Anti-DOMA bill introduced

BY LISA KEEN
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

When U.S. Rep. Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., introduced the Respect for Marriage Act in 2009, he conceded there was little chance for passage in the 111th Congress. Absent from the 102 co-sponsors that year was Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., the most veteran and influential of the three openly gay members of Congress. He said the bill had “zero” chance of passage. Also missing was then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-Md., as co-sponsors, and there was no companion bill in the Senate.

Clearly, something has changed. When Nadler reintroduced his bill to the 112th Congress March 16 Frank, Pelosi and Hoyer were among its 108 co-sponsors.

In addition, the Nadler bill this year is joined by a first-ever companion bill in the Senate, introduced March 16 by Democratic Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand of New York, Dianne Feinstein of California, Patrick Leahy of Vermont, Christopher Coons of Delaware and Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut.

What has not changed is the content of the legislation. The new Respect for Marriage Act is “precisely the same” as the last one, noted Nadler spokesman Ilan Kayatsky.

The measures seek to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). DOMA, enacted in 1996, prohibits the federal government from recognizing the legally secured marriages of same-sex couples and provides for states to ignore those marriages as well.

And there is still little likelihood of passage—at least in the Republican-controlled House.

However, the legislation arrives to a political climate concerning same-sex marriage that is clearly changing.

The latest independent poll, completed March 1 and involving 1,504 adults nationally, shows—one again—a new high in support for allowing gays to marry. While 46 percent told the Pew Research Center they oppose allowing gays to marry, 45 percent said they favor doing so—a two-point jump in the space of six months. (Nine percent admitted uncertainty. The margin

Read an interview with Cappleman’s opponent, Molly Phelan, on page 12.
Democrat Molly Phelan: Building a Better Neighborhood for Everyone

EQUAL PROTECTION

🌟 Continue to advocate for full marriage equality, in name and in fact;
🌟 Support efforts by state officials to end discrimination in foster care and adoptions;
🌟 Oppose state cuts that single out the AIDS Drug Assistance Program;

PUBLIC SAFETY

🌟 Go after problem landlords who harbor gangs, guns and drugs in our neighborhood;
🌟 Work with Mayor-elect Emanuel to put at least 1,000 new police officers on our streets;
🌟 Use her office’s $1.3 million in annual funding to improve public safety in our neighborhood.

JOBS

🌟 Use her 14 years of experience in economic development and working with small businesses to turn our neighborhoods shuttered storefronts into revitalized business corridors, starting with a Pop-up Art Program that partners with local artists to fill vacant businesses;
🌟 Promote and invest in Uptown as an entertainment center for Chicago and the Midwest to attract new businesses to the ward;
🌟 Molly has been endorsed by the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce PAC, Chicago Area Realtors PAC, and is also supported by the Illinois Hotel and Lodging Association PAC, Illinois Retail Merchants Association PAC and numerous local business leaders.

CITY BUDGET & TAXES

🌟 Require a detailed line-by-line audit of the entire city budget to identify and eliminate waste while protecting vital programs like law enforcement, job creation and public education;
🌟 Push for common sense cuts that prevent tax hikes, like reducing middle management in city government to make it operate more like a business.
🌟 Rollback elected officials’ salaries and require voter approval before future pay raises for the City Council; push for a state law that requires mandatory jail time for elected officials who violate our ethics laws.

YOUTH

🌟 The daughter of a former Uptown social worker, she will work to expand after school programs that keep kids out of gangs and engaged in learning;
🌟 Work with schools to ensure 100% enforcement of anti-bullying policies and equal treatment of all students by teachers and staff, so that every child feels safe and welcome in our schools;
🌟 Assist homeless youth, many of whom are LGBT, by opposing efforts by some to shutdown shelters and other service programs and instead help them get the resources they need to serve the community.

To volunteer, request a window/yard sign, or for more information, visit MollyForWard46.com or call 773-564-9989.
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Getting to ENDA: The road less traveled

Second of two parts
BY DANA RUDOLPH
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

On the long list of hopes that LGBT advocates put together at the beginning of the Obama administration was the idea that the president should issue an executive order requiring the federal government enter into contracts only with companies that have non-discrimination policies protecting employees based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Fred Sainz, vice president of communications for the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), noted that HRC included the recommendation as part of its “Blueprint for Positive Change” document, put out at the beginning of the Obama administration.

Richard Socarides, president of the recently formed LGBTQ media and communications group Equality Matters, told the Washington Blade Feb. 2 that such an order “ought to be something the president seriously considers doing” now. Both said the action would be a step towards full protection against employment discrimination—an important step now, when the more far-reaching Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) appears unlikely to move during the 112th Congress.

Federal contractors compose approximately 22 percent of the U.S. civilian workforce, according to the U.S. Department of Labor (Dol.), but when it comes to civil rights for LGBT people, the administration has eschewed executive orders and other official directives. Instead, it has taken the route of interpreting existing regulations more broadly than they have been in the past. And rather than having the president take the lead in doing so, it has let the heads of the various federal departments announce the expanded coverage.

President Obama has issued only two official directives regarding civil rights protections for LGBT people. The first was a memorandum, in June 2009, that directed Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Director John Berry to determine the best way to offer health coverage to domestic partners of federal employees, “including same-sex partners and their children.”

According to a press statement from OPM, the directive extended employment protections for federal employees to cover gender identity in January 2010.

The second was a memorandum, in April 2010, that directed the Department of Health and Human Services to ensure that hospitals participating in the federal Medicare or Medicaid reimbursement programs allow patients to designate their own visitors, including same-sex partners.

A presidential memorandum has the same legal force as an executive order, according to a memo from Randolph Moss, acting assistant attorney general to President Clinton, in 2000. Unless otherwise specified, either remains in effect even after a new administration takes office. A subsequent president could also change either.

One difference is that executive orders follow a more formal process for publication. They are numbered and must be published in the Federal Register, the official record of executive branch documents. Presidential memoranda are not numbered and do not have to be published in the Register—although they may be. President Obama specified that both of his LGBT-related memoranda be published.

Without a public directive of either kind from the White House, OPM quietly extended employment protections for federal employees to cover gender identity in January 2010.

Similarly, without a public presidential missive, the DoL in June 2010 issued a statement clarifying that the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) allows any private employee covered by the FMLA “who assumes the role of caring for a child” to take family leave “regardless of the legal or biological relationship” to the child. In doing so, it recognized nonbiological, nonadoptive parents in same-sex relationships.

Like the DoL, two other federal departments have—without official presidential requests—issued “guidance” about how to interpret existing regulations to be more inclusive of LGBT people, even if the regulations don’t specify sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Department of Education issued guidance to school officials last October, reminding them that federal law requires schools to take action against bullying—including gender-based and sexual harassment of LGBT students. Even though current laws enforced by the department’s Office for Civil Rights do not explicitly address harassment based on sexual orientation, they do prohibit sexual harassment and gender-based harassment directed at LGBT students or those perceived to be.

And the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) issued guidance last July stating that, although the Fair Housing Act (FHA) does not explicitly cover sexual orientation- or gender identity-based housing discrimination, such discrimination may be covered by the FHA in other ways. For example, gender-identity discrimination may be seen as gender discrimination, and discrimination against a gay man because of fear he will spread HIV/AIDS may constitute illegal discrimination on the basis of a perceived disability.

None of the departmental guidance was in reaction to President Obama’s June 2009 memo because the guidance covered people other than federal employees. There is precedent for presidents to issue executive orders to require federal agencies to give non-discrimination protections to federal employees, even if the agencies do not cover gay couples. For example, in 1988, President Ronald Reagan directed the Defense Department to provide health benefits for the same-sex partners of military personnel, and later that year, the Veterans Administration did the same for veterans.

DOMA from cover of error was plus or minus three points.

A poll sponsored last week by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) found that 51 percent oppose DOMA, 34 percent favor it and 15 percent had no opinion. When asked whether legally married gay couples should be able to obtain specific federal benefits provided to straight couples, 60 percent supported gay spouses being able to obtain Social Security benefits and 58 percent supported health coverage for federal employees’ same-sex spouses.

The HRC poll gave its respondents—800 registered voters nationwide—two statements and asked which came closer to their point of view about the House decision to defend DOMA in federal court. One choice was: the move diverts taxpayer money to a divisive issue at a time Congress should be focusing on creating jobs and cutting the deficit. The other choice was that Congress was forced to defend the law after President Obama’s administration “failed to do so.” Fifty-four percent chose the former, and 32 percent chose the latter. (The remainder said neither or both, or did not respond.)

In a related development, bills were introduced to both chambers March 10 that sought to enable coverage for domestic partners under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). COBRA is the federal law that requires group insurance plans to enable employees and their families to continue paying for their health coverage for a period of time following the loss or change in employment status.

In the Senate, the Equal Access to COBRA Act (S. 563) was reintroduced by Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., and has no co-sponsors; in the House, HR 1028 was introduced for the first time, by Rep. Anthony Weiner, D-N.Y., with 45 co-sponsors.

“Current federal laws related to COBRA coverage do not apply to domestic partners or same-sex spouses— even at companies that offer health coverage to domestic partners of employees,” according to a press statement from Boxer’s office. The proposed law, said the statement, would apply to companies that already offer health coverage to domestic partners and their children.

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**Different ages but a common goal: Fighting discrimination**

By Ross Forman

Casey Cameron heard about Caleb Laieski and his new LGBTQ organization, Gays and Lesbians United Against Discrimination (GLUAD), last June—and the two quickly started talking on the telephone and emailing each other on a daily basis.

They discussed their experiences with LGBTQ activism and campaigns, and soon discovered that they had a mutual interest in the approaches needed to reach out to combat homophobia and reach out to others. Cameron joined the GLUAD attack as its director of outreach.

Sure, they live about 1,500 miles apart as Cameron calls Chicago’s Portage Park neighborhood home, while Laieski lives in Arizona. Cameron is 35. Laieski is 16. But they have one goal: aiding the LGBTQ community.

“As director of outreach, I work daily in tandem with Caleb in all aspects of the organization,” Cameron said. “This includes goal-setting, planning, media outreach, consultation with lawyers, website development, travel, research and policy analysis. I monitor the introduction, status and progress of LGBTQ-related bills in the states and in Congress and consult with [Laieski] for appropriate action. Additionally, I coordinate with media outlets both locally and nationally to ensure proper coverage.”

How’s it been?

Very busy, Cameron said without hesitation.

“Most importantly, it has been rewarding to reach out and meet so many people,” he said. “I have learned a lot of new things and look forward to the future.

“Caleb is very inspiring. He has a lot of energy and passion and is very knowledgeable on the issues. He has tremendous drive and is in it to solve problems and help people out.

“Caleb and the organization are both inspiring and rewarding. Caleb is very energetic and passionate on the issues and GLUAD goes to the source of any given situation and solves it from the ground up. It is rewarding to see that people have been helped, offered hope and schools given direction to end bullying.”

After all, Cameron knows about bullying firsthand. He endured the wrath of bullies in school, particularly in seventh grade, when the big high school student was picking on the scrummy junior high kid.

“Although it wasn’t specifically anti-gay, it was still humiliating and belittling,” Cameron said. “I had my books knocked out of my hands, ears flicked and [was] followed down the hall with taunting. That situation was [ultimately] taken care of and the bullying ended. The critical message to send is that bullying of any kind will not be tolerated and any necessary action will be taken to make it stop.”

Cameron said he doesn’t even think about the near-20-year age difference between him and Laieski. “We work very well together as a team,” Cameron said.

“I always look to the future and look forward to a larger role working with media, public officials and people that need help,” he added. “I am consistently inspired by both Caleb and GLUAD as we have already made so many outreachs and will continue to do so in the future.

“We are always on the move and reaching out to people. I love the diversity of meeting so many other people, working with media, schools and government.

“In the short-term, we will continue reaching out to schools and individuals to ensure their safety and LGBT acceptance within the community. For the long-term, we will open homeless shelters with a focus on LGBT in other cities and expand our outreach to even more people.”

ENDA from page 4

Executive orders aimed at prohibiting discrimination, President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965 issued an order prohibiting federal contractors and subcontractors from discriminating in employment decisions “on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.”

Executive order prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, and age in federal civilian employment.

In 1995, President Bill Clinton issued an executive order prohibiting federal agencies from discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation for the purpose of granting security clearances. And in 1996, he issued an executive order to add “sexual orientation” to the non-discrimination protections for federal civilian employees.

The executive order called for under HRC’s Blueprint is one that would add sexual orientation to the non-discrimination protections for the employees of companies that contract with the federal government.

The DoL enforces anti-discrimination laws that apply to federal contractors, but so far, the department has made no move beyond the FMLA in reinterpreting existing regulations to clarify protections for LGBT people.

Similarly, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which enforces federal anti-discrimination laws among all private employers with more than 15 employees, has issued no guidance on how EEOC laws might still cover some types of anti-LGBT discrimination in the absence of fuller ENDA protections.

Brian Moulton, chief legislative counsel for HRC, acknowledged that his organization’s focus to date has been on ENDA, rather than “half measures,” such as reinterpretations of existing policies across an array of federal departments and agencies. But now that Republicans control the House and the prospects for passing ENDA have dimmed for the near future, the topic is worth a look, he said, because “the world’s a little different.”

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Anti-gay bill struck down in state Senate

BY YASMIN NAIR

SB 1993 was recently struck down in the Illinois Senate Human Services Committee. The bill would have allowed religious organizations to deny a child’s adoption or foster care to a prospective parent if the adult practiced a different faith or were atheists or agnostics. Civil- and LGBT-rights activists were concerned that this would also allow the organizations to deny adoptions to gays and lesbians if a particular religion deemed that their relationships went against the faith.

In Chicago, Ed Yohnka, director of communications and public policy for the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois said, “It’s good news for foster care in Illinois, it’s good news for children who need a loving home that these private agencies that are conducting a state function can’t discriminate against them in finding a loving home and that the primary interest that those agencies will take into consideration when deciding where to place these children will be: will they be safe and will they be happy – not the sexual orientation or the religious background of the [possible] parent. That’s really a victory for kids. We’ve got too many kids who’ve already need good homes, we don’t need to start carving up the pool of potential foster parents or parents on the basis of ideology or bias.”

According to the ACLU website, Tim Bivins, director of Illinois ACLU, and he emphasized that “you can’t let your guard down, especially when it comes to exempting religious organizations—that touches upon lots of people’s buttons and you could easily lose one of those votes. Happily, the Senate committee did the right thing and they weren’t able to generate enough of the votes in favor to move it forward.”

Garcia has been critical of his former employer, Equality Illinois, for not paying enough attention to the issue of SB 1993. While he would not speculate on why, he pointed out that there was no mention of this or the other anti-gay bills on the Equality Illinois website: “There’s one in the House and one in the Senate, a constitutional amendment identifying marriage as between a man and a woman. Those bills have not moved—one has been assigned to the executive committee in the House this session, it’s not moving but it’s something we need to keep an eye on.”

Bernard Cherkasov, executive director of Equality Illinois was asked, via email, about SB 1993 and the organization’s work on other current gay rights issues, as well as about Garcia’s point. In an emailed response, Cherkasov wrote, “When any agency takes public funds to provide a public service to all of the State, it should not be allowed to discriminate. That’s plain and simple, and Equality Illinois opposed the bill for that reason.” He went on to write, “Sometimes we can accomplish our legislative goal (such as defeating a bad bill) more effectively when we are not the public face of the opposition. Having the state’s largest LGBT rights organization lead a public fight against a faith-based adoption bill would have done more to antagonize our opponents than to add to our success. Instead, we continue to work with colleagues in the General Assembly, and we are especially grateful to State Senator Heather Steans for her leadership in ensuring that the bill does not succeed.”

The ACLU worked with Lambda Legal on SB 1993, that organization did not respond to a request for an interview by press deadline.
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Gay binational couples speak of experiences

BY YASMIN NAIR

The possibility that the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) might be repealed under a sympathetic Obama administration has given hope to many gay and lesbian U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents (LPRs) in binational relationships.

Under federal law, straight married men and women are able to sponsor their spouses for citizenship. However, the presence of DOMA has meant that even those gay and lesbians legally married in states like Massachusetts have been prevented from accessing the same benefit.

In its March 16 issue, Windy City Times ran a piece on the implications of a possible DOMA repeal for binational couples. This week, Chicago community members related their experiences living in binational relationships and how they navigate and negotiate the constant awareness of and sometimes imminent threat of deportation. Looming behind all this is the Uniting American Families Act, which has the support of advocacy organizations like Immigration Equality (IE), Lavi Soloway, the co-founder of IE, is also part of “The DOMA Project” and who seeks to argue that “removal proceedings [against a binational couple] should be terminated consistent with the Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s long-standing policy of prosecutorial discretion which favors family unification and the accommodation of sympathetic humanitarian circumstances,” according to the project’s website.

However, it is unclear if this can be applied to all cases where someone is awaiting deportation (such as people with pending misdemeanor charges against them), and those in binational relationships argue that IE has in fact been notorious for breaking up families by deporting individual members. Neither IE nor Soloway responded to requests for comments.

IE, on its website, is cautious about pinning its hopes on the removal of DOMA. The website’s “About Us” page states, “We are an activist organization that advocates for immigration reform. We work with our partners on the policy and legal front, and with the media on the communication front. We are also a grassroots movement that seeks to educate the public about immigration reform.”

“DOMA is a very strong case against the marriage of a couple in the same-sex community,” according to the project’s website. “It also has been used to deny the ability of same-sex couples to access the same benefits as heterosexual couples.”

Asylum cases can take anywhere from three months to ten years. Berndt explained that “[a] sylum is always, in our current system, a very risky endeavor because there’s so much discretion in the hands of immigration adjudicators. And studies have shown that a lot of the assertions for asylum seekers are based on who you get as a judge and not so much on the strengths of the case. So even though Anton has a very strong asylum case, it’s still a risky endeavor that requires him to talk about some very difficult things and put himself in a very vulnerable position. It’s not the preferred option.”

Goodman confirmed this, adding that applying for asylum was “the saddest decision we made because at the end of the process, Anton could be deported... at the end of the journey, it could mean we may not be together as a couple.”

So, in the meantime, the couple waits anxiously for the resolution of the asylum case while Pulung-Hartanto looks for a job as a chef. Asked what advice they could give to others in their situation, Goodman said that they found it was critical to form support networks with other binational couples: “We’ve spent many a night... and found comfort if there is any comfort at all.”

“Even having a partner with a job and an immigrant visa does not necessarily help make matters less stressful since losing that job can mean that the foreign-born partner has to leave. Such is the case with Daniel Johnson, an attorney with the law firm Jenner and Block LLP whose partner, Suresh (not his real name, by Johnson’s request), works as a management consultant. The two met six years ago on gaydot.com and, as Johnson describes it, “We fell in love on the third date at Millennium Park.” Suresh had come here from India as a temporary worker in information technology and then got a job in a start-up company in 2000. That company folded, so Suresh went to business school at the University of Chicago and gained a work visa as a consultant. However, consultancy is rife with layoffs and furloughs, and Johnson and his partner live with the anxiety of separation looming over them on a constant basis.

Would repealing DOMA help them? Johnson feels it would: “Yes, I would like to be able to marry him. Repealing DOMA would be the clearest route for permanent residency.” Like Goodman and Pulung-Hartanto, Johnson spoke about the level of stress they endured. He also felt that, with regard to immigration reform in general, “it would make a whole lot more sense to make immigration less restricted for a number of reasons, [such as] economic reasons and cultural reasons. The most important thing is to stay with someone you love.”

On that issue, Goodman was also concerned about the current climate and conversation on immigration reform and “concerned about how we take advantage to sustain privilege. The laws of this country are designed by rich landowners to keep white straight privilege in power and the more we push against white privilege, the more blaming, the more violence we do to each other in the name of justice.”

Comprehensive sex-ed measure advances


Senate Bill 1619 mandates the teaching of medical and age-appropriate sexual-education material that is based on evidence. Abstinence education will be a large component of this instruction, instructing students that abstinence presents the only “assured method of avoiding unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease and HIV/AIDS.” Contraception methods will also be addressed.

“This legislation is intended to reduce unintended pregnancies as well as sexually transmitted diseases and HIV infection in our teenage population by addressing sexual education from a comprehensive approach.”

Steans said in a statement. “By giving our teenagers the tools they need to make wise, informed decisions about their health, we are laying the groundwork for these teens to lead healthy adult lives.”

‘IMGAY’ among banned license plates

The Chicago Sun-Times recently ran an article on a partial list of personalized license plates that have been banned in Illinois.

The list, known as the “Special Plate Inhibit List,” contains almost 4,800 plates, and it grows by about 20 each week. Among the plates banned are “CLMAX,” “HONKERS,” “BLUEMEE,” “GOLFSEX,” “OLDPOPOO” and “IMGAY.”

When asked why “IMGAY” was among the prohibited plates, Candace Wanzo—who is with the secretary of state’s special plates division—told Windy City Times that “IMGAY” was excluded because “we didn’t know if, at some point, someone was trying to be negative. We’re not saying that being gay is negative, but for example, someone had ‘HATEU2.’ Some people thought it was ‘I hate you, too,’ but it was ‘I hate U2, the band.’”

Wanzo also said that it was possible that “because that list [of plates] has been out there for years, I don’t know if that was banned previously. However, if someone applied for something and we were curious about it, normally we would contact that person and ask, ‘What is your intent with this?’ If, of course, if it was something negative, we wouldn’t approve it.”

So what if someone applied for that same “IMGAY” vanity plate and it was strictly about being gay pride? “I definitely don’t think we would deny it in that case, but if someone said it was a joke we wouldn’t put it out there that way,” Wanzo said.

Rejections make up less than 2 percent of requests for the 150,000 vanity plates issued each year.

—Andrew Davis
Gay Chicagoans show solidarity with Wis. unions

BY CHARLISI DEWEY

Two weeks ago, while on a visit in Wisconsin, longtime social-rights activists Andrew Deppe and partner Stephen Weiser joined the ongoing worker’s- and union-rights protest at the state’s capital.

“We were there Thursday, March 10,” said Deppe. “The day before, they had voted on Gov. Scott Walker’s bill to sharply limit any kind of union rights or collective bargaining rights for public sector employees.”

On March 9, the Senate was able to create an opportunity to vote on the controversial bill—which had drawn protestors to the capitol for the past three weeks—without any of the 14 Democrats present, and on the following day the bill passed the assembly. [Note: On March 18, Circuit Court Judge Maryann Sumi blocked the law that would limit collective-bargaining rights for public unions.]

The mood was split March 10 according to Deppe, with many people remaining positive and hopeful, while others were becoming more concerned due to the Republicans’ legislative maneuvering. However, it remained a peaceful protest.

“There were people who were very anxious and distressed about the current maneuverings in the legislature and the fact that Republicans had figured out parliamentary ways of going ahead and doing what they wanted without the Democrats even present,” Deppe said.

For Deppe and Weiser, joining in and showing their solidarity for worker and union rights were important and necessary. The pair has been involved in many protests over the years, including protests with the AIDS group ACT UP and demonstrating against the Iraq War.

“We were concerned about labor union rights and worker rights and the fact that the Republican Party in this country has really moved much farther to the right,” Deppe said. “Some of the first things that fascists did in Italy, Spain and Germany in the 1930s were to lock up all the political opposition. ‘A lot of the same language and rhetoric that we are hearing now in Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana and other places, it’s very similar to 1930s Europe—and it’s a little frightening.’

Deppe pointed to history as a lesson that needs to be revisited. He said, ‘Well, as one of the bumper stickers said, ‘Unions brought you the weekend.’ A lot of other countries still have child labor, unsafe working conditions. They have people with no benefits or job security. A lot of that has been eroded here over time too. People died so that we could have basic benefits and working conditions. Time off and a 40-hour workweek. I think people forget that.”

The maneuvering by Republicans on this bill has drawn a diverse crowd of protestors and it continues to draw attention from workers and unions in other states who are concerned over how this bill could be adopted in their own state. Deppe said he saw young, old, gay, straight, men and women there, but he was most excited by the young people attending the protests.

“I was very impressed with the articulation and political awareness of some of these young people I think that’s a very hopeful sign. I haven’t seen that in a long time.”

Deppe said that on the day he and Weiser were at the capitol, a group of high school students had left school and marched up State Street, entering the capitol in protest of the bill. He believes that this issue is particularly engaging because it does hit so close to home for people. Even if someone is not in a union, he or she likely has a family member, friend or neighbor who is.

Deppe said in that respect it is similar to protests during the ’60s, when the government was not responding to the HIV/AIDS crisis and the LGBT community and allies were trying to bring attention to the issue and get the government to take action. People knew others who were affected and they connected with the fight.

Deppe believes that social movements really need that personal connection: “As we’ve done in other social change movements, trying to make some common cause based on our experience really helps people. I know what it’s like to be discriminated against.”

He pointed to the ongoing battles the LGBT community faces and engages in for equal rights: “The connection between LGBT rights and rights of working people, I think there should be some connection and solidarity there. We, as the queer community, are people who know what it’s like to have your rights taken away or not acknowledged.”

Deppe plans to continue his involvement in future protests for workers rights. On the evening he spoke to Windy City Times, he was heading to join other Chicagoans in a solidarity protest against the bill.

McRaith named to head federal office

Michael McRaith, the openly gay director of the Illinois Department of Insurance, will be named to lead the new Federal Insurance Office, according to Business Week. U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy F. Geithner made the announcement during a meeting of the Financial Stability Oversight Council in Washington, D.C., on March 17.

The Dodd-Frank financial overhaul law created the office last year to gather information on the insurance industry and to negotiate internationally on its behalf.

McRaith told Windy City Times that his responsibilities, by statute, include “assisting in international commercial agreements involving the insurance sector, [and working] with lead regulators of other financial sectors and industries to avoid the collapse that occurred a couple years ago.” He also said that he would be working “with Congress and national policy leaders to assure that consumers are protected and that industries are fairly regulated, and that the regulatory system is a platform for development and growth in the insurance sector.”

McRaith—who said he was “honored and humbled” when he found out about the federal position—added that he would be working with Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn through the end of this legislative session, which ends in May: he starts with the Treasury Department in June. “I’m excited about the great challenges ahead, but there’s some sadness because working with Gov. Quinn and his team has been a great privilege for me,” McRaith said.

Quinn named McRaith as the director of the state’s insurance department in 2009. Prior to his appointment, McRaith worked 15 years in private practice as an attorney in Chicago, representing national and regional financial institutions, including insurers, in finance-related litigation.

—Andrew Davis

Addendum

While the March 23 Dan Savage/Terry Miller event will take place at Nettelhorst Elementary School, 3252 N. Broadway, at 7 p.m., Unabridged Bookstore, the AIDS Foundation of Chicago and Equality Illinois are sponsoring the event. See https://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=1893815455437.
Point Foundation announces Tyler Clementi scholarship

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

The Point Foundation has announced a new scholarship to honor the memory of the Rutgers University student who killed himself last fall as a result of the bullying he encountered at the school. It's called the Tyler Clementi Point Scholarship and it will benefit one LGBTQ student for the entire four years of his or her education at an institution of higher learning.

"We spoke with Tyler's parents to make sure we had their support and endorsement," said Jorge Valencia, Point Foundation executive director and CEO since 2007. "They have been extremely gracious throughout the whole process. In speaking with them we let them know that, organizationally, we would provide the scholarship with $25,000 for the first year and then open it up to some donors and individuals that may want to support this scholarship in Tyler's name for the next three years, assuring them that if any Point money was needed to fund that named scholarship we would step in and fund the remainder."

Valencia added that "we are happy to report that just from the release of this scholarship we have had number of people from throughout the United States that have contributed to the scholarship already." The foundation chose to name this new scholarship after Clementi was to provide the family with something positive to remember him by and to have someone benefit from his life through this scholarship.

"I have a passion for anything that has to do with young people feeling out of sorts with their environment and not feeling a part of the community they live in," Clementi said. "I grew up in Texas as a Mormon in a Latino household and when you are Texan, Mormon, Latino and gay you have a lot of strikes against you in the eyes of many people," Valencia shared with us. He said that in his work he has always tried to "minimize some of the pain or alienation that young people have felt" and the work he has done with Trevor Project and now with the Point Foundation has done just that.

So how does an individual go about getting a Point Scholarship? All scholarships are funded through a combination of the foundations funds, individuals and organizations who want to help LGBT youth attend college who might not otherwise be able to do so. Each scholar has to have at least a 3.3 GPA, a commitment to academic excellence and leadership skills, along with financial and emotional needs. Some scholars have been kicked out of their homes or are couch surfing however there are some who have the support of their families but the family does not have the resources to send their child to college. This is where the Point Foundation steps in. To help students who are determined to go to college despite whatever obstacles life throws at them.

The foundation is in its semifinal round of choosing its next class of scholars, and one of them will receive the Tyler Clementi Scholarship. Valencia noted that of the 4,500 young people who have started the application, about 1,800 of them have submitted everything on time and will be competing for the next batch of scholarships—with 20-28 young people being awarded new scholarships that will fund their entire education.

Valencia said that "many people think we are just a scholarship granting organization but we don't just hand out a check to scholars for books or tuition or whatever they need for their college education. We make sure each scholar is paired up with a mentor. These mentors are professionals who are highly regarded in their professional fields and can guide them through their studies and education. In addition to their mentors they come up with a community service project which they have to complete every year they are Point Scholars. The community service project the students do benefits the LGBTQ community so these young people are giving back immediately from the support of the organizations and their generous donors."

"To date Valencia said "we have supported over 160 young people. Currently we support 66 scholars and we hope to support between 66-72 scholars during the next school year. When we started 10 years ago we started with just eight scholars." Valencia hopes that in the future the foundation will have an endowment that will fund all of its scholarships, with any fundraising dollars designated to keeping the rest of the organization going. They also want to have Point Scholars in every state and be able to help more students each year.

For more information on the Point Foundation, including ways to donate to the Tyler Clementi Scholarship, visit http://www.thepointfoundation.org.

Laura Ricketts among those honored by lawyers’ groups

Laura Ricketts—a lesbian who is a board member of the Chicago Cubs and who is chair of the Chicago Cubs Charities—is one of six 2011 Vanguard Award winners announced by local bar associations.


They will be honored at a reception/luncheon Wed., April 20, at the Standard Club, 320 S. Plymouth, in the Grand Ballroom, at 11:30 a.m. Tickets are $65 each; to reserve, contact Tamra Drees at 312-554-2057 or tdrees@chicagobar.org.

Affinity co-hosts ‘Recovery, Reclaiming and Redefining’

BY TERRENCE CHAPPELL

Affinity Community Services and Critical Justice Alliance joined forces to present Recovery, Reclaiming, and Redefining: Saying Yes to Life, a series of workshops that focused on sex and stigma, HIV/AIDS, community outreach, and religion.

UCF professor Dr. Johari Jabri kicked off the Saturday afternoon workshop with an interactive, high-energy discussion about sexuality and religion. His talk included how the Bible’s Genesis’ story of Adam and Eve influences today’s secular world of decisions, people, and institutions. Jabri challenged guests to think of real-life associations and applications in regards of the Garden of Eden, and also to view spirituality beyond religious institutions.

“I thought the discussion was really thought provoking and informative. It was a great moment. I definitely walked away with a different awareness,” said guest KOKUMU.

Starting off with a set of intimate questions about sexuality, Health Educator/Campaigns Coordinator of Black Women for Reproduction Justice Cherisse A. Scott welcomed attendees to a talk on sex and stigma in today’s culture. Scott explained the difference between sex and intimacy in terms of sexual health and expression. Scott urged people to take responsibility over their own reproductive and sexual health. She went on to share a touching story of how her father who suffers from full blown AIDS and was a victim of his environment. According to Scott, certain environments such as the church aren’t always conducive to being yourself.

“The church has not made itself a place of where you can be yourself,” said Scott. Affinity Community Services Board Vice President Kelly Saulsberry spearheaded a discussion on critical thinking that invited guests to brainstorm grass root ideas that could benefit their prospective communities. Many guests expressed their discontent over the prevalence of violence, litter, and underserialities in their neighborhoods. Saulsberry encouraged and offered guests simple solutions to address their community concerns. Saulsberry also notes that critical thinking is not limited by education or social class and even points to a “poverty of spirit” as responsible for poor neighborhood upkeep from certain residents.

“Each of us can think critically. You don’t have to have a PHD. You don’t have to have a master’s. We just need to cultivate a space where we can,” said Saulsberry.

The workshop ended with a collaborative discussion, led by Affinity Community Services Executive Director Kim Hunt, on how institutions can aide and support in the concerns, problems, and blocks addressed during the workshop. According to Hunt, the purpose behind the workshop was to raise consciousness of the underlying factors including oppression and socioeconomic setbacks that lead to poor health outcome in the communities of color. People as well as institutions can make a difference in the fight against HIV/Aids.

“People can hold politicians accountable to make sure that the little bit of HIV/AIDS funding that is out there really does follow the epidemic,” said Hunt.

Laura Ricketts.
Talk with your doctor and consider all the factors about starting treatment. HIV treatment is now recommended for everyone with a T-cell count of 500 or less and should be considered when T-cells are higher than 500, according to the DHHS* and the IAS-USA†. Starting treatment early may help protect your immune system and vital organs. Today’s medicines may have fewer, more manageable side effects. They may help you live a longer, healthier life. Receive helpful information about living with HIV that you should know. Call toll free 1-888-497-9639, or visit TREATHIVNOW.COM.

*DHHS = Department of Health and Human Services  †IAS-USA = International AIDS Society USA.
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46TH WARD

Molly Phelan
BY ROSS FORMAN

After 11 candidates battled for control of the 46th Ward aldermanic post in February, it is now down to two in the runoff election. Openly gay James Cappleman, 58, the former board president of the Uptown Chicago Commission, now opposes Mary Anne “Molly” Phelan, 39, an independent, progressive community leader with a strong business background.

Both received 20 percent of the votes in February.

Windy City Times: Thoughts as we head into the homestretch of the runoff election? Molly Phelan: It’s a little bit more challenging than the homestretch in February. I’ve been out [since the day after the February election vote], at the bus stops at 6:30 a.m., talking to voters, and also (was) out that night to thank voters and reminding them about the upcoming runoff race. We haven’t let our pace down [since the] initial election period.

And it’s crazier now because, the attention that was not put on us [too much] with 11 candidates. Now it is. It’s great that there are two of us, so it’s easier to get my message out.

WCT: Thoughts about Mayor-elect Rahm Emanuel, who has basically stayed away from the runoff in the 46th?

MP: Our platform lines up pretty well. The mayor-elect and I see eye-to-eye on numerous issues, so it’s easier to get my message out.

WCT: The 46th certainly has a strong LGBT focus.

MP: It’s a very important issue for the LGBT community.

WCT: If you were to use your aldermanic discretionary budget to enhance the safety of the 46th Ward, focusing on lighting in hot-spot areas, along with security cameras and other security measures to make the neighborhood safer.

WCT: A lot has been made in the media about what you would do with the $1.3 million, as opposed to your opponent. In fact, you were quoted as saying that you would use it for “flower pots and benches.” Talk about that, please.

MP: He has a mower where he says that he wanted to use $1.3 million [for] street beautification. He doesn’t really have a business background. His belief that one of the reasons we don’t have the economic development in our neighborhood is because our streets don’t look that great. The truth of the matter is, people aren’t coming to our neighborhood to open their small business is because there’s crime [here].

The only thing that the 46th Ward gets coverage for is its shootings on a day to day basis. If you’re going to prioritize what the ward really needs, it [starts] with safety, not street beautification.

WCT: The 46th certainly has a strong LGBT factor. What you would want to do for the LGBT community?

MP: What I’m struck by, as I go door to door in the ward, is [that] our gay and lesbian neighbors care about the same things that everyone else cares about. [starting with] making our streets safe and creating quality jobs in our community.

I supported Rep. Greg Harris’ civil-unions bill, and it was a great step forward toward full marriage equality—and I support full marriage equality for everyone in our community. I am also opposed to the proposed cuts to the Illinois AIDS Drug Assistance Program. For too many residents of our community, this program is their only option for providing life-saving assistance and it’s critical to the state to fully fund this program. Moreover, I’ve spoken with the Night Ministry; they have homeless resources for teens in the LGBT community that I think are critical, not just in the 46th Ward, but throughout the city of Chicago, to make sure those kids have resources and a community to support and protect them.

WCT: What else do you want to do for the LGBT community in particularly the 46th Ward?

MP: I’m going to be an advocate in Springfield, and I also want to provide more sensitivity training. My hope is to really protect kids in high school, those who are questioning their sexual orientation. I know that’s a very, very tough road for a lot of kids, so it’s easier for kids to truly discover who they are and do it in a safe environment.

And also have a zero-tolerance for bullying.

WCT: Talk more about bully, which certainly is a big issue for the LGBT community, but also nationally as President Obama held a conference on bullying at the White House in early March.

MP: High school is a very difficult time for many children, and even more difficult when you’re dealing with bullies. We just need to make schools a safe place for everyone. I don’t have specifics about what I’d want to do. I’d want to look at President Obama’s plan to see what he has in order, but it would be one of my top priorities in working with the local schools.

WCT: Where are schools at within the 46th Ward and how do you look to improve them?

MP: This goes back to our crime issue. Schools within the 46th Ward … these kids are getting out of school at about 2:30 p.m., and [the] families that are most susceptible to being recruited and intoxicated by gangs are the same families that cannot afford the after-school programs. What I want to do is, work with some of the small-business owners in our neighborhood to provide scholarships for these families that cannot afford after-school programs for their kids. These after-school program cost [between] $100 and $300 per month, per child—and a lot of these families cannot afford that. I really want to promote that partnership between the business community and our local schools to prevent crime, build community and to give these kids a better education.

WCT: Expand about business development within the ward.

MP: My plan for job creation in the neighborhood focuses on the pop-up art program, which partners local artists with landlords that have vacant retail real estate throughout the ward. If you put the local artists in there rent-free, the benefit is, the neighborhood has increased foot traffic, the artist has free art space, the landlord benefits because there now are more people walking past his store front which makes the property more valuable. The most important part of this program is, the artist must keep a fly Rent sign in the window: therefore, while this increased activity is occurring in the neighborhood, I’m going to go out to recruit new small-businesses to come to the neighborhood.

WCT: Where do you want to go with [for] senior citizens in the ward?

MP: I really want to work to find employment for people 55 and over. As I have walked throughout the ward, I have met numerous residents who are 55 and over, and they have been laid off from their job and are having an extremely difficult time trying to find jobs. They want to work; they are skilled; they are capable: it’s just very difficult for people in that age-range to get hired. So, I want to make sure I not only can provide safe housing for seniors who need it within the community; and I also want to make sure that there are job opportunities for them as well.


Elections 2011: Runoffs

Welcome to the Windy City Times election guide for the April 5 runoff elections in Chicago.

As expected, this version is a bit truncated from the general election guide that ran last month. That voting is over, the victor, who garnered at least 50 percent plus one of the votes cast.

However, April 5 will see runoff elections in 14 aldermanic races—including the 46th Ward, which originally had 11 candidates (including three openly gay ones). Now, just two remain: Molly Phelan and James Cappleman, who has a chance to become the second openly gay person on city council.

(Tom Tunney of the 46th Ward is the sole representative.) There is an interview with Phelan and a profile of Cappleman in this issue.

Also, the Windy City Times election guide charts are available and include the candidates’ responses to 16 LGBT-related questions sent by the newspaper. We also list endorsements from other agencies. Windy City Times does not endorse candidates for election.

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Chicago’s Dedicated and Comprehensive LGBT Program

Valle at Chicago Lakeshore Hospital provides comprehensive psychiatric and addiction-related treatment for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) individuals. Valeo is a safe, family-affirming therapeutic environment for members of the LGBTQ community. The Valeo staff is comprised of well-trained, experienced gay and gender-sensitive behavioral health professionals from a wide variety of disciplines.
The following 16 questions appeared on the survey that Windy City Times sent out to candidates in the 2011 election. Surveys were sent out to all candidates for whom we had contact info; we estimate that surveys were sent to 90 percent of all candidates. The questions were the same for candidates in all races.

1) Do you have or would you install a written policy in your office regarding sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination?
2) What is your position regarding funding for HIV/AIDS treatment and education?
3) Have you taken or would you take any steps to further HIV/AIDS treatment and education programs? If so, what are those measures?
4) What are feelings regarding abortion? (i.e., Are you pro-choice or pro-life?)
5) Have you started or would you start sensitivity training for your staff members regarding LGBT-related issues?
6) Do you favor same-sex marriage?
7) If you were in the state legislature, would you have voted in favor of the civil-unions bill that recently passed through the Illinois General Assembly?
8) Do you favor hate-crimes legislation that increases penalties for crimes committed based on the sexual orientation or gender identity of the person attacked?
9) Do you predict that LGBT individuals should become foster parents if they are qualified?
10) Do you believe that LGBT individuals have the right to adopt children if they are qualified? If so, would you support measures to ensure that they have equal rights?
11) Do you believe that tax breaks and other benefits should be available to LGBT couples?
12) What are your thoughts on a school that has a strong commitment to supporting LGBT students?
13) What are your thoughts on a school that has a strong commitment to supporting LGBT students?
14) Are you in favor of any changes to the current school policies regarding LGBT students?
15) Are you in favor of any changes to the current school policies regarding LGBT students?
16) What are your thoughts on the current state of LGBT rights in your state?
Illinois civil unions: What people need to know

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

June 1 will mark the first time in Illinois history that both same-sex and opposite-sex couples will be able to apply for and enter into civil unions.

The law, which was signed by Gov. Pat Quinn at a ceremony Jan. 31 at the Chicago Cultural Center with about 1,000 attendees and dignitaries, gives lesbian and gay couples (and heterosexual couples who wish to enter these unions) the same rights, benefits and privileges as heterosexual married couples in Illinois. The Illinois Religious Freedom Protection and Civil Union Act brings Illinois one step closer to full equality for the LGBT community.

What are these rights, benefits and privileges? Of the nearly 650 that are afforded to Illinois couples there are essential ones that will now be bestowed on couples who enter into civil unions. They include: hospital visitation rights as well as emergency medical decision-making power, the right to take family emergency and medical leave, equal tax treatment under state and local laws for couples and families, health insurance coverage for same-sex partners and the other partner’s children if your place of employment covers married spouses and their dependents. One way this benefit is not equal is in the area of taxation, where civil-union partners must pay federal income tax (but not state income tax) on the value of any health benefits.

Some other important rights, benefits and privileges are equal tax treatment under state and local laws for couples and families; automatic inheritance without a will and equal estate tax treatment; spousal testimonial privilege: state spousal benefits including workers’ compensation and spousal pension coverage; equal access to domestic relations laws and procedures, including divorce, division of property, and visitation of children; equal access to civil actions dependent on spousal status, including wrongful death, emotional distress, and loss of consortium; right to share a nursing home; and the right to control disposition of a partner’s remains when he or she dies.

Also, same-sex couples who are married, had a civil union or are in a domestic partnership from another state will automatically be recognized as a civil union by the state of Illinois. In some cases, people may be required to provide proof of their out-of-state marriage, civil union or domestic partnership.

Those who are already in a domestic partnership in Cook County or have had a religious ceremony that did not include a legal document from any state will still need to enter into a civil union. A religious ceremony is not required to enter into a civil union although it can be certifi

Innovative school curriculum incorporates LGBT-related issues

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Nestled in a former mansion on the corner of Clarendon and Buena in Lake View is an innovative new school called the Global Citizenship Experience (GCE) High School. The school is a college prep independent school in Chicago. As a part of the curriculum students participate in a program called the traveling school of life, which consists of student-taught lesson plans on topics of their choice. These classes occur two days a week for 30 minutes each day.

One student who goes by the initials “ZS” (and who happens to be bisexual) chose the topic of civil unions/gay marriages. ZS said he chose this topic because of the attention it has received here in Illinois due to the new civil-unions law that will go into effect June 1.

With this lesson ZS said he was hoping for a lively discussion since the students come from all walks of life and many different countries. ZS first showed a WGN news story on the new civil-unions law before he opened the class up for discussion and questions.

“I was a little nervous to see the reactions of people because I know a few people have been affected by the whole situation of civil unions and gay marriage and I was nervous and excited to see other people’s opinions. When I opened the class up for questions and discussion people didn’t think twice about it except for one student who expressed some reluctance,” said ZS. Instead of a lively discussion between the students on their differing views about the issue, everyone was on board with the concepts of civil unions and gay marriage. ZS said he actually had to “put himself on the con side of the issue just to allow a certain amount of debate while also keeping religion out of the discussion.” Even when ZS argued the con side of the issue it still didn’t spark a debate and none of the students, even the deeply religious students, changed their minds.

Eric Davis, founder and director of GCE, said the key elements of the school are a globally integrated curriculum, project-based learning and field experience. The core classes are integrated with a science/math class and a history/English class along with electives like foreign languages, global peace classes, global rhythm and poetry, coding and gaming, writers’ workshop and film classes. They also participate in civil engagement with non-profit partners, said Davis. The school day runs from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday with 90-minute class periods. Each class has eight to 12 students, with 16 students currently enrolled this year. GCE is looking to have 30 students enrolled next year, and eventually grow from that to a maximum of 144 students. Davis emphasized that GCE wants to stay small so students can get the attention they need to grow as individuals.

The school does not rely on standardized testing to assess student progress. Teachers still assign essays, quizzes and tests on the material but they also have students do stop motion videos, podcasts, 3D projects and other multimedia projects to demonstrate student learning. Each student creates portfolios of their work which is used for assessment purposes and the college application process.

The key to the school, said ZS and Davis, is the ability for students to learn in a challenging environment free of judgment or harassment where everyone’s opinion and self-expression is valued.

Next year the school will move to a new location at 1535 N. Dayton, in the Menomonee Club Drucker Center, to accommodate the growing student body. The new location will have spaces for offices and classrooms, and students will also benefit from the art, dance and sports rooms located at the club. To find out more about the school, visit: http://www.globalcitizenshipexperience.com.

Richard Garcia to be honored March 25

Vida/SIDA will honor longtime local LGBT rights advocate Richard Garcia with an event at Rehab at Circuit, 3641 N. Halsted, on Friday, March 25, 6-9 p.m.

Among Garcia’s achievements are being inducted into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame in 1999; co-founding the Illinois Federation for Human Rights (now known as Equality Illinois); and playing pivotal roles in the passages of the civil-unions law and the amendment of the state’s human-rights act that includes sexual orientation and gender identity.

Tickets are $50 each: contact Ricardo Jimenez at 773-278-6737 or ricardoj@prccchgo.org.

Isaiah named to hunger commission

Gov. Pat Quinn has named Mark Isaiah of AIDS United as one of 22 statewide leaders to the new Commission to End Hunger, according to a press release.

Isaiah—who formerly headed the AIDS Foundation of Chicago—recently became chief of AIDS United, a new Washington, D.C.-based national organization that emerged from the merger between the National AIDS Fund and AIDS Action.

Rep. Elizabeth Hernandez, D-Cicero, was a co-sponsor with Sen. Don Harmon, D-Oak Park, of the legislation last year that created the commission, which will address the growing problem of hunger in Illinois by improving food security and nutrition through education, better coordinating services and increasing access to programs.
John D’Emilio on pleasure and danger in Chicago

BY YASMIN NAIR

Out gay historian and professor John D’Emilio recently presented a talk on his prospective new book. The event, titled “Love and Sex, Pleasures and Dangers in the Windy City,” took place at the Institute for the Humanities of the University of Illinois at Chicago March 2.

Speaking to an room overflowing with attendees, D’Emilio began by noting that this project is a significant departure for him because his previous work has focused on social movements (Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America) or activists with a global reach (Lost Prophet: Bayard Rustin and the Quest for Peace and Justice in America), whereas this one will take up a very local topic by focusing on Chicago. He said that he was drawn to this project while trying to come up with a short survey text for students four years ago and looking for material from which to draw examples of Chicago history to illustrate larger points about the gay and lesbian movement in the United States.

Instead, he said he “kept seeing things about gay and lesbian history in Chicago that looked different from what people were writing when they wrote about San Francisco or New York or L.A. I kept finding things beyond 1950-2000 [the time period he had limited himself to] that were too fascinating to ignore.” For instance, he found that Chicago declared war against syphilis in 1937. He also discovered a trove of material in the pages of the historically Black newspaper The Chicago Defender, about female impersonators on the South Side in the 1930s. To his surprise, he said, their stories were not presented as those of “exotic, underground, illicit phenomenon,” as might be expected given the time period. Instead, the paper reported on these men as figures of which the larger community could be proud.

Such initial research prompted D’Emilio to abandon his idea of the survey text and instead focus on a different and longer work based on Chicago and sexuality in the 20th century. D’Emilio presented an outline of the book and discussed 10 potential chapters, including one on Chicago and sexuality in the 20th century.

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He emphasized that this would not be a conventional and comprehensive queer history of Chicago. Rather, he said, “[it] will move through time but there will be a shift in focus as one moves through time, in terms of ‘issues.’” One emphasis would be on the populations affected by the issues, another on locations; the book will move through various areas of the city. The aim, he said, was “to organize chapters in such a way that the person or the event I’m talking about really teaches us something larger about the subject of the chapter, so that you the reader will have experienced something and seen and grasped something about Chicago and urban America but through the lens of sexuality. Many of these episodes spoke to something that was more than just about sex.”

As an example, he returned to the chapter on the war on syphils in 1937-38. While it had sex and sexuality at its core, it involved various constituencies in the city and was enabled by the Social Security Act of 1935, which “made public health funding available to localities from the national government.”

Two questions that animate the project, said D’Emilio, were “Can one write the history of Chicago and the history of urban America through the history of sexuality?” Can the history of sexuality be a window through which the history of the U.S. in the 20th century is illuminated?”

Describing the chapters, he said that the first one would be about Jane Addams, titled, “The House on Halsted Street,” in which he plans to provide a look at an “urban, industrial America … through the eyes of a proper Victorian lady” who came from a background vastly different than the worlds she moved in for her work. Speaking of “her capacity to do the work of social justice in the context of her private love and passion [notably her long-term relationship with Ellen Gates Starr],” D’Emilio suggested that it was in fact the strict boundaries of propriety around her that focused her passion for social justice because “she could have a life filled with love and passion that sustained her every day.”

A chapter on the infamous early 20th-century red-light district of Chicago will look at the moral reformers who targeted “the young working-class men and women” who worked in and frequented these establishments. According to D’Emilio, while these campaigns have been mostly written about as moments of moral panic, they were in fact about targeting immigrants and “opened the door to immigrant restrictions.” Another chapter, titled “What’s happening to our women?”, will be about cross-dressers and “knee-pushers”—the latter a term referring to the “bad women who steal the innocence of our boys by pushing their knees” while sitting next to them in bars.

There will also be a chapter on Alfred Kinsey, who produced the landmark post-war reports on male and female sexuality. These works, in fact, took shape on the streets of Chicago, after the sexologist was told by a research subject in Indiana to come here and talk to more people. As a result, said D’Emilio, Kinsey’s numerous conversations with teachers, gay men and women, prostitutes and others in Chicago “allowed him to imagine the books” by giving him a wealth of material to work from.

In a chapter titled “The homosexual menace,” D’Emilio will examine the 1950s campaign against “sexual perversion” through the reportage of the Tribune. Here, D’Emilio will take up the curious fact that while the Tribune was caught up in detailing the extent of the “homosexual menace,” Chicago became the home of Hugh Hefner and the Playboy magazine which pioneered “a new kind of sexual commerce.” He said that he was intrigued by how “a culturally conservative ethnic political machine [under mayor Richard Daley] and the frontier of a new explicitly commercialized sexuality” could flourish at the same time. The book will end with chapters on the 1960s era of gay liberation and the battle around AIDS in the 1980s.
Gay professor tries to regain job after harassment charges

BY CHARLIE DEWEY

Robert Klein Engler, a former adjunct professor at Roosevelt University, wants to tell his story, and with the word harassment lingering around his name it is not hard to understand why he is deeply concerned with clearing his name.

“I got up in the morning and I had no intention of harassing any students,” he said, referring to the day that he told a joke in his “City and Citizenship” class at the university. “I did not ever imagine that I would do that. Supposedly I told a joke which some person interpreted as harassment. But there has never been any official statement by the university about this.”

The class had been assigned a book about legal immigration and the discussion for the day centered on the new and controversial Arizona immigration law. “I wanted to get the students involved in a discussion so I told them this joke and wondered what they thought about it,” he said.

The joke was, “There was a sociological study done in Arizona and they discovered that 60 percent of the people in Arizona approved of the immigration law and 40 percent said, ‘no habla ingles.’”

Engler has been outspoken throughout his career, writing extensively on policy issues from his conservative perspective, including articles expressing his disagreement with amnesty for illegal immigrants despite how many years they have been in the United States. He said that although he holds strong views on certain topics, he does not share those views with his students and that he did not discuss his personal views on the Arizona immigration law.

“I am good at what I do,” he said. “I never wear buttons that support one cause or another to my classroom. I never assign as required reading any article I have written and published. I allow students to express their points of view and then let other students make counter arguments. I keep prejudice and bias out of my work. I have done exactly that for over 30 years and have never had any complaints.”

He maintains that his viewpoints and writings are not racist and that he is not racist.

Engler said that it had not occurred to him when telling the joke that any of his students had been upset by it and none of his students ever approached him to discuss it.

Later, when he found out that a student had accused him of harassment and that administrators wanted to meet with him to investigate the allegation he did not know it was related to the immigration joke.

Engler, a gay man, said he became concerned immediately that a student had filed a false sexual harassment allegation against him and says he spent months over the summer of 2010 trying to find out the details of the harassment claim. He said he wanted to make sure he knew all of the details and had a formal, written document from the school before he sat down to discuss the matter.

After months of trying to obtain the details of the harassment allegations, Engler received a letter of termination in the mail. He was ultimately fired for refusing to cooperate with a formal university investigation. He believes that he was doing everything he could to cooperate with the information he had been given and without any written documentation or details and that it was actually the school that was not cooperating by refusing to provide him this information.

“I asked the university if they could document this and give me some details. Vice President Deb Ford refused to do that on at least two occasions,” he said.

Engler eventually learned the details of the harassment allegation from the school newspaper, the Torch, which published information about the joke and the student who had made the harassment charge.

Engler and his attorney, Doug Ibendahl, are concerned with the handling of the harassment charge by the administration, believing that the professor had a right to know the allegations prior to sitting down at a formal investigation discussion.

The agreement between Roosevelt University and the Roosevelt Adjunct Faculty Organization, (RAFO) ISEA-NEA states, “Any student complaint against a faculty member deemed by Roosevelt to raise the possibility of disciplinary action against the faculty member shall be brought to the attention of the faculty member. The faculty member shall also be given an opportunity to respond to such complaint prior to any disciplinary action being imposed.”

A grievance has been filed on behalf of Engler by RAFO, ISEA-NEA over the termination. “We are still trying to settle this through negotiation,” said Ibendahl. “The union is involved because there is a union contract which the union has a duty to defend. At a minimum, we see, there are two clear violations of the union contract.”

Engler hopes to be reinstated as an adjunct professor at Roosevelt, to be compensated for the classes he’d been expected to teach that fall semester and to clear his name of the harassment charge.

“T here were no offensive words in what I said,” he said. “I did not single out any student, nor is there any record of me consistently doing this to anyone. So all of the things that you think about in terms of harassment, none of that was there.”

The school’s harassment policy does include jokes as harassment. The policy states, “Offensive conduct may include, but is not limited to, offensive jokes, slurs, epithets or name calling, physical assaults or threats, intimidation, ridicule or mockery, acts of communication causing emotional distress, insults or put-downs, offensive objects or pictures, and interference with work performance.”

It also says, “Harassment becomes unlawful where 1) enduring the offensive conduct becomes a condition of continued employment or enrollment, or 2) the conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create an environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile or abusive.”

Rachel Beiersdorf, a student in the “City and Citizenship” class said, “Professor Engler had an obviously dry sense of humor and it came as no shock to most of us that he would make a joke of that content. His joke was certainly not meant to offend anyone and he made it clear that it was simply a bad joke and not meant to be anything more.”

“A college student is free to complain about whatever they want and being offended is a subjective thing,” said Ibendahl. “You can’t say this young student should not have been offended, but the university and their officials have a different perspective. They look at complaints and to say what reasonably rises to the standard to constitute true harassment.”

Women’s music legend Therese Edell dies

One of the pioneers of 1970s and 1980s “women’s music” has died. Therese Edell, who battled multiple sclerosis much of her life, passed away in early March. She was a frequent performer at women’s music festivals. Edell received the Jane Schlissman Award for Outstanding Contributions to Women’s Music at the National Women’s Music Festival in 1998.

There was not much information available about her passing, but her own website homepage stated the following, in Edell’s own words:

“I started in the 1970s by changing the programs of love songs at bar and coffeehouse performances. I sang to entertain and to tell people that it didn’t matter whom you loved but that you loved. Betsy Lippitt and I performed intimate concerts across America. Betsy booked us; her boyfriend, Michael, was fast to realize that a career was on hand for both of us. Before he died in 1986, Michael was the artistic director of the theater we created together: Fem City. Our first concert was at the college where we met, the University of California, Los Angeles. We sang songs about the women’s movement, and the connection was immediate. Our community grew in size and spirit. We were one of the first groups formed in the US with a predominantly lesbian membership.”

“Several years from 1978 through the mid-1980s, I was the unofficial Voice of the Michigan Women’s Music Festival. I was involved in every festival as a performer, producer, engineer, or announcer since the second gathering in 1978. Audio recordings include Prophecy’s Child (1970), From Women’s Faces (1978), and For Therese (1990). I composed the songs and score for the documentary film Heroes and Strangers (1984). In 1987, as a result of the progression of my disease, I became a composer. Though I knew the enormous assistance of various local and state organizations and a terrific birthday gift from Teresa, my Macintosh computer has seen many incarnations. With this equipment, I have completed several commissioned chamber music and choral works. I am most proud of “This Longest Night” and “Godness and Greens”; both works have been performed by Mid-Ohio Women’s Choir.”

“The songs are performed intimate concerts across the US, Canada, Europe, and beyond. We have performed in venues from Photo courtesy of Susan Croke
Jayson Bernard started off his Saturday running off copies of his headshot and resume for a new independent film in which he is currently starring. The day was hectic as he took the long drive out to a Borders bookstore in the suburbs to be on a panel of actors for the movie D.I.N.K.S. He plays Charles, the mayor’s aide in a comedy written and directed by Robert Alaniz. He signed posters for the crowd and discussed his journey from audition to the screen.

He is experienced with live entertainment, having worked with Second City for more than 10 years. Bernard can be spotted in past televisions shows as ER and Turks.

A typical day Bernard’s life involves taking acting class from coach Mary Reynard-Liss, catering in the Ravenswood area or maintaining the building he owns with his partner, Roberto.

The Chicago premiere of D.I.N.K.S. or Double Income No Kids is on March 25 at the Portage Theater, 4050 N. Milwaukee. For ticket information, visit http://www.dinksthemovie.com.

**the stats**

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Jayson Bernard</th>
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<tr>
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When I first learned of the first gay teen to commit suicide, I was confused. In today's world, it seems like the perfect time to be young, gay and proud! A lot of things have changed for us: “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” has been repealed, the Obama administration announced it would no longer defend the constitutionality of DOMA in court cases; and Illinois finally recognizes civil unions, just to name a few. There are a lot of things that have gotten better for us.

While I understand that it’s not a perfect world for gays, I feel we’re moving in the right direction—slowly.

A few months ago, three of my best friends told me they were gay. It got better for them and our entire administration on the first day of 2010, when President and Mrs. Obama announced that they believe the moment for bullying to come to an end. Sitting in the Blue Room of the White House, the president pulled out his son’s 8”x11” school photo and looked at intently and then wrapped Mrs. Walker’s hand around it. He said, “I remember the date of his far too short life. It reminds me of tragedies come to an end.”

Kevin Jennings is the assistant deputy sec- retary for the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools.

For Carl

Carl Joseph Walker-Hoover was a sixth grader in the Springfield (Mass.) Schools in the 2008-2009 school year. School was an awful place for Carl, a place where he was relentlessly bullied as “gay” by his peers because he was a good student who dressed neatly and didn’t fit the gender stereo- type assigned to him as an African-American male. On April 6, 2009, Carl decided he couldn’t take it any more and hung himself.

Carl was 11 years old when he decided he’d rather die than go back to school.

On March 10, 2011, I sat in the Blue Room of the White House and watched Carl’s Mom, Sride- near Walker, tell her son’s story to President and Mrs. Obama right before the start of the first- ever White House Conference on Bullying. The moment I will never forget was when Mrs. Walker pulled out her son’s 8”x11” school photo and handed it to Mrs. Obama. Looking both stricken and moved, the first lady grasped the picture, looked at intently and then wrapped Mrs. Walker in a tight embrace. At that moment, I thought that perhaps history could come out of Mrs. Walker’s loss, that perhaps her son did not die in vain, that perhaps Mrs. Walker’s courage in speaking out about the greatest nightmare that could befall any mother might help bring us to a tipping point where bullying becomes simply unacceptable in America’s schools.

If that happens, I believe March 10, 2011 will go down in history as the date when the tide turned.

By convening the first-ever White House Con- ference on Bullying and hosting it personally in the East Room of the White House, the president and the first lady made the strongest statement possible that they believe the moment for bully- ing to end has arrived and that they are putting themselves and our entire administration on the front lines of this fight. From the first remarks made by President and Mrs. Obama through the closing remarks by Secretary of Health & Hu- man Services Kathleen Sebelius and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, anti-LGBT bullying was specifically and frequently called out as unac- ceptable. As someone who spent more than two decades fighting this battle before I joined this administration, I watched in awe as the com- bined leadership of the Obama presidency sent a clear and unequivocal message: we can’t wait for it to get better for LGBT kids—we need to make it better right now.

This high-profile event was not a one-shot deal for the Obama administration. Our first-ever federal bullying summit began in 2009, when a six-agency Fed- eral Partners in Bullying Prevention workgroup convened to tackle this problem. The partners staged the first-ever federal bullying summit in August 2010, before the national media frenzy that accompanied the tragic suicides of young people like Tyler Clementi in the fall of 2010. The work group continues it efforts today, unveiling a new web site—http://www.stopbullying.gov—in March 2010 to provide a one-stop shop for those looking for resources to fight all forms of bullying, including anti-LGBT bullying. The Department of Education also announced that day its intention to set up a special technical assistance center dedicated to bullying prevention. This will be followed by the department’s national summits on gender-based violence among young people (including violence against transgender youth) in April, a first-ever federal summit on LGBT youth in June and a second an- nual federal bullying summit in September. In other words, the Obama administration is in this for the long haul.

Kevin Jennings wearing a button with suicide victim Carl Walker-Hoover’s picture on it.

Kevin Jennings is the assistant deputy sec- retary for the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools.

Letters

Rahn and LGBTs Dear Editor,

While I actively supported Carol Mosley Braun for mayor of the City of Chicago, it was with the greatest hopes for this city and all its residents that I extended my sincerest aspiration of congratulations and success to the Mayor-elect Rahm Emanuel. However, the current selection of the mayor-elect’s transition team having few LGBT people is of concern. It is difficult to believe that there are few people in the LGBT community who are equipped with the credentials to qualify for his team.

We are told to trust that this action does not reflect his feelings about LGBT people in his administration. While Emanuel attended every forum and opportunity pre- sented in the LGBT community, at no time did he address his past role in the Clinton administration or in Congress (or associ- ated policies)—namely, “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” and the Defense Of Marriage Act. Even former President Bill Clinton has re- marked that these were two policies that were not his administration’s proudest moments; however, to date the mayor-elect has not issued a clear declaration of atti- tion. Of equal concern are adverse effects of welfare reform and the displacement of poor people under his reign with the Chi- cago Housing Authority.

The campaign is over and the time to go public is now. It is to that end, along with faith in democracy and the quest for sound publishing, that I hope Emanuel understands he will not forget when selecting his cabinet and administration.

Marc Loveless

Chicago

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“Windy City Media Group generated enormous interest among their readers in this year’s LGBT Consumer Index Survey. Out of approximately 100 print and online media partners who participated in the survey, Windy City was the best performing regional media in the U.S. Only survey partners with a nationwide footprint were able to generate a greater number of responses.” — David Varshall, Research Director, Community Marketing, Inc.
Cabaret producer Ralph Lampkin is celebrating 30 years as a Midwesterner. More specifically, he's celebrating the rebirth of his career.

In 1981 he stepped off the train in Chicago with the promise of a singing job and perhaps a fresh start. The native New Yorker had had his share of success in the Big Apple—there were multiple club dates; chance meetings with idols ranging from Sammy Davis, Jr., to Debbie Allen; and attempts at recording during the era when disco reigned. But by 1981 Lampkin, whose singing voice was often described as highly imitative of Johnny Mathis', was in a career slump and looking for greener singing pastures.

The singing didn’t pan out but slowly Lampkin found his way to a new and even more satisfying career that has taken him behind the scenes, working with a host of vocalists and theatrical artists on presentation and material selection, production, benefits, CDs and a variety of other entertainment components. I met him 20 years ago and we have worked on a number of projects together. In 2002 I did an extensive profile on his fascinating early history for the Chicago Reader called “For a Song” (at http://www.chicagoreader.com).

Cabaret producer Ralph Lampkin is celebrating the rebirth of his career. I think it's because of her that I have a career. I am so blessed and I wanted to present some of the amazing talents I've have the privilege to work with in the city I've come to love so much.

Lampkin describes the anniversary series as “My way of giving back—Chicago has given me so much in terms of my personal and professional life. I am so blessed and I wanted to present some of the amazing talents I've the privilege to work with in the city I've come to love so much.”

Windy City Times: Tell me about your connection to some of the performers in the line up for these anniversary concerts.

RL: Yes—a 15-year relationship. We started out working together on a Gershwin show back in 1996. Joyce Sloane, who just passed away, was one of my original co-producers (along with Lynn Oman Weiss and Cheryl Sloane) and the entire series is dedicated to her. She was a terrific help in my career. I think it’s because of her that I have a producing career.

Left: Ralph Lampkin. Right: Ben Lerman, one of the performers in ‘What He Did for Love.’

WCT: That that covers pop and jazz. Let’s talk about some of the other highlights of this four-evening series.

RL: Ben Lerman is a brilliant comedian who plays the ukulele; [he] is on Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. I had his night club act debut in 2002 at Don’t Tell Mamas; Robin Kay, the fabulous vocalist is at 8:30 that same night. It’s our 10th anniversary of producing and releasing her dance hit “I Didn’t Go To My Prom.”

WCT: Then on April 6 you’re featuring vocalist Ester Hana along with Carlo Chapelle and Justin Williams, who is making his Chicago debut that night.

RL: It’s an all-improv show that may or may not be based on Katharine Hepburn. [Laughs] I knew we had to open the show with Alex and why don’t we just do it in Chicago? [It’s an Alex and Honey West and Mary Beidler Gearen, who is an actress, director and my producing partner for]...
REYATAZ is a prescription medicine used in combination with other medicines to treat people who are infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). REYATAZ has been studied in a 48-week trial in patients who have taken anti-HIV medicines and a 96-week trial in patients who have never taken anti-HIV medicines.

REYATAZ does not cure HIV or lower your chance of passing HIV to others.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION:

Do not take REYATAZ if you are taking the following medicines due to potential for serious, life-threatening side effects or death:

- Versed® (midazolam) when taken by mouth, Halcion® (triazolam), ergot medicines (dihydroergotamine, ergonovine, ergotamine, and methylergonovine such as Cafergot®, Migranal®, D.H.E. 45®, ergotrate maleate, Methergine®, and others), Propulsid® (cisapride), or Orap® (piomizole).

Do not take REYATAZ with the following medicines due to potential for serious side effects:

- Compazine® (prochlorperazine), Crizotinib® (crizotinib), Nexavir® (lovastatin), Zocor® (simvastatin), Unoxatral® (alfuzosin), or Revatio® (sildenafil).

Do not take REYATAZ with the following medicines as they may lower the amount of REYATAZ in your blood, which may lead to increased HIV viral load and resistance to REYATAZ or other anti-HIV medicines:

- St. John’s wort (Hypericum perforatum)-containing products, or Viramune® (nevirapine), Serevent Diskus® (salmeterol) and Advair® (salmeterol with fluticasone) are not recommended with REYATAZ.

Do not take Viracept® (voriconazole) if you are taking REYATAZ and Norvir® (ritonavir).

The above lists of medicines are not complete. Taking REYATAZ with some other medicines may require your therapy to be monitored more closely or may require a change in dose or dose schedule of REYATAZ or the other medicine. Discuss with your healthcare provider all prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamin and herbal supplements, or other health preparations you are taking or plan to take.

Tell your healthcare provider if you are pregnant, breast feeding, planning to become pregnant or breast feed, or if you have end-stage kidney disease managed with hemodialysis or severe liver dysfunction.

Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any side effects, symptoms, or conditions, including the following:

- Mild rash (redness and itching) without other symptoms sometimes occurs in patients when the medicine is started, and usually goes away within 2 weeks with no change in treatment.

- Severe rash has occurred in a small number of patients taking REYATAZ. This type of rash is associated with other symptoms that could be serious and potentially cause death. If you develop a rash with any of the following symptoms, stop using REYATAZ and call your healthcare provider right away:
  - Shortness of breath
  - General ill-feeling or “flu-like” symptoms
  - Fever
  - Muscle or joint aches
  - Conjunctivitis (red or inflamed eyes, like “pink eye”)
  - Blisters
  - Mouth sores
  - Swelling of your face

- Yellowing of the skin and/or eyes may occur due to increases in bilirubin levels in the blood (bilirubin is made by the liver).

- A change in the way your heart beats may occur. You may feel dizzy or lightheaded. These could be symptoms of a heart problem.

- Diabetes and high blood sugar may occur in patients taking protease inhibitor medicines like REYATAZ. Some patients may need changes in their diabetes medicine.

- If you have liver disease, including hepatitis B or C, it may get worse when you take anti-HIV medicines like REYATAZ.

- Kidney stones have been reported in patients taking REYATAZ. Signs or symptoms of kidney stones include pain in your side, blood in your urine, and pain when you urinate.

- Some patients with hemophilia have increased bleeding problems with protease inhibitor medicines like REYATAZ.

- Changes in body fat have been seen in some patients taking anti-HIV medicines. The cause and long-term effects are not known at this time.

- Gallbladder disorders (including gallstones and gallbladder inflammation) have been reported in patients taking REYATAZ.

Other common side effects of REYATAZ taken with other anti-HIV medicines include: nausea; headache; stomach pain; vomiting; diarrhea; depression; fever; dizziness; trouble sleeping; numbness, tingling, or burning of hands or feet and muscle pain.

You should take REYATAZ once daily with food (a meal or snack). Swallow the capsules whole; do not open the capsules. You should take REYATAZ and your other anti-HIV medicines exactly as instructed by your healthcare provider.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

On REYATAZ, Wednesday Mary’s birthday party

Thursday: 5:30 Choir practice

Buy new shoes for Latisha
how you spend your time is up to you.

Once-daily REYATAZ can help fight your HIV.

REYATAZ, a protease inhibitor (PI), in HIV combination therapy:

- Can help lower your viral load and raise your T-cell (CD4+ cell) count
- Has a low chance of diarrhea (shown in clinical trials)
  - REYATAZ in combination therapy had a 1%-3% rate of moderate-to-severe diarrhea in adults
- Is taken once a day with a snack or meal

REYATAZ is one of several treatment options your doctor may consider.
Do not take REYATAZ if you are allergic to REYATAZ or to any of its ingredients.
Ask your healthcare team about REYATAZ www.REYATAZ.com

REYATAZ does not cure HIV and has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others.
If you have hemophilia.

About all the medicines you take with REYATAZ.

REYATAZ® (RAY-ah-taz) (generic name = atazanavir sulfate)
Capsules

ALERT: Find out about medicines that should NOT be taken with REYATAZ. Read the section “What important information should I know about taking REYATAZ with other medicines?”

Read the Patient Information that comes with REYATAZ before you start using it and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This leaflet provides a summary about REYATAZ and does not include everything there is to know about your medicine. This information does not take the place of talking with your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment.

What is REYATAZ?
REYATAZ is a prescription medicine used with other anti-HIV medicines to treat people who are infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). HIV is the virus that causes acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). REYATAZ is a type of anti-HIV medicine called a protease inhibitor. HIV infection destroys CD4+ (T) cells, which are important to the immune system. The immune system helps fight infection. After a large number of (T) cells are destroyed, AIDS develops. REYATAZ helps slow the rate of (T) cell destruction by blocking the enzyme that is needed for the HIV virus to multiply. REYATAZ may lower the amount of HIV in your blood, help your body keep its supply of CD4+ (T) cells, and reduce the risk of death and illness associated with HIV.

Does REYATAZ cure HIV or AIDS?
REYATAZ does not cure HIV infection or AIDS. At present there is no cure for HIV infection. People taking REYATAZ may still get opportunistic infections or other conditions that happen with HIV infection. These infections are conditions that develop because the immune system is weak. Some of these conditions are pneumonia, herpes virus infections, and Mycobacterium avium complex (MAC) infections. It is very important that you see your healthcare provider regularly while taking REYATAZ.

REYATAZ does not lower your chance of passing HIV to other people through sexual contact, sharing needles, or being exposed to your blood. For your health and the health of others, it is important to always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom or other barrier to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood. Never use or share dirty needles.

Who should not take REYATAZ?
Do not take REYATAZ if you:
• are taking tuleapyvir.

What is the active ingredient of REYATAZ?
The active ingredient is atazanavir sulfate. See the end of this leaflet for a complete list of ingredients in REYATAZ. Tell your healthcare provider if you think you have had an allergic reaction to any of these ingredients.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before I take REYATAZ?
Tell your healthcare provider:
• If you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant. It is not known if REYATAZ can harm your unborn baby. Pregnant women have experienced serious side effects when taking REYATAZ with other HIV medicines called a nucleoside analogue. You and your healthcare provider will need to decide if REYATAZ is right for you. If you use REYATAZ while you are pregnant, talk to your healthcare provider about the Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry.

• If you are breast-feeding. You should not breast-feed if you are HIV-positive associated with other symptoms which could be serious and potentially cause death.

• If you develop a rash with any of the following symptoms stop using REYATAZ and call your healthcare provider right away:
  • shortness of breath
  • general ill feeling or “flu-like” symptoms
  • fever
  • muscle or joint aches
  • conjunctivitis (red or inflamed eyes, like “pink eye”)  
  • blisters
  • mouth sores
  • swelling of your face
  • yellowing of the skin or eyes. These effects may be due to increases in bilirubin levels in the blood (bilirubin is made by the liver). Call your healthcare provider if your skin or the white part of your eyes turn yellow. Although these effects may not be damaging to your liver, skin, or eyes, it is important to tell your healthcare provider promptly if they occur.
REYATAZ® (atazanavir sulfate)

- a change in the way your heart beats (heart rhythm change). Call your healthcare provider right away if you get dizzy or lightheaded. These could be symptoms of a heart problem.

- diabetes and high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) sometimes happen in patients taking protease inhibitor medicines like REYATAZ. Some patients have diabetes before taking protease inhibitors while others did not. Some patients may need changes in their diabetes medicine.

- if you have liver disease including hepatitis B or C, your liver disease may get worse when you take anti-HIV medicines like REYATAZ.

- kidney stones have been reported in patients taking REYATAZ. If you develop signs or symptoms of kidney stones (pain in your side, blood in your urine, pain when you urinate) tell your healthcare provider promptly.

- some patients with hemophilia have increased bleeding problems with protease inhibitors like REYATAZ.

- changes in body fat. These changes may include an increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck (buffalo hump), breast, and around the trunk. Loss of fat from the legs, arms, and face may also happen. The cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known at this time.

Other common side effects of REYATAZ taken with other anti-HIV medicines include nausea, headache, stomach pain, vomiting, diarrhea, depression; fever; diziness; trouble sleeping, numbness, tingling, or burning of hands or feet, and muscle pain.

Gallbladder disorders (which may include gallstones and gallbladder inflammation) have been reported in patients taking REYATAZ.

What important information should I know about taking REYATAZ with other medicines?

- Do not take REYATAZ if you take the following medicines (not all brands may be listed): to help your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take. REYATAZ may cause serious, life-threatening side effects or death when used with these medicines.

- Ergot medicines: dihydroergotamine, ergonovine, ergotamine, and methylergogonovine such as CAFERGOT®, MIGRANAL®, D.H.E. 45®, ergotrate maleate, METHEDRINE®, and others (used for migraine headaches).

- GRAM® (gimexide, used for Tourette's disorder).

- PROPLUSED® (cisapride, used for certain stomach problems).

- Triazolam, also known as HALCION® (used for insomnia).

- Midazolam, also known as VERSED® (used for sedation), when taken by mouth.

Do not take the following medicines with REYATAZ because of possible serious side effects:

- CAMPFOS® (rinotecan, used for cancer).

- CRIXivan® (indinavir, used for HIV infection). Both REYATAZ and CRIXivan sometimes cause increased levels of bilirubin in the blood.

- Cholesterol-lowering medicines MEVACOR® (lovastatin) or ZOCOR® (simvastatin). If you have liver disease (which may include gallstones and gallbladder disorders), REYATAZ may cause serious, life-threatening side effects or death when used with these medicines.

- If you develop signs or symptoms of kidney stones (pain in your side, blood in your urine, pain when you urinate) tell your healthcare provider promptly.

- some patients with hemophilia have increased bleeding problems with protease inhibitors like REYATAZ.

- changes in body fat. These changes may include an increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck (buffalo hump), breast, and around the trunk. Loss of fat from the legs, arms, and face may also happen. The cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known at this time.

The following medicines may require a change in the dose or dose schedule of either REYATAZ or the other medicine:

- INVRASE® (saquinavir).

- NORVIR® (ritonavir).

- SUSTIVA® (efavirenz).

- Antacids or buffered medicines.

- VIEK IR® (didanosine).

- WAREAD® (tamsulosin diospirox fumarate).

- MYCOSORB® (rifabutin).

- Calcium channel blockers such as CARDIZEM® or TIAZAC® (diltiazem), COVEND-HS® or ISPOTIN SR® (verapamil) and others.

- SML® (clarithromycin).

- Medicines for indigestion, heartburn, or ulcers such as AXID® (nizatidine), PEPCID AC® (famotidine), TAGAMET® (cimetidine), or ZANTAC® (ranitidine). Talk to your healthcare provider about choosing an effective method of contraception. REYATAZ may affect the safety and effectiveness of hormonal contraceptives such as birth control pills or the contraceptive patch. Hormonal contraceptives do not prevent the spread of HIV to others.

Remember:

1. Know all the medicines you take.

2. Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take. This medicine was prescribed for your particular condition. Do not use REYATAZ for another condition. Do not give REYATAZ to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them.

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This summary does not include everything there is to know about REYATAZ. Medicines are sometimes prescribed for conditions that are not mentioned in patient information leaflets. Remember no written summary can replace careful discussion with your healthcare provider. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider or you can call 1-800-321-1335.

What are the ingredients in REYATAZ together:

- Active ingredient: atazanavir sulfate

- Inactive ingredients: Crospovidone, lactose monohydrate (milk sugar), magnesium stearate, gelatin, FD&C Blue #2, and titanium dioxide.

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THEATER REVIEW

God of Carnage
Playwright: Yasmina Reza
At: Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn
Phone: 312-443-3800; $25-$78
Runs through: April 17

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

In the course of Yasmina Reza’s latest Teapot Tempest, one of the four people onstage vomits—also onstage—under stress. This reflex enables her to maintain composure for longer than the remaining three, who must find other, only slightly less literal, methods of venting their internal turmoil.

The pretext for this tension is a playground scrap culminating in one boy smacking another with a stick with sufficient force to damage the latter’s teeth. The injury itself is easily repaired with insurance, but then the parents join in the fray: Veronica Novak is a scholarly writer currently researching a history of Darfur and thus armed with a vocabulary of slaughter at the ready. Her husband, Michael, is a self-made cantankerous failure, uneasy at his wife’s accumulation of elevated-status accolades. Anneke Raleigh is an attorney whose fiery temperament is better suited to defending his Big Pharma client than quibbling over domestic contretemps, whereas Annette Raleigh is the fragile flower with the sensitive stomach.

Although conducted well after the on-site furor has diminished, this interclan conference nevertheles makes for an uncomfortable situation familiar—if the opening-night vocal response was any indication—to many audience members. Indeed, it is difficult not to shout warnings at the man behavior has changed much in the last 17 years. The story is in the air—literally—just waiting to be seized. The selections, therefore, must be carefully selected to convey the myopia of bourgeois citizens unsure of their place in a nebulous society. Moreover, if the small cast, single set, modern dress and 75-minute running time guarantee this play’s popularity with theater companies of all budgets, you really can’t blame Reza for repeating the formula eloquently expressed therein. What he encounters is his grandchild’s ghost, who offers him advice and insight into Gallic courtly practices circa 1951—a stark contrast to that of school chum Jessica and her husband, who drink and screw a lot. But not until Annie joins Vincent on his quest does the revelation he seeks begin to manifest itself.

And not by following instructions, either. “true love” turning out to be whatever the lovers make of it. When Vincent scoffs at Jessica and William’s volubility, he receives a smack on the nose for his inso- lence—and rightly so, for what outsider can hope to intervene when it alteration finds? This live-and-let-live attitude is customarily perpetrated by a mature playwright whose assertion is based in extensive excursions within the realms of the heart, so it is nothing short of astonishing that Smart is, himself, not yet 30 years old. Whoever said that young people today are too hip and cynical to write romantic? Not me.

Livewire Chicago Theatre has likewise invested much care and affection into its production (and, at one point, bestows some of the latter on us, but I won’t spoil the surprise). Under Steve Wilson’s sensitive direction, the six actors all but glow with innocent charm (including Robert McLean, who redeems in gallantry what he lacks in years, playing the role of the urbane grandpère). And Elise Kaukalaric’s pristine dialogues, coupled with Anders Jacobson and Judy Radvoksky’s delicate ad libbing (the last exquisite detail, the fantasy ville lumière where love is in the air—literally—just waiting to be discovered by folksy sweethearts of any age, era or opinion.

God of Carnage. Photo by Eric Y. Exit

THEATER REVIEW

Some Enchanted Evening
Playwright: Rodgers & Hammerstein
At: No Exit Café, 6970 N. Glenwood
Tickets: 773-347-1109;
http://www.theoubique.org: $25-$30
Runs through: April 30

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

For those of us raised on the songs of Rodgers and Hammerstein when they were new, and for musical theater aficionados generally, any well-done compilation of their songs will be a joyful experience, and this new Teo Ubique revue without question is well-done. Its limitations are the confines of a two-hour show; even presenting three dozen songs, it can only crack the surface of the R&H songbook. The lyrics of Oscar Hammerstein are deceptively simple and moving, and effortlessly incorporate U.S. idiom and theme, and they blend well in medleys and ensemble numbers. Anzevino and Cook tread lightly on making connections. Certain types or juxtapositions make things fresh. How about “How Do You Solve a Problem Like Maria” from The Sound of Music presented as a love song? It’s work! How about a comic combination of "Don’t Marry Me" by Flower Drum Song and “When the Children Are Asleep” from Carousel? It’s delightful. The selections emphasize how masterful Rodgers was with three-quarter time in everything from a jazz waltz (“The Gentleman is a Dope”) to arguably his most beautiful melody, “Out of My Dreams,” and how he incorporated the blues and even a stride bass line into his work.

The songs sometimes are loosely grouped by themes or ideas, but Anzevino and Cook tread lightly on making connections. Certain types of R&H songs are missing completely such as big anthems (“Climb Every Mountain” or “When You Walk Through a Storm”) and political songs (“Carefully Taught,” “Shall I Tell You What I Think of You?”), thereby leaving plenty of repe- tory for a second revue.

The five performers look sharp and mostly sing better, although sweet-voiced tenor Evan Ty- rone Martin is under-utilized. The others—Sara Schoch, Danni Smith, Jeremy Trager and Dana Tretta—each have a showcase number or two, and they blend well in medleys and ensemble numbers. Cook dazzles on an entr’acte piano solo and should have another one somewhere in the show. All are easy on the eyes, dressed well for the occasion by costumer Michael Murtaugh. Adam Vanes’s scenic design seems massive for the intimate space, dominated by a marbleized, white platform with an odd doorway, looking like a fancy hotel bathroom with a baby grand piano.

Go for the music, stay for the music. You’ll be glad you did.

THEATER REVIEW

13th of Paris
Playwright: Mat Smart
At: Livewire Chicago at the Greenhouse, 2257 N. Lincoln
Phone: 773-404-7336; $20
Runs through: April 17

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

What defines true love? Whatever your convictions on that question, you cannot deny the copious amounts of it invested by Mat Smart in this carefully-crafted multi-genera- tional look at the many faces of ‘Comarr. Vincent and Annie enjoy each other’s company sharing dinner dates and little private jokes in Chicago’s Lakeview neighborhood. But given the propensity of youth for fixing what ain’t broken, Vincent has spontaneously decamped for his ancestral apartment in the 13th arondissement (municipal dis- trict, hence the play’s title) of Paris with a suitcase full of his grandfather’s letters, there to search for the secret of the devotion so eloquently expressed therein. What he encounters is his grandparent’s ghost, who offers him advice and insight into Gallic courtly practices circa 1951—a stark contrast to that of school chum Jessica and her husband, who drink and screw a lot. But not until Annie joins Vincent on his quest does the revelation
It's amazing how some classical plays can take on a modern relevance when viewed against recent world events. Theatre of a New Audience's tour of Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice starring Academy Award-winner F. Murray Abraham at the Bank of America Theatre is certainly entertainingly insightful example.

This sleekly modern 2007 Merchant of Venice staging by director Darko Tresnjak debuted on the cusp of the current global economic crisis. Theatre for a New Audience has revived Tresnjak's foresight-filled take on Merchant of Venice, playing now like a response to our current economic morass.

Theatre of a New Audience has revived Tresnjak's foresight-filled take on Merchant of Venice, playing now like a response to our current economic morass. Tresnjak sets the action against the backdrop of designer John Lee Beatty's chillily corporate unit set which can suggest any number of locations from high-rise Wall Street lobbies to a high-stakes courtroom. Elevator chimes often herald the arrival of power-suited businessmen, playing now like a response to our current economic morass.

It's these unsettling complexities and moral quagmires that make Merchant of Venice very much a play for our days. Tresnjak and his insightful cast tackle this morally problematic Shakespeare play by playing up all the characters' faults. There's not only the obvious anti-Semitism displayed by most every character (including the pot-smoking servant Gobbo, enjoyably played by Jacob Ming-Trent), but some unflattering homophobia (by Ted Schmidt's jokester take on Gratiano) and some behind-the-back racism spouted by the heroine Portia (a steely and smart Kate MacCluggage) directed toward the Moroccan Prince (Raphael Nash Thompson, who plays role haughtily as a wealthy oil baron).

But it's not all gloom and doom, for Tresnjak and his cast also find plenty of humor throughout. Andrew Dahl stands out as the savvy gay servant Balthasar as does Christian Simon Marabate as Portia's confidante Nerissa.

Although there is a "happy ending" written by Shakespeare, Tresnjak makes every character (including the pot-smoking servant Gobbo, enjoyably played by Jacob Ming-Trent), but some unflattering homophobia (by Ted Schmidt's jokester take on Gratiano) and some behind-the-back racism spouted by the heroine Portia (a steely and smart Kate MacCluggage) directed toward the Moroccan Prince (Raphael Nash Thompson, who plays role haughtily as a wealthy oil baron)

Portia's late father's odd riddles to win her hand for all the newlyweds, Tresnjak makes every character fully restrained but tightly wound performance)

It's Shylock (F. Murray Abraham in a wonderfully restrained but tightly wound performance) who points out that despite Antonio's wealth, religion and connections, his power is ultimately built on shaky credit. While Shylock's demands for a pound of flesh for an unpaid loan is truly immoral, his demands for justice will no doubt touch a chord.

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But what truly resonates are the shocking changes of fortune experienced by the title character of Antonio and his moneylender rival Shylock. Tom Nelis’ performance of Antonio brings to mind many a modern-day Wall Street executive who arrogantly bristle at the suggestion that they’re anyway culpable for their actions.

The female contingent of GayCo Productions shine front and center in the revival of the subversive all-woman sketch comedy revue Breast in Show. See how Dora the Explorer capes with a tell-tale haircut, how lesbians compromise when they find the partner with the perfect body and, yes, there is an epic softball sketch to fulfill all sapphic stereotypes. Breast in Show continues 7 p.m. Sundays through April 10 at the Apollo Theatre Studio Space, 2540 N. Lincoln. Tickets are $15; call 773-935-6100 or visit http://www.gayco.com. Photo by John Loos.
Martha Plimpton on her show, movies and Cloris Leachman

BY JERRY NUN

Martha Plimpton entered the acting world very young, with a breakthrough movie performance in The Goonies, followed by Running on Empty, Parenthood and 200 Cigarettes. She is currently starring on the Fox Channel’s sitcom Raising Hope and has been nominated for multiple Tony Awards. Plimpton returned to her theatrical roots at a luncheon with Steppenwolf Theatre Company, chatting afterwards Nunn on One. Windy City Times: Hi, Martha! We are the same age so I have been watching your career since The River Rat. Martha Plimpton: Great. Thank you! WCT: We are so happy to have you back in Chicago.

MP: I am thrilled to be here.

WCT: Congratulations on your show Raising Hope. I heard it is renewed already for the second season.

MP: Yes, it is.

WCT: When did you know it would be a hit?

MP: I don’t think it has quite hit me quite yet. It is an ongoing gradual process. We are building an audience and developing a relationship. I guess when we first were picked up for our back nine, I knew we were having a good time. We were enjoying it but there was no way of knowing if it was translating for an audience. Finding out it was picked up was the best feeling I have ever had. I don’t even know that it’s a hit yet. I hope it is.

WCT: Oh, it is. How is it working with Cloris Leachman?

MP: She’s fabulous and crazy.

WCT: I want to interview her.

MP: Are you sure about that? [laughs]

WCT: I think so. We could talk about booze. What else?

MP: Guys!

WCT: Is your character, Virginia Chance, similar to you?

MP: She must be because the producer Greg Garcia thought I would be good for the part. We must have something in common. It is hard to say but I guess neither one of us suffer fools well. We are both kind of blunt and straightforward. We both like a good joke. I think Virginia is crusty on the outside but soft on the inside. I think I am a little bit like that.

WCT: Tell people a little bit about the show.

MP: It is a comedy about teen pregnancy, a baby whose mother is executed and grandmother has Alzheimer’s disease. With all of that, don’t forget it’s a comedy!

WCT: Did they come to you or did you audition?

MP: No; I auditioned like everyone else but I did get a call and did talk to Greg before I started going through the audition process. I read the pilot and I thought it was hilarious but I wasn’t sure I wanted to play a grandmother yet. He assured me that was the joke; she’s too young. The audition process and the testing process is so odious and miserable that you don’t want to do it unless there is a prospect of working with great people on the other end. It seemed clear to me that if I was going to sign on for a seven-year contract and work with people that are the ones that I want to do it with.

WCT: Since we are sitting at the Women of the Arts luncheon, do you have a favorite actress who you look up to?

MP: Oh my gosh, there are so many! Gena Rowlands, Barbara Stanwyck—the list is endless. There are a lot of musicians that I admire as well. Some that we think of as being very theatrical, like P.J. Harvey.

WCT: Do you get tired of talking about some of the old movies that you have acted in?

MP: No, I don’t but it depends on the questions, obviously. Is it a little bit predictable? Yes, but on the other hand it is nice that they are still curious about them. What a drag it would be if people had just forgotten all about them. That is kind of the whole point, right?

WCT: Exactly. It was fun watching all of the old clips here at lunch.

MP: I have to say, I have a certain amount of gratitude about it.

WCT: Do you talk to people from past films, like Joaquin Phoenix or Diane Wiest?

MP: No. Well, of course, I have many friends that I have worked with and I am close with. Those people from that time? No, not so much. I run into them and I love seeing them. I love Diane, she is one of the greatest ladies around. She is a woman that I really admired growing up and watching her work, Hannah and Her Sisters and all of that stuff.

WCT: Of course. You have had a long career and a very good sense of humor about things.

MP: I’m trying!

WCT: Do you feel like theater kept you grounded?

MP: Yes. You can’t be completely full of yourself if you want to be part of an ensemble. You have to have a sense of humor about yourself. You have to be willing to be silly. Also, it is just too hard. There are so many uncertainties and it is so peripatetic. It can be kind of lonely. If you are too serious about it then it makes it harder.

WCT: How is theater a different world than television or movies?

MP: The work is so completely different. Working on TV can be exhausting. It is working 14 hours sometimes. On the other hand the work itself can be funny and silly. You have to concentrate on not getting lazy and not using tricks. You have to be vigilant and not fall back on bad habits.

Raising Hope gives a whole new meaning to alternative families every Tuesday on Fox. Log on to http://www.fox.com/raisinghope for listings. For more Steppenwolf benefits such as the Red or White Ball, visit http://www.steppenwolf.org.

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the last 10 years for everything that is Alex. Sean Abley is the director and he’s onstage and he’s part of the improv. The lights go up and Sean says, “Oh my God, we’re in...” and they take off from there.

WCT: All of these people have been instrumental in helping your career, but what made you decide on doing a 30th anniversary?

RL: I’m into numerology so it’s the 30th year of my being here from New York since I stepped off my train for a singing career that I decided to give up to help other people in 1985. I’m 54 years old April 29 so that’s 5 and 4 is 9—that’s three 9s. I had just been asked to co-produce Alice Ripley and Jimmy Webb in South Bend. So it’s three shows in the first 30 days of the 30th I’m working.

WCT: For numerologists, I guess that just explains it. [laughs]

RL: Another big reason for the shows is to announce that I’m producer in charge at this new cabaret room opening on Oct. 1 at Stage 773, where the shows are being held.

WCT: So Chicago will have another cabaret space.

RL: Yes—of which there can never be enough! [laughs hard] I also wanted to give back to the city, I picked Groceryland USA (Vital Bridges), which is overseen by Lori Cannon and we’re dear old friends and David Zak and his charity, Pride Films and Plays; [Zak] is another old friend. If it wasn’t for him I wouldn’t be producing theatre legitimately, and Treehouse I have always been passionate about. I have also worked with Richard Dayhoff and Rusty Hernandez for years, who are helping to produce, and we have all learned and shared with one another.

WCT: This series combines established performers and those just coming up—was that a conscious decision on your part?

RL: Absolutely. I am stunned when I find younger people who say to me, “How do I learn to be a jazz singer? How do I learn about Broadway? How do I learn about cabaret?” Study your elders! Go to YouTube, come to these shows—learn from these legends. I remain passionate about the art form and this is a way for me to share my passion which I know is shared by audiences of all ages.


—By Ababaneel, Barnridge and Morgan
In the annals of film history there are few relationships as compelling to gay audiences as that between mother and daughter. Imitation of Life, Stella Dallas, Mermaids, The Bad Seed, Terms of Endearment and Mommie Dearest come to mind immediately. That last movie is like a fun-house mirror because, in its portrait of Faye Dunaway portraying actress Joan Crawford, it includes glimpses of Crawford preparing for what in 1945 would become her greatest screen success—the role of a self-sacrificing mother and her tempestuous relationship with her snobbish, ungrateful daughter who high-hats her at every turn, eventually taking up with her rotten playboy stepfather and involving the mother in murder and deceit.

This, of course, was Mildred Pierce—who Michael Curtiz further emphasized in his stylish noir approach to the film. The result has overshadowed the 70-year-old novel, as has Crawford’s driven performance ever since. However, now out writer-director Todd Haynes has returned to the source work and—teaming with co-writer Jon Raymond and most of the creative team that helped him reconstruct the ersatz-'50s period used for his master work, Far From Heaven (including his longtime producer Christine Vachon)—has wrought a new version of Mildred Pierce that hews more closely to the book than just about any other novel-to-screen adaptation I’ve ever seen. The result—a lavish five-part, five hour miniseries for HBO (premiering Sunday, March 27)—doesn’t have nearly the anticipated fireworks between the two isles. Certainly, Haynes’ adaptation rests on the strength of Winslet’s matchless performance. (She’s in nearly every scene and the result is like watching an acting marathon.) Winslet is a much younger Mildred, closer in age to the book’s 28-34 age span, and she gives her the fidgety, distracted energy Cain described. This is a woman who is eternally anxious, always thinking about her next move—all predicated on bringing her the love and attention of the culturally superior daughter. When she gets some of that love (as in the scene where Mildred watches Veda sing in concert) Winslet’s wound, controlled intensities nearly leap off the screen. But, surprisingly, Haynes’ miniseries feels like it skims on the relationship between Mildred and Evan Rachel Wood as the highbrow, opera-singing Veda—and the anticipated fireworks between the two is strangely muted and not nearly as fun as those acted by the melodramatic, nearly hysterical Crawford and the poisonous Blyth. But this isn’t your gay uncle’s Mildred Pierce, either. Certainly, Haynes’ adaptation rests on the strength of Winslet’s matchless performance. (She’s in nearly every scene and the result is like watching an acting marathon.) Winslet is a much younger Mildred, closer in age to the book’s 28-34 age span, and she gives her the fidgety, distracted energy Cain described. This is a woman who is eternally anxious, always thinking about her next move—all predicated on bringing her the love and attention of the culturally superior daughter. When she gets some of that love (as in the scene where Mildred watches Veda sing in concert) Winslet’s wound, controlled intensities nearly leap off the screen. But, surprisingly, Haynes’ miniseries feels like it skims on the relationship between Mildred and Evan Rachel Wood as the highbrow, opera-singing Veda—and the anticipated fireworks between the two is strangely muted and not nearly as fun as those acted by the melodramatic, nearly hysterical Crawford and the poisonous Blyth.

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Christine Vachon: Lesbian producer talks ‘Mildred Pierce’

BY RICHARD KNIGHT, JR.

One of the most enduring creative partnerships in films is that between writer-director Todd Haynes and lesbian producer Christine Vachon. The duo have worked together since they both made their feature debut with Poison in 1991. Poison helped kick-start the new Queer Cinema, and neither Vachon nor Haynes has looked back since.

Vachon has produced a staggering number of bona fide queer classics since that auspicious start. Aside from her work with Haynes on all his films projects (including Velvet Goldmine, Safe, Far From Heaven and I’m Not There), Vachon has produced Swango, Go Fish, Boys Don’t Cry, St perman, Hedwig and the Angry Inch, A Home At the End of the World and Camp as well as a batch of other notable indie movies, such as Kids, Storytelling, A Drity Shame, Infamous, An American Crime and Then She Found Me. Along the way she’s found time to write two books about her fascinating career as an independent film producer.

Now Vachon, again collaborating with Haynes, has produced her most ambitious project yet: the eagerly awaited five-hour miniseries adaptation of James M. Cain’s 1941 novel Mildred Pierce starring Kate Winslet, Guy Pearce and Evan Rachel Wood (slated to debut on Sunday, March 27, on HBO). Speaking from the offices of her Killer Films production company in New York, Vachon, forthright and passionately opinionated, didn’t mince words on a number of topics.

Windy City Times: I’m a huge fan of the original novel and the 1945 Michael Curtiz film, which I think has overshadowed the book for 55 years.

Christine Vachon: Well, I think most people, because of the movie, feel that the story of Mildred Pierce is a film noir and that it takes place in the ‘40s and that Mildred’s in her 40s. I love the movie, too. I think there’s been a lot of Internet activity with people saying, “How could anybody possibly remake this classic?”, but I think what they have to understand is that we’re not doing a remake. We’re going back to the original material and we’re interpreting that original material in a way that is much more closely aligned with Cain’s original vision. It’s just a different approach.

WCT: It’s a little bit similar to what the Coen brothers just did with True Grit.

CV: That is true.

WCT: In this case, though, we’re dealing not with John Wayne but with generations of gay men and the overwhelming power of--well, just call it the “Joan Crawford effect.” [Both laugh.] So, how does Kate Winslet compare to her in your opinion?

CV: It’s a spurious comparison because it’s almost like they’re playing two different characters. Mildred is 28 when the original book begins and 34 when it ends, and it’s about a young woman during the Depression whose husband leaves her and who has to figure out a way to survive. The backdrop of the Depression is very, very important in the book, and that didn’t even exist in the movie.

WCT: Yes, it begins in 1931. I’m amazed how closely the series recreates the period and adheres to the book. For Cain fans this is going to be nirvana. It’s extraordinarily detailed.

CV: We plan to be very involved in projects for HBO. Certainly, the dramatic genre has almost literally disappeared from movie theaters.

WCT: So as we go down the road, will you produce in a different manner? Will you do more work for HBO? Certainly, the dramatic genre has almost literally disappeared from movie theaters.

CV: They went to their computers like everyone else. I think the better question is what happened to movie audiences, period? We’re just consuming media in different ways.

WCT: I know, that’s another striking modern parallel from this 70-year-old novel. Now, as a producer and observer of the movie scene, do you have any clue where gay movie audiences have gone?

CV: They went to their computers like everyone else. I think the better question is what happened to movie audiences, period? We’re just consuming media in different ways.

WCT: Are there queer films that you’ve seen in the last little while that you’ve appreciated?

CV: I just don’t know what makes a movie “queer.” I understand that that term can be problematic, but isn’t there also a badge of honor attached to that?

CV: I don’t know. Honestly, I just don’t think about it that much. When I first started, frankly, the so-called queer community didn’t embrace me. They certainly didn’t think much of Poison. They hated Swoon. They thought Go Fish was okay except—they complained that it should have shown every single type of lesbian that existed. They felt Safe should have been about AIDS instead of environmental illness. So … I’ve never been on the right side of the queer community. I’ve never even gone to the GLAAD awards.

WCT: Have you perceived a shift in tastes since you began producing with Todd?

CV: Not really, to be honest. When we made Go Fish, for example, I’m not sure that audiences today would tolerate the law-budget aesthetic of that film now. Then they did because it was so novel to specifically target a movie at gay women. Everyone forgave it for being in black and white. But I could be wrong. Every year something comes out of Sundance that I am surprised audiences go for but they do. In some ways, then as now, the real trick for an independent film to be successful is for it to be truly original—a true alternative.

Related Interests: Cinema Q is presenting a free screening of Go Fish Wed., March 23, at 6:30 p.m. at the Chicago Cultural Center/Claudia Cassidy Theater, 78 E. Washington.
March 23, 2011

WINDY CITY TIMES

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VEHICLE REVIEW

2011 Land Rover Range Rover

BY CASEY WILLIAMS, GAYWHEELS.COM

Queen Elizabeth may be out-wealthed by females like Oprah Winfrey and a couple of the Walton women, but none of them can buy a finer 4x4 than Her Majesty’s favorite. The Queen is known for keeping a fleet of Land Rovers of varying vintages at her array of palaces and country estates. She’s even lent her stamp to the brand. Those old ‘Rovers were great vehicles, but not quite fit for her royal self. With one vehicle, she could visit the far reaches of her estates while teaching them how to ford rivers and trudge mud like pros. Nobody seemed concerned that they were sludging it out in a mega-expensive luxury liner.

That’s because the Range Rover’s all-terrain systems are second only to mountain rams and donkey-mules. Terrain Response optimizes the vehicle’s responses for sand, rocks, and other obstacles from a knob in the center console. Hill Start Assist holds the brakes momentarily while the driver lifts from brake to throttle while Hill Descent Control maintains a safe speed going downhill. Best of all, a height-adjustable suspension system lowers for entry and high-speed autobahms, but raises up for serious boulder busting. On-road, the electronic chassis controls roll in corners. The vehicle is also equipped with Adaptive Cruise Control, blind spot warning, and Emergency Brake Assist to actively protect from impending accidents and slow-moving traffic.

None of that fancy footwork would matter if the big wagon didn’t have a heart of gold. When launched, the current-generation model had a BMW V8 engine as it was being handed over to Ford from the German automaker. Now a brother to Jaguar under Indian Tata ownership, it is powered by a 375-HP 5.0-liter V8 from the XJ. An optional supercharged version gushes 510-HP. Both engines are connected to a full-time AWD system through six-speed transmissions. Power and gear shifts wouldn’t be any smoother if they were greased up and shoved under a limousine.

The Range Rover’s hood. When most manufacturers parked their supposed off-roaders, Land Rover kept putting journalists behind the wheel, teaching them how to ford rivers and trudge mud like pros. Nobody seemed concerned that they were sludging it out in a mega-expensive luxury liner.

When the original Range Rover was introduced in 1970s, one wouldn’t exactly have thought of it as a Bentley competitor. Powered by a 135-HP Buick-derived V8 engine, it rode on a ladder-type chassis with coil springs, permanent four-wheel drive, and 4-wheel disc brakes. Interiors were outfitted with vinyl seats and hose-washable plastic dashboards. Carpet, A/C, leather seats, and wood trim would have to come later. It wasn’t until 1987 when the Range Rover officially came to the U.S. A second-generation model was produced from 1994-2002, after which it was replaced by the current royal chariot.

"The rich do indeed have all the good stuff," my partner said as he climbed aboard the Range Rover. Given the old dear monarch could pump her stubby little pegs up inside the Range Rover, Her Highness would not want for luxury. The leather on the seats and steering wheel is divine, wood is elegantly placed and beautifully polished, the floormats are trimmed in leather and everything you breathe smells like a gently tanned butter churn. Seats and steering wheel are heated.

The Range Rover’s interior. Photo courtesy of Gaywheels.com

Auto news

—Bad ad?: In Italy, companies are questioning the content of an automobile ad depicting two women, according to Pink News. The 30-second ad, for a special-edition Renault Twingo, shows two women at a party who seductively exchange glances. The second woman leads the first into a bedroom, blindfolds her—and steals her top before driving away. In the Italian version of the ad, the tagline reads, “la competizione e femmina” (“the competition is female”).

— Fiat fun: Fiat recently produced five fantasy models of the 500: the Fiat 500 Bear, Fiat 500 Drag Queen, Fiat 500 Leather (top photo), Fiat 500 Lesbian and Fiat 500 Cool (bottom photo), according to AutoBlog. The units were produced for Madrid, Spain’s, Gay Pride Parade, and was subsequently displayed in the Plaza de Vazquez de Mella.

2011 Land Rover Range Rover. Photo courtesy of Gaywheels.com

The Range Rover's interior. Photo courtesy of Gaywheels.com
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fiathighlandpark.com
The Baton Show Lounge, 432 N. Clark, marked 42 years of setting the standard of female impersonation in Chicago Wed., March 16. Owner Jim Flint and the girls put together a slate of special new numbers for the extended weekend-long celebration, which included three shows per night from Wednesday through Sunday. The special reception on Wednesday night played host to many well-wishers from the community, some of which have been on the scene since The Baton’s beginnings. 

Photos by Tracy Baim
Celebrations

Lambda Legal’s Bon Foster on April 28

Lambda Legal will hold its annual Bon Foster celebration Thursday, April 28, 5:30-9:30 p.m., at the Spertus Institute, 610 S. Michigan.

Foster was the principal founder of the Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago. After his death, his bequest led to establishment of Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund’s Midwest regional office in Chicago.

Tickets are $150 each; see http://www.lambdalegal.org/bonfoster or call 312-663-4413, ext. 335.

Photo from the 2010 Bon Foster celebration by Kat Fitzgerald (www.mysticimagephotography.com).

Same-sex marriage expo at plaza March 27

The Rainbow Wedding Network’s third annual “Same Love, Same Rights” Wedding Expo will take place Sunday, March 27, at the Holiday Inn Mart Plaza, 350 W. Mart Center, 1-4 p.m.

Gay-friendly businesses—including photographers, event coordinators, officiants, ceremony and reception venues, cake decorators, musical entertainment, floral designers, travel planners and legal resources—will participate.

For more info, see http://www.RainbowWeddingNetwork.com.

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BREAKING NEWS

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TELEVISION
Fernanda Rocha: The ‘Real’ deal

BY NATASHA HEMLEY

Brazilian-born fitness trainer Fernanda Rocha is one of the new cast members joining this season’s cast of The Real Housewives of Orange County—and the first lesbian to join the show. She spoke candidly with me on the phone at a café next to her gym in Laguna Beach, Calif.

Windy City Times: What made you decide to go on the Real Housewives of Orange County?

FR: New adventure, new opportunity in life. I am all about going for new things and when the opportunity came in front of me, I just saw a fantastic and fun adventure where I would be making new friends, meeting new people. Hopefully, just a big message out there about myself.

WCT: There is a lot of media buzz about you joining the cast of The Real Housewives of Orange County [this] season. How are you dealing with the pressure?

FR: Not pressure, but basically the same topic. “Oh, you’re gay—what about this?” I know its a whole new concept, and I understand, but for me it’s just normal and should not have so much emphasis on that; however, I think it is a natural curiosity.

WCT: You were married once, correct?

FR: Yes!

WCT: What made you decide to date women after your marriage?

FR: Something inside me, I knew I had to search my soul. I got divorced [and] found someone wonderful. I connected. We spent many years together. It was a second marriage.

WCT: You co-own the Art of Fitness Gym and Day Spa?

FR: Yes. I co-own it with my ex-partner.

WCT: Fans of the show might not know you have a B.A. in kinesiology [the study of human movement]. What made you decide to go into that field?

FR: Since I was little I took dancing and did lots of sports so I knew I wanted to go into that direction, so I did kinesiology. Then I decided to come here [and] have a gym in Laguna, fulfilling my dream. Now I co-own my own studio. I’ve developed exercise DVDs, and I have a fitness clothing line...

WCT: What does your clothing line consist of? And what do you call it?

FR: Fashion wear. The name is Zijina, Zijina Brasil. It’s an expression of movement, good energy and good attitude, so I have a Zijina. We all have our own Zijina. I’ve had the clothing for about seven years.

WCT: Can anybody buy it?

FR: Anybody. We have small, medium, large. They’re comfortable and make you move. You’ll feel a little bit of Brazil, a little bit of energy.

WCT: Some news sources say that you are not a lesbian, but bisexual instead. How do you answer that?

FR: I know who I am. I do believe in my vision for life; I have a family, with a woman and a little bambino very soon. This is what I’m putting out there. What people say, I cannot control that.

WCT: In the beginning of the show you are introduced as Tamra Barney’s friend. How long have you guys known each other?

FR: [Castmates] Tamra and Gretchen [Rossi] were shooting in one bar here in Laguna. I was finishing my shooting with my clothing line and I went there to celebrate. They saw a couple of my friends wearing the line; we made a connection. They start asking about the clothing, the gym. We exchanged cards and eventually Tamra came along, and she knew that I had a Brazilian booty class and said, “I am going to bring the girl. We want to take the class.” We became part of our connection there.

WCT: You guys have been friends for a year?

FR: The first time we met was about a year and a half. We are not best friends who talk to each other all the time, but we keep a good connection. Then I got a phone call from Bravo last year. They’d like to get to know a bit more about myself—and here I am.

WCT: Bravo is quoted in a statement saying “Fernanda and Tamra are pals and they love to flirt.” Is there something to that?

FR: They’re comfortable and make you move. You’ll feel a little bit of Brazil, a little bit of energy, but that’s how they go through things, but I tried my best. There was true drama, but that’s part of life.

WCT: Explain a little bit about the tapping process?

FR: The shooting was about three, four months, but it was not too intense. They were very flexible and could work around my schedule. I was able to manage that.

WCT: What should fans of the show expect from you this season?

FR: They’re going to get the chance to get to know me. Just watch; you’ll see. I cannot judge myself. I think I’m wonderful. I hope they think the same about me.

WCT: Oh, I’m sure they will! Can you give any juicy details?

FR: There are a lot of great, great moments: intense moments, dramatic, romantic. It’s all good.

WCT: What should fans take away from the show after seeing you?

FR: I hope that people can read the message that we are all the same. There’s no difference of a straight housewife and a gay housewife. People can catch new episodes of The Real Housewives of Orange County, and new cast member, Fernanda Rocha, every Sunday on Bravo.

Fernanda Rocha. Photo courtesy of Bravo

Josh Flagg: Agent lives his ‘Dream’, comes out

BY JERRY NUNN

Josh Flagg: Agent lives his ‘Dream’, comes out

Windy City Times: Can anybody buy it?

JF: Since you don’t have the title, what do you think?

WCT: Bravo really catches you doing everything. You are writing this book even on the set.

JF: Well, even in the Candace Cayne episode I didn’t think you were especially gay. Have you always dated guys?

FR: Yes, and if anyone ever asked me then I always told the truth since I was 17. I just never defines me. It just happens to be that I am gay. It doesn’t define my personality. If someone asks me I will tell him or her but it is not like I flaunt it.

WCT: Are you currently single?

JF: No, I am not single. I have a boy friend for three years.

WCT: How does your Grandma Edith feel about you being gay?

JF: She couldn’t care less. When I told her she said, “You are not the first person in our family that likes men!”

WCT: She encouraged you to write the book.

JF: She did.

WCT: Do you dedicate it to her?

JF: I dedicated it to her and a few other people.

WCT: Have you been on Million Dollar Listing every season?

JF: Season one was a different show. It was about five different realtors and completely different. I have been on since the new format of the show since season two. So I have been on two, three, four and hopefully five. The ratings are amazing so I hope, knock on wood, that we have another season.

WCT: It is entertaining to watch you all make a lot of money.

JF: We do okay.

WCT: The business looks like it is coming back [after] the recession.

JF: I started when I was 17 years old so it was hard for them to take me seriously then. People have not taken me seriously my whole life because I was young but somehow it always succeeded.

WCT: Do you have property yourself?

JF: Sure, absolutely. My family owns a lot of commercial real estate. They own shopping centers and stuff like that. I own property myself as well.

WCT: Bravo really catches you doing everything. You are writing this book even on the set.

JF: Oh yeah, we do pretty well and we are good at what we do. We are specialists in our markets. We enjoy it foremost.

WCT: Being on a reality show do you think it’s hard for people to take you seriously sometimes?

JF: I started when I was 17 years old so it was hard for them to take me seriously then. People have not taken me seriously my whole life because I was young but somehow I always succeeded.

WCT: Do you have property yourself?

JF: Sure, absolutely. My family owns a lot of commercial real estate. They own shopping centers and stuff like that. I own property myself as well.

WCT: Bravo really catches you doing everything. You are writing this book even on the set.

JF: Oh yeah, that’s me. I don’t really care. I did what I had to do and they recorded me. When I had to go to the bathroom the way am I going to do?

WCT: Are you doing some book signings in the future?

JF: We have a whole plan of book signings in Los Angeles, then hopefully in Chicago as well as New York. The attention on the book has been incredible. The first week without even promoting it really we sold out of books on the first run. We had to reprint more, which is really interesting because the book has not even been released yet.

WCT: You know what you are doing as far as selling things so this apparently works, too.

JF: I guess so. It is a coming of age story also so it really fulfills a lot of different audiences, kids, gay, straight, realtors, non-realtors, people that are getting into business. It is a really good story I think. It is not a housewife story talking about how to paint your toenails!

LGBT Fundraiser For James Cappleman

Thursday, March 24

SPEAKOUT: Panel on Women’s Healthcare in Chicago Past, Present, Future Speakers from Affinity Community Services, the Lesbian Community Care Project and other organizations discuss the past, present and future of women's healthcare in Chicago. From the underground Jane abortion coalition of the 1970s to today’s reproductive and wellness services, panelists examine how far we have come in providing healthcare to all women in the city, and how far we have to go. 6:30 p.m., Center on Halsted, 3546 N. Halsted, http://www.centeronhalsted.org

Queering the Film Series, “Trembling Before G-D” A film about Judaism explores the relationship between homosexuality and the Bible, with filmmaker Ky Dickens present. Chicago Cultural Center’s Claudia Cassidy Theater, 78 E. Washington, 6:30 p.m. Media sponsors for the Cinema Q film series are Windy City Times, Time Out Chicago, and the Chicago Reader. http://www.queerfilmsociety.org

Friday, March 25

Vida-SIDA honoring Rick Garcia Honoring longtime Chicago activist Rick Garcia for his thirty years of dedicated work in securing basic civil rights for the LGBTQ community in Chicago, Cook County and the State of Illinois, $50, proceeds to benefit Vida-SIDA. http://www.vida-sida.org. 7:30 p.m., Touche, 6412 N. Clark, http://www.touchechicago.com

Saturday, March 26

Asians and Friends Chicago, G.A.M.-TV Premier Tea Party Join the group to watch a new, grassroots web channel based here in Chicago debut of three series: a musical documentary, a news-profile series on a Chicago-area gay and Asian men (GAM), and a comedy drama about a gay and Chinese-American 20-something making his first real, social and romantic contacts. 3 p.m., 312-409-5573, @onmoreh.355 Clark, http://gamm.tv

CCGC’s 3rd Annual Big Package Auction The Big Package Auction is Chicago Gay Men Chorus’ largest fundraiser. Our already enormous packages have grown in size and shrith every year, and this year is no exception. 5 p.m., 773-296-0541, 3349 N. Halsted, http://www.cgmc.org

Sunday, April 3

The GLAAD Leadership Council Sunday GLAAD Hatter Branch The GLAAD Leadership Council of Chicago is a group of dedicated volunteers leading the organization’s mission to share the stories of LGBTQ people in Chicago. Themned the “GLAAD Hatter Branch,” guests are encouraged to wear theirunittest, biggest, boldest hat to the event with a prize awarded to the best. Olympic-sized pitcher Basset to April 3, at 5 p.m for person at door; 11:am, Minerva Ultra Lounge and Cafe, 3341 N. Halsted, http://www.glaad.org/events/gladdahatter/ rog
“I’m a straight guy and I love Brad Pitt. I mean talk about gorgeous—what a gorgeous guy. You don’t have to be gay to adore that. And, yes, I would like to wrestle him—in oil. Absolutely!” — pro wrestler Chris Jericho tells Joy Behar how he’d prefer Brad over Angelina. Well, he’s only human.

I think I’m going through the change—but I’m not exactly sure what I’m changing into. I’m more annoyed with things I used to let slide. I’ve also noticed that The Joy Behar Show is usually preceded by commercials for masterbath fashions, followed by one for free catheter samples. Am I their target market? Clearly I’m becoming a middle-aged woman, who else would have sat through that drivel? As The Bachelor? I was transfixed watching Brad sobbing uncontrollably when reunited with his brothers and mother. I cry when I see my family, but I’m usually trying to get the jump on the eventual tears that will flow during our first blow up. And Brad seems awfully close with his brother. I realize twins have a special bond, but it seems very “special” to me. Still, I was glad to see his twin—I always wondered what a heterosexual version of Brad would look like.

You know what someone else wanted to see? Jake Gyllenhaal’s penis. Can’t blame him for that. Here’s what happened. At the world premiere of Source Code at the South by Southwest Film Festival, a fan followed Jake into the men’s room and went to the urinal next to him. So far you could be describing my encounter with Brad Pitt, but that’s another story. While Jake was urinating, the guy actually tried to take a photo. OK, that takes balls—but no pun intended (alright, maybe slightly intended). Jake grabbed the guy—presumably after tapping it and putting it away—hitting him against the wall and said, “Are we really gonna do this right now?” Like Bachelor Brad, the guy ran out of the room crying like a little girl—after Jake asked him to delete the photo. I’ve been around to know that “delete” never really means delete. So, honey, contact me and let’s recover that sucker.

Jenny McCarthy got tongues wagging last week when she was photographed walking on the beach with a hot shirtless guy. McCarthy tweeted that everyone reading this column “just saw some photos of Jeremy Jackson, who is now a fitness addict. The photos had the most important parts blacked out. Can you find the unedited pics? I want to see how the little boy from Baywatch is shaped all over!”

In the past, I’ve told you that little Jeremy Jackson has grown into a sexy young man—if you’re into that dangerous, drug-added look. I don’t mean to imply that he is actually drug-added—at least not right now. As the questioner stated, Jackson admits that his addiction of choice is working out. In fact, Lifestyle Magazine reports, “He’s not only addicted to the gym—he can’t stop injecting W7l and testosterone. We’ve told Jeremy even he injects himself with vitamin B-12.” I know that all this stuff is supposed to be bad for you, but I must admit that he looks really hot—as you can see in the photos posted on BillyMasters.com.

Someone else who’s really hot is Justin Hartley—even as a woman! His character in Smallville dressed as a showgirl to avoid some criminals in a plot twist that is too convoluted to go into here. And, frankly, the only thing that matters is that you can check him out on BillyMasters.com.

As The Bachelor? I was transfixed watching Brad sobbing uncontrollably when reunited with his brothers and mother. I cry when I see my family, but I’m usually trying to get the jump on the eventual tears that will flow during our first blow up. And Brad uses a deck, which allegedly stated the house would only be used by the young couple. And yet somehow what transpired was an out-of-control rave that was attended by 300-400 kids (many of whom claimed they paid $5 to attend—that Nick’s always thinking). The climax, as it were, was when the deck collapsed and dozens of attendees ended up in the hospital with broken bones. Well, he should be used to broken bones by now! The county sheriff said, “At one point we had a house where they were shooting X-rated movies in a residential area.” Now it’s all coming together.

As we previously reported, The Real World: Las Vegas cast member Dustin Zite has a past as gay porn star Spencer on Fratmen and Fratpad. He even mentions it fleetingly (an apt description) on the first episode of “RW.” It’s one thing to refer to it—it’s another thing for people to actually see it. That may be why most nude photos and footage (specifically, a scene where he orally services fellow Fratman Travis) have mysteriously vanished from the web. We’re told MTV ain’t so happy about people like me, who are in possession of this very explicit material. So I suggest you check out BillyMasters.com as soon as possible—Lord knows how long they’ll last! Our “Ask Billy” question promises to bring you even more fresh. Randy in San Antonio wrote, “I just saw some photos of Jeremy Jackson, who is now a fitness addict. The photos had the most important parts blacked out. Can you find the unedited pics? I want to see how the little boy from Baywatch is shaped all over!”

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When The Real World ain’t so real, it’s definitely time to end yet another column. I remember the first time I met Justin Hartley was in Kathy Griffin’s kitchen—which sounds a lot like Jenny McCarthy being at the beach with her hairdresser. Things that make you go, “Hmmm”—which you’ll do repeatedly at www.BillyMasters.com. If you have a question you want me to tackle, write to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before Gruber ends up on Fratmen! So, until next time, remember, one man’s filth is another man’s bible.

Billy Masters had a close encounter—in a bathroom.

Windy City Times is seeking to recognize 30 more outstanding LGBT individuals (and allies) for its annual 30 Under 30 Awards.

Nominees should be 30 years or under as of June 30, 2011, and should have made some substantial contributions to the LGBT community, whether in the fields of entertainment, politics, health, activism, academics, or other areas.

Individuals, organizations, co-workers, etc. can nominate a person by e-mailing Andrew@WindyCityMediaGroup.com or faxing to Andrew Davis’ attention to 773-871-7609.

Self-nominations are welcome.

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The nomination should be 100 words or fewer, and should state what achievements or contributions the nominee has made. Nominators should include their own names and contact information as well as the contact information and the age of the nominee.

Honoraries will be notified in May and recognized at a free ceremony, Wed., June 22, 5:30 p.m., at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St.

The deadline to nominate individuals is Friday, April 22.
BY ROSS FORMAN

New league, same goal … welcome to the 2011 Chicago Force season, which kicks off Saturday, April 9, with the season- and home-opener against the Minnesota Machine.

The Force, in its eighth season, is now part of the Women’s Football Alliance (WFA), which includes such teams as Bay Area Bandits, Boston Militia, Dallas Diamonds, DC Divas, Kansas City Tribe, New York Sharks, Pittsburgh Passion and the San Diego Surge—teams that previously played in the Independent Women’s Football League (IWFL). They will align with such top WFA teams such as the Philadelphia Liberty Belles, Lone Star Mustangs, the St. Louis Slam and the West Michigan Mayhem.

The WFA is a full-contact football league with 62 teams across the United States and Mexico. “I’m excited about this year’s group of play- ers,” said Chicago Force owner/general manager Linda Bache. “We have a number of rookies who will contribute and several have the opportunity to be game-breakers. I feel good about the level of talent that we have returning, but I’m wait- ing to see if they’ll make the commitment and sacrifices that are necessary to become a great team that wins tough games.”

John Konecki returns to the sidelines as the team’s head coach, “and I believe he is the best coach in women’s football—we’re very fortunate to have him,” Bache said. “John has assembled a great staff, so I couldn’t be happier with the level of coaching.”

The Force play eight regular-season games, ending June 18 with a match up against the Indiana Polis Crash. The Force’s home games take place April 30 (Siam), May 7 (Tribe) and May 14 (Mayhem).

“I think the overall team roster is pretty bal-anced and we have a lot of solid players,” Bache said. “We don’t have a lot of superstars, but we have a lot of different players who will step up and make a difference. Superstars tend to be di- vas, so I’d prefer a group of hungry, committed players who play well together.

“My biggest concern this year is injuries. If we can stay healthy, we have an opportunity for a very special season. [Injuries are] the variable that you can’t predict. Injuries will happen—you just hope that they’re not season-ending injuries and that they don’t all happen to key personnel at the same time.”

Sam Grisafe is back at quarterback this sea- son. Albi Zhubi also is back on the Force offen- sive attack. Zhubi saw action last season at wide receiver and quarterback.

“Albi is quick and expands our offensive play- book with her mobility,” Bache said. “Starting wide receiver Jeanette Gray is also taking snaps at quarterback this season, so we have more depth at this position than ever before.”

As for the Force running game, Bache said, “We’re very excited about our ability to run the ball. We have an experienced and powerful run- ning back in Jessica Springer. We also have two newer running backs who have been impressive in pre-season practices: Brandy Hatcher, a sec- ond-year player, and rookie Leslie Johnson.”

And the running game this season will set up the Force aerial strike.

“We need our quarterbacks to make the cor- rect reads and not force the ball into coverage,” Bache said. “We expect our returning receivers to improve their skills as well, and we’ve also added some rookie talent at that position.”

Darcy Leslie, the team’s defensive MVP in 2010, is returning, “and it’s obvious that Darcy worked hard in the off-season to get ready for this year,” Bache said. “We expect her to be very active and make a lot of plays.

“We have a lot of new faces on defense. And some familiar faces are in new positions. I think our defense is improving and will develop over the course of the season to ultimately become a [team] strength.”

Key newcomers this season include wide re- ceiver Angel Mason, running back/defensive lineman Leslie Johnson, and Ashley Berggren at wide receiver/defensive line. “These are three high-level athletes who are new to football, but are showing great potential,” Bache said. Veteran center Stacey Baker retired, but she’s joined the team’s coaching staff. Plus, the team lost two promising second-year players to sea- son-ending injuries: wide receiver Taylor Malloy (knee) and linebacker Jessica Kirinchich.

“The Women’s Football Alliance has [more than] 60 teams and boasts the top teams in women’s football,” Bache said. “We’ll have some new opponents this year, but I’m happy that we will still play our old rival, the KC Tribe.

“This will be the most competitive schedule we’ve ever played.”

The Force will play its home games at Win- nemac Stadium, with kickoffs set for 4 p.m.

“I think 2011 will be a great season for the Force,” Bache said. “I hope our existing fans continue to support us and that the rest of the community wakes up and comes out to watch the best football team in Chicago. I guarantee that you will see us in the playoffs this year— get on the bandwagon now.”

MILDRED from page 27

In this version the truly compelling relationship is between Mildred and Monty Beragon, played by Guy Pearce. With Pearce, Haynes has cast a perfect personification of the morally detached playboy whose sexual compatability with Mildred is astonishing and almost an embarrassment to her. Pearce, who has never been sexier (Priscilla, Queen of the Desert aside) is the essence of a soulless, drunken kept man who understands his role isn't much more than that of a paid escort—and who doesn't care. Wood is fine and bitchy enough, although her treacherous Veda doesn't appear until too late in the series. (For far too long Morgan Turner plays the young Veda and she isn't nearly a good enough actress to spar effectively with Winslet.) Winslet's supporting cast—Melissa Leo as Mrs. Gessler, Mildred's helpful neighbor (a major character in the book); James LeGros as Wally (in for Jack Carson); and Mare Winningham as Ida (taking Eve Arden's part)—are also fine but none makes nearly the impression their forebears did in the 1945 adaptation.

To be fair, that may have more to do with Haynes' methodical approach, which follows the book; James LeGros as Wally (in for Jack Carson); and Mare Winningham as Ida (taking Eve Arden's part)—are also fine but none makes nearly the impression their forebears did in the 1945 adaptation.

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This should be fun.