



**KIM CATTRALL TALKS WITH WCT**

PAGE 24

# WINDY CITY TIMES

THE VOICE OF CHICAGO'S GAY, LESBIAN, BI AND TRANS COMMUNITY SINCE 1985

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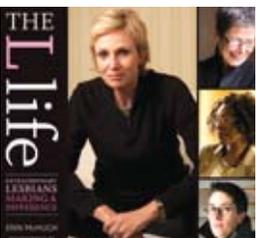
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**'BOYSTOWN' CONTROVERSY**  
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**BOOKS: THE LIFE, SMOKING TYPEWRITERS**

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**DESIGNER BORIS POWELL**  
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Spring is in full swing, if events around town are any indication. Dan Savage was the keynote speaker at AIDS Foundation of Chicago's spring luncheon (bottom right), while Chicago House held its annual brunch/fashion show (top) and Lambda Legal hosted its yearly Bon Foster celebration (bottom left). See pages 9 and 28. Photos by Kat Fitzgerald, [www.MysticImagesPhotography.com](http://www.MysticImagesPhotography.com)

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Photos on cover (left, from top): Kim Cattrall pic by Andrew Potter; Rae Lewis-Thornton photo by Andrew Davis; Dave Schlessinger Facebook image; The L Life book cover; photo of Borris Powell by Andrew Davis



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### NUNN BUT THE BRAVE

WCT's Jerry Nunn talks with Bad Girls Club's Natalie Nunn (left).



Read Sugar & Spice's review of GT Fish & Oyster.

Image by Cynthia Holmes



LRA welcomed leather activist Vi Johnson, who gave a history lesson like none other.

Photo by Terrence Chappell

### LEAVE IT TO DIVAS

See photos from Chicago Gay Men's Chorus' recent "Diva Ball."

### ON THE DOT

See pics from a dot429 mixer, an event with author Jeff Graubart and a talk with Christian Siriano.

### THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

This week's entertainment round-up includes items on Michael Jackson, Jane Lynch and Top Chef Masters.

plus DAILY BREAKING NEWS

### HEY, SOUL SISTER



The latest Bent Nights column reviews concerts by Peter Murphy; Erykah Badu (above); and Ezra Furman and the Harpoons.

Photo by Vern Hester

An issue fit for a queen!

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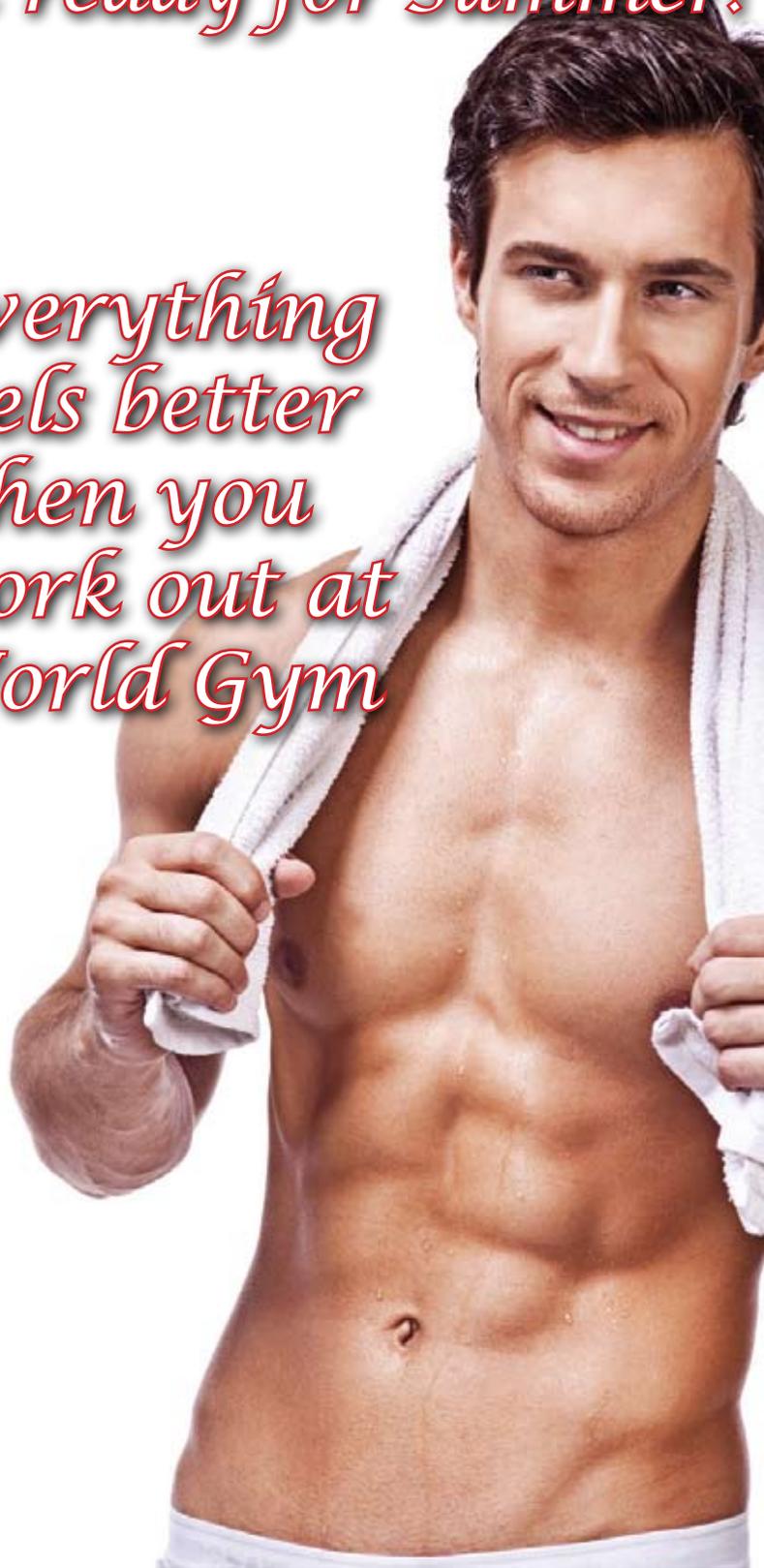
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# AIDS funding: Caught in the crossfire

BY LISA KEEN  
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

Before it left on spring recess, the U.S. House passed a budget for Fiscal Year 2012 that the president called "wrong for America" and that AIDS activists have said would do "irreparable harm."

The proposal hasn't gone over well with many Americans, either. During the two-week recess, the budget bill's chief author, Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., was greeted with crowds of unhappy constituents and many boos.

The primary complaint is that the so-called "Ryan budget" calls for dramatic cuts in Medicaid, which provides health insurance coverage for people with low incomes. It also calls for dramatic cuts in Medicare, which provides health insurance coverage for Americans 65 and older and for people with disabilities, including AIDS.

In a letter to members of the House last month, a large coalition of groups serving people with HIV urged a "no" vote on the plan.

"Chairman Ryan's proposal to dismantle the Medicaid and Medicare programs, roll back reforms enacted through the Affordable Care Act, and drastically reduce support for vital federal programs will do irreparable harm to people living with HIV disease as well as those at risk for HIV infection," said the letter. "We will lose



U.S. Rep. Paul Ryan.

our battle against HIV disease and the loss will come with a high price tag in terms of the human toll and costs to the health care system."

The letter notes that Medicaid is the "single

largest source" of funding for HIV-related treatment and care, covering about 40 percent of people with HIV in the United States.

The coalition said Ryan's proposal to completely defund provisions of President Obama's recently enacted Affordable Care Act would leave "hundreds of thousands of people with HIV without access to health care coverage and services."

Overall, Ryan's plan would cut federal spending by \$6 trillion over the next 10 years. For fiscal year (FY) 2012, Ryan's plan calls for a 15 percent drop in spending on non-security-related funding—from \$565 billion this year to \$482 billion next year. That includes a \$56 billion cut in discretionary health spending over the next five years. The coalition of AIDS groups say that cut would lead to the loss of programs to prevent new HIV infections.

"It is counterproductive to disable the prevention, care and research programs that have controlled the HIV epidemic and transformed HIV disease from a fatal to a complex but manageable condition in the United States," said the coalition's letter.

The letter was sent to members of the House April 13 and signed by 54 groups, including AIDS United, the Gay Men's Health Crisis, the AIDS Institute, the National Minority AIDS Council, the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, Treatment Action Group, the AIDS Task Force of Greater Cleveland and the AIDS Foundation of Chicago.

Some the organizations that signed the letter—such as AIDS United and The AIDS Institute—had expressed relief at the FY 2011 budget because there were no cuts in places where people with HIV need additional help. But all AIDS organizations seem to be alarmed at the House plans for FY 12.

Project Inform, a 26-year-old national AIDS policy advocacy group, says on its website that Ryan's budget would "devastate" the country's response to HIV.

The National Minority AIDS Council Deputy Executive Director, Daniel Montoya, issued a statement, saying, "Medicare and Medicaid are essential programs that safeguard the health of all Americans, including those living with HIV/AIDS."

"Placing the burden of his \$6 trillion cuts on the backs of our nation's vulnerable," said Montoya of Ryan, "is inhumane and un-American."

The unpopularity of the Medicare/Medicaid provisions prompted Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, R-Nev., to say he might put it on the floor for a vote soon, presumably to put Senate Republicans in the uncomfortable position of defending a bill that so many are clamoring against.

There are other budget proposals—the presi-

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NATIONAL NEWS

—Bill T. Jones (left) joins N.Y. marriage-equality effort

—First full-time staffer at Fairness West Virginia

—Five men charged in anti-gay S.C. attack

dent's original FY 12 budget plan (which AIDS and LGBT groups generally like) and several in the works by various groups of legislators. One plan, from the Congressional Progressive Caucus, would maintain Medicare and Medicaid but require significant tax increases for people with high incomes and tax capital gains and dividends as ordinary income. The caucus includes all four openly gay members: Rep. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., who serves as a vice chairman, as well as Reps. Barney Frank, D-Mass.; Jared Polis, D-Colo.; and David Cicilline, D-R.I.

The House rejected that proposal during last month's vote.

However, no budget proposal has yet emerged that appears to be capable of gaining passage through both chambers of Congress. So, it's likely to be another knockdown-drag out fight, like that just finished for FY 11.

And to complicate the negotiations for FY 12, there is the looming gloom of the nation's debt ceiling. The government anticipates spending to bump up against that ceiling—currently set at \$14.6 trillion—in July. Republicans have vowed to oppose an increase in that ceiling unless significant concessions are made to cut spending.

In an effort to encourage cooperation between the House and Senate and both parties, President Obama named a commission of six to find common ground on the budget and on a request to raise the debt ceiling. Vice President Joe Biden is leading the panel.

The group holds its first meeting May 5.

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ferred our neighbors a hand, and we offered the wounded our blood. We reaffirmed our ties to each other, and our love of community and country. On that day, no matter where we came from, what God we prayed to, or what race or ethnicity we were, we were united as one American family.

"We give thanks for the men who carried out this operation, for they exemplify the professionalism, patriotism, and unparalleled courage of those who serve our country. And they are part of a generation that has borne the heaviest share of the burden since that September day.

"Finally, let me say to the families who lost loved ones on 9/11 that we have never forgotten your loss, nor wavered in our commitment to see that we do whatever it takes to prevent another attack on our shores.

"And tonight, let us think back to the sense of unity that prevailed on 9/11. I know that it has, at times, frayed. Yet today's achievement is a testament to the greatness of our country and the determination of the American people."

View the entire speech at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/gay/lesbian/news/ARTICLE.php?AID=31601>.

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## Obama on the death of Osama bin Laden

Below are some of the remarks President Obama made May 1 while informing the country about the death of Osama bin Laden:

"Good evening. Tonight, I can report to the American people and to the world that the United States has conducted an operation that killed Osama bin Laden, the leader of al Qaeda, and a terrorist who's responsible for the murder of thousands of innocent men, women, and children.

"It was nearly 10 years ago that a bright September day was darkened by the worst attack on the American people in our history. The images of 9/11 are seared into our national memory—hijacked planes cutting through a cloudless September sky; the Twin Towers collapsing to the ground; black smoke billowing up from the Pentagon; the wreckage of Flight 93 in Shanksville, Pa., where the actions of heroic citizens saved even more heartbreak and destruction.

"On Sept. 11, 2001, in our time of grief, the American people came together. We of-

# Judge Walker called to answer

First of two parts

BY LISA KEEN  
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

The new chief judge of the U.S. District Court in San Francisco has asked former Chief Judge Vaughn Walker to come back to court. In an April 28 order, Judge James Ware instructed Walker to appear in court to answer why he should not be required to return to the court videotapes he made of the Proposition 8 trial proceedings last year.

However, there will be another matter on the agenda at the June 13 hearing: a motion from Yes on 8 Proponents asking Ware to vacate Walker's decision last August that the same-sex marriage ban violates the federal constitution.

There is no indication whether Walker will be expected to provide any opinion concerning that motion, even though it involves a question of whether he ever intended to marry his same-sex partner of 10 years when he accepted the job of presiding over the *Perry v. Schwarzenegger* case (now known as *Perry v. Brown*).

Yes, there will be a lot of opportunity for drama at the hearing.

However, attorneys who would like to see Prop 8 ultimately struck down—presumably at the U.S. Supreme Court level—adamantly insist they see virtually no likelihood that Ware will vacate Walker's decision.

"This is an absurd, desperate, and patently offensive motion," said Theodore Bontros, Jr., one of the lead attorneys on a legal team headed by conservative attorney Ted Olson and his liberal comrade David Boies. "We are glad Chief Judge Ware has expedited the proceedings and look forward to responding to it."

Yes on 8 attorneys had requested a hearing date of July 11, but on April 27, Ware said he would expedite the motion to vacate to June 13. That same day, April 27, the 9th Circuit panel that heard Yes on 8's appeal in December of Judge Walker's decision, tossed two other sideshow motions back to Judge Ware. Both concern the videotapes Judge Walker produced for his own use in studying the evidence at trial to reach his decision. One motion, from Yes on 8, demands that Walker return the videotapes to the district court and have them sequestered; the other, from the Olson-Boies team, seeks to have the videotapes released publicly.

The conflict over the videotapes was just a minor sideshow until Judge Ware instructed Judge Walker to appear in court.

"All participants in the trial, including the presiding judge (now retired), who are in possession of a recording of the trial proceedings, are ordered to appear at the hearing on June 13, 2011, to show cause as to why the recordings should not be returned to the Court's possession," stated Judge Ware's order.

Yes on 8 filed its motion to retrieve and sequester the videotapes after they learned that Walker used a three-minute clip from the trial during a recent speech concerning the history of cameras in the courtroom. Walker is an advocate for allowing cameras in the courtroom, particularly at the district court level, where a factual record for a case is created.

No one is yet predicting how Ware will rule on that issue. But, for a number of reasons, the impact of that ruling is relatively minor. A transcript of the three-week-long trial and its closing argument are already public record.

The motion to vacate Walker's ruling is both more consequential and more dramatic. It is almost certainly the first time a legal team has sought to disqualify any judge—state or feder-



Judge  
Vaughn  
Walker.

al—because the judge was in a relationship with the partner of the same sex. (This reporter has been covering LGBT legal cases for more than 25 years and cannot recall one instance.)

Gay legal activists agree with Bontros that the motion to vacate is a "desperate" long-shot tactic by Proposition 8 proponents. Jon Davidson, legal director for Lambda Legal, characterized it as a "Hail Mary" tactic.

Also, Yes on 8 has reason to throw a "Hail Mary." Their appeal of Walker's decision to the 9th Circuit is in jeopardy over whether there is any California law that authorizes them to appeal a decision that the elected representatives of the people—the governor and attorney general—had chosen to not to appeal. The California Supreme Court is expected to hear arguments on that question in September. If the court rules—and the 9th Circuit accepts—that Yes on 8 has no standing, Walker's ruling will stand and same-sex couples may again obtain marriage licenses in California.

Thus, if the Walker decision stands, Yes on 8 hopes its motion to vacate will kill it.

However, Yes on 8 would likely characterize its motion as more of a late flag than a Hail Mary, and they blame Walker.

Before and during the trial last year, Walker never publicly disclosed he was gay or in a relationship with a man. But the San Francisco Chronicle, in a well-publicized political column published a week after the testimony portion of the trial ended, reported that it was an "open secret" in San Francisco that Walker is gay. It quoted a fellow judge—a "friend and confidant" who it did not identify himself for the report—as saying Walker did not "conceal" his private life.

Having retired from the bench in February, Walker, 67, hosted a sort of farewell briefing April 6 with a group of six local court reporters. One of the reporters asked Walker about the report in the Chronicle that he was gay.

Walker, according to reports from several of those at the briefing, acknowledged he is gay and that he had been in a relationship for the past 10 years with a man. Asked whether he should have recused himself from the Perry case, Walker stated emphatically that he did not believe he should have.

"It would not be a positive development if you thought that a judge's sexuality, ethnicity, national origin or gender would prevent a judge from handling a case—that's a very slippery slope," he said, according to one published account, in the Daily Journal, a legal newspaper in San Francisco.

**Part two:** The U.S. Code says a judge must recuse himself if he has any interest in the outcome. However, does Judge Walker's 10-year relationship with a man amount to proof that he had some personal interest in the outcome?

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# States struggle over gay and lesbian adoptive parents

Part two of a series on children and gay parents

BY DANA RUDOLPH  
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

Each year, more than 100,000 children in the United States foster care system are waiting for adoptive homes, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Also, more than 2 million gay and lesbian people are interested in adopting a child, according to a 2007 study by the Williams Institute of UCLA.

However, legislative and court battles are being waged in several states over whether gay and lesbian people—individually or as couples—should be allowed to adopt. And the outcomes have been mixed.

Under a bill signed April 18 by Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer (R), a married man and woman will receive “placement preference” in adoption over a single adult, if all relevant factors are equal. Unmarried individuals may adopt, but only a married husband and wife may adopt jointly. Marriages of same-sex couples are not recognized in the state.

Also, the Virginia State Board of Social Services voted 7-2 April 20 to reject a proposal of former Gov. Tim Kaine (D) that would have prohibited discrimination against potential adoptive parents on the basis of sexual orientation. Gov. Bob McDonnell (R) recommended that they disapprove the proposal, although the Board was not obligated to follow him.

Two other senior state officials had also expressed their opposition to the proposal. Republican Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli II's office issued a memo April 12, written by Senior Assistant Attorney General Allen Wilson. The memo said the proposed change goes against state law and public policy and the board “lacks the authority to adopt this proposed language.” The memo “revises and amends” Wilson's memo from December 2009 (during Kaine's governorship), in which he said the Board did have that authority.

Virginia Social Services Commissioner Martin Brown, a McDonnell appointee, also advised against the proposed regulations. Brown is the former executive director of The Family Foundation of Virginia, a conservative organization that includes among the partners listed on its Web site the Family Research Council, classified as an anti-gay hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center.

In Illinois, however, a state Senate committee killed a bill April 11 that would have allowed religiously affiliated child welfare agencies to refuse a person's adoption or foster home application if the person was in a civil union.

Court rulings on adoption by same-sex couples have varied. The Arkansas Supreme Court ruled April 7 that the state's ban on adoption by unmarried, cohabiting couples violated the state constitution. Last September, a Florida appeals court overturned that state's ban on adoption by gay and lesbian individuals.

However, the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals



Jennifer Chrisler.

ruled April 12 that the Louisiana state registrar did not violate the U.S. Constitution by refusing to issue a new birth certificate to a Louisiana-born child adopted in New York by a gay couple. Louisiana officials said to do so would violate the state's public policy of not allowing joint adoptions by unmarried couples.

Utah also has a legislative ban against adoption by unmarried couples. Mississippi has a ban on adoption by same-sex couples. And while Michigan has no statutory ban, state courts have ruled that unmarried individuals may not jointly petition to adopt.

In Arizona, Virginia, Louisiana, Utah, Mississippi and Michigan, nearly 12,000 children in foster care are eligible and waiting for adoptive homes, according to the most recent (2009) data from HHS.

Jennifer Chrisler, executive director of the Family Equality Council, said that “the overarching picture right now is looking a little gloomy at the state level.”

However, Chrisler added that the adoption battles are in part because of “a growing awareness of the issue of LGBT people and their ways of creating family,” combined with an “opportunistic moment” for conservative politics. Conservatives are using the opportunity “to push through as much of their conservative agenda as they can.”

She sees their actions as “a serious threat” to finding homes for children who need them.

Ellen Kahn, director of the Human Rights Campaign's (HRC) Family Project, said that society

at a “threshold moment in child welfare,” when people have to move beyond old beliefs and traditions, just as they did with adoption by single parents and interracial couples, among others.

However, she thinks the issue has hit “the tipping point” with regard to adoption by LGBT parents. Research has shown, she said, that “there's absolutely no reason to discriminate.”

“Because this issue is so politicized,” however, she said, it gets pulled out of the context of child welfare. This slows down “a natural, organic progression” towards acceptance of LGBT adoptive parents among child welfare professionals.

Sarah Warbelow, HRC's state legislative director, said the issue of adoption is also tied up with the issue of relationship recognition for same-sex couples, especially in states that ban all forms of relationship recognition—not only marriage—for such couples. Adoption agencies in those states, Warbelow said, are often then “reluctant to allow couples to even consider adopting, because they don't know how to interpret the language.”

Currently, 18 states have such comprehensive bans. Only one of those, Arkansas, after its April 7 state Supreme Court decision, allows same-sex couples to jointly petition to adopt statewide.

While only 16 states plus the District of Columbia do allow same-sex couples to jointly petition to adopt, Kahn said she works with adoption agencies in states that do not permit joint adoptions by same-sex couples and that many of those agencies will nevertheless treat same-sex prospective parents like a couple, even though they know only one will become the legal parent.

That kind of attitude, she says, “keeps moving regardless of who's in office” and, “over time, changes the landscape agency to agency and makes a big difference for families.”

On a federal level, the Family Equality Council announced in an e-mail to supporters April 22 that U.S. Rep. Pete Stark, D-Calif., would, on May 3, reintroduce the Every Child Deserves a Family Act, which would withhold federal adoption and foster care assistance funds from states that discriminate against LGBT people in foster placements or adoption. He introduced a similar bill last session, but it died in committee.

Furthermore, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued a memo April 6 encouraging child-welfare agencies to better serve the needs of “lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth” in the foster care system, and calling LGBT prospective parents “a largely untapped resource” for providing foster or adoptive homes to LGBTQ young people.

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## Labor department adds protections for transgender people

The U.S. Department of Labor has announced its full commitment to implementing equal employment opportunity policies for all department employees and applicants.

In addition to ensuring equal protections for all employees and applicants on the bases of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, parental status and sexual orientation, additional classifications include gender identity and pregnancy.

“I am expressing my personal commitment to ensure that the U.S. Department of Labor is a model workplace, free from unlawful discrimination and harassment, which fosters a work environment that fully utilizes the capabilities of every employee,” said Labor Secretary Hilda Solis. “It is my goal that we achieve and maintain a high-quality, diverse workforce at all organizational levels throughout the department.”



Hilda Solis.

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force praised the additions, with Executive Director Rea Carey saying in a press release, “With this change, the federal government is doing what smart employers in the private sector have been doing for years. They know that in order to attract the best talent they need to show that diversity is important to their companies.”

“The Department of Labor's announcement makes it clear that it is a place that values diversity and allows people to contribute their talents and skills free from discrimination.”

# 'Boystown' show backer has criminal past

*Project's status in question*  
BY JOSEPH ERBENTRAUT

Plans going forward for Boystown, a proposed reality television series centered on Chicago's well-known queer enclave on Halsted Street, may be in serious jeopardy as it has come to the attention of Windy City Times that the show's producer, David Schlessinger, is a registered sex offender with one charge of predatory criminal sexual assault and two charges of aggravated criminal sexual assault in his past.

According to court records, Schlessinger, 45, pled guilty and was convicted of the charges in September 1998 related to his assaults of three underage boys between June 1995 and January 1997. Thirty-two years old at the time of his conviction, Schlessinger met the boys while cruising Chicago's Uptown neighborhood.

Schlessinger was originally arrested March 1997 after one underage boy said he had been in the man's company. After he was originally taken into custody, Schlessinger was released on a \$50,000 bond before he was later sentenced to three years in prison in each case. He reportedly served the sentences concurrently.

Schlessinger's name re-emerged in the press last month as the producer behind Boystown, a proposed reality show for which he held casting calls at two Chicago bars, Scarlet and Minibar, during the weekend of April 15 after a few weeks of scouting. The events attracted hundreds of interested applicants to the Boystown hotspots and generated a great deal of excitement in local media.

The show, said to be a hybrid of The A-List, The Real World and Jersey Shore, specifically hoped to cast "[m]ales or females between the ages of 21-25 [with] [f]un, dramatic, energetic, interesting and wild personalit[ies] ... MUST BE IN TO [sic] THE CLUB SCENE," according to a listing posted on the website of Chitown Entertainment, LLC, Schlessinger's company. The show's format, although reportedly up in the air, would have either followed the staff and patrons of one of the bars or kept the cameras rolling on an apartment inhabited by a group of young LGBT people.

Paul Cannella, owner of Scarlet bar, declined to comment on Schlessinger's criminal record but admitted his bar had already determined the series was "not a good fit for us" before receiving the news of Schlessinger's criminal history. Cannella acknowledged the proposed series had amassed considerable buzz in the short amount of time since it was announced but described the production company as "not very well financed or put together."

"I don't think this [series] is going to go anywhere," he added. Scarlet bar is located less than a half mile away from a school, the Netelhorst Elementary School, 3252 N. Broadway.

John Dalton, co-owner of Minibar, also admit-

ted his bar was already unlikely to pursue being a part of the series prior to this development. He described his bar patrons' excitement surrounding the series as "a kind of fun moment to have."

"This is definitely not something we'd want to associate ourselves with," Dalton added.

Neither Cannella nor Dalton knew whether any other neighborhood nightspots had been approached to participate in Schlessinger's series.

Noa Francis Shayden, a Chicagoan who had been in the running to participate as a cast member in the series, said he had not received any additional correspondence from the producer or any casting agents since a request for a video application around the time of the casting call. He added the development made him "a little wary" about working with Schlessinger on the series and hoped to be informed if any other show staff had criminal histories.

Los Angeles-based freelance casting directors whom Schlessinger had hired to work on the potential series indicated they were no longer involved with the project and had severed all ties with the Chicago producer. To their knowledge, the proposed series had not advanced beyond the recent casting calls.

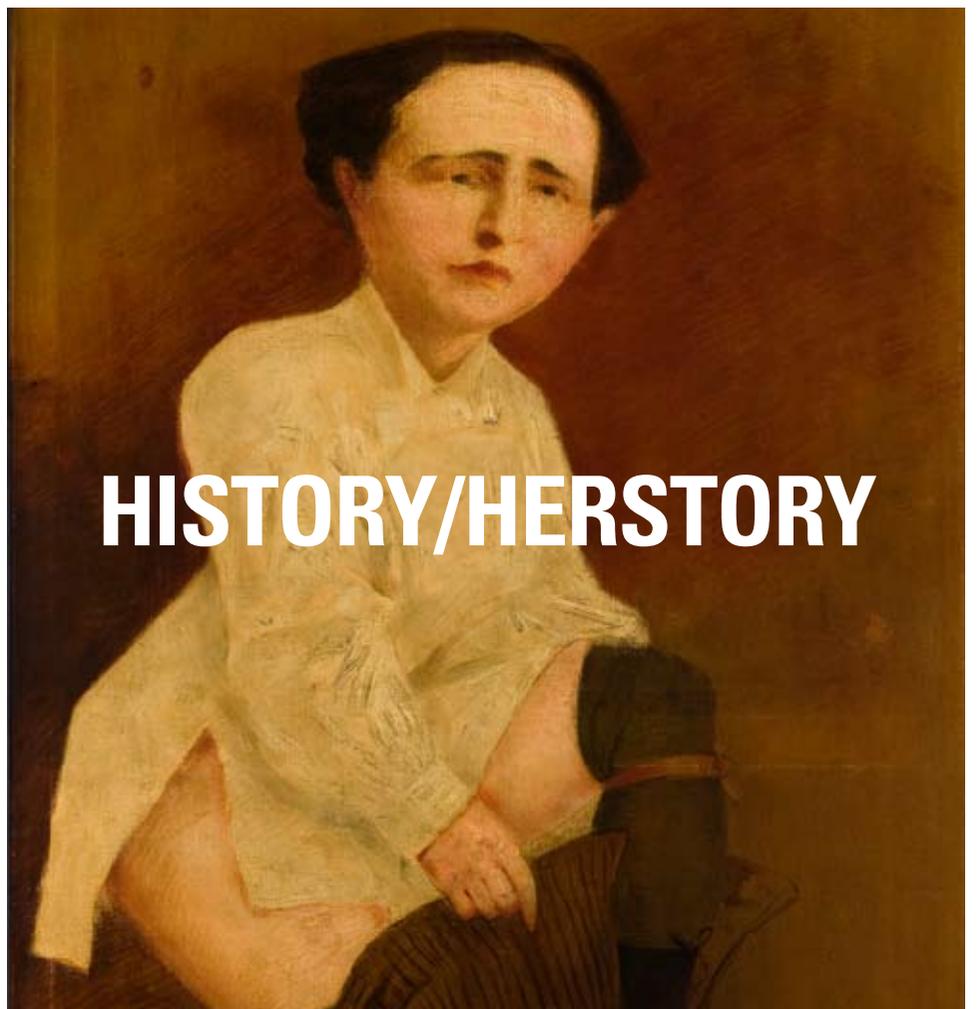
Cannella, Dalton and the casting agents were all unaware of Schlessinger's criminal past, with Cannella reiterating in an email that Scarlet has withdrawn from being affiliated with the show, based on "a variety of reasons."

Schlessinger responded to Windy City Times but would not comment on the record for this story.

Schlessinger describes himself on the Chitown Entertainment, LLC, website as having "a love, passion, and devotion to music, artists, and the entertainment industry [that] dates back to the year 1991" when he first attended the MTV Video Music Awards. "With offices in Chicago, the UK, and Miami, his Success [sic] has exceeded his expectations in his ability to produce and promote sold out events and performances." It does not appear he has any previous experience producing reality television programs.

The sexual-assault convictions are the only felonies marking Schlessinger's criminal record but his name also made the headlines following a bizarre altercation the man initiated in a Lake Geneva, Wis., steakhouse in January 1994.

According to a Wisconsin State Journal story, Schlessinger was unhappy with the way his dinner had been prepared and chose to voice his displeasure by filing a lawsuit against "everyone ... in or out of sight—including the town of Geneva, the town board and its members and the town's police department and ... chief of police." After the 7th Circuit court called the lawsuit "goofy" and ordered Schlessinger to pay the court costs of those he sued, he filed an appeal with the Supreme Court. The high court did not take on his appeal.



## HISTORY/HERSTORY

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Facebook photo  
of Dave  
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registry.





Ra Perre Shelton and C.C. Carter at the conference. Photo by Terrence Chappell

# Things get 'Raw' at youth confab

BY TERRENCE CHAPPELL

HIV/AIDS outreach and prevention, healthcare and education were just a few of the hot-button topics explored at the Chicagoland Youth Against AIDS (CYAA) ninth annual youth conference, entitled "As Raw As it Gets."

Youths ages 13-24 were equipped with information packages for the daylong conference that included special guest presenters, workshops and discussion groups. Community activist and renowned motivational speaker Marbelyn Brown served as the special morning keynote speaker. Brown learned she was HIV-positive at the age of 19. Now, at 26, Brown has not only shared her story and insight around the nation at different universities and institutions but has also received numerous awards for her humanitarian work, including an Emmy Award for Outstanding National PSA in 2007 and being named a Modern Day Black History Month hero by BET.

Youth conference emcee and conference co-chair Julian Perkins related to the conference and the issues addressed on a much deeper level. Growing up on the city's West Side, Perkins saw his peers go down the wrong path, but opted to take a different and better one for himself. "I hope I can do this forever. I use to just want to play basketball. But, I want to help out. Playing basketball is all about yourself," he said.

After the morning kick-off, youths participated in a series of workshops and forums that focused on major issues and dilemmas faced by today's youth. Fourteen-year-old Brianna Christman came out to the conference to support a family friend, David Robertson, a presenter who

is HIV-positive. Christman recalled having an emotional reaction to hearing Robertson's talk.

"It was really getting to me, but I had to remember where I was at, and why I was here. The best thing that I took from his [Robertson] talk was how he went through all of that and kept going with his life. He didn't give up," said Christman.

Other workshops included "This is What HIV Looks Like," where a panel dispelled stereotypes and notions associated with HIV and the communities affected by the virus. In another workshop, "Turn Your Hustle Into a Career," youths were given advice on how to make their passion and craft into a fruitful career. Presenter Ra Perre Shelton co-hosted the "Writing My Life Positive" workshop, where youth were taught how writing can be used as a therapeutic means of managing feelings, organizing thoughts and prioritizing goals. Shelton's mission behind the workshop was to encourage young people to think critically and to remind them that "they [youth] have the power to dictate who and how they are in a social setting."

"I wanted them to know that based on what they say and what they write; they have the power to reinterpret society," Shelton said.

Dr. Margo Bell was the driving force behind the conference. In addition to Bell, the Chicago HIV/AIDS Risk Reduction Project For Youth (CHRRPY), which specializes in addressing the major barriers youth face when accessing services according to its website; Stroger Hospital-Division of Adolescent Medicine; and POW-WOW, Inc. all came on board to bring the conference to life. Natasha Smith and Perkins were the co-chairs for the conference and are also CYAA committee members. C.C. Carter—founder of POW-WOW Inc., an organization designed to speak to the social justice issues concerning women, in particular, women of color—worked closely with Bell on advising and facilitating the vision for the youth conference. As a teacher for 25 years, Carter is no stranger to working with youth and still finds her work rewarding.

"I believe that if nothing else, the youth will be armed with ammunition of information from this conference. They will not have to rely on some adult to tell them or even get miseducated from someone. This conference will help them to empower themselves," said Carter.

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You like?

## Wheaton LGBTQ organization forms

BY LISA KLEIN

"You are not tragic," reads a letter from the LGBTQ group OneWheaton to students of Wheaton College. "Your desire for companionship, intimacy and love is not shameful."

The letter was written in response to a chapel message delivered at the evangelical Christian school by gay alum Wesley Hill April 1. Hill spoke to students about his struggle with his sexuality, telling them that he has



chosen lifelong celibacy because being gay is "not something to be affirmed and celebrated, but a sign that we're broken."

OneWheaton, formed this year as a support group for LGBTQ students and alumni of Wheaton College (but not sanctioned by the school), distributed its response letter on campus and posted it on its website.

"We knew that we had to respond and reach out directly to those students," said Kristin Winn, spokesperson for OneWheaton.

Winn recalled her days at Wheaton, saying the chapel messages she remembered made her and other LGBTQ students feel like something was wrong with them, "like you have a dark future ahead."

The group originally formed around the idea of LGBTQ alumni making a video for sex columnist Dan Savage's It Gets Better project, but ended up as a support group for both alumni and students of the school.

Winn said being an LGBTQ student at the school could be a lonely, isolating experience. "You feel like you're the only one," she said.

She added that LGBTQ alumni are left out of the Wheaton community, and aren't even included in the alumni updates in the school's magazine.

The group's goal is to support each other and current Wheaton students and their families. Winn said the response in the past few days "has been completely overwhelming," the group receiving hundreds of emails from all kinds of students, both about coming out themselves or with questions about friends.

In an email sent to students in response to OneWheaton's letter, provided by Winn, the college stated that they "condemn violence

and injustice directed towards LGBTQ people," but added that they "seek to prepare our students to maintain fidelity with the historic stance of the church," on sexuality.

Winn said the group plans on having social gatherings in the future and possibly marching in the Pride Parade this year. "We want to make ourselves known," she said. "We exist and we made it."

## Emanuel appoints gay man as deputy commissioner

Mayor-elect Rahm Emanuel has appointed John Pfeiffer, a gay man, as the first deputy commissioner of the Department of Family and Support Services. Evelyn Diaz will serve as commissioner.

Pfeiffer—who is married to Chicago House case manager Gregory Potts—is currently the executive director and CEO of Inspiration Corporation, a nonprofit that operates the Inspiration Cafe and helps more than 3,000 homeless and low-income Chicagoans achieve greater self-sufficiency and stability each year.

Equality Illinois CEO Bernard Cherkasov credited the development to the Chicago Ap-



John Pfeiffer. Photo by Steven Gross

pointments Project, a collaboration involving his organization, the Human Rights Campaign the Gay & Lesbian Leadership Institute and community leaders. The project, according to its web page, seeks to "identify well-qualified openly LGBT candidates for positions in the next mayoral administration and to advocate for their appointments."

"We're so proud of our accomplishment," Cherkasov said. "It just goes to show how committed the mayor is to making sure that the LGBT community is included in his administration."

Pfeiffer previously served as director of operations for New York City's Department of Homeless Services and as a consultant at KPMG, where he focused on the management of nonprofit and public institutions. John earned his B.A. from Northwestern University and his M.P.A. in nonprofit and public management from Columbia University.

The appointment is pending approval by the city council.

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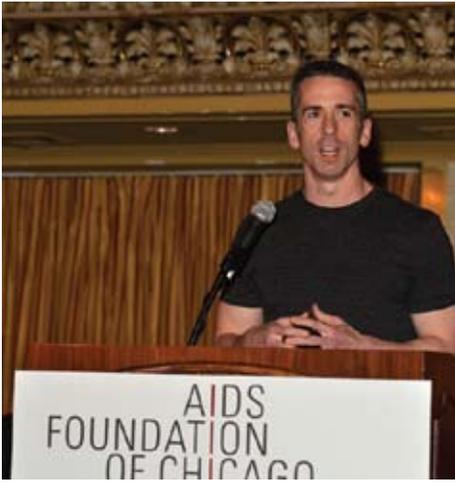
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# AFC luncheon features Dan Savage



More than 400 people crowded the Grand Ballroom at the Hilton Chicago to attend the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) spring luncheon May 2. While observing AFC's 25th anniversary, people got an up-close look at the event's keynote speaker: writer and "It Gets Better Project" creator Dan Savage.

Addressing a business-casual crowd in a T-shirt and jeans, Savage talked about his anti-bullying video project and emphasized the connection between bullying and HIV infection rates among youth.

"Anything that shreds someone's self-esteem puts them at higher risk for all kinds of self-destructive behaviors," Savage said.

Savage recalled his own experiences trying to reach queer youth, who he felt needed to see gay adults who lived through bullying. While the Rogers Park native spoke at colleges, he said he felt that gay people were not allowed to talk to younger children who might need gay role models.

"I was waiting for permission that, in the YouTube era, I no longer required," Savage said. "We have given them, as Harvey Milk urged us to, given them hope."

"Whether you value your child's life right now or not, we do... one day, you will thank us."

Savage said that he hoped the project would not only curb suicide rates, but HIV infection rates because youth would be less driven towards risky behaviors.

AFC President/CEO David Munar also spoke about homophobia and AIDS. "Homophobia remains an essential building block to HIV risk," he said. "Homophobia Harbors wherever AIDS exists."

The luncheon, which celebrated the finish of AFC's 25th year of service, also saw AIDS advocate Larry Giddings honored with the Lori Kaufman Volunteer of the Year Award.

While Munar addressed realities facing care providers and HIV-positive people in 2011, state Rep. Sara Feigenholtz urged attendees to lobby their legislators for AIDS funding.

Text by Kate Sosin and photos by Kat Fitzgerald (MysticImagesPhotography.com); many more online at <http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com>



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# Local lesbians in online wedding contest

BY ROSS FORMAN

Carrie Neff and Anastasia Maley spoke on the phone for about five months before meeting for the first time—and Maley admitted to Windy City Times, “I knew instantly that there was something about her voice and enthusiasm for life which made me want to get to know her better.”

So their phone chats went to emails. Then they went to instant messaging before they met for the first time in May 2004.

“She was even more dynamic in person and I was head over heels,” Maley said.

The two met through mutual friends in their sorority, Delta Gamma, at Villanova University in Pennsylvania. Neff had already graduated, but was back visiting when she met Maley for the first time. She noticed Maley’s crafty denim jacket, while Maley couldn’t believe how short Neff was in person.

Their friendship turned into love after leading a service trip together in 2007.

“I always knew there was something different about Stasia from the first moment we talked, and more so the moment we met,” Neff said. “Stasia came to visit me in Chicago a few weeks after meeting and she had a headache and fell asleep on my lap. I had always dated men [up to that point] and didn’t recognize my feelings at first, but soon came to realize I would never love another person as deeply as I love her.”

The feeling is mutual, as Neff and Maley are happily ever together.

They also were the second LGBT couple to participate in the Crate & Barrel \$100,000 Ultimate Wedding Contest.

“We wanted to raise the visibility of LGBT couples in mainstream culture,” Neff said. “We thought it was wonderful that Crate & Barrel included same-sex couples in their contest. We want to get our family and friends more interested in supporting marriage equality, to show others that we view ourselves as equally deserving of recognition in this contest, and most of all, that we consider our marriage as a marriage, just as the thousands of heterosexual couples consider as well.”

Neff, 29, is from Sudbury, Mass., and now works as a human rights campaigner for Amnesty International USA. Maley, 26, from Folcroft, Penn., is a registered nurse, working in hematology/oncology/stem-cell transplant department at Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

“When we started dating, we began doing ‘letter dates,’ where we went through the alphabet and each took turns planning a surprise date starting with a different letter [of the alphabet]. For example, A might be amusement park, B could be beach trip, C might be camping. It was a great way to get to know each other better through different experiences,” Maley said.

Neff has been living in Chicago for four years,

Maley for three. They were on the committee for the Human Rights Campaign Gala in November, 2009. They also attend and support local LGBT organizations, such as Hamburger Mary’s Bingo Night to benefit the Center on Halsted, or Lambda Legal’s Freedom to Marry Reception.

Neff ran a half marathon in Chicago in 2008 to benefit the AIDS Foundation of Chicago. Maley completed the Chicago Triathlon for Team in Training, benefiting the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, in August 2009.

Neither is running this spring or summer ... they have a wedding to plan.

“Our only hesitation in applying for the contest was, reading the fine print guidelines and rules,” Maley said. “We wanted to be sure our wedding would still have all the important elements that were important to us, such as eco-décor, local/organic food and flowers, tented outdoor reception, etc.”

Since applying, they said the response has been overwhelmingly favorable.

“We have yet to receive a negative comment from family, friends, or strangers,” Neff said. “Many of our friends and family have posted our contest on their Facebook wall to support us and inform others to vote. We have been blown away by the amount of love and support we have been shown, especially by unusual suspects.”

So what would you do if you won the contest?

“Jump up and down,” they said in unison.

Neff added, “We then would get down to business planning our ‘Ultimate Wedding.’ We have many elements already planned, as our wedding is set for Sept. 10.

“We would also want to publicize, as much as possible, that Crate & Barrel has chosen a same-sex couple as their contest winners and continue using this experience as an advocacy tool.”

The two have run three ‘donation drives’ on Facebook, where they pledge to donate one dollar for every vote received over a 24-hour period to charity. Their charities are the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, the Aneurysm & AVM Foundation and Dining out for AIDS.

**Note:** The contest ended April 30, where voters chose the top 100 couples. A panel that includes wedding planner Yifat Oren and Crate and Barrel representatives will then select a winner. Look for the announcement of the winning couple in June.

Neff and Maley had 1,492 votes; gay couple Robbie Cronrod and Allen Artcliff (profiled in the April 13 issue of WCT) garnered 10,127 votes.

#### More Carrie Neff and Anastasia Maley:

—Nicknames: Neff and Stasia

—Hobbies: Neff: Cleaning, organizing, music and traveling; Maley: Thrift store shopping, crafting, beach volleyball

—Favorite movie: Neff: Shawshank Redemption; Maley: Wild Hearts Can’t Be Broken and



Carrie Neff and Anastasia Maley. Photo courtesy of the couple

Dirty Dancing.

—Favorite TV show(s): Neff: Glee and The Office; Maley: The L Word

—Favorite sport: Neff: NCAA basketball; Maley: Horseback riding

—Favorite sports team: Neff: Villanova men’s basketball and the Chicago Cubs; Maley: Philadelphia Phillies.

—Favorite athlete: Neff: Hubert Davis. Maley: Cliff Lee.

—Favorite alcoholic drink: Neff: Margarita on

the rocks with glass salted. Maley: Corona with neck salted.

—Little-known skill: Neff: Can juggle three things, sometimes four; Maley: Almost always wins every limbo contest

—I’m better than my partner at ...Neff: cleaning; Maley: being on time.

—Favorite Chicago restaurant: Neff: Big Bowl; Maley: Café Ba Ba Reeba.

—Favorite Chicago bar: Neff: Mystic Celt; Maley: Timothy O’Toole’s

## Pro-LGBT group up for award

The Uhlich Children’s Advantage Network (UCAN) is a contender for the Alford-Axelson Award for Nonprofit Managerial Excellence. Two awards (for large and small nonprofits) will be handed out at the event, which will take place Tuesday, May 17, at the Holiday Inn Chicago Mart Plaza, 350 W. Mart Center.

UCAN and Howard Brown Health Center’s Broadway Youth Center launched the LGBTQ Host Home Program in 2009 to find housing for homeless LGBTQ youth. Recently, the organization held an open house so people could learn more about the program.

UCAN is in the large nonprofit category (with an annual budget exceeding \$3 million). Other nominees include Children’s Home + Aid, Concordia Place, Inspiration Corporation and Junior Achievement of Chicago. In the small-nonprofit category, ACCION Chicago, Bickerdike Redevelopment Corporation, Lincoln Park Community Shelter, the North Lawndale Employment Network and Turning Point, Inc., are vying for the award.

Mayor-elect Rahm Emanuel recently named Inspiration Corporation’s openly gay executive director/CEO, John Pfeiffer, as first deputy commissioner of the Department of Family and Support Services.

The two winning organizations will each receive a \$5,000 unrestricted grant.

One organization will also be presented with the Axelson’s Center Excellent Emerging Nonprofit Organization Award. This new award targets smaller, emerging organizations and includes more than \$25,000 in pro bono capacity-building services and a \$2,500 grant. Nominees include Camp of Dreams, Beyond the Ball and Urban Initiatives.

Email [jtaustein@dresnerco.com](mailto:jtaustein@dresnerco.com) or [dgutiérrez@dresnerco.com](mailto:dgutiérrez@dresnerco.com) for more information about the event.

## Commission recognizes IDAHO

At its regularly scheduled monthly meeting April 20, the City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations’ Advisory Council on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues recognized the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHO), which will be observed May 17 around the world.

The council voted without dissent to officially welcome the annual observance, thus joining national, regional and local government bodies in numerous countries that have acknowledged the international event since it was first observed May 17, 2005.

Longtime council member William B. Kelley, who introduced the proposal that the Advisory Council officially welcome the IDAHO observance, expressed his “hope that it would encourage local organizations, as part of a run-up to Chicago’s annual Pride Month, to show solidarity with their international counterparts’ struggles against prejudice and discrimination worldwide.” One such local organization, Chicago’s Gay Liberation Network, has conducted activities here for several years in support of IDAHO.

May 17 was established in commemoration of the date of the World Health Organization’s 1990 decision to remove homosexuality from its list of mental illnesses. Louis-Georges Tin—a French university lecturer and a campaigner for Black and LGBT rights—spearheaded IDAHO’s creation. The IDAHO Committee—composed of a largely volunteer, Paris-based board and a diverse international advisory board—oversees the event.

The IDAHO website, <http://www.dayagainsthomophobia.org>, currently lists May 17 events planned in the United States, Ireland, Germany, the United Kingdom, Hong Kong, Malta, Sweden, France, Rwanda, Russia, Turkey, Chile, Peru and other countries.

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TEXT AND PHOTOS BY ROSS FORMAN



Underground chef  
**Iliana Regan**

Credit goes to the pierogis.

At least that's what launched Iliana Regan.

In 2008, Regan began sprouting pea shoots in her pantry and by that summer, it evolved into a garden in Indiana and she was selling sprout wraps, soups and zucchini pancakes made fresh at an Indiana farmers market.

One week she arrived at the farmers market with beet pierogis, and they were a hit.

Within months, Regan's creation landed on the shelves at Green Grocer.

The popularity of the pierogis took off, so has Regan's cooking career.



"It started as a natural food company, and I designed the company myself," Regan said. "It's kind of a restaurant, garden, prepared foods company and catering company all in one."

"Sure, I was hoping the pierogis would take off, but I never expected it."

She is working toward a restaurant, an avant garde restaurant, she said, with whimsical, traditional food.

Regan now runs a successful underground dining experience inside her northside apartment. She offers 10- to 15-course tasting meals up to six times per month for up to 12 people per session (\$90 per person), served at a communal table.

"They are a lot of fun, with real interesting guests," Regan said. "To hear some of the conversations [among the diners] is funny, from the birthing process to how to wash dogs."

Regan has been hosting the popular, successful, elaborate underground dinners since last May, with hungry visitors ranging in age from 20 to 80-plus.

"There are some real cerebral people, [diners who are] truly taking in the food and everything to others who are just out for a unique meal experience," she said.

Regan said gay men are about 15 percent of her clients, and she even offered a special Valentine's Day special with two-top tables for more intimacy. Her most popular course has long been the detailed, music-involved Madhatter's Tea Party.



Regan's menus change regularly, and she always adapts and evolves the courses. Take, for instance, the short rib special she once offered. It tasted great, but was difficult to present in a glitzy manner, she admitted.

After all, Regan's underground dining dinners are, in essence, her testing ground for a future restaurant. She doesn't have the time, staff or funds, yet, to practice dishes repeatedly—as a restaurant does.

At least not yet.



*the stats*

**Name**

Iliana Regan

**Neighborhood**

Andersonville

**Hometown**

Merrillville, Ind.

**Hobbies**

Gardening, foraging, hiking, fishing and bicycle riding

**Relationship status**

Dating Tonya Pierce, 27

**Pets**

Three chihuahuas: Paris, Nick and Chloe

**Favorite Chicago restaurant**

Anteprima (in Andersonville)

**Favorite Chicago bar**

Hopleaf (in Uptown)

**Tattoos**

Has a full sleeve on her left arm, three on her right arm, plus one on her chest, back and neck

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## Rae Lewis-Thornton: Talking with an AIDS diva

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Rae Lewis-Thornton calls herself a “diva living with AIDS.” However, she is not the typical self-absorbed individual making constant demands—unless a person counts the ones she makes on herself.

Lewis-Thornton, a heterosexual woman, was diagnosed with HIV in 1986. She now has full-blown AIDS—but that has not deterred her from embarking on a crusade, speaking around the country while she aims to educate and challenge people about the disease, their bodies and their futures. Along the way, she has been featured in various magazines, including *Essence* and *Women’s Day*, and even has received a Chicago Emmy Award for outstanding achievement in a regularly scheduled news program.

In a recent interview, the outspoken activist talked about contracting the disease, who it was most difficult to tell and her future.

**Windy City Times:** As you know, we’re running our AIDS @ 30 series this year. Did you think that, at this point, we would not have a cure?



Above: This bracelet is from the TeamRae collection. Below: Lewis-Thornton’s Chicago Emmy. Photos courtesy of Lewis-Thornton



Rae Lewis-Thornton: In the beginning, I didn’t have an idea if we would have a cure because we didn’t know very much about the disease. Maybe a couple years after the second class of medicine breakthroughs—the protease inhibitors—it gave me a clearer picture of how sophisticated the virus really is. So it took all of those years for me to say a cure is going to be difficult [to find] because it’s a sophisticated virus.

It adapts to what you give it, [even a] whole class of medicines, and there are thousands of strains. It’s sophisticated, and the cure would have been even more [complex]. In my first few years, I kept it a secret. I didn’t really start to digest items about the disease until I made the transition to AIDS in 1992. So I didn’t think a cure was happening for a long time. That’s not the politically correct thing to say, but I’ve never been politically correct.

**WCT:** What was your life like before you were diagnosed in ‘86?

RL-T: I was a political organizer. I started in politics early (I was about 19); I started locally here, with Operation PUSH, and was good at what I did. They liked me.

Rev. [Jesse] Jackson took me with him to Washington, D.C., for his ‘84 presidential campaign. When that campaign was over, I became a field organizer; I oversaw the Southeast region for SANE/FREEZE, the largest peace and disarmament organization at the time. I was in the epicenter of politics, trying to bring about change. Then, I was the national youth director of the Jackson campaign in ‘88. So at 24 I was a senior staff member of a presidential campaign, and by then I knew I was infected.

**WCT:** Take me through the day when you found out you were HIV-positive.

RL-T: This is the ironic piece about my diagnosis: There had been an Amtrak accident in northern Virginia, and there were Red Cross shortages because people were afraid to donate blood. The hysteria was, “If I donate blood, I’ll get HIV”—which is stupid. So I organized a blood drive, I baked cookies and brownies. It was the winter of ‘86; the HIV-antibody test was about a year old and, of course, the Red Cross started testing blood immediately. Three months later, I received a letter in the mail telling me that something was wrong with the blood I had donated; when I first received it, I thought it was a thank-you letter.

The next day I went in, and they told me that I was HIV-infected. The meeting took, like, five minutes in her office. She said, “You don’t have AIDS. You only have HIV.” What we knew back then was that everybody with AIDS was dying, and that HIV did cause AIDS. There was nothing to say [at that point]. She gave me a telephone number to the National Institutes of Health and referred me to an epidemiological study that NIH was doing with the Red Cross.

I went back to work, being the overachiever that I am, and did my 12 hours because I was getting ready to go on the road. I came home after 12 hours, washed my boyfriend’s clothes and waited for him to come by the house to tell him



Rae Lewis-Thornton at home. Photo by Andrew Davis

that I was infected. I told him; he took his clean clothes and left. I went to bed, got up at six the next morning, went on the road and started to call ex-boyfriends to tell them they needed to be tested. I just methodically went on with my life; I didn’t have an enormous amount of emotion.

**WCT:** That’s very interesting.

RL-T: I can put up [with a lot]. I grew up physically, sexually and emotionally abused. I’d literally been taking care of myself since I was 17, so I figured that if I could live the life I’d already lived, HIV would be a breeze. Mind you, I didn’t think I’d get AIDS. I had to face the issue when I dated but beyond that, I didn’t have to face it.

Also, I had assumed that I had been infected recently. Years later, I found out I had been infected three years prior [to being diagnosed]. I’ve never disclosed the person’s name publicly. He wasn’t on my list because of his stature—what he did for a living, etc. I couldn’t figure out who could’ve infected me but there was that stereotype: I was dating men with six-figure incomes, so how could I become infected? My body doesn’t come cheap—but what I found out was that it didn’t matter.

Most people back then didn’t know they were infected until they were dying. The antibody test wasn’t developed until ‘85—and some people were still calling it GRID [gay-related immune deficiency].

Rev. Jackson was the first presidential candidate with an AIDS policy, so I was familiar with the disease. He slept in AIDS hospices, and we had gay- and lesbian-[related] deaths on the campaign; Ronald Reagan refused to say the word “AIDS.” I knew that this disease was infecting and affecting people; we just didn’t have enough information. They were saying that the only heterosexual women who could get it were prostitutes. Again, all these stereotypes ... And there’s the logic: If men could get it from sex, why couldn’t women?

Here’s the other ironic part: I was in an environment that forced us to think critically and compassionately about HIV, and I was already infected and didn’t know it. I was one of those people who started using condoms. I was out in D.C., and everybody had gay friends. One of my friends said, “Mm-mmm ... Leave it alone.” There was a lot of bisexuality and risqué behavior happening in the ‘80s. I had been using condoms consistently for a couple years before I found out I was infected.

**WCT:** Who was it hardest to tell?

RL-T: [Pauses.] Jesse Jackson and his wife, Jackie.

**WCT:** Why is that?

RL-T: She actually took me under her wing. She saw something in me and gave me a chance. During the ‘84 campaign, she’d see me on the campaign trail and say, “Rae, watcha out here doin’?” I’d say, “Trying to get your husband elected president.” One night in Atlanta—it was Super Tuesday—she asked, “What are you doing tonight?” I said, “I don’t know,” and she said, “Come to the hotel.” I literally crawled in

the bed with her. She has been like a mother to me.

I shared their home for five years. Congressman Jackson, Jonathan and I were housemates for almost five years. [Note: Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr., who first won his seat in 1994, and Jonathan Jackson are brothers.] The Jacksons had bought a second home across from their family home when Jesse and Johnny got out of college. When I moved back to Chicago, I stayed [at that house].

When you believe in someone’s mission and have supported it up close and personal, I asked, “Would he practice what he preached? Would he be the man who slept in those AIDS hospices?” Then, I had lived in their house and not told them; I had lied.

**WCT:** Do you really feel that you lied or ... ?

RL-T: I just didn’t tell; I didn’t lie, but I told everything else. But I knew that I had to disclose and then work my way down, because people talk too damn much. I had told five people over seven years.

When I made the transition to AIDS, I went from three pills a day to 15 pills a day. I went from a size 12 to a size six in six months. I became clinically depressed, I was sick all the time, [the drug] DDI was working on me, I was shitting on myself, throwing up ...

**WCT:** And people wanted to know what your weight-loss secret was?

RL-T: Yes! I was like, “Girl, I’ve been hittin’ the gym.” But I knew I had to tell—and I had to start at the top of the pyramid.

So I stood in [Rev. Jackson’s] kitchen and said, “Reverend, I gotta talk to you.” He said, “What is it—are you pregnant?” I was like, “I wish.” [Smiles] I said, “I have AIDS.” He said, “You mean you have HIV.” I said, “No. I have AIDS.”

Think about what was going through his mind: Everybody he had seen with AIDS is dying. So, here I am telling him this, and he said, “I have to process this.” He took a deep breath and said, “Rae, I loved you before AIDS, and I love you with AIDS,” and we prayed. Then, we went into the dining room and told Mrs. Jackson together. THAT was hard.

**WCT:** How did she react?

RL-T: It took a while to digest. I had to sit at the dining-room table for the rest of the evening. She said, “Baby, are you telling me you’re dying?” Keep in mind that the Jackson’s had another close AIDS death: Keith Barrow—[activist] Rev. Willie Barrow’s son. He used to baby-sit Jesse [Jr.] and Johnny. She then said, “We need to move you in the house. You can’t die by yourself.”

After I told them, I started to tell and tell and tell—the rest of my political family and other close friends. Of course, I became the center of gossip. The girlfriends of some of my male friends wanted to make sure they never had sex with me. All the men who wanted to have sex

# Youth Pride reaches out on HIV/AIDS

BY TERRENCE CHAPPELL

A minority, an LGBT-identifying member and an HIV-positive person—each comes with a sometimes unavoidable external stigma attached. Combine all three and it makes for a triple minority that could be vulnerable to depression and suicide. Youth Pride Services Inc. is committed to addressing these issues through its HIV/AIDS outreach for underrepresented GLBTQA youth of color.

Youth Pride Services Inc. (YPS) has implemented the Youth Pride Center (YPC), on Chicago's South Side, to work with often underfunded and socially ignored youths of color on the South and West side communities. Statistically, GLBTQ youths ages 13-24 are at greater risk for contracting HIV than their heterosexual counterparts, GLBTQ and heterosexual adults, according to University of South Florida College of Public Health researcher/evaluator Peter Gamache's report, "HIV education for youth in transition to adulthood: Preliminary findings." Gamache also found that youth of color are at a significantly higher risk for HIV infections.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control conducted a similar study that focused on young men.

The CDC reported in 2008 that 55 percent of young men who have sex with men (ages 15-22) did not let people know they were sexually attracted to, and engaging in sexual acts with, other males. They were then less likely to seek HIV testing. Even with alarming statistics and a lack of funding, YPC carries a mission to educate and advocate for youth of color who identify as HIV-positive as well as homeless youth of color, and the greater GLBTQA community.

In 2010, the National Youth Advocacy Coalition to Washington, D.C., invited YPC to the National HIV Best Practice Summit: GLBTQ Youth of Color and HIV Prevention. The summit was a four-day venture of HIV preventative best-practice, community building and sharing, and a presentation of some of the nation's most cutting-edge youth-based, HIV advocacy organizations and their endeavors.

YPC, a division of Youth Pride Services Inc., was invited for its youth-led, social marketing campaign, Caution: Youth at Hope, Not at Risk.



Frank Walker (right) and YPC member Anshae Lorenzen. Photo by Andrew Davis

YPC's former president, Frank Walker, was head of YPC when the organization was invited to D.C. Walker was excited to travel to the nation's capital to present his organization's campaign to other youth organizations and attendees. Walker attributes the success and draw of the Caution campaign to the fact that words such as "HIV/AIDS" weren't plastered on promotional materials. Instead, the campaign took a more laid-back approach by communicating with youth in a manner that was relatable.

Carlton Cummings is a YPS alum and a Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Award recipient. He worked with Walker on HIV/AIDS outreach and remembers deciding to work with the organization in that capacity because of the impact the virus had and still has on the LGBT community.

"It felt great to be so altruistic. I mean I always get tested, so I encourage others to as well. I felt fulfilled," said Cummings.

Directed at young men who have sex with other men, ages 13-21, the Caution campaign challenged youth to connect with their peers through on-the-street surveys, focus groups, and interviews. The three-month project had youth participating in any of YPC's programs, workshops and training. More than 100 youth responded to campaign messages and outreach.

Each new YPC participant was tested for HIV. Fifty percent of the new, incoming program participants who responded to the Caution campaign tested HIV-positive and were then linked to proper healthcare and attention. Non-traditional, yet still effective, YPC's Caution

campaign serves as a new-age approach to HIV outreach organized by youth and for youth.

Walker was not surprised by the high percentage of youth testing positive. Unfortunately, when working in HIV/AIDS outreach and prevention, high percentages for positive tests are sometimes a daily occurrence, according to Walker.

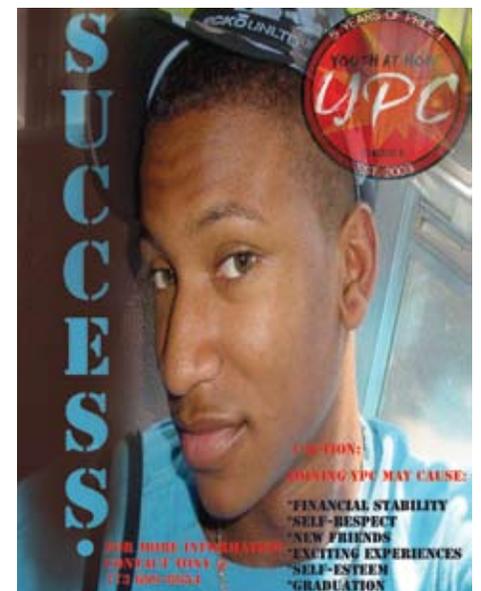
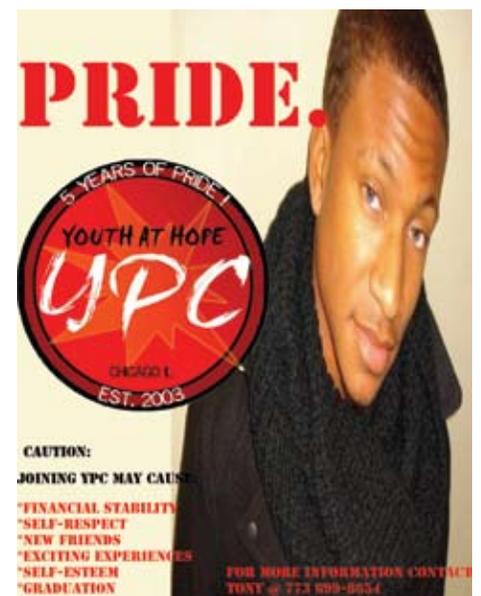
"I was not alarmed by it at all. I guess when you are on the ground working on it, it's not very surprising. I hear about two to three cases a week," he said.

Longtime YPC supporter Vernita Gray knows about the harsh realities concerning the lack of HIV/AIDS funding for youth of color on the South and West side neighborhoods of Chicago. When working as the LGBT liaison at the Cook County state's attorney's office, Gray met Walker at a community meeting. She immediately took to his mission to educate, empower and reach out to youth of color. With her friend, the late Renae Ogletree, a fellow youth activist, the two women set out to support Walker's HIV/AIDS outreach endeavors in any capacity. Whether support came in the form of writing a check, attending an event or sending a referral, both women played an integral role in the success of Walker's HIV/AIDS initiatives.

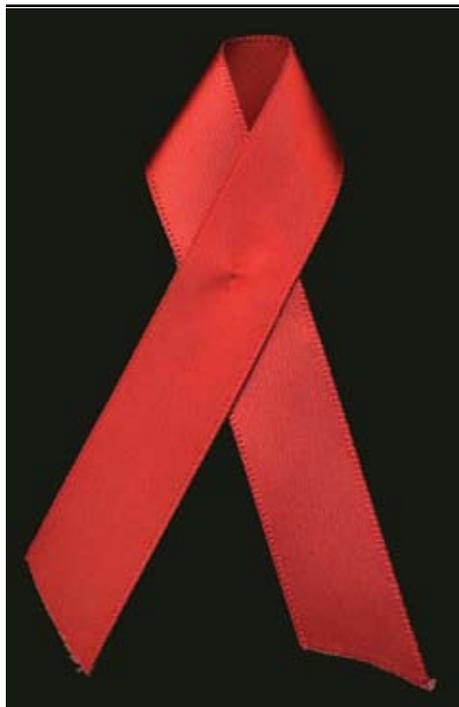
"It's important to have services on the South Side," Gray said. "We need services in our community and we need HIV prevention in our community. It's important to have services for gays, lesbians, transgender, and questioning youth on the South Side. Why not?"

Whether it's jet-setting to an HIV-preventative "best-practices" youth summit, working on the ground level to test youth for HIV or carrying out a social marketing campaign in support of HIV/AIDS outreach, Walker said HIV/AIDS awareness is integrated in not only YPC's mission, but also its team, work, and practice.

"We take on a very holistic approach to HIV/AIDS awareness and outreach," he said. "We focus on food, health, education and employment. If youth have all those things going for them, then they will make a better decision about their sexual health. Everything we do, education wise or employment wise, is all about HIV, which is why our motto is youth at hope, not at risk."



Two promotional pieces from the YPC Caution campaign.



## Red ribbon symbolizes AIDS fight

BY KRISTEN THOMAS

There were an estimated 33.3 million adults living with AIDS by the end of 2009, according to Avert, an international HIV and AIDS charity. Despite some progress on treatment, there is still no cure, and AIDS is only increasing in impact. But where has the symbolic red ribbon, once so common throughout the 1990s, gone?

The red ribbon's connection to the AIDS/HIV epidemic is largely attributed to the working of the Visual AIDS Artists Caucus, a New York City-based group that was the artists' arm of ACT UP, and caucus member, Frank Moore, according to The New York Times. Moore, an HIV-positive surrealist painter who died in 2002, approached Visual AIDS with the idea in 1990 after noticing the prevalence of yellow ribbons being worn in commemoration of the soldiers fighting in the

Gulf War. The creation of this new symbol was not without controversy. Paul Jabara, an HIV-positive, Academy Award-winning songwriter and actor, is also sometimes credited with the initial idea of the red ribbon. Jabara, who died in 1992, co-founded the Red Ribbon Foundation in 1991.

Soon after its development, the ribbon became synonymous with solidarity with those inflicted with the disease and love. Its red color also came to serve as a warning to others, and campaigns still exist in 2011 using the red theme to raise AIDS awareness (and funds).

The red ribbon's popularity peaked during the 1990s. At a press conference, basketball star Magic Johnson confirmed that he was HIV positive and announced his retirement, stating, "I think sometimes we think, well, only gay people can get it—it is not going to happen to me.

And here I am saying that it happen to anyone." Queen's lead singer, Freddie Mercury, died one day after he confirmed that he, too, had tested positive for HIV. More than 100,000 red ribbons were passed out to the audience of London's 1992 Freddie Mercury Tribute Concert. The appearance of English actor Jeremy Irons, at the 1991 Tony Awards, wearing a red ribbon further prompted support for the HIV/AIDS cause. Other celebrities picked up the red ribbon cause at awards shows, including the Academy Awards.

Even though the red ribbon remains the international emblem for AIDS awareness, its once popular presence has dwindled significantly from the public eye.

See [www.avert.org](http://www.avert.org), [www.redribbon.com](http://www.redribbon.com). Also see HIV/AIDS, by Kathy S. Stolley and John E. Glass (Greenwood, 2009).

Next week in AIDS@30 The NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt



## Gay man with AIDS runs against the disease

BY ROSS FORMAN

It had been two years since his last HIV test when—about nine years ago, at age 24—Richard Cordova learned he had AIDS, not just HIV.

Cordova was, admittedly, leading an unhealthy lifestyle at the time, which included drug use.

"When I found out [I had AIDS], I really wasn't dealing with my diagnosis. Sure, I was taking medication [for it], but I continued partying," he said.

That lifestyle lasted for several more years—until May 29, 2007, when Cordova took his life down a new path: the running path along the lakefront, to be exact.

That's when Cordova joined the National AIDS Marathon Training Program in preparation for his first 26.2-mile run, which he did the Sunday after Thanksgiving 2007 in Florence, Italy.

Cordova has since completed six marathons, three half-marathons (13.1 miles each) and the last three Rides For AIDS Chicago.

"I've come to live pretty openly with [the disease] and, because I've been pretty open about it, I've come into contact with people who are not as open, and also some who are ashamed [of the disease]," Cordova said. "Now, for a lot of people, HIV is a chronic, manageable illness—unlike years ago when it almost always was a death sentence. Sure, there are setbacks and struggles nowadays, but it is manageable.

"Personally, I didn't process [the AIDS diagnosis] immediately as a death sentence, but, at some point in the progression of having it, I definitely thought I would die early, that I never would live to see 30 [years-old]. That really was a motivating force to turn my life around—I realized that it wasn't the HIV that was going to kill me, but rather, the other stuff."

Cordova struggled internally with his diagno-

sis for several years. Tears were common when he was by himself.

Clearly, Cordova thought his life had a short expiration date after his diagnosis.

However, when he started training for that first marathon, Cordova gave up his destructive past cold turkey—and it's been an upward swing ever since.

Today, Cordova is proof that if one can turn his or her life around, if one wants to.

Cordova is the project manager for the Ride For AIDS Chicago, working for Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN), a position he's held since last October.

"Helping produce this event is rewarding because showing people that they can challenge themselves, while at the same time giving back to their community, is a very powerful position to be in," he said.

Cordova, 33, who is living in Lakeview and dating, got a plus-sign tattoo on his right arm in 2009, of which he is very proud: "The plus sign reminds me that I am living positive."

"Every time I do an endurance event, it's another notch on my belt, showing me that HIV does not define me, that HIV does not have a hold on me," Cordova said. "I know HIV/AIDS is a crippling disease for some, but, for many, it's just a chronic illness. I want people who are HIV-positive, or living with AIDS, to be open and honest about it—and not fear retaliation or rejection. I believe that if more people are outspoken about their status, it will help normalize the disease for us all. You want people to have compassion and understanding for you. It's impossible for that to happen when people are unaware of the fact that someone who might be their best friend/brother/daughter—and still living with this disease every day."

## HIV prevention with drugs: Recent PrEP news a disappointment

BY ENID VÁZQUEZ

Last year—finally—there was exciting news about HIV prevention.

Based on the successful results of two large studies, advocates geared up to discuss the use of medication to prevent HIV. In January, based on one of those studies, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued interim guidelines for men who have sex with men (MSM) on the use of the HIV medication Truvada for PrEP, or pre-exposure prophylaxis (prevention).

However, in April, 2011, Family Health International (FHI) announced that it was closing its FEM-PrEP study looking at whether Truvada can protect women from HIV. (Transgender women were not included.) FHI, a non-profit research and service organization, reported that with the results up to that date, if the study was carried out to full term it would be "highly unlikely" to statistically determine whether or not Truvada prevented HIV in the women.

The organization also noted that, "At this time, it cannot be determined whether or not Truvada works to prevent HIV infection in women."

The disappointing and unexpected results made an important point about PrEP—there's still much to be learned.

According to the U.S.-based HIV prevention advocacy organization AVAC, there are 20,000 participants in PrEP studies around the world.

Other HIV medications besides Truvada are being studied, along with different strategies, such as daily use versus at the time of exposure.

Last July, CAPRISA 004, from South Africa, reported a 39-percent drop in HIV infection in women using a vaginal gel containing tenofovir, one of the two medications found in the HIV drug Truvada. And in November, the international iPrEx study reported a 42-percent drop in HIV infections when using Truvada in gay men, men who have sex with men (MSM), and transgender women (born male).

In both studies, the reduction in risk of HIV infection was even greater in the people who used their regimen the most consistently. For example, there was a 68-percent drop in HIV infection for those in iPrEx who took more than 90 percent of their Truvada doses. The CORE Center here in Chicago will participate in the extension of the iPrEx study.

At the time that the FEM-PrEP trial was stopped, the same percent of women given Tru-

vada had become infected with HIV (5 percent) as in the group of women given a placebo (fake pill). The women, ages 18 to 35, lived in areas of Kenya, South Africa and Tanzania where there is a high prevalence of HIV, and therefore considered to be at high risk of infection. The infection rate seen in the study showed that this was the case. In fact, 21 percent of the women screened for this study were ineligible because they were found to already be HIV-positive, and this was the main reason that women trying to enroll were ineligible. All of the women received monthly counseling sessions promoting safer sex, along with free male and female condoms.

In a press release about the FEM-PrEP results issued by the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), the agency noted that Truvada would be compared to Viread (brand name of the tenofovir in Truvada) and a tenofovir vaginal gel in the VOICE study for women (Vaginal and Oral Interventions to Control the Epidemic), and that continued research is "imperative."

Truvada, one of the mostly commonly used HIV medications in this country, has already been widely prescribed for the use of HIV prevention for years, through off-label use. Gilead Sciences, maker of Truvada, is preparing to get the drug approved for the use of HIV prevention, which is expected to happen by the end of this year.

Some of the many issues that need to be hashed out include the price and availability of PrEP; how it might compete with funds for HIV treatment; and how to promote adherence—taking it correctly, whether it's Truvada or anything else.

Julie Davids, director of National Advocacy and Mobilization for the AIDS Foundation of Chicago, points out that there are many emotional and social aspects as well.

"PrEP has scientific issues, it has community issues, it has personal issues," said Davids. "We're just at the first steps in the process, and it's not about PrEP vs. condoms or men who protect themselves vs. men who don't. That's a very divisive discussion and PrEP is emphasizing these tensions." Davids advocates for options, and said that while it may be counter-intuitive, PrEP research has not shown a decrease in the use of condoms, and may even help promote them.

Enid Vázquez is associate editor of **Positively Aware**.



These two photos: Chicagoan Richard Cordova, 33, got a plus-sign tattoo on his right arm in 2009, which he's very proud of. "The plus sign reminds me that I am living positive." Photos by Ross Forman

### AFC and Windy City Times Want Your Stories for AIDS @ 30

Were you around during the era of GRID and ACT UP? Did you lose friends or family? Then the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) and the Windy City Times want to hear your account of that time. We are teaming up to produce a nine-month series called AIDS @ 30 to recognize the 30th year of AIDS in America, remember the early days of the epidemic, honor those we lost, and celebrate long-term survivors.

AIDS @ 30 will draw from more than two decades of photographs and articles from the Windy City Times and other Chicago publications, but we need your stories to give this project real life. The weekly features will run in the Windy City Times from April through December, tracing the epidemic's history from the early 1980's. The series will feature profiles of local advocates, organizations, those lost to AIDS, and uncover personal stories of family members, friends and people who have lived with AIDS for 20 years or more.

Is there a particular person, organization or story you think needs to be highlighted in AIDS @ 30? If so, please contribute your story ideas!

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/AIDSAT30>

**AIDS**  
**@30**



## DIVA from page 12

with me who I turned down were happy I had [rejected] them. Then I went on with my life; it felt like a weight had been lifted from my shoulders. The secret had been killing me.

**WCT: Could you talk about what you have done over the years, talking with audiences about HIV/AIDS?**

RL-T: I wasn't a public speaker; I was an organizer. Someone from Test Positive Aware [Network] knew I was in politics and called me saying, "I have a teacher who wants someone to come to the school who's not gay and who's drug-free. Will you do it?" The teacher convinced me to come.

About the time of the third workshop, I noticed that some kids were still standing around. I asked the teacher if she made them stay, she said, "No. These kids are skipping class to hear you speak." On the second day, there were kids everywhere. At the end of the day, a little Hispanic girl came up to me and said, "Ms. Lewis, I know you said you weren't a public speaker

but you shouldn't stop because the Lord is using you." I patted her on the back and asked myself, "What does she mean by that?"—but I couldn't shake it. So I woke up one morning and decided this is what I'm supposed to be doing.

I quit my job, with no speaking engagements lined up, no brochure, no direction. Two weeks later, that same teacher called me and asked if I would come to a retreat. She could only give me 15 minutes; when I left, every other school that had attended was confirmed.

Six months later, I received the Community Service Award at the Expo for Today's Black Woman. It had been an interesting event. You know how people sometimes half-listen? Well, people knew I was an AIDS activist but they missed the part about me having AIDS. I stood up and said, "Men have been hitting on me all night long. Not only do I have HIV, but I have full-blown AIDS." You could hear a pin drop. Susan Taylor [of Essence magazine] grabbed me as I was walking off the stage and said, "We'd like to do a story on you." I asked her, "Why?" She said, "I believe you have a story to tell, and I want to tell it." It was controversial—even the

title was controversial.

If I don't go for anything else, I will go down for giving a face to Black women with AIDS—a face and lifestyle where they can see themselves. There are people with AIDS who live normal lives.

I took a beating from the AIDS community for that.

**WCT: For being on the cover?**

RL-T: For being on the cover, being on Nightline—"She's a latecomer." I didn't start speaking until '93 so people asked, "How in the hell did you get to be on the cover of a magazine?" Ted Koppel had always done AIDS stories, though.

The thing about me is that, one, I reach middle America—both Black and white. No one does what I do across this country. And I have a unique way of talking about AIDS so that people get it; it's a gift. One of my Twitter followers donated \$300; she said, "Reading your blog and seeing your tweets made me a better woman." I deal with the truths of all of this.

It doesn't matter if you're gay or straight. It's about what I can share with you. This is what I know; this is my experience. I can't talk about gay issues because I'm not gay. But do I tolerate gay-bashing? Hell, no.

So I'm a little controversial. I've been invited to one national AIDS conference in 20 years.

**WCT: When was that?**

RL-T: In '96; it was the first women's HIV conference in Washington, D.C. I've been featured on Nightline three times, I've been on Oprah and I have a local Emmy for a hard-news story.

**WCT: Do you feel that people have gotten really complacent about HIV/AIDS? There was a time when you saw red ribbons everywhere.**

RL-T: I think there's a lot of denial about HIV, really in the African-American community. The fact that people now live longer with HIV has

made it seem not as urgent. It's not a sexy topic anymore. There is a lackadaisical attitude, generally speaking; but among African Americans, there's just a lot of denial and a lack of culpability. Plus, we're not addressing the real issues responsible for a rise of HIV in our community.

**WCT: What do you think the real issues are?**

RL-T: I think poverty is one.

**WCT: What about the whole "down-low" phenomenon? Some people seem to think that it is a huge factor.**

RL-T: Let me get this out. I told [writer] J.L. King that he is a fucking fool and that he needs to just admit that he's gay—which he has done. (I said this way back when.) My position about the reaction of the Black community and the emphasis was wrong. The emphasis was, "These Black men are infecting Black women because they're having these seedy relationships." Instead of saying why our Black men have these complex relationships, has anyone really asked a gay man who is living a double life but would prefer not to do so? The emphasis should be "How do we begin to have an honest conversation in our community and create an environment where [those] Black men are not ostracized from their families?" I can't believe that a person living a double life wants to, unless they're psychotic.

**WCT: OK. With everything you've been through, what is the one thing you've learned about yourself?**

RL-T: [Pauses.] That I'm stronger than this fucking disease, AIDS.

Rae Lewis-Thornton will present the commencement address at Northeastern Illinois University's commencement ceremony at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 7. For more on Lewis-Thornton, visit <http://www.RaeLewisThornton.com>.



Art in Lewis-Thornton's Chicago home. Photo by Andrew Davis

## iCondom



iCondom's logo online.

## Philly starts iCondom iPhone campaign

iCondom, a new free iPhone condom locator application, and the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) have partnered to launch a free condom locator application for the city of Philadelphia—iCondom Philly.

iCondom Philly will supplement the PDPH, Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Control Program's existing efforts to reduce the alarming rates of STDs among adolescents in Philadelphia. iCondom Philly will build upon the existing iCondom application, which is already being used in large metropolitan cities worldwide, to allow users to find the nearest free condom distribution site.

Recent U.S. surveillance reporting indicates that Philadelphia is in the top ten among large US cities for reportable STDs, with African-Americans and adolescents being disproportionately affected. New data also indicates that teens infected with an STD are at greater risk for having a subsequent HIV infection.

iCondom Philly will launch in tandem with the new PDPH STD Control Program's teen-centered website [TakeControlPhilly.org](http://TakeControlPhilly.org) which will include resources for sexual health education, videos on how to properly use

condoms, and a new program to request condoms by mail for youth who may be uncomfortable picking up their own.

"When we designed iCondom, we had in mind that the application could be easily developed to meet the needs of each city's publicly run condom programs that exist worldwide. Philadelphia immediately understood how useful the application could be in targeting youth 11 to 19 years old," said Morgane Danielou, founder of iCondom. The founders designed the application so that all users could add their preferred locations. Crowd sourcing has proved to be highly efficient and users have been adding location in countries such as Brazil, Spain, Australia, Canada, UK, France, Italy, Switzerland, Sweden, Ireland, and the U.S.

iCondom was the first application to help users find the nearest condom dispensing locations and provide them with access to free condoms no matter where the user is, 24/7. Based on a geolocation platform (Google Maps) and crowd sourcing, iCondom locates the condom dispensing site nearest to the user.

**iCondom and iCondom Philly can be downloaded from the Apple App Store.**

## VIEWPOINTS

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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 Marshall, Research Director, Community Marketing, Inc.**

 Community Marketing, Inc.



**TERRY  
ANGEL  
MASON**

## Welcome to McDonald's, where violence and transphobia are on the menu

McDonald's has finally reached the ultimate pinnacle in their quest to provide the perfect family dining experience. The chain now offers you dinner theater with mouthwatering Big Macs, delicious fries, Filet-O-Fish sandwiches, value meals and fruit smoothies.

Now, customers can watch murderous homophobic female thugs as they attempt to kill members of the LGBT community, while management and crew members cheer them on and video tape horrific violent assaults to later post on YouTube, Facebook and other hip-hop social networks.

Does it sound unbelievable??? Well, that is exactly what happened on a chilling Baltimore evening at around 8 p.m., inside a McDonald's restaurant in the 6300 block of Kenwood Avenue. What fueled the incident was when a transgender woman made her way toward the women's restroom to use the facility. The victim first asked one of the McDonald crew members if she could use the restroom and was told that she had to purchase some food in order to use the facility. She responded by saying that she really had to go right away and could not wait. According to the woman, while walking toward the restroom an unidentified man apparently approached her—possibly, one of the girl's boyfriends—in an attempt to flirt with her, but the woman declined his offer and immediately went into the restroom.

When she came out two African-American females, 14 and 18, spat in her face and began arguing with her, expressing their objection to the woman using the bathroom; one of the women accused her of flirting with her boyfriend. The argument escalated into what has become one of the most violent attacks ever viewed on the Internet. As a matter of fact, immediately after the video was uploaded to several popular social networks, it went viral!

When I first learned of this incident, I was warned that the video is extremely violent and graphically disturbing, but never in my wildest dreams, could I have ever imagined just how horrific and disgusting it would be to watch! All through the video, I was overwhelmed by a variety of emotions. All the while, I cringed in disbelief and thought to myself, "This cannot be happening and why isn't anyone making any real attempt to stop this violent attack, phone the police; and my God, where is the manager?"

Then out of nowhere, after several minutes that seemed like hours of brutal beating, an elderly woman dressed in white, like an angelic emissary, appeared on the scene to rescue the woman in distress. Even though it is clear that she is no match for the two younger women attacking the victim, she literally places her life in jeopardy in a courageous attempt to defuse the situation and ward off the attackers. While her efforts were not completely successful (because the assailants later returned to beat the woman even more viciously), her intervention delayed the attackers and may possibly have saved the woman's life.

Now, you are probably wondering, like me: Where was the staff and where was the manager?

That's an easy question to answer; the manager is making a half-hearted attempt to stop the fight while others can be heard in the background, peering through video phone camera lenses, boasting about how they are going to put the video on YouTube and other social networks. The manager on duty made an insincere attempt to intervene only after the badly beaten victim was viciously dragged by the hair to the front door by the young female thugs who seemed intent upon murder. After a sustained barrage of brutal kicks to the head, the victim began convulsing and bleeding from the mouth—all of which was followed by a violent seizure.

Moreover, while this occurred, the crew was gleefully cheering the thugs on while videotaping it, never making a genuine attempt to defuse the attack and/or phone the police. Instead of the manager locking the door and retaining the two women who had attacked the victim until the police could arrive, the employees encouraged them to flee for their own protection and the manager walked over the victim's body lying in the doorway (as he can be seen doing throughout the video) like she was a piece of trash that was totally unworthy of any type of assistance.

When Baltimore County officers finally arrived, they found a 22-year-old woman convulsing and having seizures. She was still lying in the doorway of the restaurant. After the woman had recovered to some degree, the officers questioned the woman and apparently ran a make on the woman to determine if she had a criminal history. Their inquiry revealed that the victim had a lengthy rap sheet, which of course had nothing at all to do with the incident or the fact that she had been undeservedly almost beaten to death by vicious attackers. The victim's criminal history and even home address were made public after the unmerciful beating, further jeopardizing the woman's safety and adding to the emotional duress, physical and mental trauma caused by her assailants.

The owner of that particular McDonald's announced April 23 that one employee who taped the violent beating and put it on YouTube and other social networks had been fired (quite justifiably so). He also responded by expressing his dismay about the entire incident:

"My first and foremost concern is with the victim," franchise owner Mitchell McPherson said in a statement, adding that action might be taken against other restaurant workers as well. "I'm as shocked and disturbed by this assault as anyone would be. The behavior displayed in the video is unfathomable and reprehensible."

I am inclined to agree wholeheartedly with McPherson, however; if I were in his position, I would fire every employee—starting with the manager and every crew member who stood idly by, witnessed the incident and did nothing to stop it or even intervene by calling the police.

Some people have stated that the transgender woman should not have attempted to use the women's restroom and expressed their vehement disapproval. I realize that most people don't fully understand anything about transgender people, but since we are having a "teachable moment," it should be noted that most transgender people don't think of themselves as being gay but see their gender assignment at birth as a false or incomplete description of themselves. Therefore, it is only natural for them to dress, act and, yes, even use public lavatories that are appropriate for them as a transgender woman or man. Needless to say, it was probably extremely wise and appropriate for the transgender woman to use the women's restroom, because if the truth be told, had she entered the men's restroom (in some minority communities) she could have placed herself in even greater jeopardy!

Not long ago, Baltimore, Md., was besieged by evangelical ministers who had fled the D.C. area after being expelled from the region. They were horribly defeated by the LGBT community and affirming congregations during the implementation of the Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage

Equality Amendment Act of 2009 Bill 18-482, granting same-sex couples the right to marry. Of course, since Baltimore is in close proximity to D.C., it was only natural for the LGBT community to seek the same constitutional rights and provision to marry as well. However, religious leaders banned together, enraging the African-American community and pitting them against the gay community once again, killing the bill.

It is no secret that the Black church has tremendous influence over the African-American community and influences the minds of the countless thousands within its ranks. Furthermore, it is no secret that sometimes this vehement disapproval mutates within the Black community and manifests itself in the form of overt bigotry and hatred toward same-gender-loving people, even outside of the church. I don't blame the ministers for these acts of violence completely, but I do blame them for not telling their parishioners that whatever their doctrinal beliefs are about same-gender-loving people, those beliefs never gives any individual the right to discriminate or beat anyone unmercifully or to murder them!

I have said it before and I will say it again: These types of horrible occurrences are not isolated incidents, but are a result of years of consensual discrimination that this country endorses and allows! Innocent women, children and teens will continue to commit suicide by the thousands and athletes will think nothing of blurting out anti-gay slurs for millions of fans on national television to hear without conscience.

As long as rap artists (whom we worship) are allowed to continually spew homophobic lyrics, secretly knowing that they have our mental endorsement and permission to reshape the mindsets of our children with subliminal anti-gay messages cleverly woven into the fabric of rap lyrics, then we can expect to see more incidents like this occur. Most children who are gay, bisexual or lesbian aren't as bold as transgender people are, and many hide their sexual orientation from parents and guardians in the African-American community most of their lives until they eventually cast off the chains of discrimination and oppression and come out of the closet.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., modeled his life after Christ, and both of them were examples to us all. Their goal was to teach us to love one another and to respect one another because every human being is made in the image of the Creator and deserves their God-given equal rights. Many religious extremists rant and claim that acceptance of all people is against God's will and that by granting all people equal rights will most certainly lead to the demise and the downfall of our great nation. However, I prefer to think the opposite!

I prefer to embrace the philosophy and vision of our forefathers whom under divine inspiration crafted the Constitution (an ingenious revolutionary document that is still the envy of countless nations today) and believed that all people deserve equal rights. If our nation falls, it will not be because people are LGBT; it will be because we have allowed ourselves to become deluded and deceived by our own homophobic prejudices, still intent upon continuing our legacy of discrimination and hatred that have stained the pages of our history with the blood of the innocent for decades.

Terry Angel Mason is an author, HIV advocate and civil-rights activist whose latest book, *Love Won't Let Me Be Silent*, earned a 2009 submission for the Pulitzer Prize, a nomination for the Lambda Awards and the Stonewall Awards. His new book, *They Say That I am Broken*, is due to be released soon. Visit <http://www.TerryAngelMason.com> for more info.

# GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



Photo  
courtesy of  
Anchor Bay  
Films

## STRIP SERVICE

Kim Cattrall portrays a stripper/former porn star in *Meet Monica Velour*. Read an interview with her on page 24.

### TV

**My little Toni.**  
Page 27.

Photo of Toni Braxton from WE TV



### FASHION

**Dress in show.**  
Page 26.

Photo of Borris Powell  
by Andrew Davis



### CELEBRATIONS

**It's an honor.**  
Page 31.

Photo of Laura Ricketts  
from Linda Heacox



## Scottish Play Scott

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

The New Colony has been named by The League of Chicago Theatres as the winner of the 2011 Broadway in Chicago Emerging Theater Award. The prize entails a \$5,000 award, plus a marketing package to be co-created with an executive team from Broadway in Chicago.

It's quite an honor for the four-year-old theater company, which has built its reputation on presenting eight ensemble-created world premieres since its 2007 inception. The New Colony is the same age as the award, which was created by Broadway in Chicago and the League of Chicago Theatres to encourage and promote emerging non-Equity theaters that have "demonstrated great ability and promise, artistic excellence and fiscal responsibility in business practices." Previous winners of the award are The House Theatre of Chicago, Silk Road Theatre Project, the side project and Steep Theatre.

Some of the more memorable New Colony productions include its environmental staging of *Frat* at the Dank Haus, and its most recent work called *The Warriors* (based upon New Colony ensemble member Mary Hollis Inboden's efforts to reconnect with her classmates who were survivors of the 1998 Westside Middle School shootings in Jonesboro, Ark.).

In my opinion, some New Colony shows didn't fully coalesce, like *11:11* or *Tupperware: An American Musical Fable*. However, I was still happy that The New Colony was focusing so much effort on creating world premieres.

The New Colony bested other finalists via a majority vote from the entire League membership. The 2011 finalists included 16th Street Theater, Theater Wit, Theatre Seven of Chicago and Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre.

### Non-Equity Jeff noms

Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre may have missed out on the Emerging Theater Award, but it can at least take some consolation in the 12 Non-Equity Jeff Award nominations it nabbed last week. The Rogers Park-based theater company had the most nominations for a single production (eight nods for *Cats*), and was second in the highest tally for nominations (the top honor went to *The Hypocrites* with its 14 nods—seven of which went to its staging of *Cabaret*).

All in all, there were 106 nominations in 23 categories, with a record 32 theater companies receiving nominations for productions that opened between April 1, 2010 and March 31, 2011. The Jeff Committee also announced that the nomination field is so big and talented that not one person was nominated twice this year.

For a full list of how the Chicago-area non-Equity theater companies were recognized, visit

<http://www.jeffawards.org> for a complete list of nominees. The winners are to be announced at the 38th Anniversary Non-Equity Jeff Awards Ceremony at Park West, 322 W. Armitage, at 7:30 p.m. Monday, June 6. Tickets are \$40-\$45.

### Porchlight's new leading man

Porchlight Music Theatre has named Michael Weber to be the organization's new artistic director. Weber takes over for departing artistic director L. Walter Stearns, who is now with the Mercury Theatre.

Weber is a two-time Jeff Award winner and a seven-time nominee. Weber previously served as artistic director for the inaugural season of Drury Lane Theatre Water Tower Place in 2005 and with Theatre at the Center from 1998 to 2004.

"I am extremely honored to accept this position with Porchlight Music Theatre," said Weber in a statement. "I have long admired Porchlight's innovative approach to musical theater and I look forward to continuing their tradition of excellence starting with the 2011-2012 season."

That season includes the Sondheim revue *Put-*

ting it Together (Sept. 2-Oct. 16), the Chicago premiere of the musical *A Catered Affair* (Feb. 17-April 1, 2012) and the Jonathan Larson Prent musical tick, tick... BOOM! (April 27-June 10, 2012). Porchlight Music Theatre is currently producing its first Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, *The King and I*.

### Steppenwolf's Woolf to wow Broadway

Start kicking yourself now if you missed Steppenwolf Theatre's critically acclaimed revival of Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* The Pam MacKinnon-directed production that also recently played the Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., is now headed to Broadway.

Set to open on Oct. 13, 2012—50 years to the day of the original Broadway opening of Albee's controversial drama—this revival is set to feature the Chicago and D.C. casts of Steppenwolf Theatre ensemble members Tracy Letts and Amy Morton alongside Carrie Coons and Madison Dirks.

Now some might feel that this Virginia Woolf revival might be arriving too soon, just seven years after the 2005 Broadway production starring Kathleen Turner and Tony Award-winner Bill Irwin. (These two stars also brought the play on tour to the now-Bank of America Theatre in Chicago in 2007.) However, when it comes to the American classics, there is always room for new interpretations and a new generation who hasn't seen this particular work before.

This transfer of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* brings to mind another Chicago-to-Broadway production, namely the Robert Falls-directed 50th-anniversary staging of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*. That Goodman Theatre production triumphed not only on Broadway in 1998, but also in London in 2005.

Let's hope that Steppenwolf Theatre can replicate the same kind of global success with another pillar of classic American drama.

Please send theater news and other related tidbits to [scottishplayscott@yahoo.com](mailto:scottishplayscott@yahoo.com) or [Andrew@windycitymediagroup.com](mailto:Andrew@windycitymediagroup.com).



The New Colony's *The Warriors*, which ended its run April 17.



Bury the Dead. Photo by Tom McGrath

## THEATER REVIEW

### Bury the Dead

Playwright: Irwin Shaw

At: Promethean Theatre Ensemble at the Artistic Home, 3914 N. Clark  
Phone: 1-800-838-3006; \$20  
Runs through: May 21

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

How's this for a premise? Six deceased GIs rise up in their freshly-dug graves and refuse to be buried. Their superior officers order them to lie down like the lifeless refuse that the doctor's official statement affirms they are. The chaplains accuse them of blasphemy ("Who do they think they are—Jesus Christ?") and initiate exorcisms. The pentagon tries to suppress reports of this unpatriotic behavior ("We can only keep fighting when the dead are buried and forgotten," huffs one general) as the media attempts to spin it into a feel-good morale-booster. Wives, sisters, mothers and girlfriends are distraught—even angry—at the return of their loved ones. Gradually, however, word of this posthumous mutiny spreads, gathering popular support.

Nowadays, with vampires and zombies very much in vogue, reanimated corpses are less shocking than in 1936, when Irwin Shaw wrote his scathing indictment of war's destruction—so scathing, in fact, that theaters were prohibited from performing it in the late 1960s, when anti-Vietnam war sentiment was at its peak. Shaw may have been talking about World War I—his infantrymen speak of "front lines," trench fever

and "being caught on the wire"—but the Promethean Theatre Ensemble doesn't comfort us with historical distance. Its production presents us with deliberately eclectic period details to create a panorama of images drawn from the many calls to arms following the one purported To End Them All: field uniforms blend jungle and desert camouflage, body armor appears side-by-side with booniehats. Civilians wear classic fashions dating from anytime between 1960 and 2010. Slang, pop references and economic indicators (a mechanic's wages, for example) are, likewise, updated.

Director Beth Wolf wisely keeps the action scaled to the intimate dimensions of the Artistic Home's storefront auditorium, making for a spartan stage picture as her mostly young actors deliver emotionally intense performances transcending the propagandist archetypes they portray. Audience members whose exposure to international conflict is limited to safely-sanitized summaries, conveniently submitted well after the fact, may argue that the atrocities of 1918 are no longer relevant in an age of Smart Bombs and Kevlar jackets, but until somebody invents a war where nobody dies, the untimely slaughter of our country's youth will continue to invoke sorrow and outrage.

## CRITICS' PICKS

**The Goat or, Who Is Sylvia?**, Remy Bumppo at The Greenhouse, through May 8. Want to destroy your life? Make love to a goat. Edward Albee's outrageous premise tests the limits of love, marriage, friendship and passion in this beautifully-acted production. JA

**He/She**, Chicago Opera Theater at Harris Theater for Music and Dance, May 7 and 8. A very limited run of song cycles by Robert Schumann (Frauenliebe und Leben) and Leos Janacek (The Diary of One Who Disappeared) exploring the differing psyches of a man and woman in desperate states of love. SCM

**The Madness of George III**, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, through June 12. This gorgeously costumed drama entertains with modern relevance as it shows the political machinations that play out when Britain's King George III descends into a state of "madness." SCM

**Sex With Strangers**, Steppenwolf Theatre, through May 15. Writers in love—preferably from another century—are a safe study for the classroom, but Stephen Louis Grush and Sally Murphy make Laura Eason's tale of the blogger and the novelist sizzle with immediacy. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

## THEATER REVIEW

### Rantoul and Die

Playwright: Mark Roberts

At: American Blues Theatre at the Biograph, 2433 N. Lincoln

Phone: 773-871-3000; \$32-\$40

Runs through: May 22

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Just as every urban center is presumed to harbor twisted serial killers armed with state-of-the-art weapons, rural neighborhoods in popular fiction are invariably populated with hard-drinking bullies who delight in slaughtering one another with no more finesse than they would extend butchered livestock or felled trees—hey, what's the use of all that industrial equipment, if not to terrorize sheltered middle-class audiences? And though Tracy Letts' Killer Joe put a comic spin on the Deliverance genre in 1991, the archetypes remain the same.

In the downstate Illinois town whose name invites the titular pun, they are represented by



a quartet of familiar rubes: Gary, the brawny lug with his brains firmly lodged in his pants. Debbie, the salty-talking disgruntled wife. Rallis, the wimpish husband doomed to mistreatment by his peers. Meanwhile, cat-owning spinster Callie is so relentlessly cheerful that five minutes after meeting her, we anticipate her participation in some grisly violence.

We anticipate many other things, too. Mark Roberts' success as a writer of television comedies has given him an ear for witty dialogue—along with a palpable craving for the vulgarity

prohibited by network censors—but not the focus required to sustain a 90-minute story. Not only do his characters utter such signpost declarations as "I'm up to my ears in rage and resentment," but base their decisions more in narrative expediency than in personal revelation: when Rallis waves a firearm around the room, he does it so ineptly that we *know* that he won't



Rantoul and Die. Pics by Paul Marchese

shoot at anyone (he doesn't even accidentally let off a shot that breaks something, ho-ho-ho), and when the plot requires him to turn the gun on himself, we also know that he will bungle his suicide attempt so that he can return in the next scene for some likewise occasion-driven Weekend-At-Bernie's shtick.

It can be argued, of course, that a cast with Kate Buddeke, Francis Guinan, Alan Wilder and Heather Graeff could sell *anything* and, under Erin Quigley's direction, they struggle valiantly to lend substance to this live-action cartoon. However, unless you consciously distance yourself from the universe presented by Roberts for our amusement and scorn—why *shouldn't* the managers of a Dairy Queen take their jobs seriously, for chrissakes?—the fates of the players in Rantoul's low-stakes intrigue will offer no more suspense than the hayseed clichés making up the author's inspiration.

## Hollis Resnik in 'All About Eve' benefit reading

Award-winning actress Hollis Resnik is Margo Channing in Season of Concern's benefit reading of "All About Eve" Monday, May 23, at the Mayne Stage, 1328 W. Morse.

The reading of Joseph L. Mankiewicz's iconic 1950 screenplay is directed by longtime Goodman Theatre associate producer Steve Scott. Show time is 7 p.m.

Resnik will be joined onstage by other Chicago favorites including Larry Yando as Addison DeWitt, Heidi Kettenring as Karen, Steppenwolf ensemble member James Vincent Meredith as Bill, Peggy Roeder as Birdie, Northlight Theatre Artistic Director BJ Jones as Lloyd, Ross Lehman as Max Fabian, Maura Kidwell as Ms. Caswell and Sandra Delgado as Eve. Longtime Chicago musician John Steinhagen is the pianist.

Additional casting will be announced shortly.

The 1950 film All About Eve starred Bette Davis as Channing, the prominent yet aging Broadway star, and Anne Baxter as Eve Harrington, a willingly helpful young fan who

insinuates herself into Channing's life. Joseph L. Mankiewicz wrote and directed the movie, based on the short story "The Wisdom of Eve" by Mary Orr.

The film was nominated for 14 Academy Awards and won six, including Best Picture.

Season of Concern (SoC) is the Chicago theatre community's fundraising effort, providing compassionate care to artists who are experiencing life-threatening illnesses. Each year, Season of Concern raises funds that provide direct care and address critical healthcare needs for Chicago theatre community members.

At the benefit, SoC will present its 4th Annual Larry Sloan Awards to the AIDS Foundation of Chicago, former SoC Board President Barry Taylor and longtime SoC fundraiser Karen Bronson.

All About Eve is presented by special arrangement with Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation and Sonia Friedman Productions. Windy City Media Group is a media sponsor.

Valet parking is available for \$5 at the door. Tickets for the reading are on sale for \$45, or two for \$80. For more information and to purchase tickets visit <http://www.seasonofconcern.org>.

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DOUBLE REVIEW

Next to Normal

Score: Tom Kitt; Book & Lyrics: Brian Yorkey  
 At: Bank of America Theatre, 80 W. Monroe  
 Phone: 800-775-2000; \$32-\$95  
 Runs through: May 8

Passing Strange

Score: Stew and Heidi Rodewald;  
 Book & lyrics: Stew  
 At: Bailiwick Chicago at Chicago  
 Center for the Performing Arts, 777 N. Green  
 Phone: 312-733-6000; \$25-\$35  
 Runs through: May 29

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Many Broadway seasons nowadays are dominated by jukebox musicals with prepackaged pop hits or screen-to-stage adaptations. But now and then wholly original shows like Next to Normal and Passing Strange emerge to push the art form of musical theater in new directions with a distinctly contemporary sound and unconventional subject matter.

Next to Normal, now in Chicago through May 8 at the Bank of America Theatre, arrives with a distinguished pedigree: the 2010 Pulitzer Prize for drama and three 2009 Tony Awards (score, orchestrations and best actress in a musical). Composer Tom Kitt and librettist Brian Yorkey utilize a largely modern pop sound in their smart and emotional approach to Next to Normal, a musical exploring a family where the mother, Diana Goodman, struggles with treatment for her bipolar disorder.

It's an often harrowing work mixed with sarcastic humor as Diana juggles medication and psychotherapy to try and live a semblance of an ordinary life. Director Michael Greif stages this intimate story masterfully upon Mark Wendland's multi-level set with flashes of color-saturated lighting by designer Kevin Adams. Greif also



Next to Normal.

elicits strong performances from his small six-member cast, who each largely meet the emotional and technical demands put upon them.

The only drawback to this tour of Next to Normal is what should have been its brightest asset: Alice Ripley recreating her Tony Award-winning performance as Diana.

At the performance I attended, Ripley's voice sounded raspy and was characterized by odd vowel enunciations now and then. Now the gravely Janis Joplin-type sound Ripley produced naturally matched with the unhinged nature of Diana, but I couldn't help but worry whether or

not she should be put on vocal rest.

The 2008 Broadway musical Passing Strange isn't quite the same emotional roller-coaster ride as Next to Normal, but it definitely rocks out in the secure hands of Bailiwick Chicago and the local band JC Brooks and the Uptown Sound at the Chicago Center for the Performing Arts.

Passing Strange is about an African-American teenager who shuns his middle-class Los Angeles existence and journeys to Amsterdam and Berlin to become a musical "artist." Exploring notions of faith, identity and freedom (both artistic and sexual), Passing Strange is a touching and very thoughtful story of a man questioning his decisions as a rebellious teenager.

Director Lili-Anne Brown helms a versatile cast who are chameleons with multiple characters (a big shout out to the hilarious Aaron Holland as Christoph, the German performance artist), or by bringing to the fore the superlative vocal chops to flesh out their singular roles.

Both Passing Strange and Next to Normal point to new approaches in American musical theater, and they're not to be missed by anyone who cares about the art form.

There's more: Read a review of The Woyzeck Project online at <http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com>.

SPOTLIGHT



Critics like to praise George Bernard Shaw's precient prediction about the decline of the British leisure class in his 1919 **Heartbreak House**, a drama centering on a young woman's indecision to marry for love or money. See how Writers' Theatre tackles Heartbreak House, which runs now through June 26 at Writers' Theatre, 325 Tudor, Glencoe. Performances are 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays (also 2 p.m. May 18 and June 22), 8 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays, 4 and 8 p.m. Saturdays, 2 and 6 p.m. Sundays (no 6 p.m. shows May 22 or June 26). Tickets are \$45-\$65. Call 847-242-6000 or visit <http://www.writerstheatre.org>. Photo by Michael Brosilow



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Among the "extraordinary lesbians" covered in *The L Life* are activist Urvashi Vaid (left) and comedian Kate Clinton (right). Photos by Jennifer May



## BOOK REVIEW

### The L Life: Extraordinary Lesbians Making a Difference

by Erin McHugh

\$32.50; Abrams Books; 158 pages

REVIEW BY TRACY BAIM

I can appreciate just how difficult it would be to select a list of lesbians to include in a book about lesbian life. Just as *The L Word* can only represent a slice of that world, so does *The L Life* book, by Erin McHugh. The author and her photographer Jennifer May crossed the country to interview 26 lesbians from all walks of life. There are celebrities and politicians, but also a sheriff and non-profit leaders.

This is a sugar-coated, surface look at the lesbian world. These are not investigative pieces, and they do not deal with any real controversial issues that may surround some of those interviewed. But it doesn't pretend to be investigative journalism, and it really is just a simple look at the lives of 26 women, all of them deserving of recognition for their efforts.

I could list a hundred more who should have been included (and Chicago is pretty much ignored, except for the few, like Jane Lynch, who used to live here). But any book trying to tackle the lesbian life would have those same limitations. McHugh set out to profile a sample of lesbian life and, combined with the images, she does just that.

Because she focused on those who are living, this is also not a historical book. But there are

wonderful legendary lesbians included, such as Phyllis Lyon, Ann Bannon and Dr. Susan Love. I also applaud McHugh's effort to get a few folks under the normal media radar, and some younger faces. A few high-powered dykes are conspicuous in their absence (Rachel Maddow, Melissa

Etheridge, Ellen DeGeneres, Billie Jean King, Martina Navratilova, Wanda Sykes, Lily Tomlin, Sheryl Swoopes, etc.), but that was probably a good thing: If the author had room for just 26 people, celebrities could have dominated the list. As it is, she left room for more everyday

folks, even though it is heavy on the bigger names, and very heavily white.

The full list of those featured in the book is: comic Kate Clinton, cartoonist Alison Bechdel, health advocate Marjorie Hill, actor Jane Lynch, musicians Amy & Elizabeth Ziff, activist Phyllis Lyon, union leader Randi Weingarten, New York politician Christine Quinn, journalist Linda Villarosa, leader Kate Kendall, Dr. Susan Love, international activist Nan Buzard, political activist Hilary Rosen, sheriff Lupe Valdez, political activist Elizabeth Birch, author Ann Bannon, Logo TV's Lisa Sherman, political activist Roberta Achtenberg, U.S. Rep. Tammy Baldwin, Michigan Fest's Lisa Vogel, political activist Urvashi Vaid, Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum, corporate activist Sally Susman, urban farmer Mary Seton Corboy, youth advocate Tenaja Jordan and film producer Christine Vachon.

Since each profile is short, we don't learn extensive details on these women, and a few would deserve their own full-length biographies. The photos enhance the book greatly, making it serve more as a coffee-table discussion point than a detailed history of the lesbian movement. What I didn't like about the book is its attempt to claim itself as one of the only "cultural touchstones" that have opened people's eyes to everyday lesbian life. There have been thousands of books, movies, plays, songs and much more that do this very thing. There's no reason to make over-inflated claims about the role this book plays. It is an important book, and looks beautiful, but it is not all things to all lesbians, and it presents only a specific slice of the lives of 26 of us, out of millions.

I recommend the book for what it is, not for what it can't be: No one book will ever represent all of us. But *The L Life* is certainly a nice, pretty addition to our bookshelves.



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BOOK REVIEW

**Smoking Typewriters**

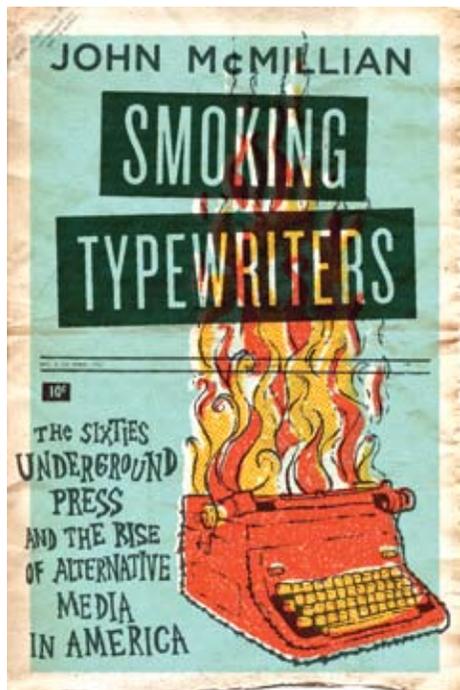
by John McMillian  
\$27.95; Oxford; 204 pages  
REVIEW BY TRACY BAIM

I don't just review LGBT-specific books, because I know our readers care about issues that are of broader interest as well. And one of my interests, as a reporter in LGBT media since 1984, is alternative media in general. So I was pleasantly surprised to find a book about alternative journalism that actually had some interesting gay history embedded within.

Smoking Typewriters is not about the gay press and, in fact, the gay press is pretty much ignored in the book's coverage of 1960s and 1970s "alternative" media. But writer John McMillian has uncovered some interesting facts about the role a few gay men played at critical underground media, and media content provider Liberation News Service, during this era. [Lesbians are not mentioned specifically.]

The book does an excellent job of reviewing a niche of underground media, those newspapers and services controlled mostly by white men, and some white women, focused on anti-establishment writing. The book begins with the primary reason that media started to be more diversified in the 1960s: The mimeograph machine made it possible to afford the printing process that broke the process wide open.

McMillian had a tremendous task in front of him in trying to summarize a movement that included hundreds if not thousands of publications across the country. He focused his work through the examples of a few key media in various cities, including the Los Angeles Free Press, or Freep; East Lansing, Michigan's Paper; Austin's Rag; and the Berkeley Tribe. The Chicago Seed is among those mentioned, but not in great detail.



The founding editor of Michigan's Paper was Michael Kingman. He was a Michigan State University student upset with the administration and the failed promises offered by the school. His work at The Paper was critical, but he eventually became involved in the psychedelic movement, was in a cult and died of AIDS in 1991.

The Rag was even well known enough to be attacked by Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley in 1968. He called it "the terrorists' guide to Chicago."

While the book does not deal with the LGBT media, including the 1950s and 1960s Matachine, ONE and Ladder publications, it does note that some of the people who started in the underground press in the 1960s eventually gravitated toward gay activism and coverage in the 1970s and 1980s, including reporting about AIDS. Many of the women involved in underground media also went on to work on

feminist publications and activism. Controlling the means of printing meant a flourishing of women-owned presses in the 1970s, including in Chicago, something also not mentioned in the book.

The era covered by McMillian is actually only a few years, and some of the papers lasted for very short periods of time. But they were still vital and influential, and laid the groundwork for far more diverse media in the future. They also forced some of the mainstream media to stop ignoring the youth movement, and some of the reporters ended up with long careers in mainstream media. That print diversity eventually paved the path for the Internet and all its diversity.

The Chicago Reader is also mentioned in the book, including its work as part of an alliance of alternative media formed in the late 1970s. It's interesting to note that this alliance became far more mainstream and focused on business, and I really liked how McMillian captured those changes in "underground" media that now wanted to appeal to corporate advertising buyers. That alliance of alternative weeklies was also very narrow in its focus: they did not allow many truly alternative papers, including gay media, to join.

The intensity of the 1960s and early 1970s work was probably part of the reason for its demise. That level of anger just could not be sustained, and it claimed many victims. There was infighting, drug use, sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, and all sorts of personality clashes. There were also great enemies to battle: The FBI had spies working to sabotage the movement, and papers were mercilessly harassed by police and other authorities. Many papers faced obscenity charges that were clearly politically motivated. Reporters and editors were arrested on drug charges.

The author does a great job of showing how the passion often transformed into paranoia, how ideologies clashed, and some of the papers

and media services just imploded. I loved the story of how Liberation News Service was so divided that half the team absconded with all the equipment and supplies and then the others found them and held them hostage until the printing machine could be located. Drama and turmoil, fueled in many ways by the drugs ubiquitous in the underground media scene. But they still accomplished important things, and many of their goals were met. Those kinds of passionate people still exist in alternative media today. (After all, in 1987, I was part of a staff coup from the original Windy City Times.)

There is a lot of interesting material in Smoking Typewriters and I highly recommend it for anyone interested in media history and the limited gay history the book includes from that era. The sources in the back of the book are also very valuable for finding out additional information on these topics.



Author John McMillian. Photo by Lenny W. Doolan

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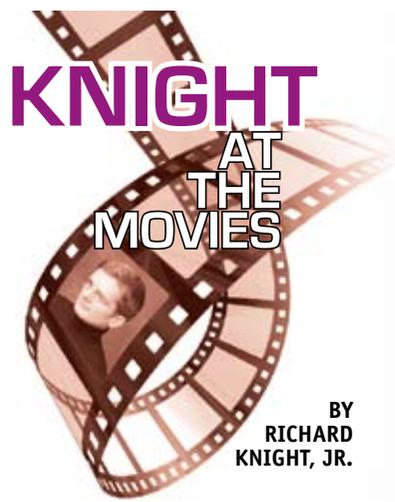
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BY  
RICHARD  
KNIGHT, JR.

## Becoming Chaz; film notes



Chaz Bono.

Queer cable show and film producer/directors Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato (known through their moniker World of Wonder Productions and their biggest TV hit, RuPaul's Drag Race) are the duo behind the documentary **Becoming Chaz**. The movie follows the year in which the former Chastity Bono, the offspring of Sonny & Cher, makes the transition from female to male—finding renewal as Chaz Salvatore (in honor of his late father) Bono on the other side.

Oprah Winfrey's OWN network grabbed the movie, which debuted at Sundance to good advance word; it will premiere May 10, kicking off a new documentary series. It's easy to see why Winfrey's nascent network would purchase the broadcast rights to such a remarkable journey. A movie that follows the gender reassignment of the child of celebrity icons in a respectful, rather than salacious, manner seems made to order for OWN. Indeed, as we follow Chaz throughout the final steps to becoming male (including hormone treatments, surgery to remove breasts, legal reclassification, etc.) it's evident that there's much in *Becoming Chaz* that both the informed and the uninitiated with the topic of gender transition will find compelling.

I have been a big champion of Bailey and Barbato's feature offbeat documentaries—especially, *Inside Deep Throat* and *The Eyes of Tammy Faye*—but beyond the subject matter of making a transition, the duo is, for once, stymied by their central figure. Chaz is no Tammy Faye or any of the colorful characters that normally populate a Bailey/Barbato presentation. Once past the fanciful vintage clips and the “I always knew I was born in the wrong body” refrain—painful yet familiar—the duo's film subject turns out to be such a typical guy's guy (obsessed with video-gaming and his pets) that the filmmakers end up looking to Chaz's girlfriend, relatives and doctors for some dramatic juice.

Cher herself is seen in the archival footage, news clippings and in a lone solo interview, discussing her fears and emotional difficulty with “da” (the family's nickname for Chastity/Chaz). However, though we see Chaz with Sonny's widow and stepsiblings, Cher, whose mega-celebrity hangs over the proceedings from beginning to end, isn't seen in contact with her new son until a brief, forced meet-up between the two (obviously staged for the cameras) at the film's conclusion (during the *Burlesque* red carpet premiere). Moreover, tantalizing questions—why Chaz's lesbian couple friends (his sobriety sponsors) had to lend him the money for surgery, for example—aren't addressed.

What we do get a lot of—and I mean a lot of—is Chaz's girlfriend, Jennifer, who wears out her welcome long before she and Chaz start to have problems because his testosterone shots find him acting more aggressively and with less “softness.” By default, she becomes the go-to girl for the filmmakers and the movie feels pad-

ded because she's always there cajoling, kvetching, explaining hers and Chaz's feelings. Best are the instances where the filmmakers stick close to their shy central subject, capturing some of the most genuinely moving moments in the process—when Chaz's driver's license, with his new gender classification, arrives in the mail; when Chaz alone attends an Atlanta conference with other transgender people; or watches his mother on TV explaining her feelings about his sex change on *The David Letterman Show*. (Talk about surreal.)

A segment late in the movie where Bailey and Barbato follow Chaz on what can only be described as a play date with a pint-sized transgender male child as well as his involvement with an organization of parents supportive of their children living as opposite genders (started by the child's mother) is particularly illuminating and poignant. Scenes like these speak volumes about the courageous journey that the shy, taciturn man—a true trailblazer—has gone through on his way to combining body and soul.

### Film notes:

—For the fourth year in a row my alter ego, Dick O'Day, will be hosting (with able assistance from David Cerda and the Handbag Players) **Mother's Day with Mommie Dearest** this Sunday, May 8, at the historic Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the 1981 camp classic that stars Faye Dunaway as Joan Crawford, portraying Crawford as both the world's most maniacal movie star and mother. Mara Hobel and Diana Scarwid play the beleaguered, adopted daughter Christina, who penned the bestseller that started all the fuss upon Crawford's death. I can honestly report that there's nothing quite so satisfying to a gay moviegoer as hearing a packed house scream out in unison, “I'm not mad at you. I'm mad at the dirt!” and hearing some of the hilarious ad-libbing offered at each year's screening.

“Joan and Christina” will take photos with eager fans beginning at 1 p.m. in the lobby (with proceeds to benefit Vital Bridges) and the pre-show (costume contest, prizes, a video by The Joans, *Mommie Dearest Sing-A-Long*, etc.) starts at 1:30 p.m. with the interactive screening to follow. Tickets are \$12/general admission or \$28.50 for a pre-screening brunch at Blue Bayou (across the street from the Music Box) and preferred section seating in the theatre. There's all that plus 300 “souvenir” wire hangers to the first 300 patrons! See <http://www.musicboxtheatre.com>.

—You may have heard that a certain former leading box-office powerhouse whose personal life has spun out of control—filled with drunken arrests salted with racial and homophobic epi-

thets for starters—is starring in an offbeat indie in which he gives a performance that his female co-star and director (not to mention the producers of the movie) hope will convince audiences to overlook his personal prejudices and focus on his work in the movie. You may have also read interviews with his equally high-profile co-star and director—winner of two Best Actress Oscars—in which she tacitly defends her star's behavior, insisting instead that she wants you to give both the actor and her movie the benefit of the doubt.

However, although this actress-director is giving plenty of interviews to mainstream press to try and make her case (especially to writers willing to tiptoe around said actor's abhorrent behavior) as we go to press she's once again snubbing the LGBT media (though, to our surprise, she initially did schedule an interview with WCT,

only later to cancel it for “scheduling reasons”). Apparently, it's one thing to implicitly defend her star's off-screen behavior by sidestepping questions about it with complicit journalists but it's quite another to chance addressing her own status as a closeted lesbian—an open secret she herself somewhat acknowledged when receiving an award several years back. Taking all that into consideration, why then would Windy City Times and its resident queer film critic review this film, do anything that would imply our support of said movie or encourage our LGBT readership (and those sensitive to LGBT issues) to do anything but the same?

Check out my archived reviews at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com> or <http://www.knightatthemovies.com>. Readers can leave feedback at the latter website.

## Chaz Bono to speak at HBHC events

Chaz Bono, renowned advocate for LGBT rights and social justice, will be the featured speaker at Howard Brown Health Center's Lifeline Celebration Friday, May 6, at the Palmer House Hilton, 17 E. Monroe, according to a press release.

In addition to sharing his personal journey at the main event, Bono will visit Howard Brown Health Center's Sheridan Road Clinic earlier that day for an open house on LGBT health and will participate in a panel discussion. Details about this public program will follow.

“Chaz Bono is strong voice nationally for the LGBT community in general and for the transgender community specifically,” said Jamal Edwards, president and CEO. “For years, we have provided quality and cutting-edge health services to the transgender community including our new informed consent hormone protocol, THInC. We are thrilled that Chaz will be speaking and sharing his time with our patients, staff and supporters at Howard Brown and our Lifeline Celebration. It's part of our broader and deep commitment to providing quality care to LGBTQ people.”

As the only child of famed entertainers Sonny and Cher, Bono used his celebrity spotlight to become one of the most recognized leaders for LGBT rights and social justice as an advocate, author and speaker. Recently, Bono shared his first-person account of a 40-year transformation from female to male in his biography, *Transition*. The book inspired a film documentary of Bono's experiences in transforming from female to male in *Becoming Chaz*, which received a standing ovation at its debut at the Sundance Film Festival this year.

“Chicago is home to an active and vibrant LGBT community, and I'm very excited to have an opportunity to share my story as a transgender man,” said Bono. “It is not easy to find compassionate, quality healthcare as a transperson. I am thankful that an organization such as Howard Brown exists, because it provides much needed care to those who might not otherwise be able to access or afford it.”

Earlier in the day, Bono will be part of a panel on holistic transgender health. The event—with other panelists such as Howard Brown Transgender Health Manager Lois Bates, Transformative Justice Law Project of Illinois' Owen Daniel-McCarter and Young Women's Empowerment Project's C. Angel Torres and Shira Hassan—will be 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at Howard Brown Health Center, 4025 N. Sheridan.

Following the afternoon's events, Bono will mingle with guests during the premier VIP reception of The Lifeline Celebration at 5:30 p.m. The evening's main event begins at 6:30 p.m. and features a personal address by Bono and the presentation of Howard Brown's an-

nual Friends for Life awards. Benefit guests can savor culinary specialties, sip champagne and cocktails and enjoy a raffle to raise funds to support Howard Brown's Lifeline Appeal and its health and wellness services to the community.

Proceeds from The Lifeline Celebration will support Howard Brown's ongoing work to meet the needs of more than 36,000 people with life-saving health care services and a myriad of comprehensive programs to support the wellness of the entire LGBTQ community.

Tickets to the premier VIP champagne reception, which features a mixer with Bono and opportunities to bid on signature raffle tickets, are \$250. Admission to the main event—which features cocktails, raffles and an address by Bono—is \$100.

For more information about The Lifeline Celebration and to purchase tickets, visit <http://www.HowardBrown.org> or call 773-388-1600. Email [daisym@howardbrown.org](mailto:daisym@howardbrown.org) about the health panel.

## UIC films talk about sex

Tuesdays are the new movie nights as the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) hosts its second year of documentaries and discussion with the Sex Positive Documentary Series.

Established in 2009, the film series and discussion group addresses sex, culture and sexual fun with an intimate, multimedia approach, according to the website. Held in UIC's Jane Addams Hull-House Museum on the second Tuesday of every month, the series is the brainchild of Clarisse Thorn, a Chicago-based feminist and blogger who has run sex workshops, events and lectures around the city.

The group will explore some new themes this year, such as the interrelation of sex and activism in activist sex; the historical portrayal of sex; and how intimacy, love and relationships influence sex in love and sex.

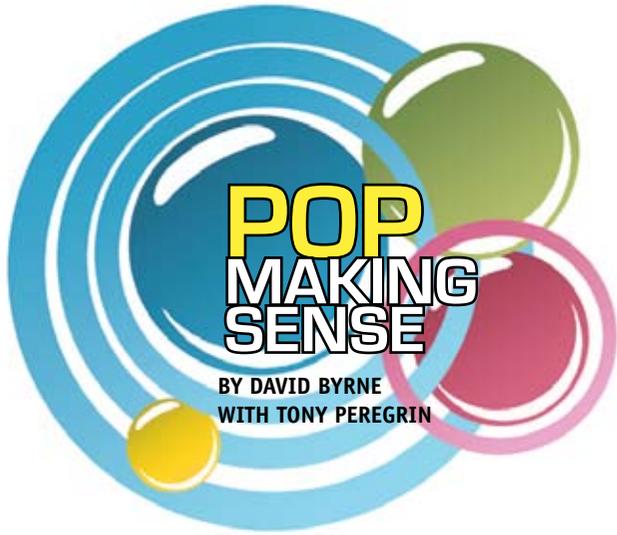
Those interested in attending should RSVP by phone, 312-413-5353, to reserve a seat. Seats are not reserved after 7 p.m.

—Terrence Chappell

## 50 Faggots webisode premiering May 6

The documentary web series *50Faggots* will premiere the second webisode, “I Was Just A Poor Lost Boy Myself,” Friday, May 6, at the Hoover-Leppen Theatre at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, 7-9:30 p.m.

An audience Q&A and talkback discussion will follow the premiere. Then, an afterparty/fundraiser, “Serving Faggots” will take place at Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted. See <http://www.50Faggots.com>.



The month of May is serving as a precursor to the multiple happenings with Pride. In the upcoming weeks, there are several noteworthy LGBT music events throughout the Chicago-area.

The **Alt Q Festival** is taking place on Saturday, May 14, at The Old Town School of Folk Music, 4544 N. Lincoln. The annual all-queer showcase is organized by the godfather of Chicago's LGBT-music scene, Scott Free. The event will feature **Ellis, Nicole Reynolds** and **Levan D. Hawkins** as well as local talents **Sister Speak, Jeffrey Altergott** and **Ian Wilson**.

This marks Alt Q's 11th anniversary. Each year, Free seamlessly accomplishes the task of assembling a fantastic assortment of LGBT-identifying artists, who cover multiple genres. The Old Town School of Folk Music is the perfect setting to hear these outstanding singer-songwriters deliver their take on the queer experience through music and storytelling.

This year's Alt Q Festival will benefit St. Leonard's High School of Chicago, a free alternative high school for those who were incarcerated. For more information and tickets, please visit <http://www.altqfestival.com>.

Fresh from a recent concert with Everest, Wilson's former band, **Canasta**, will be headlining at The Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western, on Friday, May 13. Also on the bill are Dastardly, Soft Speaker and Secret Colours. These four bands took top honors in the Deli Chicago's Best Emerging Artists' poll. Wilson departed from Canasta after last year's release of *The Fakeout*, the *Tease* and the *Breather*.

Having performed at The Alt Q Festival previously, **Coyote Grace** will be at The Space, 1245 Chicago, Evanston, on Wed., May 11, with *Girlyman*. On *Coyote Grace's* 2009 album *Ear to the Ground*, vocalist and upright bassist Ingrid Elizabeth beautifully captures the essence of a pure love, as she swoons over her bandmate Joe Stevens. The successor EP *Buck Naked* is out now. *Coyote Grace* has become a trio with the new addition Michael Connolly.

On Saturday, May 7, the queer-focused monthly art-house show **Cake Chicago** returns to Red Line Tap, 7006 N. Glenwood. Madsen Minax from The Homoticons and Actor Slash Model will be performing with members of Homoticons. *Cake Chicago's* founder and regular contributor, Ripley Caine will be joined by the Full Moon. Also on the card are The Dykings and comedy by Ever Mainard. *Cake Chicago* is on Facebook.

On Friday, May 6, another monthly LGBT concert series, **The Flesh Hungry Dog Show**, hosts three local bands at Jackhammer, 6406 N. Clark. With a new line-up, the female rock trio 8 Inch Betsy issued its sophomore outing, *The Mean Days*. Blane Fonda delivers quite the workout with its high energy live show. In addition to blurring the genres of rock, new wave and soul, *Blah Blah Blah* also has a positive message prevalent in its work. In between the sets, burlesque artist Titty Perkins and female illusionist Vallery Dolls will entertain the crowd. For tickets and more information, please visit <http://www.fleshhungrydog.com>.

**Matt Alber** has performed twice at The Flesh Hungry Dog Show. He returns to the Windy City with a special acoustic performance at Schuba's, 3159 N. Southport, on Wed., May 25, in support of UCAN Foundation of Illinois. This organization is devoted to working with teens and their families.

Alber's stunning full-length solo debut, *Hide Nothing*, features the romantic "End of the World;" a remake of Imogen Heap's "Hide & Seek;" and the absolutely heavenly numbers "Slow Club" and "Monarch." Alber is working on

the follow-up to *Hide Nothing*. For a sneak peek of his new material, a live rendition of "The River" is on YouTube.

Oscar winner Joan Crawford's final film, the 1970 science-fiction camp classic *Trog*, is spoofed in **TROGG! A Musical**. This staged version from Hell in a Handbag Productions is written by David Cerda with Cheryl Snodgrass and



**Jeffrey Altergott.**

Taylor E. Ross; Scott Fergusson directs.

Fans of Chicago's Crawford-inspired New Wave-rock band The Joans can expect a reworking of "Do the Trogg" during the show. Get your mind out of the gutter; the numbers "Big Furry Monster," "Exploring the Cave" and "Real Gone Gal" actually help tell the story about the discovery

of a caveman living in coastal California in 1967 and the impact this plays on two female scientists.

**TROGG! A Musical** is in previews starting Saturday, May 14, with a run from Sunday, May 22, through Sunday, July 3, at The Chopin Theatre, 1543 W. Division. For tickets, please visit <http://www.brownpapertickets.com>.

"I Should Be So Lucky" that **Kylie Minogue** would return to Chicago with her *Aphrodite: Live 2011* tour. However, her 2011 trek is skipping the Midwest altogether. *Aphrodite: Live 2011*, which kicked off in this hemisphere in Montreal, has the same stage technology as the troubled Broadway musical *Spider Man: Turn off the Dark*.

If you are unable to travel "Light Years" to see her live show, *The Call*, 1547 W. Bryn Mawr, is hosting Club Kylie, a night dedicated to all things Minogue, on Friday, May 13, with DJ Riley York.

Minogue's *Aphrodite*, which I dubbed as the best album of 2010, is out now. A digital EP with live versions of five of Minogue's hits like "Get out of My Way" and "Can't Get You out of My Head" was just released. Another digital EP, with remixes to "Put Your Hands Up," is due out Tuesday, May 31.

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## MOVIES

# Kim Cattrall: Sex and the seedy

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

There's not much city in Meet Monica Velour, but there's sex—and a trailer park and a very hag-gard-looking Kim Cattrall. The *Sex and the City* actress plays the title character, a washed-up porn star who meets a young fan of hers when the boy travels to rural Indiana to see her at a strip club. After six seasons of glam in her iconic role as super-slut Samantha Jones on the hit TV series (and two movie spin-offs), Monica Velour is nothing like the femme fatale Cattrall once played.

Recently, we caught up with Cattrall, who discussed how the part parallels her own career, why she shops at Kmart and whether she'd be up for another *Sex and the City*.

**Windy City Times: What about this role was so different for you?**

Kim Cattrall: I usually play characters who are very strong, forceful and successful dynamos, and this woman is someone who's been marginalized and is very much an outcast. I thought, "What will it be like to inhabit that, and do I have that in me?"

In some ways it's a story that's not too far from what has happened in Hollywood for decades. And I thought, "I can relate to that. That's a great handle for me to go on, because I'm in my 50s and suddenly you become, 'You look good for your age,' instead of, 'You look good.'" It was a physical, emotional and intellectual challenge.

**WCT: You really threw yourself into this part.**

KC: I had a tremendous amount of support—I really did. To be handed a role like this at any time in your career, but especially at this time, I said to Keith Bearden, the director: "You've written a feminist film. It's really incredible that you cast a woman in her 50s who's overweight, and that you wrote that role." This is a guy who's rewriting a Hollywood movie and what he's done is make a wonderful American movie. And I don't think we have a lot of those around anymore, sadly.

**WCT: What kind of research went into this role? I heard some of it involved you going to strip clubs.**

KC: That was the least of it, really. I mean, that kind of reality is very easy to access on the Internet. For Keith and I, it was really an investigation on multiple levels. I decided to go with a deeper register in my voice. I felt that my voice as Kim was too hopeful, too lyrical, and I wanted to go deeper than that. Gaining the weight was, again, like looking at porn. It was something that was a dedication in the sense of continuously being aware of it and doing it and not exercising, which was a blessing, and not being on diet, which was an even bigger blessing. [Laughs]

**WCT: What did you eat?**

KC: Oh, God. Definitely pasta, butter, desserts, lots of pork. Anything and everything that was either salty or sweet. It was really a "Get Out of Jail Free" card, because my whole life I've been on a diet or on an exercise routine. But I do love to eat.

**WCT: Before the shoot, you were spotted at Kmart.**

KC: Oh, yeah. I was there. I did a lot of the costumes myself, and every weekend I would go to Kmart because that's where Monica would shop. That's the kind of authenticity that was going on in the sense of this is real; it's not Hollywood real, it's real. No special lighting, no special treatment.

**WCT: You mention Monica being an outcast,**



Kim Cattrall. Photo by Andrew Potter

and early test screenings for the movie showed a strong interest among gay men. Do you think that has something to do with it?

Well, not being a gay man, I can't really comment on that. But I can understand how it would—yes, definitely. Especially in Middle America.

**WCT: Did you tend to buddy-up with the gay people on set?**

KC: Our scenic designer, who did a brilliant job, is gay and he absolutely loved working on this movie. He came in at the last minute, and he did a phenomenal job. That trailer park doesn't exist. A lot of those places didn't exist. We actually shot in the trailer, and with such detail. I remember saying to him, "This really feels real." The bedroom felt real; the living room and everything in the kitchen, he built that all out and he did a phenomenal job.

**WCT: Do you appreciate porn stars more now?**

KC: It gave me an appreciation for women of a certain age—which I am one of them. Whether you're an actress or a teacher or a porn star, after a certain age you are marginalized—and then, in the case of a porn star, you're an outcast. So where do these people go? And where do aging actresses go? I like to think that they go to the theater and they continue to be involved with great stories. So there are a lot of women that I've surrounded myself with, like Janet Suzman, Judi Dench and Meryl Streep; they are really inspiring, but most people get so downtrodden, like this character—where do they go, what happens to them? So I have a real respect and appreciation for what that is and will continue to fight it with everything I have. [Laughs]

**WCT: If you were a porn star, what would your porn star name be?**

KC: Mine would be Fluffy Dawn, because my cat was Fluffy, and I lived on Dawn Road.

**WCT: What do you think Samantha would say about Monica? Would they be friends?**

KC: I don't think they would be friends. I think they live in different universes. Samantha is a dynamo and in some ways she's kind of stuck in her own way, meaning that she doesn't want to change, she doesn't want to age. A character like Monica Velour doesn't have a choice.

**WCT: Will there be a *Sex and the City 3*?**

KC: I have no idea. I really don't know.

**WCT: Would you be on board?**

KC: To me, it always depends on the script, because I always felt the writing was so good on the show and I know that for the writers and producers—Sarah (Jessica Parker) being one of them—that would be a real priority. But I've heard nothing. I also haven't been around too much. I've been busy working. You'll probably know before I do.

**WCT: What's your relationship been like with the *Sex and the City* women? Do you stay in touch?**

KC: You know, we do in the sense of, "Hi, I'm over here," and "Congratulations on that." Two of the four of us have kids, so that's a whole other world, and Kristin (Davis) travels extensively, as do I. But when we see each other, it's so nice. It's really lovely. But we all live in different universes.

**WCT: How did you react when Cynthia Nixon came out?**

KC: I was very happy for her. I saw the pictures of her, and also just from being around her, and she just seemed so fulfilled. Christine (Marinoni) is just wonderful. They're a terrific couple. And I'm very pleased about the baby.

**WCT: What do you think when you go back and watch yourself in *Star Trek VI* or *Mannequin*?**

KC: I never do it. [Laughs] The most I see of that is from fans. But I look back at my career so fondly. I had so much fun and I worked with such terrific people. I'm still working, and I'm just very lucky. And I know I've worked hard for it, and continue to, but it has not been a hardship, it has been a real joy.

**WCT: You played Britney Spears' mom in *Crossroads*, and her life as changed so much since then. But did you ever feel maternal, like you wanted to protect her from all she'd gone through?**

KC: When I met Britney she was in top form, but what I really liked about her was that she

had a real desire—acting in this film meant a lot to her. She had a coach on the set, and she took it very seriously.

I have a lot of empathy for her. The road that she's chosen is a really tough one, and to be in the public eye is tough already—but to be at that level at such an early age, she has handled it the best she knew how. My hat's off to her that she has found her way through that really tough time, and I wish her the very best. I really do.

**WCT: On your episode of *Who Do You Think You Are*, you found out that your grandfather was married to two women at the same time. How did discovering that affect you personally?**

KC: It's affected my whole family. It was very wounding and hurtful to find out the truth, but ultimately it brought the family that I do have closer together. It also started to envelope other people who neither of us knew existed, and that has been a wonderful experience—to have new family and really respect and value the family you do have.

**WCT: This may come as a shock to you, but you have a massive gay following.**

KC: Where would I be without gay men? I don't know where I'd be. I love gay men.

**WCT: I love gay men, too.**

KC: I know you do! [Laughs]

**WCT: Do most gay men recognize you as Samantha?**

KC: Some do, and some know *Mannequin* and some know *Big Trouble in Little China*. Some know me just from my theater work. I have a couple of gentlemen who traveled all the way from New York to Liverpool to see me in *Antony and Cleopatra* over the fall, and that is just so incredible. I'm overwhelmed that someone cares enough to follow me where my career goes.

**WCT: Did you realize how much gay men loved you before *Sex and the City*?**

KC: I didn't. I really didn't. But now I do!

## NUNN ON ONE: COMEDY

### Heather McDonald: On Chelsea Handler and the road

BY JERRY NUNN

Heather McDonald is more than just Chelsea Handler's sidekick. She is a comedian and writer in her own right. She is now a New York Times best-selling author and spins off the Chelsea Lately show with *After Lately*. Heading to Chicago with a certain famous drunken blonde in tow at The Chicago Theatre, we talked Nunn on One before she arrived.

**Windy City Times: Hey, Heather. Are you out touring?**

Heather McDonald: Just for the weekend. I am doing the University of Arkansas for stand up and then I am going to Atlantic City and doing one night there.

**WCT: Do you like being on the road?**

HM: I do but I prefer it with Chelsea because it is fun to be with someone, we take a private plane, and she always sells out. I am excited to go on the live tour.

**WCT: The times I have been around Chelsea Handler. It is always crazy with people running around.**

HM: It will be this time, too, because it is more people with me, Josh Wolf and Brad Wollack at every show, but it will be fun. We are going to do a Q&A after each show. The fans are going to go online and ask a question so they will know when they come that they were chosen to ask a question. We won't know what the questions are but it will be fun and spontaneous.

**WCT: That will keep you on your toes.**

HM: Yeah. I will answer any question about the show and working with Chelsea. She is



Heather McDonald.

such an open book that I never will get in trouble for saying something.

**WCT: I wanted Ross Matthews or some of the gay comedians to come on tour with you.**

HM: Well, it's because we all wrote chapters in the new book, *Lies Chelsea Handler Told Me*. It's also a good balance. I love Ross. I did a pilot with Ross for Chelsea's company. We are hoping that E! will pick it up. It's called "Love or Hate" and it's with Ross and me. We are very close.

**Break out the vodka for Chelsea and Heather at The Chicago Theatre, 175 N. State, on Wed., May 11, and visit <http://www.chelseahandler.com> for ticket information.**

**The whole gang will be signing copies of the new book *Lies Chelsea Handler Told Me* for the first 500 customers at Macy's, 111 N. State, at 5 p.m. before the show the same day.**

**Read the full interview online at <http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com>, where McDonald talks about meeting Chelsea Handler and impersonating lesbian actress Geri Jewell (who was Geri on the '80s TV show *Facts of Life*).**

WINDY CITY MEDIA GROUP PRESENTS



9th Annual

# WINDY CITY GAY IDOL

CHICAGO'S BIGGEST GLBT CONTEST!

ONLY 4 PRELIM EVENTS LEFT!

## T's

5025 N. Clark

SUN. MAY 8

7 sign up/8 start  
\$5 cover/\$10 to sing

\$6.50 Miller Lite double pints

with your hostess  
Sofia Saffire

\$100

to the singer with  
the most votes!

Top Two Finalists  
advance to Semi-finals!

### GRAND PRIZE AT FINALS:

\$1000 Cash, Trip to Vancouver, theatre/concert tickets & more!

Audience prize: TRIP FOR TWO to Vancouver.

Enter to Win at Semi-finals and Finals!

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

## Parlour

6341 N. Clark

MON. MAY 9

8 sign up/9 start

## Scarlet

3320 N. Halsted

MON. MAY 16

8 sign up/9 start

## Roscoe's

3356 N. Halsted

MON. MAY 23

8 sign up/9 start

WILD CARD

## Sidetrack

 3349 N. Halsted  
SAT. JUNE 4 2 door/3 start

SEMIS

## Sidetrack

 3349 N. Halsted  
SAT. JUNE 18 2 door/3 start

FINALS

[facebook.com/WindyCityGayIdol](http://facebook.com/WindyCityGayIdol)

For more, visit [windycitymediagroup.com](http://windycitymediagroup.com)  
or e-mail [cynthia@windycitymediagroup.com](mailto:cynthia@windycitymediagroup.com)

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## FASHION

# Borris Powell: From Lincoln Park to the Oscars

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Borris Powell is proof positive that it is worth pursuing one's dream.

Powell, a Chicago resident, quit his job to become a full-time fashion designer. Now, he has achieved most of his goals ahead of schedule—including having his "Black Swan" dress shown at this year's Oscars and winning the approval of premier designer Valentino. Powell, who now has his own store in Lincoln Park, talked with Windy City Times about what it took to make his dreams come true. (By the way, guys should not fret: Powell will expand into a menswear line next year.)

**Windy City Times: What compelled you to make the jump and quit your part-time job, was it?**

Borris Powell: It was a full-time job at Express [at Century Mall]. I quit the second week in December [2010].

I was pushed big-time to get this space. My [business] landlord is also my doctor. He said, "You're amazing. You're going places. The people who are going to want to keep in contact with you are not going to want to come to your house." He also said, "I've got the perfect place for you. It's in Lincoln Park, and it's the perfect place to get started." He's, like, an angel.

It was rough [at first]. It was raw—yellow walls, the floor was a mess. I brought some friends with me and they were like, "Borris, you're crazy. What are you going to do?" But I knew I could make this work—and I'm not even done, Andrew. Now we're going to redo the entire floor. I acquired this space before I quit Express, so I've been working on it for some time.

**WCT: Congratulations on winning the Oscars contest, where you got to show your "Black Swan" dress. How did this all come about?**

BP: Thank you. I got a call in December from this lady named Toni Pickett from the Academy. She said, "You're a hard man to get a hold of" because she had left me several messages. The message was about entering a competition for the Oscars but I didn't take it seriously and I was leery about any kind of design competition because I really don't want to be part of that. I love Project Runway but I don't want to be a contestant. Sometimes, reality shows paint people in negative ways.

**WCT: So what convinced to go ahead with the competition?**

BP: She got me on the phone one day. She said, "I want to talk to you about this competition." After she [described] it, I said, "I'm not quite sure I want to go on with it. I have another fashion show. There's a lot on my plate," and she said, "No, Borris. You need to do this competition." I asked her to send me some information, and she said, "No, Borris. You will do this competition." She was so persistent.

**WCT: How did she know about you?**

BP: She actually contacted the city's cultural affairs department, asking for referrals. My name was suggested to them, and then they Googled me, looked at my website. They loved what they saw; that's why she was so persistent. I decided that it was great: It wasn't a reality-television competition, and I always wanted to be on the red carpet. My goal was to have a dress on the red carpet in five years—and [I thought] who knows what this [contest] could do, even if I don't win? People out there would know my name.

I talked with my team about it, and they were going crazy. We had two weeks to have a dress

ready and meet the model. So we got the dress ready, I flew out [to L.A.]—and it was an amazing experience.

Then I heard I was in the top nine, which was way more than I had expected. Then there was an online voting contest. I did what was completely natural to me: I dropped everything, even though I had an upcoming show. I did not send out any mass emails. I sent out personal emails and called people for four or five days straight. Now, here I am. Since I got back, I have not stopped.

**WCT: So what did you win, exactly?**

BP: I got the most amazing exposure, first of all. Now I have the title of Oscar Design Challenge winner 2011. I had my dress on the red carpet so [the model and I] were walking—that was an amazing feeling.

**WCT: What was that like?**

BP: It was indescribable. I was out of my body.



Borris Powell. Photo by Andrew Davis

You're seeing stars pass by you. It was unbelievable.

Remember, I said last year I wanted a dress on the red carpet five years from now. I reached my goal [much earlier] than expected. I was trying to process all this. I'm walking and I see Valentino; I'm, like, "I'm here." They kept pinching me, saying, "It's real." It was hard to take it all in.

I was trying to figure out how I was there. I'm a self-taught designer with no education who started out five years ago. Not even a few months ago, I was working full-time at a retail store. When I quit my job, everything opened up.

**WCT: People are going to start quitting their jobs now.**

BP: [Laughs] I'm not telling anyone to do that. That's just what happened to me, honey!

It was a hard decision, and it's not for everyone. It was [brewing] for years, and something just told me to leap. I had amazing support—friends and family. Fans are now friends; I don't believe in fans.

It was such an amazing experience; I'll never forget it.

**WCT: By the way, who did you meet at the Oscars?**

BP: Jennifer Hudson. I also met Justin Timberlake at the end of the ceremony; he actually did not have security or an entourage. I was two steps behind Celine Dion.

Even meeting Valentino, I didn't lose control—although somehow my feet guided me to him. I was like, "Mr. Valentino, I am honored," and I introduced myself and the dress.

**WCT: Did he comment on the dress?**

BP: He looked it up and down and, in this

amazing Italian accent, said, "Very nice. Very nice." He then told my model, "You look chic in this dress." That was validation that I'll never forget. I told him, "Mr. Valentino, I don't need anything else in the world right now. I have a dress on the red carpet, I'm meeting my idol and you said my dress is very nice. I'm leaving." Then I went on my way, passing by Nicole Kidman.

**WCT: OK—she had an interesting dress. Who did you think were the best and worst dressed?**

BP: Helena [Bonham Carter] definitely needs help, but she has her own style; it's just not my taste. I'm a very simple, classic, timeless, romantic guy when it comes to dresses.

Mila Kunis was gorgeous. I thought Halle Berry was as sexy as all get-out; she looked amazing. She just knows how to dress. Gwyneth Paltrow was so classic. Cate Blanchett had one of those looks that teeter-totters between "horrific" or "so amazing you don't get it." In person, it was stunning. I thought Michelle Williams was amazing; Jennifer Hudson was one of my faves.

I was looking at everything from an unbelievably positive lens. [The Oscars] are the biggest platform for fashion. Everything was so surreal. Next year, I'll have a critical lens. [Laughs]

**WCT: Without revealing any names, have any celebrities contacted you about making dresses for them?**

BP: Thank you for asking it that way, and respecting [their privacy]. Yes, we are in the process of working with some celebrities. I just need to get through my messages; yesterday, I had 43 voicemails, and I still have 39 today. The night the contest win was announced, I had 700 emails. Who knows who's on my voicemail? It's getting harder for me to respond directly; it's tough because everyone is used to being so personal with me.

**WCT: What's your advice for aspiring designers?**

BP: You have to believe like there's no tomorrow. You have to surround yourself with nothing but amazing supporters. You also have to be willing to admit that you're not the best; there's always someone out there who's better than you. Telling myself that I'm not the best is something that keeps me going.

See <http://www.BorrisPowell.com>.



Borris Powell's "Black Swan" dress. Photo by Andrew Davis

## Windy City Gay Idol adds another venue

CHICAGO—Windy City Gay Idol, now in its ninth year, is adding one additional preliminary event to its line up, May 9 at Parlour. The largest and most highly anticipated annual search for the best amateur LGBT singers in the Chicago area has only four more opportunities before June 4 to compete for a spot in the semifinals.

Windy City Gay Idol winners have gone on to sing at Wrigley Field, Soldier Field, Market Days and at festivals around Illinois, Milwaukee and even Toronto. Plus, the Windy City Gay Idol Finals in 2008 featured a then-unknown Lady Gaga as a guest performer. So you never know what you will see and hear! You don't have to sing to be a part of it. Just come and vote!

Windy City Gay Idol 2011 preliminary competitions are held one night only at different bars. As many as 20 participants sing at each venue, where all contestants compete for the chance to advance to the semifinals Saturday, June 4, at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted. Results from every preliminary, semi-final and final event come from audience votes. Votes from friends, family and audience members hopefully land them on the stage at the finals Saturday, June 18, at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted.

The 2011 Windy City Gay Idol is produced by Windy City Media Group along with its premium sponsor, Miller Lite. Other sponsors include Creaoke, Tourism Vancouver and Vancouver Coast & Mountains, and Ravinia.

With more than \$5,000 in cash and prizes, all contestants will face local celebrity judges that include singers, DJs, actors, talent and casting agents and others familiar with the performance arena.

Each winner collecting the most votes at

each preliminary bar will win \$100 cash. Two winners from each bar will advance to the semifinals. Audience members at each bar also have the chance to win great prizes, such as Miller merchandise, concert and theatre tickets, new DVD & CD releases, and much more.

The finals feature big prizes for audience members (including a trip for two to Vancouver to one lucky audience member) as well as prizes to the top three contestants.

The finals winner crowned at Sidetrack is awarded \$1,000 cash, a dream vacation trip to Vancouver, Miller Lite premium gifts, theatre and concert tickets, plus the coveted title of Windy City Gay Idol 2011. The winner will also be given a chance to sing at a Chicago Cubs and a Chicago Sky women's pro basketball game this summer.

The event is open to all amateur singers age 21 and above, regardless of sexual orientation. There is a \$10 signup fee for singers, and a \$5 fee for audience members at all preliminary events. There is a \$10 cover at the semifinals and finals at Sidetrack.

The Windy City Gay Idol 2011 remaining schedule:

—Sunday, May 8: T's bar, 5025 N. Clark, 7 p.m. sign up, 8 p.m. start.

—Monday, May 9: Parlour, 6341 N. Clark, 8 p.m. sign up, 9 p.m. start

—Monday, May 16: Scarlet, 3320 N. Halsted, 8 p.m. sign up, 9 p.m. start.

—Monday, May 23: WILD CARD, Roscoe's, 3356 N. Halsted, 8 p.m. door opens, 9 p.m. start. Invited guests plus open slots for new singers.

—Sat., June 4: SEMIFINALS, Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted, 2 p.m. door opens, 3 p.m. start.

—Sat., June 18: FINALS, Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted, 2 p.m. door, 3 p.m. start.

Complete rules and regulations at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com)

## TELEVISION

# Braxtons make it a family affair



BY JERRY NUNN

Six-time Grammy Award winner Toni Braxton is ready for reality with a new show, Braxton Family Values. Although Braxton has sold more than 40 million records worldwide, the road has not been easy for the singer: She filed for bankruptcy and was diagnosed with lupus. Starting a new project, the bickering Braxtons are letting it all hang out on WETv this spring. Three of the Ts—Toni, Trina and Tamar—talked talent and toothpaste on the telephone.

**Windy City Times:** Hi, ladies. When did this idea of doing a reality show start?

Tamar: I knew since about 2007, maybe 2008. I asked my sisters and they said, "No you're tripping, absolutely not," especially Toni was not interested. It took awhile but she decided that it's time for her to tell her own story and we convinced her into doing it. So here we are.

**WCT:** Toni, were you worried about how you would be portrayed on a reality show?

Toni: A little bit I have to be honest, yes. But then I said, "I'm just going to let people see the side of me they haven't seen." I want them to see me as a sister and a mom. I wasn't trying to be a diva or keep it up on the glam side. I can always do that on stage. So it's important to me that I display another side of me.

Tamar: We all realized that we all had a story to tell. Trina had her thing with her husband, she went down the wrong path and Toni, her financial and health situation, and myself trying to balance being a wife, trying to launch... Toni is making fun of me right now, my superstarism that's inside of me and Towanda's trying to find herself and then Tracy realizing that...

Trina: Life goes on.

Tamar: ...life goes on, decisions that she made when she was a teenager she has to live with them now as an adult. We thought that it would definitely make a difference in someone's life that they can take with them and apply it to theirs.

**WCT:** I saw the part with you, Tamar, talking about Lady Gaga to your husband. Are you a fan of Gaga?

Toni: Gaga is signed to Tamar's husband's record label. He actually discovered her. I hate to say "discovered," like she wasn't there. So she's like family. She's like another little Braxton sister. Tamar sings stuff with her all the time but she's been doing things on her album. Like the single that's out, "Born That Way," that's Tamar you hear in the background.

Tamar: "Born This Way."

Toni: "Born This Way." Sorry, Gaga.

Tamar: In the clip, in my defense and in Gaga's defense, I wasn't saying anything negative towards her. I was just saying if I'm good enough to sing background then I'm good enough to sing the hook or a duet.

**WCT:** Amen.

Tamar: Whoa. We love you.

**WCT:** You have been through a lot, Toni,

with debilitating illness, marital separation and bankruptcy. How is that covered on the show?

Toni: My marriage I don't talk about on the show. That is not even an option because I have a special-needs son and I don't want him to know what is going on with mom and dad's life unless he hears it from us. Of all my sisters you'll find I'm still the one that's still aloof but for me it was more of a platform of telling my story. In addition to that hanging out, having fun with my sisters and you will see a different side of me. You will hardly ever see me, Toni Braxton as the singer. That's not something I portray in the show at all.

**WCT:** So behind the scenes.

Toni: Yes, I got my jammies and a T-shirt, and I have toothpaste on my acne trying to dry it up. I wasn't trying to be pretentious, not that I am, but I wasn't trying to be an artist at all



Toni Braxton. Photo from WETv

unless I was on the stage. You see a distinct difference because we shot a few shows during the taping.

**WCT:** Would you ever make a whole album together like the Jacksons?

Tamar: Will we ever make a Braxtons album? Let's see. Well, we had a Braxton single out. Was it in 1990?

Trina: It was 1990.

Tamar: We sold three copies to my mom, my dad and my grandma. So I don't know. We're a

little skeptical about it. People are in different place in their lives so I don't know. We're talking about it. We'll see what happens.

Toni: I think we'll probably end up in the end doing at least a single.

**WCT:** How is your relationship with your father?

Trina: It's a work in progress. We're working on mending and healing.

Toni: It's just challenging for us because our dad was such a focal point for our family when our parents were married and now they're divorced. And my dad got remarried and unfortunately when he divorced my mom he kind of divorced us too.

We want people to see that every family goes through changes. We're just one of many families. We hope that we can heal ourselves.

**WCT:** Toni, I have always wanted to ask you, how do you feel about your gay fans?

Toni: Oh my God, I want to say thank you boys for showing me how to be more fabulous and making me a better girl!

**"Un-Break" Toni's heart and watch her show that recently debuted on Tuesday nights. Visit <http://www.wetv.com> for listings and details.**



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CHICAGO 2011 SECOND TO NONE NAGAAA GSWS



# Chicago House's brunch in fashion

Harold Washington Library's Winter Garden Ballroom was the place to see and be seen May 1 as Chicago House held its 24th Annual Spring Brunch & Fashion Show—and raised more than \$120,000. Models wore items from Mark Shale's spring line while guests dined and bid on silent-auction items as Dixie Longate of Dixie's Tupperware Party was among those who took the mic. Chicago House honored former state Sen. Dawn Clark Netsch with the Spirit Award, and the agency announced the return of its 2011 Speaker Series Luncheon, which will take place Nov. 4 at the Palmer House Hilton with Whoopi Goldberg.

Photos by Kat Fitzgerald (MysticImagesPhotography.com); many more online at <http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com>



# Bon Foster's 'Momentum'

"The momentum is ours and our time is now," said co-chair Chubi Anyaoku at this year's Bon Foster Civil Rights Celebration, echoing the theme for 2011, "Seize the Momentum."

The annual fundraising event for LGBT-rights group Lambda Legal was held at the Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies April 28. The event is named after Bon Foster, a lawyer who left \$250,000 to Lambda Legal to open a Midwest office after his death at 36 in 1991.

"He was loud and proud before it was fine," said Lambda Legal Midwest Regional Director Jim Bennett. "That visibility is what moved us forward."

Guest speakers talked about personal moments in their lives. Co-chair and Lambda Legal National Leadership Council member John Richards spoke about when he came out to his parents, saying that coming out is the biggest moment for many gay people.

Bennett talked about the moment when his mother finally told his conservative uncle that he is gay.

Zach Wahls, a 19-year-old college student with lesbian parents, got a standing ovation from the crowd after his testimony to the Iowa House of Representatives was played. Wahls recently received national attention for his speech asking for equal treatment for families like his.

"We still have a long way to go, but we're on our way," Wahls told the audience. He said that his personal moment was after his testimony when he

realized that "all these people had my back."

Lambda Legal's new national marriage project director, Camilla Taylor, talked about arguments against same-sex couples raising children. "We have now reached a time when it's considered shameful to make those arguments," she said, adding that many couples still struggle to get respect for their relationships.

Anyaoku closed by talking about his experiences growing up in Africa, where it's still legal to be prosecuted for being gay.

After the presentation guests enjoyed music, drinks courtesy of Sidetrack, hors d'oeuvres from Wolfgang Puck and views of Buckingham Fountain from the ninth-floor museum space.

Lambda Legal also launched its "Get to Know Me" campaign with a photo booth for couples. Same- and opposite-sex couples supporting marriage equality will be featured on the Facebook page created for the campaign.

"It's really moving fast and furious now, both up and down," said Bennett, mentioning the most recent election, the civil-unions" bill passed in Illinois and the repealing of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." "There's a momentum that our movement has. We want to encourage each individual to seize their own moment," he added.

Text by Lisa Klein; photos by Kat Fitzgerald (MysticImagesPhotography.com).





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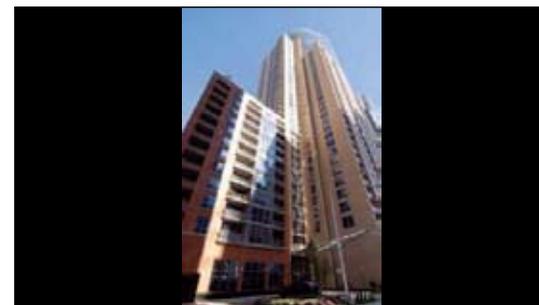
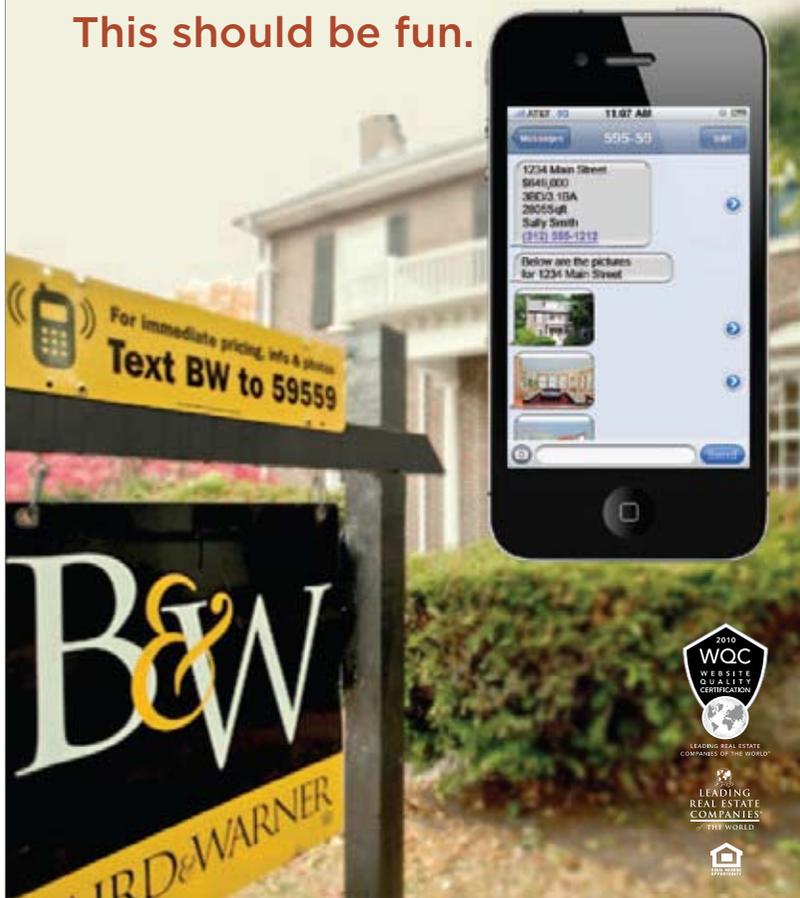
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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**LGB WORKER STUDY** Lesbian, gay, and bisexual people who are employed in Chicago, your help is needed for UIC research study about the experiences of LGB workers. [www.gayworkersurvey.com](http://www.gayworkersurvey.com) (5/4/11 - 4)

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# Celebrations

Share your special moments with the community in Windy City Times' new announcement section!



## Attorneys honor Ricketts

Chicago Cubs board member and Chicago Cubs Charities Chair Laura M. Ricketts was be honored with a 2011 Vanguard Award at a luncheon on April 20 at the Standard Club. The Vanguard Awards are presented every year by The Asian American Bar Association, The Chicago Bar Association, The Cook County Bar Association, The Hispanic Lawyers Association of Illinois, The Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago and The Puerto Rican Bar Association. They honor lawyers and judges who, through their efforts, have made the law and legal profession more accessible to and reflective of the community at-large. Ricketts is the 2011 honoree of The Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago. Photos by Linda Heacox



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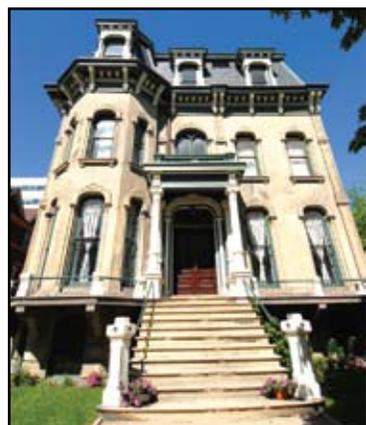
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Got something to celebrate? Send us information on your civil union, anniversary, adoption, marriage or any other joyous moment in life to appear in our new section,

# Celebrations

Please send an email to [andrew@windycitymediagroup.com](mailto:andrew@windycitymediagroup.com) and let Windy City Times join in your celebration.

# calendar

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## Wed., May 4

**Hope & Healing Support Group: LGBT Loss** The death of a life partner, while always traumatic, can be particularly stressful for people who may lack societal or familial support because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Our LGBT loss group helps grieving individuals identify ways to cope with secrecy, shame or guilt—symptoms of grief that often are expressed in the LGBT community. 6:30 p.m., 847-556-1777, Japanese American Service Committee 4427 N. Clark, <http://http://www.carecenter.org/news-events/events-calendar/view/197/date/2011-06-22>

**The Joffrey Ballet's Rising Stars** 2010-2011 Stars season concludes this spring with Rising Stars, a mixed repertory program featuring two World Premieres by Edwaard Liang and Yuri Possokhov, plus a company premiere by Julia Adam, \$25 and \$145; 7:30 p.m., The Joffrey Ballet, 10 E. Randolph, <http://www.joffrey.org>

**Queer Social Club** A no-attitude, casual evening for the Humboldt/Ukie Area LG-BTQ and their friends to come in, have drinks, meet new friends, mingle, etc. 8 p.m., Archie's Tavern 2600 W. Iowa, 60622, <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=10150094929770492>

## Thursday, May 5

**Pop-Up Art Loop Gallery Walk** The Chicago Loop Alliance (CLA) presents its popular First Thursdays Pop-Up Gallery Walks beginning May 5. Pop-Up Gallery Walks are free, self-guided tours of the many new exhibits throughout the Loop that include complimentary wine, live art-making, mu-

## FLARE APPARENT Friday, May 6

Cyon Flare will host 50 Faggots' party for the release of its second webisode at Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted St.

PR photo



sic and more. 5 p.m., 205 S. State, <http://www.popupartloop.com>

**Lipstick Thursdays** at Parlour Join Parlour for their weekly night devoted to the Ladies! There's plenty of libations, and love-lies surrounded by great music! 6 p.m., Parlour on Clark, 6341 N. Clark, <http://www.parlouronclark.com>

**Team Furr Second Annual Cinco de Mayo Party** Last year was so much fun we decided to do it again... This time we're doing it Bucks style. So come on down to help Team Furr reach their \$50,000 goal to end AIDS. All money raised will go to Ride for AIDS Chicago (TPAN). 6 p.m., Bucks Saloon, 3439 N. Halsted, <http://www.sofobarchicago.com>

**Equality Illinois Civil Union Community Forum** Join Equality Illinois for their Civil Union Community Forum. Contact EQIL at [info@eqil.org](mailto:info@eqil.org) or 773-477-7173 for more information; 7 p.m., Quad Cities, <http://www.eqil.org>

## Friday, May 6

**Equality Illinois First Friday Networking Social** Join Equality Illinois every first Friday of the month as they feature a different community partner organization. \$10 gets you 2 cocktails and a ticket for the prize drawing. 6 p.m., Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted, <http://www.equalityillinois.org>

**HBHC: The Lifeline Celebration** Howard Brown Health Center is honored to host Chaz Bono, renowned advocate for LGBT rights and social justice, as the featured speaker at The Lifeline Celebration. General Admission: \$100 in advance, \$125 at the door, VIP Admission: \$250 includes access to an exclusive pre-event reception with Chaz Bono. 6:30 p.m., Hilton Palmer House, 17 E. Monroe, <http://www.howardbrown.org/default.asp?id=1706>

**Suzy Bogguss** Platinum-selling singer, "You can't deal me the aces and think I wouldn't play..." 8:15 p.m., S.P.A.C.E., 1245 Chicago Ave, Evanston, <http://www.evanston.space.com>

**Serving F\*ggot - 50F\*ggots Webisode 2 Release Party & Fundraiser** One-night-only fundraiser of national and local performers serving their favorite versions of our most beloved effeminate, gay male artists. Variety show starts at 11:30 p.m. Featuring Jade, Dida Ritz, Precious Jewel, Debbie Fox, Phillipe Cunningham, Corece, Krisdelarash and more! Hosted by Cyon Flare. Be sure to also join us before for our Webisode 2 screening, with cast and creative team Q&A and audience talkback, at Center on Halsted from 7-9:30 p.m.; 10 p.m., Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted, <http://www.hydratechicago.com>

**HOUSE OF DIVAS** Cee-Cee LaRouge and her HOUSE OF DIVAS take over the Parlour EVERY FRIDAY from 10-11 p.m. and these ladies are PROMPT! So when we say 10, we mean 10. 10 p.m., Parlour on Clark, 6341 N. Clark, <http://parlouronclark.com>

## Saturday, May 7

**A Tribute to Mayor Daley** The outgoing mayor will be honored for his support of active duty military members, veterans and ROTC programs. 9:30 a.m., Soldier Field

**"Point of View": An Exhibition of Woman-made art in Logan Square** Celebrate Mother's Day month with an exhibition of woman-made art, by Katie Holland, Tracy Kostenbader and Julie Sulzen; Rewster's Café will join Café con Leche/D'Noche and Paper Moon in providing tasty hors d'oeuvres along with craft beers by local brewer, Wil Huffman and resident DJ, Nick Kusi, will be on the decks at IALS once again. 6 p.m., I Am Logan Square Gallery, 2648 N. Milwaukee

**Cake Chicago** Comedy by Ever Mainard; live music by Madsen Minax, Ripley Caine and The Full Moon and The Dykings, \$5. 9 p.m., 773.274.5463, Red Line Tap, 7700 N. Glenwood Ave, <http://www.facebook.com/cakechicago>

## Sunday, May 8

**Bike Lake View** Bike Lake View is a free hour-long neighborhood social ride on the second Sunday of every month. The rides are geared toward all of our neighbors, whether you haven't touched your bike in years or you commute daily by bike. We also invite local elected officials and neighborhood police to join us every month. For more information, contact Lee Crandell at [crandell@gmail.com](mailto:crandell@gmail.com). 10 a.m., Meet at Seminary Waveland

**Urban Village Church Worship** is about coming together as community to make space for God to move in us. It's a place to receive God's grace and love and to give of ourselves, as well. 10:15 a.m., Urban Village Church, Spertus Institute, 610 S. Michigan, <http://www.newchicagochurch.com>

## Monday, May 9

**Queering the Faith Film Series, A Jihad for Love** A film about Islam and homosexuality, showing with the DePaul A.V. Club, part of LGBT Change's The Faith Project in association with the Queer Intercollegiate Alliance series exploring the intersection of the LGBTQ Community and Religion. Each film explores the theme in the context of a different religion. 7 p.m., Lincoln Park Student Center, 2250 N. Sheffield, <http://www.lgbtchange.org>

**Mr. & Miss Heart of America Continental** Two fierce pageants in one night! Starring 2010 Miss Continental Mokha Montrese, 2010-2011 Mr. Continental Nick Gray and 2010 Mr. Heart of America Continental Leo D'Mor. Special performances by Chyenne Valentino, Chanel Exotique and Aurora Sexton. Hosted by Tajma Hall. Plus, the infamous Stella buffet. \$20. Doors open 8 p.m., pageant begins at 9 p.m.; 8 p.m., Baton Show Lounge, 436 N. Clark, <http://www.stellaproductions2.com>

**Windy City Gay Idol** Now in its ninth year, Idol searches for the best amateur LGBT singers in the Chicago area and is open to all amateur singers age 21 and above, regardless of sexual orientation, 8 p.m. \$10 signup fee for singers, and 9 p.m. \$5 fee for audience members. Scarlet, 3320 N. Halsted, <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/promotions/idol2011.html>

**United House: A Night of Unity in House Music** Join Hydrate Nightclub, ChicagoPride.com, and host Cyon Flare for United House: A Night of Unity in House Music, featuring New Resident House DJ Semaj; 10 p.m., Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted, <http://www.hydratechicago.com>

## Tuesday, May 10

**Free Legal Clinic at Center on Halsted** Tuesdays and Wednesdays 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. by appointment, allows LGBT and Ally people to speak one-on-one with a licensed attorney about their specific legal concern and receive appropriate information and referral options, 4 p.m., 773-472-6469, ext. 290, Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

**I2I-Invisible to Invincible**, Asian & Pacific Islander Pride of Chicago I2I holds a social the second Tuesday of every month. Greek food with salad options, desserts, price range \$8-15. 6 p.m., Artopolis, 306 S. Halsted

**Becoming Chaz** The world television premiere of the story of Chaz Bono's transformation from a woman to a man, will launch the OWN Documentary Club on OWN: Oprah Winfrey Network, followed by the film Rosie O'Donnell hosting a one-hour special event, "The Doc Club with Rosie O'Donnell" (10:30-11:30 p.m. ET/PT). A forum for further thought and discussion



## WAKE UP, LITTLE SUZY Friday, May 6

Singer Suzy Bogguss will perform at S.P.A.C.E., 1245 Chicago Ave., Evanston.

Promo photo

about the documentary "Becoming Chaz," this one-hour special with Chaz Bono will discuss the extreme lengths people will go in order to become their authentic, best self. 9 p.m., OWN: Oprah Winfrey Network, <http://www.oprah.com/own>

## Wed., May 11

**Equality Illinois Spring Wine Tasting** \$20 gets access to tastings of over 120 different wines. You also have the chance to purchase those wines at a great discount; with a percentage going to the important work of Equality Illinois; 6 p.m., Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted, <http://www.equalityillinois.org>

**Queering the Faith Townhall Discussion: From Dialogue to Action** Bringing together the strands of the Queering the Faith series with an LGBT panel on how to build interfaith dialogue into national action, featuring speakers from diverse religious and institutional perspectives. 7 p.m., Adler Planetarium and Astronomy Museum, 1300 S. Lake Shore, <http://www.lgbtchange.org>

## Friday, May 13

**Scooty & JoJo Show, ALIEN QUEEN: The Concert** Combines the legendary music of Queen with an outrageous parody of the "Alien" films. \$16 advance-sale general admission, \$20 day-of general admission, and \$30 VIP seating. Doors at 8 p.m.. 9 p.m., Metro, 3730 N. Clark, <http://www.scootyjojo.com>

## Saturday, May 14

**Center on Halsted Human First Gala** Center on Halsted hosts Human First, an annual gala performance supporting Center on Halsted. Comedienne Wanda Sykes and singer Linda Eder will perform at the event, held at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance in Millennium Park. 7:30 p.m., 773-661-0794, Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph, <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

**Scott Free presents: ALT Q** Featuring an evening of music from national and local LGBT artists, the event's mission is to raise visibility and awareness of out performers among the general public and the LGBT community; meet-the-artists reception will follow the event and proceeds from ALT Q will be given to St. Leonard's High School of Chicago, a free, community-based alternative high school for formerly incarcerated men and women. <http://www.slministries.org/mbc-education>; 7 p.m., Old Town School of Folk Music, 4544 N. Lincoln, <http://www.altfestival.com>

## Thursday, May 19

**Artha Franklin** Tickets \$47.50 - \$125. on sale Friday, March 25 at 10 am; 8pm, Chicago Theatre, 175 N. State, <http://www.thechicagotheatre.com>



## BEING HUMAN

### Saturday, May 14

Wanda Sykes (above) and Linda Eder will perform at Center on Halsted's Human First gala at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph.

Photo by Craig Blankenhorn

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# BILLY MASTERS

"Studio questions the appeal of Jodie Foster's *Beaver*."—Headline in a trade magazine regarding the upcoming Mel Gibson flick, *The Beaver*. I'm surprised it's a question.

Didya all watch the royal wedding? I bet if it was Harry getting married, you would have all been glued to the telly. However, this was William's day and I thought he looked dashing. OK, so there's his hair, but someday he'll be able to cover the crown of his head—with a crown! Not a bad trade-off. I thought Harry's uniform was a bit "busy"—like he was a drum majorette ... or perhaps an extra in a Pink video. Then there's Kate Middleton, who we heard wanted to do her own makeup "so that he'll be able to recognize me coming down the aisle." Honey, he couldn't miss you. Is there any blush left in the British Isles? It was like watching a wedding on *Tel-emundo* (no offense). Maybe she also did her mother's makeup—either that or Mrs. Middleton is quite a fan of the mascara!

Kate's brother, James, and sister, Pippa, appear to have gotten a two-for-one special at the tanning salon—but who am I to criticize that? Since we've mentioned James, let's tackle those rumors head on. Could it be that James is, perhaps, a fan of this column? It sure seems to be what the overseas press is insinuating. If so, we'll send him a little wave while telling the rest of you about him. Although his parents and Pippa run a party planning company, James (who I doubt has a future in public speaking) runs his own bakery and designs cakes for a living. How "regal." We've also unearthed a number of questionable photos of James—ranging from him slipping into some of Kate's dresses to slipping out of all of his clothes! Of course, we'll share all with you at [BillyMasters.com](http://BillyMasters.com).

Back to the wedding—regardless of what else was happening, my eyes were glued to Queen Elizabeth, and it seems to me she may have dozed off at least once. When her head bounced back up, she started flipping through her program and whispered something to Prince Philip, which may have been, "Where the fuck are we?" All that aside, everything appeared to go off without a hitch. I'm told even the after-party at Buckingham Palace was a smashing success. I'm no expert on royal protocol, but I don't believe it's standard for the best man to refer to the maid of honor with the phrase "Hit it and quit it" in his toast. Must be a British thing.

There had to be some salacious side to this otherwise austere event, and leave it to the British tabloids to run photos of Prince William at a friend's 21st birthday party in 2002. The headlines stated, "Prince William gyrates on stage in boxer shorts and feather boa," so you know those photos will also turn up on [BillyMasters.com](http://BillyMasters.com). There's one other thing notable about the Prince nine years ago—back then he had a full head of hair!

You may have seen Elton John and David Furnish at the royal wedding. However, days earlier, the twosome was in New York City for the opening night of Larry Kramer's play *The Normal Heart* on Broadway. Elton and David were so moved that they are talking about bringing the show to London. Furnish called the play "an astonishing, emotionally compelling piece of writing and a moving, fantastic piece of theatre that the younger generation needs to see. Elton and I are focused on making sure they do. We would both like to make the production as widely seen as possible, and that includes helping fund and mount future versions of it wherever we can." He also revealed that it was the original production 25 years ago that spurred Elton to focus his fundraising efforts on fighting AIDS, which included founding the Elton John AIDS Foundation. Although the play is now making its Broad-

way debut, it played London's West End in 1986 for three months starring Martin Sheen, John Shea and Tom Hulce.

Logo's reality show *The A-List* is preparing for the upcoming season with a number of changes, both large and small. Regarding the flagship New York cast, we can reveal that Reichen and Rodiney have indeed broken up, but will both continue to be a part of the show. Also, there's been an addition to the cast—Nyasha Zimucha. Press material states that she's a recording artist of some kind and was a judge on *Little Miss Perfect*, a WE TV series about kiddie pageants that I somehow missed. Concerning the L.A. cast, I'm told that three of the previously announced cast members have been dumped due to "creative differences." That's show biz.

Is anyone out there watching *90210*? No? Then you missed mega-hot Trevor Donovan hooking up with the equally sexy Alan Ritchson. Yes, two gorgeous guys who have modeled underwear got together on network TV (well, *The CW*). Ritchson



Alan Ritchson (above) and Trevor Donovan made *90210* very special.

played a former classmate who Donovan always had a crush on. They reunite, Trev comes out and Alan ... well, he takes the bull by the horns, as it were. You can see all at [BillyMasters.com](http://BillyMasters.com).

If you watched the premiere episode of *The Voice*, you heard a familiar one—that of Frenchie Davis. Of course, faithful fans of this column already knew Frenchie would appear courtesy of a blind item I wrote weeks ago. I was sworn to secrecy about her involvement on the show, but couldn't be happier to see my pal—and a strong supporter of our community—get a chance to strut her stuff on national television!

Another former *American Idol* contestant is also the subject of this week's "Ask Billy" question. Sean in Sacramento writes, "What do you know about Jovany? He was in the Top 24 on *'Idol'* this season. He's totally gorgeous and someone told me he's posted some nude photos online. Is this true?"

Sorry to burst your bubble, but the lovely Jovany Barreto hasn't posed naked—at least not completely naked. He has, however, taken quite a number of shirtless pics of himself, which have fallen into our hot little hands (which ain't so little, by the by). You can check him out at [BillyMasters.com](http://BillyMasters.com).

When we can run the gamut of new royalty to ousted Idols, it's definitely time to end yet another column. Billy's taking a bit of a rest (and dealing with some dental distress), but one place that never disappoints is [www.BillyMasters.com](http://www.BillyMasters.com). If you've got a question—or perhaps access to some painkillers—do drop a note to [Billy@BillyMasters.com](mailto:Billy@BillyMasters.com) and I promise to get back to you before we get photos of James Middleton in Kate's wedding dress (or Pippa's)! Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

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# Baseball coach suspended for anti-gay slurs

BY ROSS FORMAN

Roger McDowell was known as a prankster during his 12 season pitching in the major leagues from 1985-1996, often entertaining and appearing to enjoy a friendship with fans sitting in the right-field bleachers at Wrigley Field.

However, no one is laughing at McDowell's recent antics now.

McDowell, the pitching coach for the Atlanta Braves, allegedly made anti-gay remarks to a group of male fans in San Francisco. He also allegedly made crude gestures with his hips and a baseball bat.

The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) immediately called for disciplinary action and reached out to officials with the Braves.

McDowell issued an apology regarding allegations, which included making violent threats before the Braves played the San Francisco Giants.

"I am deeply sorry that I responded to the heckling fans in San Francisco. I apologize to everyone for my actions," McDowell said in a statement several days after the incident.

GLAAD President Jarrett Barrios said McDowell's apology is a start, "but the Atlanta Braves and Major League Baseball must take real disciplinary action and send the message that anti-gay slurs have no place in sports.

"Professional sporting events should be an environment that all fans and families can enjoy, not a place where children are exposed to violent threats and discriminatory language."

[Note: Major League Baseball has suspended McDowell for two weeks, retroactive to April 29, and fined him an undisclosed amount of money, according to the San Francisco Chronicle.]

Attorney Gloria Allred announced the allegations in a news conference, representing Justin Quinn, his wife and two young daughters. Allred stated that they watched McDowell make anti-gay remarks at a group of male fans. Quinn said that McDowell proceeded to make crude gestures at the group. McDowell then allegedly told Quinn that children do not belong at a baseball park. He then picked up a bat, approached Quinn and



Roger McDowell. Photo from Braves website

asked him, 'How much are your teeth worth?'"

McDowell pitched for five teams during his 12-year career, and was the winning pitcher in the deciding Game 7 of the 1986 World Series while a member of the New York Mets. McDowell had a 70-70 lifetime record and recorded 159 saves in his career. This is McDowell's sixth season as Atlanta's pitching coach.

McDowell was signed by the Chicago White Sox for the 1997 season, but did not play that year due to two shoulder surgeries. He attended spring training with the White Sox in 1998, but retired before the season.

In 1992, McDowell made a cameo appearance in a two-part episode of Seinfeld, ironically called The Boyfriend. The episode also starred McDowell's ex-teammate, Keith Hernandez.

"As more and more sports teams refuse to allow this sort of behavior, we urge the Atlanta Braves and Major League Baseball to investigate this matter immediately and work towards ensuring the safety of all fans and players," Barrios said.

LZ Granderson, an openly gay sportswriter from Michigan, added: "The silver lining from the incident is not what GLAAD, Major League Baseball, the Atlanta Braves, or even Roger McDowell eventually does, it's what people who weren't even targeted already did—they said something. So many times victims in that instance are left to defend themselves, but here, we have bystanders confronting McDowell and condemning his uncivil behavior. That's really encouraging because that's the kind of response needed in order to cripple the effects of bullying and detour prejudicial attacks."

Chicago-based transgender sportswriter Chris-

tina Kahrl added: "If the accusations are true, what's extraordinary about this situation is that it's someone in uniform directing comments and actions at fans and managing to simultaneously say something stupid about families, children, and gay people. [Former major leaguer] John Rocker never managed that, but, then again, Rocker was never accused of threatening somebody with a bat either. I have every faith that baseball will investigate the incident as thoroughly as Commissioner Bud Selig has said that it will, and will act appropriately if they determine that this transpired as Mr. Quinn says that it did."

## Center gets boost from Cubs Care

Cubs Care presented a \$30,000 grant to Center on Halsted's Youth Fitness Program on April 27. The fitness program has become an important component of the Center's broader Youth Program, which helps youth improve lifelong achievement rates and become productive citizens.

The Youth Fitness Program offers sports, fitness, health and nutrition programming for LGBTQ youth ages 13-24, along with opportunities for social and leadership development. It targets youth often marginalized within, or denied service by, mainstream sports and fitness programs—in other words, youth who are the least likely to take part in sports and recreation.

Center on Halsted's youth program serves more than 600 youth each year—300 of them through after-school programming or our Breakfast Club for homeless young people. Approximately 80 youth participate in the Youth Fitness Program each year.

Cubs Care is a fund of the McCormick Foundation, and supports nonprofit social service and youth initiatives in Lakeview, Uptown and Lincoln Park.



## Force slams top foe



The Chicago Force made a bold statement April 30, stopping the St. Louis Slam 29-7 to keep its record perfect and hand the visitors their first regular-season loss in three years.

"I'm very happy with the way the team played," said Chicago quarterback Sami Grisafe. "The defense played big and the offense executed the way it has in practice. This was a huge win for us because we now control our playoff destiny; we're in the driver's seat."

The Force moves to 3-0, has outscored its opponents 156-7 and is 62-19 overall since its inception eight years ago.

"Things just feel right with this team," said Grisafe, who was named the Spin Nightclub Offensive MVP.

Grisafe threw for two touchdowns to Carolyn Lee, including a highlight reel 15-yarder late in the second quarter into the left corner of the endzone. The Force led 22-7 at halftime.

"We expected this to be a battle, and it was. It was a heavyweight fight, though the score may indicate something else" said Albi Zhubi, one of Grisafe's main offensive targets. "Everyone played well, particularly the rookies, who showed that they can perform."

Such as, Emma Finestone, who had a key interception for the Force—one of the team's four interceptions of St. Louis quarterback Liz Lacy. Finestone was named the Spin Nightclub Defensive MVP.

Brandy Hatcher scored on a two-yard run in the second quarter, giving the Force a 16-0 lead at the time. Running back Jessica Springer, the team's main offensive workhorse, scored a 7-yard touchdown with 4:11 remaining in regulation time to ice the victory. Photo and text by Ross Forman

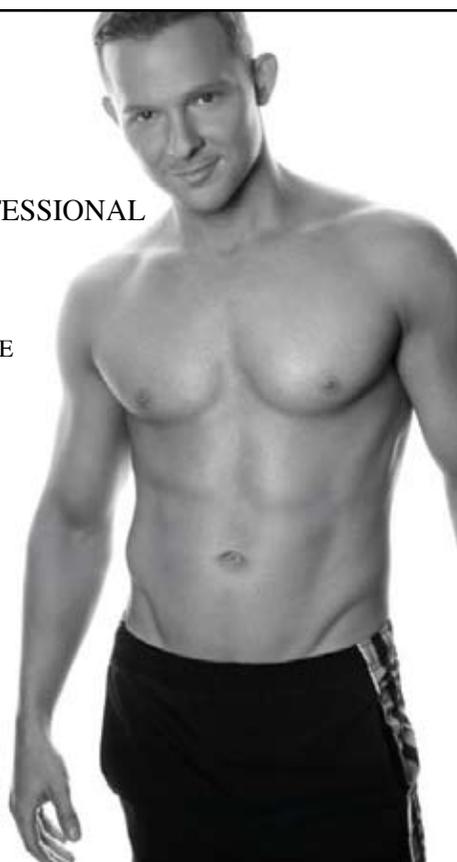
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# 9th Annual WINDY CITY GAY IDOL

Ten talented singers fought it out May 1 at DS Tequila Co., 3352 N. Halsted. Only two—Amy and Wicked—advanced to the semi-finals at Sidetrack on Sat., June 4.

Photos by Kirk Williamson. See more photos at [facebook.com/windycitygayidol](http://facebook.com/windycitygayidol).

Check out next week's Nightspots for photos of Windy City Gay Idol at Jackhammer.



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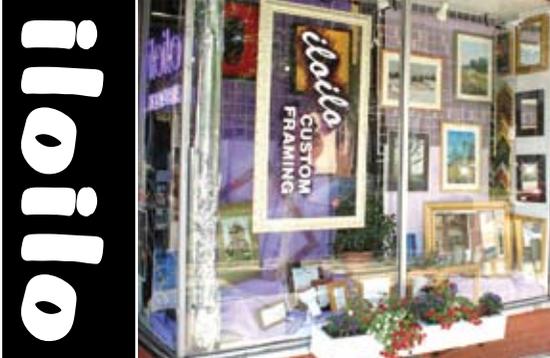


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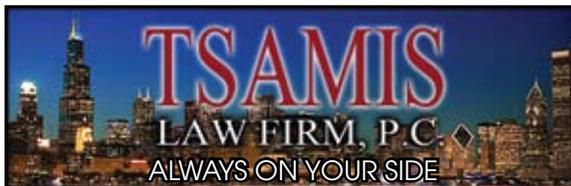
Ray is a legal authority on all of his practice areas, which include probate, trusts, guardianship, estate planning, and elder law, including the litigation of those areas. He is a longtime advocate for and member of the LGBT community, and is involved in several charitable groups, community associations, and professional organizations. Ray is a member of Clark Hill PLC, a full-service law firm consisting of a diverse team of attorneys and professionals committed to our clients and our communities.

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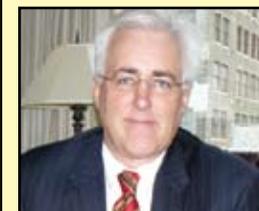


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