



**CHAZ BONO  
TALKS WITH  
WCT**

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# WINDY CITY TIMES

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BI AND TRANS COMMUNITY SINCE 1985

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# Civil unions to start

BY JOSEPH ERBENTRAUT

Months following the hard-fought and emotional legislative battle that ultimately resulted in Illinois' new civil-union law being signed into law by Gov. Pat Quinn earlier this year, many LGBT Illinoisans have been eyeing June 1, the day the law finally goes into effect, with a great deal of anticipation.

In the Chicago area, that anticipation will culminate in a number of events honoring the milestone that are expected to draw large crowds. On June 2, the first day in which couples filing for civil unions will be able to mark their unions with a ceremony, some 33 couples

are slated to participate in the city's official celebration of the law's fruition at 10 a.m. in Millennium Park's Wrigley Square.

Quinn, as well as the city's newly inaugurated mayor, Rahm Emanuel, will also be on hand at the event, co-sponsored by the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, the Chicago Office of Tourism and Culture, Lambda Legal, Equality Illinois and the Alliance of Illinois Judges. Timothy Evans, Circuit Court of Cook County chief judge, will lead the officiation of the civil-union ceremonies.

The Millennium Park event will be followed by another multiple-couple civil-union ceremony and celebra-

tion hosted by The Civil Rights Agenda (TCRA) Friday, June 3, at the Chicago History Museum. Tickets purchased for the event, which will include 40 couples at the organizers' latest count, will benefit TCRA's Families United Project.

Finally, celebrants in the suburbs will not be left out, as DreamGayWeddings.com will also host civil-union ceremonies beginning at the stroke of midnight at the aLoft Hotel in Bolingbrook June 2. The organization will also be hosting representatives from the Will County Clerk's office at a welcome party the night before,

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## Leather regions

Hundreds of leather enthusiasts and the just-plain-curious flooded Chicago's Hyatt Regency for the 33rd International Mr. Leather and the Victory Party at the House of Blues. Pictured (L-R) are International Mr. Leather second runner-up Anthony Rollar, International Mr. Bootblack 2011 Jim Deuder and International Mr. Leather 2011 Eric Gutierrez. Photo by Dave Ouano

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## Honoring LGBT vets

**VETERAN**

Jim Darby speaks at a Memorial Day tribute to LGBT veterans in Space Park. Find out more on page 9. Photo by Tracy Baim

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**CIAO AND WHY**

WCT talked with openly gay chef Cesar Pineda about his Pilsen eatery, Ciao Amore.

Photo by Jerry Nunn



The third season of True Blood is among the new crop of recent/upcoming DVDs from Disc and That.

WCT traveled to the desert, and has a report on Las Vegas.

Photo by Jerry Nunn

Photo from HBO

**PARENTAL ADVISORY**

Dana Rudolph lists dos and dont's when it comes to interacting with LGBT parents.

**A MORE PERFECT UNION**

Read Sugar and Spice's roundup of the Union Sushi + Barbeque Bar.

**THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT**

This week's entertainment round-up includes items on Calpernia Adams, Lindsay Lohan and Sir Ian McKellen.

plus  
**DAILY BREAKING NEWS**

**SEEING THE LIGHT**



Nunn on One talks separately with Neon Trees lead singer Tyler Glenn (above, second from left) and goth-rock icon Peter Murphy.

PR photo

All the leathery goodness.

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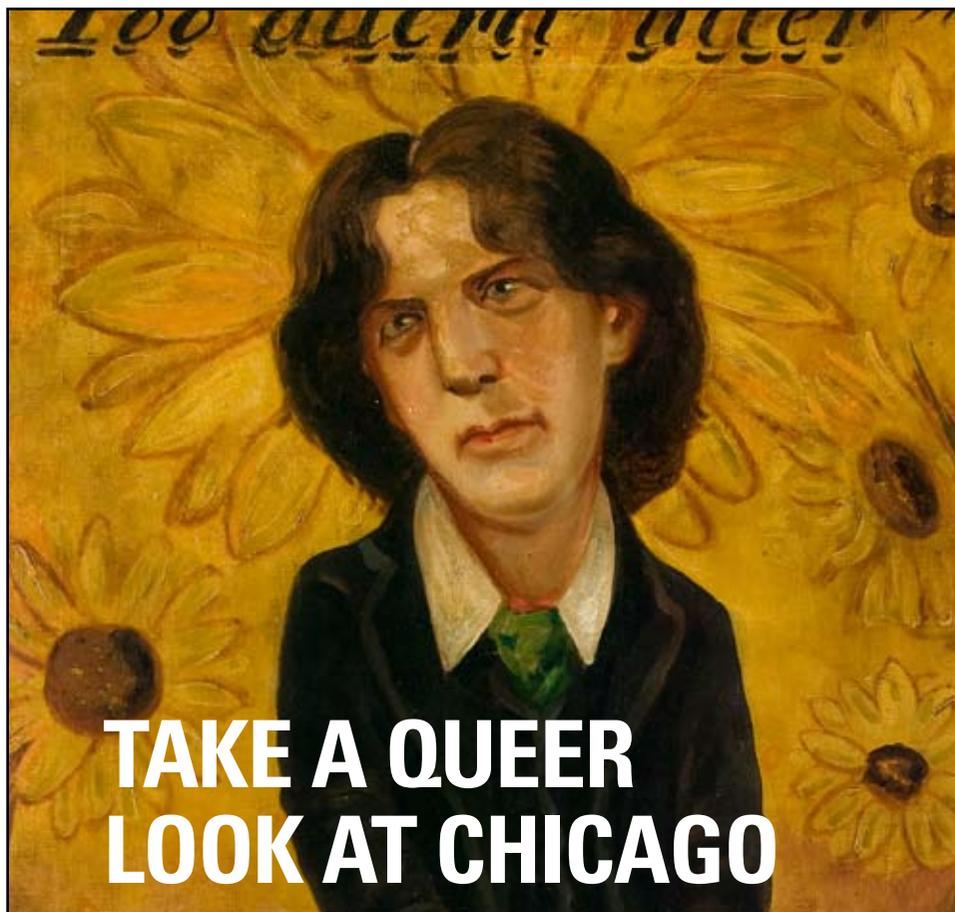
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**TAKE A QUEER LOOK AT CHICAGO**

Oscar Wilde, who angered Chicagoans by calling the Water Tower a "castellated monstrosity," was caricatured in this 1883 portrait.

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# Showdown looming over Tennessee's anti-gay law

BY LISA KEEN  
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

Gay legal activists are already working on a legal challenge to a new state law in Tennessee, signed into law May 23 by Republican Gov. Bill Haslam, which prevents local governments from requiring their contractors to abide by local human-rights ordinances.

The legislation, entitled the "Equal Access to Intrastate Commerce Act," was aimed at undermining a new Nashville metro area ordinance, signed into law in April. The ordinance prohibited city contractors from discriminating based on sexual orientation and gender identity. It was



Gov. Bill Haslam

passed by the Nashville/Davidson County Metro Council.

Abby Rubinfeld, a Nashville attorney and a former legal director of Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, said Tuesday that the new state law will "definitely be challenged—we are working on it right now."

Haslam, who took office Jan. 15, pitched his support for the law as a pro-business act, saying it relieved businesses of the necessity of navigating differing non-discrimination regulations from city to city. The Family Action Council of Tennessee argued that it does not target LGBT people, and noted that the law does not affect the Nashville Metropolitan Government ordinance prohibiting discrimination by the government against LGBT people.

However, no attempt was made prior to passage of the Nashville ordinance to relieve businesses affected by a Nashville ordinance that prohibited contractors from discriminating based on age, race, sex or disability.

Greg Nevins of Lambda Legal's Atlanta office said Lambda is not involved in mounting a legal challenge against the Tennessee law, but he called it "a terrible piece of legislation."

The Human Rights Campaign said Haslam was trying to score "cheap political points" by giving a "green light" to anti-LGBT discrimination. HRC noted that a number of large corporations—including FedEx, AT&T, Comcast and the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce—opposed the new state law.

FedEx issued a statement May 20 saying it "values and promotes the unique contributions, perspectives, and differences" of all its employees and is "committed to diversity and inclusion in the workplace."

State Rep. Glen Casada, a Republican from nearby Williamson County, introduced the "Equal Access" bill after the Nashville Metro Council passed a law requiring city contractors to sign an affidavit promising not to discriminate based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Specifically, the bill prohibits local ordinances from having non-discrimination laws broader than that of the state. According to Lambda Legal, Tennessee has no statewide laws prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation or

gender identity in either public or private employment.

Casada told local television NewsChannel 5 that the Nashville ordinance amounted to having the city "dictating moral policy."

Another anti-gay bill—one that sought to prohibit teachers from providing any information about homosexuality to public school students in grades kindergarten through 8—passed the Tennessee Senate 19 to 11 on May 20 but did not get a vote in the House before the General Assembly adjourned May 21. The original bill—dubbed the "Don't Say Gay Bill"—was amended to limit sex education curricula "to natural reproduction science."

The Tennessee Equality Project said the bill "remains a threat to safe schools for all students in Tennessee," even though the bill no longer references homosexuality specifically.

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## LGBT Chicagoans host Obama events

BY TRACY BAIM

Two events were staged in Chicago May 25 as benefits and outreach events for President Barack Obama's 2012 re-election campaign. The first was held at the home of Brad Lippitz and Jonathan Pizer in the Lakeview neighborhood, the second at the nearby Sidetrack gay bar.

Addressing the crowds were the Obama campaign's national finance director, Rufus Gifford; Press Secretary Ben LaBolt; Digital



Jamie Citron (left) and Zach Portilla at Sidetrack. Photo by Tracy Baim

ONLINE AT  
WINDYCITYMEDIAGROUP.COM  
NATIONAL NEWS



—Former Palin aide paints unflattering portrait of her

—Obama (left) to speak at NYC LGBT event

—Georgia state rep comes out

Director Teddy Goff; Project Vote Director Buffy Wicks; and Jamie Citron, director of the LGBT Leadership Council, a project of Obama for America 2012 and the Democratic National Committee. All except Wicks are openly gay staffers. Other staff also attended, including openly gay Zach Portilla, at the Sidetrack event; he most recently worked in the White House personnel department.

At the private home, staffers took questions from the attendees, who seemed wary of being pitched for more money when there is still some question about how full-force Obama will be on same-sex marriage and some more mainstream issues. While people said they were supportive of the president, they appeared to be assessing how that will translate into donations and action. The Obama staffers assured that in this coming election, constituency groups such as LGBT, youth, women and others will be more involved in the campaign.

The larger and more public event at Sidetrack was billed as an "LGBT Campaign Kick-off." There were handouts promoting all that Obama has done on LGBT issues, in addition to a pitch for a large LGBT event for Obama, featuring the president himself, June 23 in New York City. The host will be Neil Patrick Harris, and tickets start at \$1,250. Chicago's Laura Ricketts is among the leaders of the LGBT efforts to re-elect Obama, but she had a plane delay returning to Chicago for the events.

## Transgender report presented at Center

BY STEVEN CHAITMAN

Quantifiable proof of injustice against transgender and gender non-conforming individuals now exists in the form of a new national study. Titled "Injustice at Every Turn," the survey highlights the myriad of challenges trans people face in employment, educations, housing, public accommodations and more.

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) presented a summary of its 200-page report, created in conjunction with the National Center for Transgender Equality, May 25 at the Center on Halsted. The Center provided a local panel of equality advocates and an open community forum to discuss the findings and current efforts to improve trans rights and equality in Chicago and Illinois.

A total of 6,450 transgender and gender non-conforming individuals from all 50 states (including 173 from Chicago) completed the survey from September 2008 through February 2009. The survey's key findings were that most of its respondents lived in extreme pov-

erty; trans people of color faced a significantly higher degree of discrimination; and 41 percent of respondents reported attempting suicide, compared to 1.6 percent of the general population.

The survey aimed to provide policymakers, community activists and legal advocates the data they need to improve efforts toward transgender justice and equality. NGLTF Deputy Executive Director Russell Roybal presented the summary and said that current equality efforts need to be more inclusive of the transgender community.

"Although there have been many positive laws at the state and municipal level that include sexual orientation-based non-discrimination, there have been many that did not include gender identity or expression," Roybal said. "So part of the goal of creating this survey was to provide the information necessary to make those policy changes at the local, state and national level."

After Roybal's presentation, Lisa Gilmore, Center on Halsted's director of education and victim advocacy, moderated a panel discussion and forum on trans issues and efforts on the local level. Panelists included Anthony Martinez,

executive director of The Civil Rights Agenda (TCRA); Kate Sosin, co-founder of Genderqueer Chicago and Windy City Times reporter; and Owen Daniel-McCarter, project attorney for Transformative Justice Law Project (TJLP) in Illinois.

Sosin discussed Genderqueer Chicago's T-Friendly Bathroom Initiative, which launched in February to provide transgender individuals with safe public restrooms throughout the city.

"One of the stories that a lot of trans people share is anxiety over bathrooms," Sosin said. "It's so common. When we boiled it down and talked about it, your right to use the toilet should not be in dispute."

Daniel-McCarter said that TJLP holds day events in the city to assist transgender people with name-change paperwork. He also described the project's efforts to provide legal council for trans persons improperly assigned to sex-segregated prisons.

"In Illinois, people are placed according to the sex that was assigned to them at birth, not to their preferred gender identity," Daniel-McCarter said, "which means since about 93 percent of people who are incarcerated in our

country are assigned male, most of our clients are transgender women who are in men's prisons and are experiencing some of the most horrific hate based violence that I've ever seen in my life."

Some organizations, such as TCRA, have already put the new survey to use. Martinez said TCRA's lawyers used the report to bolster their argument in a case involving a Metra worker who transitioned on the job and was denied the ability to use the locker room that best represented their gender identity. He says the next step is to use the information to help inform lawmakers.

"Now we want to use this report to help work with our legislators to help educate them around trans issues," Martinez said. "That's kind of the next frontier for the LGBT community in terms of ensuring transgender people have protections overtly and are able to do simple things like change their birth certificate to their current gender identity."

The full "Injustice at Every Turn" report is available at <http://www.TheTaskForce.org>, or <http://www.TransEquality.org>. More information about the survey can be found at <http://www.EndTransDiscrimination.org>.

# 32 arrests at Moscow Pride, city flouts Euro Court ruling

BY REX WOCKNER

Undeterred by the April ruling from the European Court of Human Rights that banning Moscow Pride is illegal in multiple ways, the city banned the May 28 gay pride parade for the sixth year in a row. Activists responded by trying to rally near the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and City Hall. They were violently arrested.

Among those taken into custody were U.S. activist Dan Choi, International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHO) President Louis-Georges Tin, Chicago activist Andy Thayer and 15 Russian LGBT activists, including, according to Choi, Anna Komarova, Tim Magomedov, Alexey Kiselev, Elizaveta Nikitina, Aleksandr Shiriaev and Andzey Zayziev. Fourteen anti-gay protesters also were arrested.

"I was arrested and put in a solitary confinement without any air, without any light," said Tin. "The policemen were calling me 'fucking faggot.' After four hours ... I was released. My concern now is about European institutions. The right to vote of Russia within the Council of Europe has to be suspended."

Choi live-tweeted his arrest from the moment he was placed into a police wagon until his release several hours later.

Once out of custody, he wrote: "Released. No charge, no fine. ... Few bruises on left leg, scratches and swelling right ear. Punched in the face 5 times. Still alive. Overall best pride march yet. (U.S. Secretary of State) Hillary Clinton still needs to say something about the Russian ban on this freedom of expression. We were abso-

lutely non-violent. My twitter feed (twitter.com/ldanchoi) has some pics from the jail, and other details from the event. Love is worth it."

Komarova said police pressured her to divulge information about the structure of Moscow Pride, according to British gay leader Peter Tatchell, who was in Moscow but was not detained.

The Council of Europe's commissioner for human rights, Thomas Hammarberg, denounced Moscow's refusal to abide by the Euro Court decision.

"I learnt that a LGBT Pride event planned for Saturday 28 May in Moscow has not been authorised by the authorities because of expected traffic obstructions and the impact of this event on the 'psychological health and moral damage of children and teenagers,'" Hammarberg wrote. "(T)he rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly are fundamental rights in a democratic society and they belong to all people. The European Court of Human Rights has ruled in two judgments against unlawful restrictions or bans running counter to the exercise of freedom of assembly by LGBT persons in the context of the organisation of Pride parades. Peaceful demonstrations cannot be banned simply because of hostile attitudes to the demonstrators or to the causes they advocate. The State also has a duty to protect the participants in peaceful demonstrations including when they hold unpopular views or belong to minorities."

IDAHO's Tin said the Council of Europe must react to Russia's flouting of European law and the Euro Court ruling.

"This situation is intolerable, and cannot last



Andy Thayer (fourth from right, in glasses) was part of the chaos that ensued at Moscow Pride May 28. Photo courtesy of Thayer

anymore," he said. "The Council of Europe, which was created to promote human rights, cannot include (in its membership) without any reaction a member state that denies human rights so clearly."

There is video of Choi and Thayer being arrested at [tinyurl.com/danchoimoscow](http://tinyurl.com/danchoimoscow). Choi posted a video from inside the police wagon. See [tinyurl.com/choiwagon](http://tinyurl.com/choiwagon).

In ruling against the Moscow government's violent homophobia, the European Court of Human Rights said that previous years' gay-pride bans by then-Mayor Yuri Luzhkov violated the European Convention on Human Rights in the areas of freedom of assembly and association, the right to an effective remedy and prohibition of discrimination.

Gays have marched or staged other public ac-

tions yearly since 2006 despite the bans. The gatherings were attacked by anti-gay hooligans, picketed by religious protesters and broken up by police.

Meanwhile, five days before this year's pride drama, about 60 LGBT and other people staged an Equality March on Gogolevsky Boulevard in central Moscow.

That march had been banned as well. Officials said it would provoke a negative reaction in society and could affect the psychological health of children and teens.

Other groups taking part in the Equality March included feminists, socialists, anarchists, leftists and liberals, a spokesman for the group said. There is video at [tinyurl.com/mos-em-a](http://tinyurl.com/mos-em-a).

—Assistance: Bill Kelley



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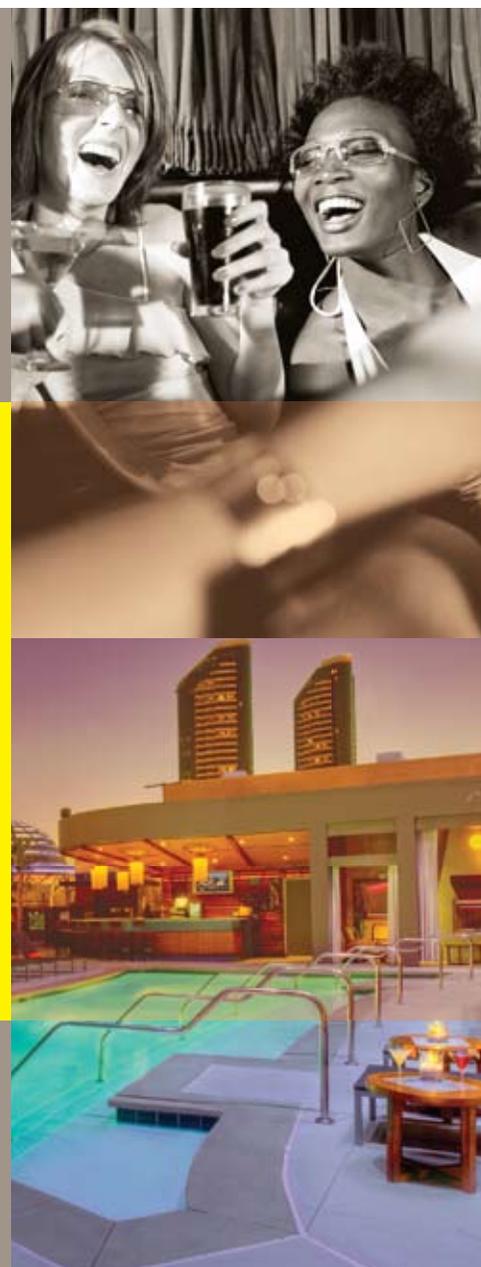
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# NCLR marks 34th anniversary

BY ROSS FORMAN

SAN FRANCISCO—Minutes after the Honorable Donna Hitchens accepted the Founder's Award here at the 34th Anniversary Celebration, held May 21, the spotlight shifted to National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) clients Desiree 'Dez' Shelton and Sarah Lindstrom. They are the out high school lesbians who successfully challenged their Minnesota school district in January, 2011 so they could walk together as part of the royal court of their school's winter formal.

Generations in time, generations in love. An evening filled with tears of joy and sadness, emotions galore. This was, after all, the night NCLR honored four trailblazers, and others, in the movement for LGBT equality.

Hitchens, the NCLR founder and a retired San Francisco Superior Court judge, was honored for her lifetime commitment to activism on behalf of the LGBT community.

Shelton and Lindstrom were singled out,



Kate Kendell at the gala. Photo by Ross Forman

seemingly spontaneously during NCLR Executive Director Kate Kendell's emotional keynote address.

"One of the things I love the most about this organization, and the work we do, is: we really care about, and honor, our history—and we also empower young people," Kendell said in an exclusive interview after the two hour ceremony, held at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in downtown San Francisco—with more than 1,700 attending.

"That room showed the full range of who we, NCLR, are to each other and how we rely on each other. This is an inter-generational movement and we need to learn from people who went before us, and we need to empower young people so they can be their own leaders. This night really encapsulated a lot of that energy."

The anniversary celebration also featured three other award winners:

—Voice & Visibility Award, presented to the first-ever openly LGBT country music singer, Chely Wright, and her father, Stan Wright;

—Justice Award, presented to former Belmont University women's soccer coach Lisa Howe; and the

—Spirit Award, which recognized the first-ever openly transgender Division I basketball player, Kye Allums.

"Our anniversary celebration is, always, the most inspirational, meaningful evening of our organizational life," Kendell said. "It's where we bring more supporters and more people who care about the work we do, and who have been benefited by the work we do. The energy, the commitment, the sense of purpose that you feel in that room ... I'm higher than a kite for days after the event."

"This year's event was a particularly meaningful evening because, as I started to prepare my remarks, I could see, based on who we were honoring and who was coming, that we were going to have a lot of the parents of the honorees. That theme, people supported by their parents, is really in a new [response], such that a parent's first, immediate reaction is not immediate rejection. Tonight really felt a lot to me like [the evening was] about family and doing it right if you have an LGBT kid, so it felt particularly powerful.

"All [annual] celebrations are special in their



Chely Wright at the gala. Photo by Ross Forman; see more photos online at <http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com>

own way, so it's hard to compare [events from year to year,] but this definitely felt, for everyone who was here, there was no where else that they wanted to be."

NCLR was founded in 1977 and is a national legal organization devoted to advancing LGBT justice and equality through litigation, public policy, and public education. NCLR has helped more than 5,000 people each year.

"I am so honored to be recognized with Chely and Stan and such incredible clients, who are my true role models," said Hitchens. "Their courage and willingness to stand up for what is right is, and always has been, the real foundation of this organization. I have been lucky to be a part of it from the beginning, and to see NCLR turn 34 is truly amazing."

Howe, formerly of Belmont University in Nashville, was honored for her courage and perseverance to fight for justice and sacrificed to make broad social change for the LGBT community. Howe helped transform the hearts and minds of her community and colleagues, inspiring them to launch an unprecedented public discussion about the place of LGBT people in private Christian colleges and universities, and prompting Belmont to change its non-discrimination policy to include sexual orientation.

"It's a privilege to be recognized with this honor from NCLR, which has provided me with a tremendous amount of guidance and support

over the last six months," Howe said in a statement.

"They have literally been at my side, helping me through this process and coaching me through media interviews. One of the most memorable experiences was a conference call I had with them the morning before I gave my first interview. Without saying it directly, the tone of that phone call made me understand how influential I suddenly was, and how many people of all ages in all parts of the country were depending on me to represent the LGBT community. I'm truly grateful for them, as well as my Nashville attorney, Abby Rubinfeld. I am honored to get to work with such an amazingly powerful group of people, and to receive this award."

Allums, who played for the George Washington University women's basketball team this season, was honored for his strength of character, which embodies and invigorates the spirit of the LGBT community.

Allums, ironically, announced days before the celebration that he was retiring and not returning to the team next season.

"I am truly humbled that NCLR honored me with the Spirit Award," Allums said in a statement. "The love, and support from my friends and family, has made my coming out experience an unforgettable one."

# CHICAGO



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# Diocese stops child services in wake of anti-bias law

BY CHUCK COLBERT

The Rockford, Ill., diocese announced that it would halt state-funded adoption and foster-care services at Catholic Charities rather than comply with state anti-discrimination laws.

With state funding of \$7.5 million, Rockford Catholic Charities handles about 350 adoption and foster-family cases in 11 counties in northern Illinois.

Officials said that the agency would terminate 58 employees.

The announcement came on May 26 at a press conference—one day after the Illinois Senate tabled an amendment that would have carved out an exemption to the Illinois Religious Freedom Protections and Civil Unions Act.

The new law, which takes effect June 1, extends all equivocal spousal benefits available at the state level to registered same-sex partners.

For months, the Catholic Conference of Illinois—the church's lobbying arm—sought an explicit exemption for religiously affiliated child-welfare agencies from providing adoption services to same-sex couples in civil unions.

Two previous amendment attempts failed.

Church officials say that their faith, or church teaching, does not allow them to place children in homes with same-sex couples and that they are in effect being "forced" out of the adoption business.

"It's an issue of conscience," said Robert Gilligan, executive director of the Catholic Conference of Illinois, according to the Associated Press.

"The law of our land has always guaranteed its people freedom of religion," said Penny Wiegert, the Rockford diocese director of communications, according to a press-conference transcript.

"Denying this exemption to faith-based agencies leads one to believe that our lawmakers prefer laws that guarantee freedom from religion," she explained. "We simply cannot compromise the spirit that motivates us to deliver quality, professional services to families by letting our state define our religious teachings."

The decision by Rockford diocese officials was not unexpected. Gilligan suggested as much earlier this month.

"There's a real possibility that we will be forced out of foster care and adoption," he told reporters at a Statehouse news conference May 4, according to the Associated Press.

However, the Chicago archdiocese had already



Marianne Duddy-Burke.

halted its foster-care services in 2007. As the Associated Press reported, "Catholic Charities told the Chicago Tribune the decision came after a \$12 million lawsuit payment caused the agency's insurer to drop its coverage." A 2001 lawsuit, settled in 2006, alleged that foster parents licensed through Catholic Charities had abused three children.

Meanwhile, officials from the Belleville, Joliet, Peoria and Springfield dioceses have not yet indicated what they will do—although last week Gilligan said, "No diocese is going to willingly put a child in a same-sex household," according to the Associated Press.

His remark drew strong reactions from gay-rights activists and gay Catholics.

"Attempts to brand same-sex couples as unfit parents solely because they are gay sends a harmful message to LGBT youth. It signals that there is something inherently wrong in being gay or lesbian and in a same-sex committed relationship," said James L. Bennett, Midwest regional director for Lambda Legal, a national advocacy organization.

"Such a policy is not in the best interest of children and is contrary to the policy of every leading professional child welfare organization in this country," he added.

Bernard Cherkasov, CEO of Equality Illinois, said, "Gilligan's statement at last revealed what so many also suspected to be the case. That his organization cared more about enforcing its dogma than about the welfare of children in its care."

Jennifer Chrisler, executive director of the

Family Equality Council, offered her perspective. "Our country is facing a child welfare crisis with 424,000 children in foster care waiting for loving, stable homes," she said. "Placement agencies have an obligation to consider the best interests of these children and welcome any qualified parent who is committed to providing a home for a child in foster care."

The Family Equality Council is a national advocacy organization for LGBT parents and children.

Marianne Duddy-Burke, executive director of Dignity/USA, even offered to introduce Gilligan to her family.

"I invite Mr. Gilligan, or any other Catholic Charities or diocesan official, to come and talk with my kids and see how they feel about having two moms," she said.

"Come for dinner, and listen to our daughters pray for people who don't have enough to eat or homes to live in, or sit with us as we read books chosen to reinforce their self-esteem. Listen to my partner sing the girls to sleep with songs she wrote just for them. Then tell us that lesbian and gay people can't be good foster or adoptive parents," Duddy-Burke added.

Altogether, the Rockford diocese's decision to end its foster-care and adoption services also hit close to home for Chicago lesbian and theater professional Heather Schmucker. "I've always been very proud to say I was adopted through Catholic Charities [in Pennsylvania, 34 years ago]," she said, adding, "I'm incredibly grateful for so many of the core values I learned growing up Catholic—compassion, fairness, generosity, service, a commitment to social justice, and a responsibility to those most vulnerable in our society."

As Schmucker explained, "What saddens me most about the Diocese of Rockford's decision is that it simply stands in opposition to those very basic values that are truly at the heart of Catholic teaching."

Attempts to reach Gilligan were unsuccessful. Sure enough, Rockford diocesan and Illinois Catholic Conference officials may well be taking their cues from Rome. A 2003 Vatican document called gay adoptions "gravely immoral."

The document, "Considerations Regarding Proposals to Give Legal Recognition to Unions Between Homosexual Persons," stated, "Allowing children to be adopted by persons living in such unions would actually mean doing violence to these children, in the sense that their condition of dependency would be used to place them in an environment that is not conducive to their full development."

However, a Catholic majority seems to disagree with the Vatican point of view. Recent polling found that 60 percent of American Catholics nationwide say same-sex couples should not be limited in their ability to adopt or foster children, according to the Public Religion Research Institute.

The Rockford diocese's decision to drop foster care and adoption services is not unusual.

Nationwide, Catholic Charities in the Boston

(2006), San Francisco (2006), and Washington, D.C., (2010) archdioceses ended their programs rather than comply with state and city non-discrimination laws.

In Boston and San Francisco, for example, despite the Vatican's decrying of gay adoptions as "gravely immoral," Catholic Charities agencies openly acknowledged that through their programs, gay men and lesbians had adopted a small number of hard-to-place foster children.

"Children, especially those with special needs, have had very successful adoptions by caring and competent individuals and couples who also happened to be gay," said Charles Martel, a Boston-based licensed clinical social worker now in private practice.

Martel is a former Catholic Charities employee in Massachusetts where he assisted in home studies of prospective adoptive parents.

He went on to explain what happened after Catholic Charities in Boston got out of the adoption business. "Other public agencies took over these services, and have been able to provide the necessary care and support, including the successful placement of children," he said. "This is what has taken place in Massachusetts, and can certainly take place in Illinois as well."

In Washington, D.C., Catholic Charities transferred its entire foster-care program to another provider, the National Center for Children and Families, a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to serving vulnerable children.

## Emanuel issues Pride Month proclamation

Mayor Rahm Emanuel has issued a proclamation for LGBT Pride Month in Chicago.

It reads:

"WHEREAS, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender communities of Chicago have organized numerous workshops, sporting events, receptions, festivals, concerts, plays, dances, and other activities to celebrate Pride Month; and

"WHEREAS, the 42nd Annual Pride Parade, one of the major events of the month, will take place on Sunday, June 26, 2011, bringing together an estimated 450,000 people; and

"WHEREAS, Chicago's diverse Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender communities have contributed significantly to the quality of life in Chicago;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RAHM EMANUEL, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO, do hereby proclaim June 2011 to be PRIDE MONTH in CHICAGO, and encourage all Chicagoans to recognize the many contributions the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender communities have made to our city."

The letter is dated May 17.

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# LGBT vets honored on Memorial Day

BY TERRENCE CHAPPELL

American Veterans for Equal Rights (AVER) saluted and celebrated LGBT veterans on Memorial Day in Chicago. The service was held in Space Park on Roscoe just west of Halsted.

Although the event was originally planned by 1VU, a social and environmental nonprofit with plans to build a monument in honor of LGBT servicemembers in Space Park, that group appears to be in transition and, as a result, AVER spearheaded the event and treated guests to a touching ceremony that featured guest speakers and song.

Chicago Gay Men's Chorus kicked off the ceremony with the National Anthem. Jim Darby,



Congressman Mike Quigley. Photo by Tracy Baim

president of the Chicago chapter of the AVER, welcomed attendees with a history of AVER. He also acknowledged openly gay 44th Ward Ald. Tom Tunney among the two dozen people in the crowd.

Guest speaker Congressman Mike Quigley channeled Abraham Lincoln's ideology of "everyone being equal" and said such an idea lived on after Lincoln's presidency. Quigley said the public should hold those in office accountable for progressive landmark decisions such as the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell.

"Thank the elected officials who support the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell and work on the officials who don't. Human rights evolve over a period of time. There's an evolution towards greater fairness and justice in this country—people grow," said Quigley.

Lee Reinhart, a U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard veteran of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (DADT), shared with guests his experience in serving in the Navy and Coast Guard as an openly gay man. Reinhart was able to serve in the Navy as an out gay man for four years and reported no discrimination. However, post-9/11, when Reinhart reenlisted to serve in the Coast Guard in 2002, he was honorably discharged less than six months later because he is gay. Reinhart said he views the repeal of DADT as a step up the ladder of equality, but warned those serving to remain private about their sexuality for the sake of their career.

"Unfortunately, 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' is still a law, even though it has been repealed," said Reinhart. "It's important for them [LGBT identify-

ing servicemembers] to realize that even though the law has been repealed, it has not been certified by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the president of the United States. Until that happens, they can still discharge people who come out as gay or lesbian."

Community activist and leader Lori Cannon spoke about the Legacy Project and touched on longtime Navy physician Tom Dooley's honorable service during the 1950s; unacknowledged as a gay man, Dooley's "out" status is overlooked by the history books. Gay veteran Travis sent guests off with his rendering of "America the Beautiful." In remembrance, a red, white and blue floral arrangement was installed in the park.

Coast Guard veteran Larry Simpson was delighted to attend as an out gay veteran.

"There are so many more veterans that identify as LGBT but they don't want to identify themselves as that, but I'm willing to come out," said Simpson.

See more photos online at <http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com>.



Gay veterans present flags at the Memorial Day tribute. Photo by Tracy Baim.

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# New group aims to instill Latino pride



United Latino Pride. Photo courtesy of the organization

BY NATASHA HEMLEY

United Latino Pride will be holding a weeklong event June 5-12 to celebrate "who we are and who we love," according to its website.

After attending a picnic held by local Latino organization *Orgullo en Accion*, United Latino Pride co-founder Jessica Carrillo thought that there "just wasn't anything out there for LGBTQ Latino individuals and decided to hold a meeting at a local cafe."

"There's a lot of other organizations and people that [said] let's do more. They believed in the capacity to do more. I started having conversations with organizations and individuals and that's how we had the meeting," said Carrillo.

The name "United Latino Pride" was created by the 20-plus volunteers who showed up for the first meeting last April. The mission of this newly developed group is "to honor the diversity in our Latino LGBTQ community by coming together, celebrating and educating the community as a whole, regardless of religion, politics, organization or individual status." There are at least 30,000 Latino LGBTQs in the Chicago, who up until last year either identified with being latino or queer, but not both, according to Pride's website.

"We really wanted to create something to amplify the work that different organizations and individuals were doing on a progressive level, and also celebrate the duality of being Latino and LGBTQA," said Carrillo.

The volunteers who compose the group have

their own personal reasons for joining the organization.

"Personally, the call to action pulled strongly at my sincere desire to see the Queer Latino community come together to heal wounds and build bridges between the cultural groups that make up our community," said member/volunteer Pedro Serrano. Serrano also went on to say that he believes most volunteers join the group to "celebrate the duality of our culture as Queer Latinos."

Kara Carrell, who started volunteering for United Latino Pride last year, really likes that the group offered her the ability to "celebrate the duality of my multifaceted identities, as a blaxican [black-Mexican] and a lesbian."

Events for this year, which are still to be determined, will be held at "traditionally" Latino areas like Little Village and Humboldt Park. Carrillo believes this will bring more information to those in the Latino community who are simple not aware or accepting of those in the LGBTQA community.

"We want to create awareness among the community to say look we are your children, neighbors, friends and we are no different simple because we love someone of the same gender," said Carrillo.

Several organizations and businesses are teaming up with United Latino Pride, including the National Museum of Mexican Art, Project VIDA (Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement), Illuminati and Mesh 110, among others. Visit <http://www.unitedlatinopride.com> for more information.

a year in Germany before settling in Chicago. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Kansas with a bachelor of arts in communications studies and German, and holds a masters degree in political science from the University of Illinois-Chicago.

"I'm really excited about joining TPAN," said VanMeter. "TPAN is one of our community's strongest forces empowering people living with HIV and educating the larger community about HIV and HIV prevention."

In 2004, VanMeter was named to the Windy City Times 30 under 30. He has lived in Lakeview (Boystown) for more than 10 years and is actively involved in the community. Ryan serves as board chair of the Lake View YMCA, where he has been a volunteer and member since 2002, and has taken part in the Ride for AIDS Chicago as a rider since 2009.

## Legacy Project appoints board of directors

The Legacy Project—a non-profit corporation committed to fostering awareness of the vital roles LGBT people have played in the advancement of world history and culture—has announced the appointment of its formal board of directors, according to a press release. This group is composed of leading activists, fundraisers and ambassadors for the LGBT community.

The project's board of directors includes:

—Laurie Dittman, board chairperson: Dittman is one of the legendary "Gang of Four" that coordinated the efforts to pass the Human Rights Ordinance in 1988. According to



Victor Salvo.

the project, "Dittman's work has been paramount for LGBT rights through the years and her patience, experience and knowledge will be extremely important as the Legacy Project embarks on its mission."

—Paul Fairchild, board vice-chairperson; former chief development officer of Howard Brown Health Center: The project feels that "[w]ith a history in organization building through his work with Heartland Alliance and Howard Brown, Fairchild's knowledge of fundraising methods and his relationships within the non-profit realm will be instrumental in the development of the Legacy Project."

—Cleo Wilson, executive director of Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art: Wilson showcases the contributions of underrepresented artists and communities through Intuit, and is a former executive director of the Playboy Foundation.

—Owen Keehnen, board secretary; independent LGBT historian, author and researcher: The release states that Keehnen's "assistance with biographical research and candidate-nomination processing is essential to The Legacy Project's central mission of sharing these important LGBT figures with the community."

—Lori Cannon, founder of Open Hand/Chicago: The project feels that Cannon's "experience in grass-roots organizational development, and her wide array of contacts and respected presence in the non-profit world make her a tremendous asset to the success of the Legacy Project."

—Jason Hendrix, board treasurer; finance associate, Chicago Area Interpreter Referral Service: According to the release, Hendrix's "experience handling financial accounts for various non-profit and LGBT corporations will help The Legacy Project move forward with fiscal assurance."

—Gerri Spinella, assistant professor and member of the Education Leadership Department at National-Louis University: The project hopes to utilize Spinella "in furthering The Legacy Project's goal to raise awareness of our history for LGBT youth."

—John Menefee, graphic design specialist, Leo Burnett Advertising: The project stated that Menefee's "knowledge of brand creation, graphics and advertising through emerging technologies will assist The Legacy Project with establishing brand recognition by re-fashioning its corporate image with an eye toward educating the public about the organization's mission."

—Leslie Schreiber, director of media relations, Winger Marketing: "Leslie's experience and success in the field of public relations and marketing will prove invaluable as we promote The Legacy Walk as a major public LGBT History attraction," according to the release.

—Paul Highfield, senior manager, Levi-Strauss Store Development: The project stated that Highfield's "knowledge of corporate- and community-based fundraising, as well as his contacts among influential individuals in the entertainment industry, make him a vital resource to The Legacy Project's fundraising goals."

With the organization's leadership in place, The Legacy Project has set its sights on the installation of The Legacy Walk, which will transform the "Northalsted Streetscape" into the only "walking museum" in the world dedicated to celebrating the many contributions LGBT people have made. The dedication will take place Oct. 11, 2012—National Coming-Out Day—a day that also marks the 25th anniversary of the 1987 March on Washington for lesbian and gay civil rights, when the idea for The Legacy Project first came to life.

According to Legacy Project Founder and Executive Director Victor Salvo, "Hundreds of thousands of us were there—living history rising up against the country's exploding hatred and indifference to our plight. Juxtaposed against the first National Coming-Out Day celebrating our past was the Names Project AIDS Memorial Quilt symbolizing the plague poised to kill us all... all I could think of was 'who will remember our history once we are gone...?'"

The Legacy Walk will consist of 18" x 24" bronze plaques affixed to the 22 rainbow pylons that designate Halsted Street as the center of Chicago's LGBT community. A visitors' resource center and gift shop, with an interior exhibit space, is being planned to one day house all the plaques that have been outdoors while also hosting special exhibits, visiting lectures and multimedia presentations to further The Legacy Project's mission.

By choosing 2012 as the official launch of The Legacy Walk, the organization intends to take advantage of new opportunities to work with Illinois Safe Schools, the Prevent School Violence/Illinois coalition and gay-straight alliance advisors to develop and evaluate educational materials, based on The Legacy Walk, that will help LGBT youth confront anti-LGBT bullying—and their own sense of cultural isolation—with knowledge.

Tax-deductible donations can be made through Gerber/Hart Library, which is acting as The Legacy Project's fiscal agent until confirmation of their 501(c)3 status is completed this summer. For more information, to volunteer or to donate, visit <http://www.legacy-projectchicago.org> or call 312-608-1198.

## VanMeter is TPAN's new director of development

Local HIV/AIDS agency Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN) has announced that Ryan VanMeter has joined the organization as director of development.

VanMeter, who is active in Illinois politics and has managed fundraising for city, county and statewide political candidates, has worked with some of Chicago's largest non-profit social service and health care organizations.

"We are thrilled to have Ryan join our team as Director of Development," said Bill Farrand, TPAN's executive director. "Ryan's background makes him a great fit for TPAN. He is also well-respected as a leader in our community."

Originally from Kansas, VanMeter spent over

**Read the latest on the legislative redistricting vote online at <http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com>.**

# Anti-gays rally at Loop church

BY JOE FRANCO

"What do we want? EQUAL RIGHTS! When do we want them? NOW!" Imagine that chant from a group of more than 50 proponents of same-sex marriage equality while "Ave Marie" was being sung in the background. That was the dramatic scene today in front of the Thompson Center in the Loop as anti-gay activists rallied for "traditional marriage" in front of the Loop's St. Peter's Catholic Church May 27.

A group of nearly 150 individuals representing Americans for Life, Americans for Truth, the Pro-Life Action League and various evangelical, protestant and Roman Catholic Church congregations rallied against the Illinois civil-unions law, which goes into effect June 1.

The anti-gay coalition gathered in front of the church before marching down Dearborn to the Thompson Center. Michael Ramos, a public-safety official for the church, reported that some participants showed up the previous Friday in error and that it was the only way that he had been made aware that there were any protesters coming at all. The Chicago Police Department was on hand with ATVs to escort the rally participants to the Thompson Center.

The Gay Liberation Network's (GLN's) Bob Schwartz believed that the "civil-unions bill was not the real target" for the rally but was "an organizing tool for an anti-gay marriage amendment." The website for Americans For Life strongly hints at such an objective, noting an Illinois Petition for Defense of Marriage Initia-

tive. Peter LaBarbera, head of the Americans for Truth about Homosexuality, confirmed that the goal of the rally was to support a referendum for an Illinois constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage and its equivalent.

Dick Walsh, head of Americans For Life, opened the rally by saying, "We will win! God is on our side." Walsh claimed, "We're here because God told us to be here." Walsh's flyer, posted on his website, claimed that "homosexual marriage is wrong because: it's not marriage because procreation is impossible, it violates the natural law of sexual purpose, it promotes the homosexual lifestyle, known to spread the deadly disease AIDS, it defeats the interest of government in promoting the family unit in society" and several other allegations.

Walsh added, "The real bullies are across the street"—referring to the pro-LGBT activists. He said, "I am here in defense of my grandchildren. One man and one woman are incapable of sin when done in the bounds of traditional marriage." Walsh could not be contacted for further comment.

Also on hand was Rev. Hiram Crawford, Jr. (Crawford's father was most famous for his support of the Daley Plaza Nativity display, and for opposing the Chicago gay-rights bill with pickets and newspaper ads in the 1980s.) Crawford, Jr., invoked the late Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., saying that he was "a family man" and that he was there, as were the others to "stand up for life and righteousness." Several bystanders not affiliated with either set of demonstrators began to boo. "Who are these people? Why are they in Chicago?," asked one woman.

Schwartz said that he was pleased with the turnout and support from the advocates of same-sex marriage equality. GLN was the catalyst for the counter-demonstration, which involved numerous other local pro-LGBT advocacy groups. "We will not them codify bigotry in the state constitution," Schwartz said. "Where ever they go, we will follow!"

—Assistance: Bill Kelley

## Renee Hanover memorial July 16

The family and friends of longtime lesbian attorney and activist Renee Hanover has been set for Saturday, July 16, 1-4 p.m., at 1900 S. Prairie.

Hanover was a significant leader in Chicago's LGBT movement from the 1960s until she moved to California a few years ago. She also defended important legal cases and clients. She died Jan. 12, 2011.

Her obituary is at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/gay/lesbian/news/ARTICLE.php?AID=30130>.

People interested in speaking at the memorial should email Tracy Baim at [editor@windycitymediagroup.com](mailto:editor@windycitymediagroup.com). Those attending are also asked to bring photos, memorabilia or even written memories of Hanover.

## Teen historians in nat'l contest

More than 60 of the most accomplished teen historians from the Chicago area will represent Illinois in a national historical research competition next month.

Sixty-nine Illinois students will join students from across the nation at the National History Day (NHD) competition, which will take place at the University of Maryland in College Park June 13-16.

The projects developed by Chicago-area students cover subjects such as the Nazi march in Skokie and the Picasso sculpture in Daley Plaza. Among those competing are Tanya Jonsson, Brian Nunez, Felipe Rodriguez, Daianna Soto and Veronica Soto (East Aurora High School) for "Chicago Human Rights Ordinance" in the Senior Group Performance category.



Pro-LGBT advocates attended the May 27 anti-gay rally in the Loop. Photo by Mike Lackovich

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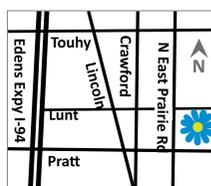


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# Diversion program involves transgender women

BY KATE SOSIN

A group of Chicago legal experts has instituted a new diversion program (one run by a police department or some other office that is designed to enable alleged offenders of criminal law to avoid criminal charges and a record) aimed at helping one of the city's most marginalized populations. Transgender women charged in the city with sex work can now opt to complete a diversion program much like the one that has been offered to non-transgender women for years.

The program came about because, according to organizers, the number of arrests of transgender sex workers has increased over the past few years.

QUEST works like many other diversion programs. First-time offenders can opt to complete a one-day program in lieu of other penalties, both legal and financial. The program went into effect in early May and has already served at least 11 people.

"We would like to see young trans women have other options," said Bennett Lawson, a spokesperson for 44th Ward Ald. Tom Tunney's Office. Tunney's office collaborated with other QUEST organizers to create the program. Lawson said that Lake View has seen an increase in sex work and complaints in the neighborhood.

"If we could lower the amount of arrests, the amount of calls [about prostitution], that would benefit everyone," Lawson said.

According to a recent National Gay and Lesbian Task Force survey, unemployment rates for transgender people are twice the national average. In Chicago, 27 percent of respondents reported being fired for being transgender, a percentage point higher than the national average for transgender people.

The QUEST program is designed to address some of those challenges by offering participants GED classes, housing, computer training and free non-mandatory HIV and STI screenings.

The one-day session will be held at Christian Community Health Center, 9718 S. Halsted. At the end of it, participants will receive a certificate to bring back to the court, and their charges will be dismissed. The session costs \$25, but according to QUEST organizers, fundraising efforts at Boystown clubs will cover the costs for those unable to pay.

QUEST founder and Assistant Public Defender Susan Matyus-Ehrlich told Windy City Times that she pursued creating the program because both non-transgender women and men have access to different diversion programs when charged with sex work or solicitation. She said that everyone involved thus far was happy.

In Chicago's transgender community, however, the announcement of QUEST was met with heavy skepticism. No transgender organization was included in the planning of the program, a fact confirmed by Matyus-Ehrlich who said she did not have experience working with transgender people. Transgender advocates have expressed concerns both publicly and privately that their expertise was circumvented.

The project was designed with input from Cen-



Owen Daniel-McCarter. Pic by Carrie Maxwell

ter on Halsted, which has offered consultation to Christian Community Health Center in creating the program. The Center has a transgender program, but it does not have known paid transgender staffers.

Owen Daniel-McCarter of the Transformative Justice Law Project of Illinois (TJLP) said that there is a need for the diversion program, but that he worries it is of touch with the community that could benefit. "I like the idea of this happening from the community up," Daniel-McCarter said. "A lot of people are working on this stuff. I'm confused as to why our opinions are not enlisted."

The program has already made one small error: it refers to transgender people as "transgenders," a commonly used term that is generally deemed offensive and grammatically inaccurate.

Daniel-McCarter said that unless QUEST organizers consult directly with the community affected, the program could create a new set of problems for transgender people. He said that a diversion program for just transgender women could unnecessarily out many people as transgender, putting them at-risk of violence, discrimination and humiliation.

He also said the program does not address another problem facing transgender women in Lake View: Many transgender people have argued over the last two years that police arbitrarily arrest transgender women for being out after dark in Boystown and charge them with prostitution. Windy City Times was not able to confirm this.

Program materials for QUEST claim that it is the first of its kind in the nation. At least one similar diversion program does exist already, however. The Washington D.C. superior court offers an eight-week program to transgender women.

Matyus-Ehrlich said that she and other QUEST organizers are working now to include more LGBT organizations in the ongoing creation of QUEST.

## Stalemate develops in transgender situation

BY KATE SOSIN

Transgender activists from the group Illinois Gender Advocates (IGA) are facing off with the ACLU over a lawsuit that by most counts, aims to do exactly what IGA has been working toward for months.

On May 10, the ACLU filed a lawsuit against the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). The class-action suit, filed on behalf of three transgender individuals, alleges that current policy unfairly prevents many transgender people from changing the gender marker on their birth certificates.

IGA also found the policy problematic but says it has been working on changing the policy internally, that they were nearing a resolution with IDPH, and the new lawsuit could hamper their efforts. The disagreement has become the subject of an often awkward public stalemate between two groups working toward the same goal.

"This wasn't stepping over us," said IGA Chair Candice Hart. "It was stepping on us."

Hart said that she did not even know the ACLU was filing suit until she read about it in the newspapers. "We were concerned as well as dismayed that the ACLU would take such action without so much as giving us a heads up," Hart said.

In January, IDPH released a new proposed policy on transgender people and birth certificates. That policy, which mandated a laundry list of surgeries before a gender marker could be changed, was met with strong critiques from transgender organizers. Such surgeries can cost in the tens of thousands of dollars and are rarely covered by insurance companies. It was also met with scorn by the ACLU.

Hart said that she felt fairly confident that the ACLU knew that IGA was working on changing the policy already.

John Knight, director of the LGBT Project at the ACLU of Illinois, is the attorney on the case. He told Windy City Times, "I don't think I knew that IGA was involved [in re-drafting the policy]," although he did know that the policy was under revision. However, Knight added, his clients were denied birth certificates on April 21 for lack of genital surgery "without any indication that DPH intended to change the rule."

June LaTrobe, the director of public policy for IGA, said that IDPH presented the pro-

posed policy to the public for revision and that IGA had already been successful in negotiating out many of the initial requirements. She also claimed that she had personally informed Knight of their progress.

"[IDPH] has been genuine in wanting to work with us," LaTrobe said. LaTrobe added that they were just months away from having a new policy in place.

Knight said his clients could not wait any longer. The ACLU filed a similar lawsuit against IDPH in 2009. That suit was settled when the state granted new birth certificates to the plaintiffs and promised to update policies to make it easier for transgender people to change their certificates. That more progressive policy never came, however, and policy IDPH proposed in January included strict requirements that, Knight said, the department had agreed to do away with.

"We've been telling the department for two years that its arbitrary surgery rules clash with the medical standard of care for transgender people and make it impossible for most transgender people to correct the gender on their birth certificates," Knight said in a recent press release. "We took them at their word when they said they would make an appropriate change, but all we've seen is more delay."

The controversy may come at a sensitive time for Chicago-based transgender organizers. In April, the Cook County sheriff's office announced a new program for housing transgender detainees, a program that was developed without input from the local transgender community. The announcement of a new sentencing program for transgender sex workers this week also caught many by surprise as major players in transgender organizing, including the Transformative Justice Law Project of Illinois, were not consulted on the program.

Now, IGA is accusing Knight and the ACLU of skirting their own efforts to advocate for their community.

Knight told Windy City Times the two groups can work together. "We applaud all groups, including the IGA, for their efforts to change this policy," he said. "We, however, respectfully disagree that our litigation is 'counter-productive.' We hope that our work and theirs leads to an end of the current, harmful policy."

Hart said IGA wants open communication with the ACLU. How the two groups will work together on the issue remains unclear. IGA has no plans to stop working with IDPH. The ACLU has no plans to drop the lawsuit.

## 'Out of the Office' Pride Month event June 7

Real-estate firm Baird & Warner has announced that its annual Pride Month networking event, "OUT of the Office," will be held Tuesday, June 7, at Vertigo Sky Lounge, 2 W. Erie, 6-8:30 p.m. The event is open to LGBTQ professionals and their friendly co-workers, business vendors, friends and family.

The annual event, in its sixth year, is Baird & Warner's alternative to the Pride Parade. It also serves as a fundraiser for Chicago-based organizations through a suggested donation of \$10 at the door. This year's beneficiary is Vital Bridges, a Lake View organization that helps people impacted by HIV and AIDS. Past beneficiaries of the mixer have included the La Casa Norte, Gay Games, Chicago House, AIDSCare Chicago and Chicago 2016.

Jim Schiefelbein, vice president and chief marketing officer at Baird & Warner, said the

event helps LGBTQ professionals network personally and politically: "It is important for our community, the gay and lesbian community, to gather and show our strength in numbers as well as show our support for those businesses that support us."

## Vital Bridges Pride kickoff event June 5

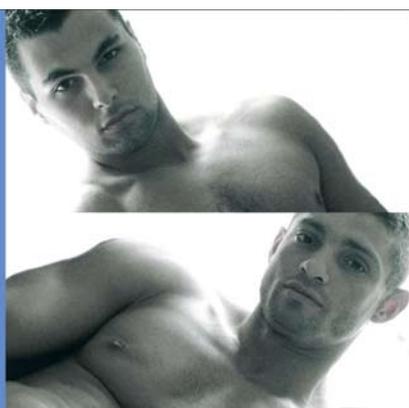
HIV/AIDS agency Vital Bridges will host a "Kick-off to Pride" event at ACRE restaurant, 5308 N. Clark, on Sunday, June 5, at 11 a.m. Guests will enjoy a buffet, champagne and martinis, all while supporting Vital Bridges and their initiatives.

The kickoff is a Chefs and the City culinary series event. Chefs and the City will take place Friday, July 15, at the Ritz-Carlton Chicago.

Tickets for the June 5 event are \$30 each; see <http://www.vitalbridges.org/pages/event-detail/17.php?id=11> for more information.

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# @GAY in the LIFE

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY ROSS FORMAN



Clinical massage therapist  
**Ryan Dahms**



Ryan Dahms has been giving massages since he was a kid and the joke had long been that, eventually, he go to school for massage therapy and then do it professional.

Now, he is—inside his two-bedroom apartment.

Dahms has been licensed for almost three years and has a customer base of men and women ranging in age from their 20s to their 50s—including a large contingent of gay men.

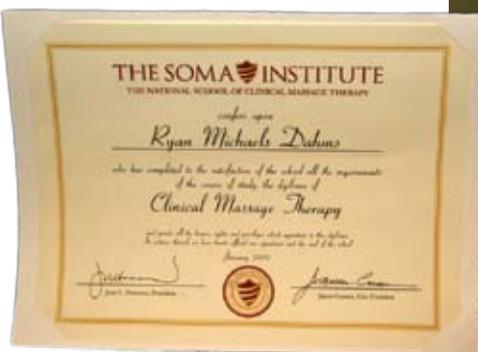
"I'm a healer," Dahms said. "Massages encourage blood flow, which brings more oxygen to the limbs and creates overall relaxation."

Dahms gives up to five massages daily, each for a minimum of 60 minutes. He charges \$1 per minute, which he calls "a blue-collar massage," because he feels everyone should have access to a massage to help maintain their health, not just the affluent.

Ironically, Dahms has never had a professional massage himself.

In addition to massages, Dahms also offers the healing energy work of reiki.

His massages usually focuses on deep tissue and/or trigger-point—and the atmosphere includes candles and New Age/ambient music or Bob Marley songs, a stark contrast to Dahms' personal musical interests, which are "harder and faster—the more experimental, the weirder the better," he said.



*the stats*

**Name**  
Ryan Dahms

**Hobbies**  
Writing, painting and working out

**Home**  
Has lived in Germany and five states in the United States

**Fashion**  
Is a jeans-and-T-shirt guy

**Relationship status**  
Single

**Tattoos**  
Three, including an abstract design on his left leg that he personally did. "Thank God it came out OK," he said. Also has an abstract tat on his right arm.

**Education**  
Received his degree from The Soma Institute in Chicago

**Favorite Chicago restaurants**  
India House and El Gallo Bravo

**Favorite all-time musical group**  
Guns N' Roses



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# Organizations discuss civil-union nuts and bolts

BY TERENCE CHAPPELL

Debated, negotiated, compromised and tabled—but civil unions are now a reality for same-sex couples in Illinois.

Effective June 1, same-sex couples will have the same marital rights as their opposite-sex counterparts under the Illinois Religious Freedom Protection and Civil Union Act, which Gov. Pat Quinn signed into law. LGBT organizations Lambda Legal and Equality Illinois recently hosted a teleconference that offered an inside



Christopher Clark. Photo by Yasmin Nair

look into the new, landmark law, its benefits and the next steps. Spearheaded by Equality Illinois' CEO Bernard Cherkasov and Lambda Legal senior staff attorney Christopher Clark, the two answered questions on civil-union issues that included tax breaks, insurance policies and other mutual benefits as well as new responsibilities under the new law. Cherkasov believes that the teleconference was a step in the right direction of keeping the LGBT community informed on such a long awaited, hot-button decision.

"We wanted to ensure that our community and that our allies are educated on what civil unions are and how they will impact the lives of people across the state," said Cherkasov.

In particular, the teleconference covered the rights granted to same-sex couples under the civil-union law. Such rights include the ability to visit one's partner in the hospital and to make medical decisions, divorce, the right to sue over one's partner's death and the right to live together in nursing homes.

Other rights that are granted to heterosexual couples in marriages but are still not applied to same-sex married couples or those that will enter into a civil-union include joint filing of federal taxes; the right to receive social security payments upon partner's death; immigration rights for foreign partners; and the right to inherit a partner's property without paying federal estate taxes. Currently, religious institutions are still not obligated to recognize same-sex relationships.

Clark advised that same-sex couples looking to enter into a civil-union should be taking into account the same precautions, concerns and issues as heterosexual couples. "The new law will be a legal obligation to support each other and care for each other," he said. "And if a civil-union needs to be dissolved, it would have to be by a court in the same way that a divorce needs to be obtained from the court. So, in some instance, a civil-union is like a marriage because it intertwines two people's lives in a legal way."

Josh Hildebrand has been a domestic partnership with his partner for four years and is excited that civil unions are now an option for him and his partner.

"I truly think that Illinois took a giant leap in

the right direction with legalizing civil unions," Hildebrand told Windy City Times in a separate conversation. "I think this is great and it's just good to know that this is an option for me and my partner."

Although the recognition and legalization of civil unions are a benefit for the LGBT community, Cherkasov still warns that though the new law is a reason to celebrate, this is just the beginning.

"The civil-union law is not the end all to our [LGBT] equality. It's an important milestone on the state level in providing some of the rights and responsibilities that marriage only makes available to heterosexual couples. However, at the same time, there are limitations to the civil-union law. First of all, it's not portable. So, if same-sex couples travel outside of Illinois, they're relationship will not be recognized," said Cherkasov.

According to both organizations, Equality Illinois and Lambda Legal partnered up for the teleconference not only to keep the public informed on current updates concerning civil unions but also because each fulfills a needed mission towards working to fulfill equality for the LGBT community. While Equality Illinois maintains a mission to protect and secure equal rights for the LGBT community according to its website, Lambda Legal works towards legal and policy progression for the community.

"We make sure that we coordinate our efforts together where it makes sense so that we can accomplish our mission of full equality," said Cherkasov.

In celebration of the new law, the city of Chicago Commission on Human Relations' Advisory Council on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues has partnered up with Equality Illinois, Lambda Legal, the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, the Chicago office of Tourism and Culture, and the Alliance of Illinois Judges to host a grand civil-union ceremony in Millennium Park June 2 where 30

## SIDEBAR

### Insurance dept. has info on benefits, protections

In addition to other new rights, those entering into civil unions can expect a change in insurance benefits. The Illinois Department of Insurance published important new insurance benefits and protections available to civil-union spouses.

"Whether through auto, life, homeowners, renters or health insurance, nearly every Illinois resident relies on an insurance policy to provide financial security," said Illinois Department of Insurance Director Mike McRaith in a statement. "As the people of Illinois celebrate the many positive implications and benefits of this historic civil union law, the Department is available to provide timely information and answer questions from the families, employers, and insurance professionals impacted by the law."

For more information and updates, the insurance department provided a fact sheet at <http://www.insurance.illinois.gov>. In addition, for a list of insurance companies licensed to operate in Illinois and information regarding the law, visit the department website at <http://insurance.illinois.gov/cb/2011/cb2011-06.pdf>.

—Terence Chappell

couples will commit themselves to each other through a civil union. The following evening, The Civil Rights Agenda will host a mass civil-union ceremony at the Chicago History Museum.

Both Cherkasov and Clark are married, and though both men feel there is a lot more on the agenda regarding equal rights for the LGBT community, the passing of the civil-union law is a

time to raise a glass and rejoice in the victory.

"This is a great step forward for same-sex couples because same-sex couples were not able to get married in the state of Illinois," Clark said. "They will be able to become legal civil-union partners in the state of Illinois. They will be able to solemnize they're union. They will be recognized."

## CIVIL from cover

allowing interested couples to skip a separate trip.

For state Rep. Greg Harris, the perennial lead sponsor of the civil-union bill he first introduced in 2007, the months that have passed since Quinn's Jan. 31 signing of the bill have put the moment into an illuminating context.

While some of his colleagues may have expressed concern for their constituents' reactions over their vote in support of the measure, Harris said media coverage showing couples, families and county clerks' offices alike preparing for the law's implementation, most interestingly appearing in the state's central and southern regions, have indicated "the people of Illinois are way ahead of their legislators on this issue."

"It's an emotionally charged issue and everyone has their opinions but I just watch the TV stations and read the newspapers down here [in and around Springfield] and they're talking about families who are so happy for their brother or sister or son or daughter who are finally seeing their relationship recognized," Harris told Windy City Times. "That helps you realize this is truly changing a lot of peoples' lives for the better."

Emanuel described the occasion as marking "a day of celebration and an historic milestone on the road to full marriage equality for LGBT Illinoisans" in a city news release, mirroring the assertions of the bulk of queer activists across the state that civil unions still fall short of their end goal. Although the law will grant many of the same legal protections to same-sex (as well as heterosexual) couples who register for civil unions as those

the law will provide "necessary protections that families need now until the time we have same-sex marriage" in Illinois but was quick to add the caveat that "separate is not equal and a civil-union is not a marriage."

"We have a job ahead of us to make sure there is only one set of rules and one yard stick for everyone," Garcia said. "This is a time to be celebratory and happy but it is also a time to recommit ourselves to equality and fairness."

Andy Thayer, co-founder of Chicago's Gay Liberation Network, noted the idea of civil unions for same-sex couples as separate but equal as "oxymoronic" though he hoped the law's passage would "help hasten the day of full legal equality."

In the months that followed the state legislature's approval of the bill late last year, social conservative groups, most notably the Catholic Conference of Illinois, supported repeated attempts to weaken the law, particularly as it pertained to gay and lesbian parents' adoptive and foster care rights.

Thayer hoped LGBT activists in the state would take the opportunity to face any further such opposition from faith-based groups head on—something he felt activists in other statewide battles in recent years have failed to do.

"In the California defeat with Proposition 8 and Maine with Question 1, our community hesitated to take on 'religious' bigots and those were hesitations which proved disastrous," Thayer noted. "It is my hope that many more LGBTs begin to feel that we cannot give a 'religious' exemption for bigotry."

Equality Illinois CEO Bernard Cherkasov, too, called for continued vigilance on the community's part against further opposition,



Gov. Pat Quinn signed the civil-unions act into law Jan. 31. Photo by Hal Baim

afforded to married couples in the state, when it comes to federal matters, the civil unions remain unrecognized.

"There is something a little bit both exciting and bittersweet that it's not full marriage," said Jim Bennett, regional director of Lambda Legal's Midwest office, before noting that many of the couples participating in the Millennium Park event still have their eyes set on a full-fledged marriage ceremony in the future.

"You don't want to rain on an amazing parade but [the law] is a great step and it's nice that Illinois is on the leading side of making equality happen," he added.

Veteran gay activist Rick Garcia, who lobbied aggressively for the bill's passage, noted

such as the call from some conservative activists, including American for Truth about Homosexuality head Peter LaBarbera, for a measure on the civil-union law to be placed on a statewide ballot in the next election.

"It's important for us to be vigilant and keep our eyes on the goal of full equality," Cherkasov said, "and we need to take every threat that comes our way very seriously."

Cherkasov added that he hoped couples embarking on civil unions would sign up for Equality Illinois and Lambda Legal's jointly launched Civil Union Tracker to aide their organizations' abilities to keep tabs on any problems or questions that arise for those applying for licenses.



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# Long road back: Chad Hendry running against HIV

BY ROSS FORMAN

Chad T. Hendry remembers the moment like it was yesterday, one of those where-were-you-when lifetime moments.

It was Dec. 30, 2009, at 11:07 a.m. in Hollywood, Calif., at the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center.

Hendry was 30 at the time and admits now that he was well aware of what he might hear, though he held out hope, as slim as that may have been. He vividly recalls the exact words he heard: "You are negative for hepatitis C, but you have come back reactive for HIV."

His heart sank and, though he did not immediately cry, he wanted to. Fear swept over shame, along with guilt. He was numb from head to toe.

Hendry's journey to that fateful day actually started about a year earlier. He had a lot of stress and issues he was dealing with—people very close to him dying of cancer, a bad break up, job stress. So Hendry sought out a way to numb the stress and pain of life.

He tried crystal meth—and was immediately hooked.

The progression was swift and the consequences were immense, he said. "In one year's time, I lost my career, threw away school, lost my home, my car, my friends. I sacrificed everything for the drug and the lifestyle that came along with it."

Plus, he got wrapped up in a sexual addiction.



"Anyone who is familiar with this culture knows it's not conducive to a healthy lifestyle," Hendry said.

On Dec. 23, 2009, Hendry finally reached out for help from the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center. His counselor helped get him into the Van Ness Recovery Home in Hollywood.

After spending Christmas in the recovery home, he then learned he was HIV-positive.

"On Jan. 7, 2010, I left the recovery home and, in all honesty, I was ready to die. I wanted to die. I had lost all hope. I had lost everything material and now my health," Hendry said. "What brought me through that very dark time was my family. My mother convinced me to reach out to my family here in Naperville."

On Jan. 12, 2010, Hendry moved back to Naperville, Ill.

He's been clean since April 6, 2010.

"How has my life changed [since the diagnosis]? Well, beyond the obvious things, such as having to go to the doctor a few more times a year and taking a pill a day, my life hasn't changed that much. What has changed is my approach to life," Hendry said. "Today, I am grateful for every moment I have here on this earth. Every day I continue to grow and learn more about myself, and I fully believe I have never gone through addiction or contracted HIV, I never would have developed this gratitude for life. I also would have never realized what my purpose in life is ... and that is, to help people."

"The biggest impact HIV has had on my life is [that] it has helped me find my passion. That passion is helping others. Giving away what was so freely given to me which was a chance at a new way of life. I wouldn't take back my actions in addiction or the fact that I have HIV. I am now uniquely qualified to approach life with empathy and compassion. I believe that it's a gift and I intend to give that gift away to others."

Hendry, now 31, and living at Alexian Brothers Bonaventure House in Lake View, is single and, for the first time in his life, not focused on dating. Instead, he's out to find fulfillment through relationships, he said. "I have been taking the time to get to know myself. I am sure when the right person comes along I will be open to dating though."

Hendry does volunteer work for several area agencies, including the Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN) and the Chicago House & Social Service Agency, where he works in HIV prevention, outreach and testing.

Hendry was born in Salt Lake City, Utah. His family moved to Naperville and Lisle for a few years in the early 1980s until his parents divorced, and then he moved back to Utah. At 21, he moved to Palm Springs, Calif., and he lived in Southern California for the next eight years.

Hendry ran the 110-meter hurdles in high school and has competed in numerous 5K races. In 2008, he trained for the inaugural Pasadena Marathon, but it was cancelled due to fires.

"When I first moved to Chicago I saw an advertisement for the Team To End AIDS (T2) endurance-training program, and I knew that I wanted to challenge myself and run with that team," Hendry said. "I wasn't able to run [for T2 in 2010] because of all the other things going on [in my life], but this year I am determined to do it. With the help of Alexian Brothers Bonaventure House, I was able to join T2."

"One of the reasons I wanted to run with T2 was to be able to raise money for the AIDS Foundation of Chicago. I call it putting my gratitude in motion. I want to give back to the many agencies that have helped me save my life and find a new way to live. I also knew that if I was going to be able to train for a marathon I needed the encouragement of teammates."

So Hendry is there along the lakefront, in his red T2 shirt, running mile after mile after mile on Saturday mornings.

His goal: the finish line in the annual Bank of America Chicago Marathon on Sunday, Oct. 9.

"I believe that running any marathon is an amazing challenge," Hendry said. "Never in my life did I ever think I would be running a 26.2-mile marathon. It takes a lot of physical and mental preparation, but I believe, when I cross that finish line, it will all have been worth it. Not only am I challenging myself, but I am also able to help others in the process. That in and of itself makes it all worthwhile."

"I believe we can all achieve anything that we want, and having HIV and being an addict in recovery shouldn't ever be something to hold me back. I believe that I can do anything and I approach my life each day with that in mind. So you ask why do it? I say, why not?"

Hendry said joining T2 was a simple, logical choice, even with numerous other charity training programs in the city. It's the energy of T2 that has Hendry hooked. It's a force of souls coming together to push and challenge people to do something together that they may not have been able to do alone, he said. "Not only are we pushing ourselves physically, but we are raising money to make a difference in the lives of people who need it."

Hendry said fundraising is a challenge; it definitely takes him out of his comfort zone.

"I have never been very good at asking for money or support, but, it's worth the challenge. It's an opportunity to do what was done for me. Many of the programs I have been involved with get funding from AFC, so this is a way for me to give back."

In addition to marathon training, Hendry is in college, working on his undergraduate degree in social work at Harold Washington College.

"One of my goals is to do the best that I can every day, and realize that my best might change from day to day. That's perfectly OK. I try to approach each day with gratitude for being alive," Hendry said.

"Events such as the Ride For AIDS or T2 could mean the difference between someone having access to food and shelter, life-saving medications, a new way of life, and more. I believe, because of programs like these, underserved populations are able to have access to services that might not be available otherwise. I also believe that programs like these give the average person a way to give back and help their community. For me, it's a way to give back directly to the organizations that have helped me save my life, such as Alexian Brothers Bonaventure House, the AIDS Foundation of Chicago, Test Positive Aware Network and Chicago House."

Hendry is truly a changed man since returning to Chicago—and a happy one.

"If you have just found out that you are HIV-positive, stop, take a deep breath and allow yourself to process it," Hendry said. "Realize that HIV is only a small part of you and it never



Chad Hendry.

needs to consume you. I believe that we can embrace our life for all the good and the bad, and we can achieve all of our dreams. Nobody is ever in this fight alone; reach out to your family and friends, and add new support through community-based AIDS organizations. You are never alone and we can fight this fight together.

"Having HIV doesn't have to be a death sentence [like it once was for so many people]. I do believe that you do have to make active, healthy life decisions going forward in order to live a healthy life mentally and physically. We have a chance that the pioneers of HIV didn't have, which is medical advancements and treatments."

"HIV/AIDS awareness is essential. I currently do HIV outreach and testing in the local bathhouses. I also wear the 'HIV Positive' T-shirt all of the time in public in an effort to facilitate a conversation with people, [and] ideally, to dispel stigmas and misconceptions about people living with HIV/AIDS. I also write a blog about my life in recovery from addiction and living with HIV, about my every day struggles or thoughts, and more. I believe by being honest about having HIV and my addiction that, hopefully, I might make it easier for someone else to reach out to his or her trusted support."

"HIV impacts my life in every way, every day. My purpose is to help others and I keep the fact that I have HIV at the forefront of my mind."

Anyone interested in supporting Hendry on his fundraising for T2 on behalf of AFC should visit <http://afc.aidschicago.org/netcommunity/chadthendry>.



Whoopi Goldberg.

## Whoopi Goldberg at Chicago House event

BY ROSS FORMAN

Whoopi Goldberg is coming to Chicago for the annual Speaker Series Luncheon, presented by and benefiting Chicago House and Social Service Agency.

Goldberg, who calls Daytime Emmy Award-winning show *The View* (ABC-TV) her home, will be the third speaker in the series, following Madeline Albright and former President Bill Clinton. Goldberg's appearance is scheduled for Friday, Nov. 4, at the Palmer House Hilton Hotel, 17 E. Monroe, starting at 11:30 a.m.

"Our Inaugural Speaker Series Luncheon aimed to bring attention to and create dialogue surrounding Chicago House's mission and the core services that we provide to formerly homeless men, women, and children who are affected by AIDS," said Chicago House Manager of Special Events Jeremy Hilborn. "In continuing to offer a diverse voice behind our urgent mission, in the event's third year, we wanted to deviate from a political point of view and consider intellectual offerings from the world of entertainment, journalism, or sports.

"We ultimately landed on Whoopi, who has long associated herself with philanthropy, most notably her work in support of the homeless with Comic Relief in the 1980s. She supports Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, sits on the national board of DIFFA, and was honored with a GLAAD Award in 1999. We expect she will bring a new and diverse perspective on Chicago House, the state of HIV/AIDS and homelessness and our relevance to the big picture, with her own style of wit, humor and intelligence."

About 1,000 are expected to attend and the fundraising goal is \$275,000. The combined fundraising in 2009 and 2010 was more than \$300,000.

"Above and beyond raising unrestricted funds to support Chicago House's mission, the purpose of the Speaker Series is to bring a new and diverse outlook and to create discussion among media, our corporate partners, and allies in and outside the LGBT community about our mission and the urgent work we're doing," Hilborn said. "Whoopi [is] consistently gay-[friendly]. Last fall, she joined forces with other celebrities to do a series of Public Service Announcements for FightBackPac.com, which targeted New York politicians who voted against same-sex marriage, and [she] continues to rally for LGBT causes on-screen as a co-host on *The View*."

As Celie in 1985 film *The Color Purple*, Gold-

berg played one of the first lesbian/bisexual characters in a primary role in a mainstream film. She also starred as a lesbian in the 1994 film *Boys on the Side*, a character that still remains one of the few Black lesbians in a primary role in mainstream cinema.

"Whoopi's intelligence and range of expressive speaking abilities were what initially attracted us to her," Hilborn said. "In raising the bar this year to create a new and diverse intellectual offering, we wanted to use our third year to tell the story through someone else's eyes. President Clinton and Dr. Albright were the perfect individuals to pioneer the event in its infancy, and in future years we may continue to bring domestic and international political perspectives to the event. As millions of people tune in to daily to watch her moderate on ABC's *The View*, we too are very excited to hear Whoopi's viewpoint on the hot topics that are important to our community."



Jeremy Hilborn and Madeleine Albright. Photo courtesy of Hilborn

He added, "Whoopi can deliver a serious message in an optimistic way that everyone can relate to."

Hilborn, 34, who lives in Chicago's Uptown neighborhood, is responsible for overseeing the event, which includes venue selection, contract negotiation, travel arrangements, and more. Plus, he oversees a team of production consultants, and also works on the event timeline, manages and trains staff, volunteers and table captains. Hilborn also manages printing, marketing, publicity, ticket sales, and more.

Hilborn, who is gay, has been at Chicago House for nine years.

"I'm looking forward to working with her team in the coming months to secure media interviews, and to debrief her on the ever-changing work that Chicago House does in support of people affected by AIDS," he said.

## Sex and seniors in the city: Forum and film on HIV/AIDS and older gays

BY KATE SOSIN

A room of more than 75 people broke into cheers when Hope Barrett, Center on Halsted senior director of public programs, said people don't stop having sex at age 30.

"We know that people are still having sex at 50, at 60, at 70," Barrett said over loud applause during a meeting at the Center on Halsted's Hoover-Leppen Theater.

That fact may seem obvious to many. However, if one couples the stigma surrounding sex and elders with a persistent stigma around HIV/AIDS, there is a trend that is putting more people over 50 at the highest risk of HIV infection ever.

That trend is the subject of a powerful new documentary produced by Center on Halsted. *Aging POZitively: The story of three older adults living with HIV*, directed by Dennis Belogorsky, follows the lives of three older adults coping with a virus they contracted late in life.

The 34-minute film premiered May 23 to much fanfare and many tears.

"It was very difficult to find folks to come put a face to this," Barrett told the audience before the film started. Barrett told *Windy City Times* that older adults shied from talking publicly about their HIV status.

Barrett finally found willing candidates in Helena Bushong, Frank Parker and Walter Maul. They each offered an unprecedented telling of the ways HIV affects older adults not just medically but personally.

Helena Bushong was 47 when she found out she was HIV-positive. "At the time, I was in an environment where I felt I couldn't reveal my health status," Bushong said in the film. Bushong left for Chicago to stay with friends who wanted to care for her.

"I moved here [to the Beverly neighborhood and] pretty much resolved to die," she said.

That was 13 years ago. Today, Bushong is active in AIDS prevention advocacy and transgender organizing. However, life is hardly simple for Bushong. She can't always go see theater on the North Side, one of her favorite things, because doing so would interrupt her HIV regimen. She struggles with deciding when and how to tell people she meets that she is HIV-positive.

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Preven-

tion statistics suggested that, in 2005, people over age 50 made up 35 percent of AIDS deaths and 15 percent of new HIV infections.

*Aging POZitively* aims to bring those numbers out in the open through personal interviews and expert commentary. Featured in the film are Center on Halsted's Jill Dispenza and Gregory Gross; Magda Houlberg, M.D. from Howard Brown Health Center; and Nathan Linsk, Ph.D., from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

According to experts, healthcare providers tend to shy away from talking to older adults about HIV/AIDS because many feel uncomfortable with the idea that older people have sex. New drugs like Viagra, however, have made it possible for many older adults to have sex later in life.

Some older adults may mistake HIV symptoms like fatigue for signs of aging, but stigma prevents many people from getting tested, discussing HIV with sexual partners, and finally, talking about HIV if they are positive.

"I don't know another word other than 'shame,' maybe, that you've fallen to this level," said Parker on screen, of the progression of his HIV and his nagging shortness of breath.

Maul also struggles with HIV and aging. The 50-year-old former interior designer is often forced to recuperate for an entire day if the previous day was busy for him. Maul has moved past feeling embarrassed that he has HIV, however. Like Bushong, he puts much of his energy into HIV-prevention efforts.

Audience members at the screening lauded the courage of Bushong, Parker and Maul in sharing their stories. The three sat together in the audience, holding hands. When the lights came up, many in the crowd stood up and "came out" as being HIV-positive. Others cried quietly.

Bushong said unless older adults start talking about HIV, AIDS advocacy work will continue to target youth. "The whole idea about being transparent and open about HIV is really important," she said. "Once we address those secrets, we're set free."

A portion of the \$475,000 grant awarded last year by U.S. Health and Human Services to Center on Halsted for senior services funded *Aging POZitively*. The film will be available for free viewing at <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>.



Pictured, from left: Director Gregory Gross; Dennis Belogorsky, Frank Parker, Helena Bushong, and Walter Maul. In Front: Hope Barrett. Photo by Kate Sosin

# AIDS warrior: Chicagoan Keith Green

BY PATRICK DUVAL

As the HIV/AIDS epidemic carries into the second decade of the 21st century, Keith Green has emerged as a strong contender in the fight. When meeting him it is impossible to overlook his deep respect for the individual humanity of people with AIDS, and his passion for encouraging goodness in those who need it most.

For seven years, Green has been involved with a number of direct, community-based outreach programs, and, this past February, Green was hired as the new director of federal affairs at the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC).

While the face of HIV/AIDS has changed over the past 30 years, so has the complexity of the struggle to combat the disease. Green is a new sort of AIDS health professional that looks beyond traditional treatment methods. "HIV is a symptom of a much larger combination of sicknesses," Green said. "[Like] poverty, homophobia, racism, and sexism. I'm more interested in figuring out how to tackle some of those larger issues, in and out of the context of HIV, so that we can really get a grip on the epidemic."

He goes on to say that, while sexual health education is an absolutely necessary part of the overall strategy, people would "throw all of that out of the window if [they] don't have anywhere to sleep." Next year Green plans to start work on his Ph.D. in social-welfare policy to further deepen his understanding of the issue. "I went to school to be able to mix the sort of community-based perspective with what I was learning from academia, and pull them together to really drive the work, to help make it better."

When Green started at AFC earlier this year, a new Congressional session was beginning with a strong GOP majority in the House of Representatives. Revising the budget was at the top of the list of the new Congress, and one of the first cuts proposed was the elimination of federally funded needle-sharing programs. Green quickly got to work contacting elected officials and he helped to develop a strategy that eventually kept the needle-sharing programs in place.

While he has many duties as director of federal affairs, Green's primary responsibility is monitoring how federal funds are applied, specifically making sure that Illinois is in alignment with the national HIV/AIDS strategy. Dr. Margo Bell, a pediatrician who has worked with Green for the last six years on various sexual health education initiatives, reports that Green is always asking "Is the fight about money, or is the fight about people?" With strong roots in community advocacy, it seems that, at least in Illinois, Green one of the people who makes sure money for AIDS initiatives gets where it needs to go.

In April 2010, Bell approached Green about serving as project director for a pre-exposure prophylaxis study at John H. Stroger Hospital. Dubbed "Project Prepare," the trial tests the effectiveness of Truvada, a powerful anti-retroviral drug, as a method of HIV-prevention in young men in the Chicago area. Dr. Sybil G. Hosek, an expert on adolescent psychology, was the principal investigator on the project.

During the recruitment phase of Project Prepare, Green informed his research assistants that their time would be split equally doing research and outreach. Although women and HIV-positive individuals were excluded from the study, Green's team did their best to direct people to places in their community where they could get

tested and keep them informed about available resources. They even went so far as to escort people to appointments at local clinics and follow up to direct them to treatment, if necessary. Green was very careful to tailor the study to fit the needs of the community. In Green's words, "We built a lot of relationships out in the field, which, you know, is uncommon in research, and is what, at the end of the day, has made a difference for us and for our community—and it's continuing to make a difference."

On Nov. 23, 2010, Gladstone Institutes, a non-profit independent research organization affiliated with the University of California at San Francisco, published data on a similar international study in *The New England Journal of Medicine*. The results showed that the rate of HIV infection was dramatically lowered with the correct dosage of Truvada.

After Gladstone's *Iniciativa Profilaxis Preexposicion (iPrEx)* data was released; Project Prepare was put on hold; and Green called a community forum at Center on Halsted to discuss the potentially game-changing results. A major concern discussed at the meeting was about the ethics of giving some participants a placebo when the iPrEx study had such success. After he advocated with the principal investigators, Project Prepare was reinstated, and all participants taking the placebo were given the opportunity to join the main branch of the Stroger study.

Green also reached out to Dr. Robert Grant, principal researcher of the Gladstone Institutes study, in hopes of folding Project Prepare into the main iPrEx trial. Concerned about the lack of young people involved in the first cohort of participants, Green strongly lobbied for his work with Hosek and Bell to be included in the larger work. Men who have sex with men in their teens and 20s have one of the fastest rising rates of HIV infection in the country. Green knew that for the study to have the most impact, data from younger people would need to be captured. Earlier this year, Stroger Hospital became an official iPrEx testing site, and Green is now working with the head investigators to translate the information about the study to a younger audience.

Bell enlisted Green to serve as director for another project based out of Stroger Hospital offering evidenced-based interventions to the Chicago house ball community. Made famous by the 1990 documentary film *Paris is Burning*, the house ball scene is an underground group of primarily LGBT individuals who compete for trophies in different categories based around gender presentation and class. The ball scene is a safe haven for transgender people and gender-nonconforming gays and lesbians. There are formalized groups within the community—referred to as "houses," headed by a man or woman, termed the House Parent. Members of the Ball scene have been one of the groups hardest hit by HIV/AIDS. In Green's words, "One of the things the house ball community taught me is that poverty is a huge driver of the epidemic in that community. Poverty exists for a number of reasons. A lot of it has to do with homophobia and discrimination against more effeminate men and trans folks."

During a focus group Green and Bell conducted with the House Parents Association, the community leaders said the epidemic had reached the point that they were attending three to four funerals a month within the region. They also expressed concerns about seeking out help, due



Keith Green. Photos courtesy of Keith Green

to their past history of opening their community to scientists and artists, only to be exploited. Green is very sensitive to these issues, and is working to shape his programs to create a sustainable environment for the scientists to get the data they are looking for and the community the resources it needs. For Green, it's not just about the research. It's about being able to give people the tools they have to have to improve their lives and to help them find what it takes to keep going.

As with Project Prepare, Green is working to translate the resources of the community health system to best help a high-risk community. The project will soon launch a series of interventions that will feature educational materials on the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, food, and guest speakers on topics like stigma and the medical and pharmaceutical options available.

## The personal is political

Being involved in community outreach is now an essential part of Green's life and work. He has reached a level of success professionally, holding two degrees, working with at-risk communities, and now with the largest AIDS organization in Chicago; however, it was not always this way. The journey to reach this point was a long one.

In 1994, when he was 17 years old and still a senior in high school on Chicago's South Side, Green was diagnosed as HIV-positive and given roughly 10 years to live. After a few attempts at pursuing the future he had hoped for, Green accepted that he only had a limited amount of time left. He decided to enjoy his remaining time, but largely ignored the disease, forgoing medication or treatment of any kind. For eight and half years Green lived his life and held a variety of jobs, including claims adjuster for an insurance company, bookstore clerk, and roller rink manager.

In 2002, while he was living in Charlotte, N.C., Green's health declined drastically. An old friend of his claimed him as a domestic partner to get him insurance coverage. Blood work revealed his viral load was in the hundreds of thousands, his T-cell count was at 30 and he was 50 pounds underweight. He was immediately hospitalized. At that point he assumed that his 10 years had come a little early, and it wasn't until his doctor gave him a copy of *Positively Aware*, an HIV-treatment journal published by Chicago-based AIDS community group Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN), that Green began to think about the future again.

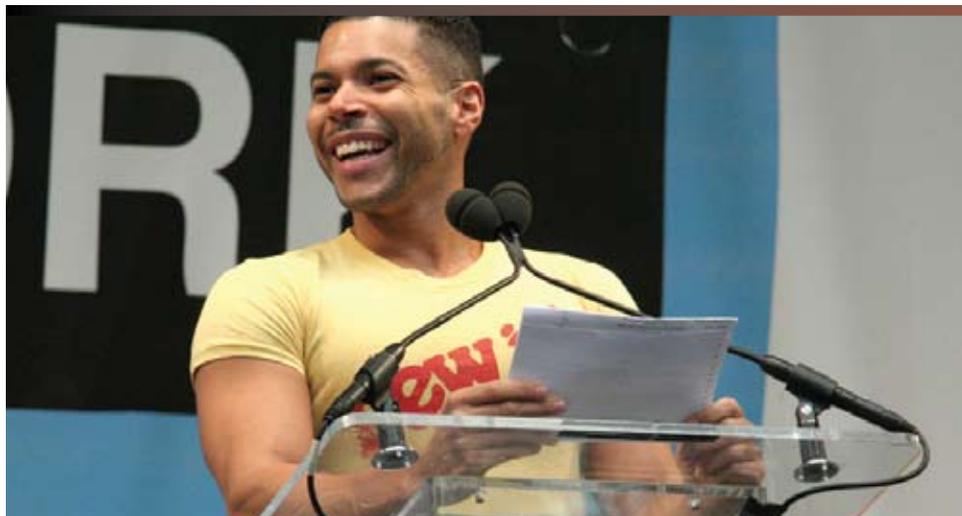
Soon after the initial incident, Green moved back to Chicago with a thirst for knowledge, and started attending TPAN meetings regularly. Eventually he began working at TPAN and earned a bachelor's degree in social work from Northwestern Illinois University while struggling with

a bad case of immune reconstitution syndrome. During this time, he even had biopsy wounds open up during a final exam. Green's reaction was to retreat the wound and finish the test. He aced it.

While at TPAN, he started community outreach programs that took sex education right to the dance floor of nightclubs in the neighborhoods hardest hit by HIV/AIDS. Green would dance with the crowd and pass out condoms and candy. He also taught classes at the organization to teach people with HIV about the biology behind the disease and the different treatment options available. His favorite class was the ABC's of Anti-Retroviral Therapy. He even became assistant editor of *Positively Aware*.

Green brings out the best in people. When he was struggling to form a picture of his future during his first major illness, a close family friend gave him the encouragement and hope he needed to get back on his feet and build a life for himself. Although he has come a long way since then, Green hasn't forgotten those times or those words. He is busy balancing federal advocacy with the AFC, managing a potentially life-saving study and developing educational programs for at-risk communities—the normal ups and downs of a man in his 30s. While he is always looking for how he can best help his community next, Green still remembers the power that a little bit of hope can have to inspire someone on the brink of defeat.





Wilson Cruz from My So-Called Life. Photos by Adam Fredericks



Lee Pace from The Normal Heart.

## 45,000 walkers raise \$6.2 million at New York AIDS Walk

The 26th annual AIDS Walk New York (AWNY) drew a massive crowd of 45,000 participants to Central Park May 15. The event began with a star-studded opening ceremony followed by a 10-kilometer walk, and raised funds for GMHC and 41 other AIDS service organizations in the tri-state area. Record-breaking corporate sponsorship bolstered the event's fundraising results, as did the large turnout of individual walkers, who together raised multi-millions of dollars to combat the epidemic.

"As we look back on 30 years of this devastating epidemic, I'm proud to see so many people walking with us, raising urgently needed funds, and committing to a future without HIV and AIDS," said Marjorie J. Hill, Ph.D., CEO of GMHC. "Infections among youth, African Americans, Latinos, women and gay men are on the rise; an aging population living with HIV will soon be facing new obstacles to their health and well-being. Yet today, I witnessed a community ready to confront head-on the challenges of this disease—and win."

Celebrities made a strong showing at this year's event. Notable AIDS Walk supporters included Matt Bomer (White Collar); Julie Bowen, Ty Burrell, Jesse Tyler Ferguson and Eric Stonestreet (Modern Family); Wilson Cruz (My So-Called Life); Conchata Ferrell (Two and a Half Men); Mondo Guerra and Jack Mackenroth (Project Runway); Laura Innes (The Event); Dot-Marie Jones (Glee); Nyambi Nyambi (Mike and Molly); Lee Pace (The Normal Heart); Mike Ruiz (The A-List); and CBS-2 news anchors Mary Calvi, Don Dahler, Maurice DuBois, Rob Morrison, Dana Tyler and weathercaster Elise Finch.

The cast of Broadway's *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* performed "We Believe" from the new hit show. Four-time Tony winner, two-time Grammy winner and television star Audra McDonald (Private Practice) closed the opening ceremony with her performance of "You'll Never Walk Alone."

The AIDS Walk Post-Walk Concert, hosted by the Red Hot Organization, featured Superhuman Happiness, Mister Saturday Night, cast of *Tearing Down the Walls* and Curtis Baily and The Clinic. - From a press release



CEO of GMHC, Marjorie Hill, Ph.D.

The cast from the stage show *Priscilla: Queen of the Desert*.Matt Bomer of the TV show *White Collar* and Laura Innes of *The Event*.

## HIV treatment stops transmission

BY ENID VÁZQUEZ

International research led by the National Institutes on Health (NIH) now has strong evidence that HIV treatment helps prevent transmission to sex partners.

This is the first time that gold-standard research—a randomized, controlled clinical trial—successfully demonstrates the concept of "treatment as prevention."

"Previous data about the potential value of antiretrovirals in making HIV-infected individuals less infectious to their sexual partners came largely from observational and epidemiological studies," said Anthony S. Fauci, M.D., director of the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), in a press release. "This new finding convincingly demonstrates that treating the infected individual—and doing so sooner rather than later—can have a major impact on reducing HIV transmission."

According to the release, "Men and women infected with HIV reduced the risk of transmitting the virus to their sexual partners by taking oral antiretroviral medicines when their immune systems were relatively healthy."

The study, HPTN 052, conducted by the U.S.-based HIV Prevention Trials Network, found a 96-percent drop in the risk of infection with the use of antiviral therapy. It looked at 1,763 couples from around the world in which one partner had HIV and the other one didn't. Half of the positive partners were put on anti-HIV therapy immediately. The other half received therapy when they experienced an AIDS-related event such as PCP (pneumocystis pneumonia) or a serious decrease in their immune-system function (as evidenced by a drop in their CD4+ T-cell counts down to 250).

The positive participants had moderately healthy immune systems when joining the study (between 350 and 550 CD4+ T-cells), so they did not have advanced disease. The numbers of HIV-positive men and women in the trial were nearly equal.

HPTN 052 was designed to determine whether treating HIV-positive people with antivirals may protect their partners from HIV infection. It is also looking at the optimal time to start therapy in

order to prevent illness and death.

The vast majority of the couples (97 percent) were heterosexuals, and NIAID emphasized that "this precludes any definitive conclusions about effectiveness in men who have sex with men." The couples participated from 13 sites in Botswana, Brazil, India, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, Thailand, the United States and Zimbabwe. They all received safer-sex counseling, free condoms, treatment for STIs (sexually transmitted infections), regular HIV testing and evaluations and treatment of complications related to HIV.

Of 39 infections that occurred, 28 were genetically linked to the positive partner (seven were not and four are still undergoing analysis).

Of these 28 infections, only one occurred in the treatment group of the study. This represented a 96-percent decrease in the risk of infection.

The findings were released early (the study was scheduled to end in 2015) and, based on these results, all of the HIV-positive people in the deferred treatment group were offered antiretroviral therapy.

In early 2008, Swiss HIV experts published a consensus statement saying that HIV-positive people are nearly non-infectious if they are on effective antiretroviral therapy (considered a viral load test result of less than 40 copies) for at least six months and have no other STIs. The consensus was based in part on a relatively small study with heterosexual couples from Rakai, Uganda. There was limited data on reduced transmission via male-to-male sex. For more on the Swiss statement, see <http://www.positivelyaware.com> or <http://www.aidsmap.org>.

There is also research showing that some men who have undetectable HIV in their blood streams (below the level of detection on a viral load test) still have detectable levels of virus in their semen.

According to the website of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the concept of HIV treatment as prevention is a promising avenue for lessening the risk of infection, but is not foolproof.

Courtesy of Positively Aware, from *Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN)*.

## 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.

PHILLIP  
LEFEVREA small town's  
transformation

Do any of these names ring a bell: Joel Drake Johnson (playwright), Ronald Reagan (actor/president), Rondi Reed (Tony Award winner), Jeanie Linders (writer and producer of the hit show *Menopause the Musical*) or David Klamman (nationally recognized visual artist)? All of these big names in the arts world graduated from a high school in a small town of 15,000 in northwest Illinois. These talented individuals were all raised along the scenic Rock River in Dixon. Dixon has had a major transformation since these individuals left the town; they probably wouldn't recognize it today.

Today, Dixon has a thriving downtown, a

thriving arts scene—and a thriving gay scene. The downtown has two art galleries, sushi bar, French bistro, Italian cafe, two bookstores catered to the arts, a revitalized 1920s performing arts theater, a Black church, a Muslim mosque and its first openly gay councilman. As a matter of fact, in the town's election a month ago Dixon elected its first female council member, the first openly gay man (who, by the way, was only seven votes short of being the top vote getter) and a gay-friendly mayor. This is not the Dixon of Johnson, Reagan, Reed and Klamman.

There is currently a partnership developed to bring to the downtown Dixon's first gay bar. Also, Dixon has a huge Fourth Of July parade that now features gay activist groups and a large presence of PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays).

In Johnson's play *The End Of The Tour*, a very different, mostly dark, image of Dixon is shown. His play is about a gay man from Dixon who lives in Chicago and decides to go back to Dixon with his partner to visit his mother in a nursing home. This play shows a very small-minded town in relation to homosexuality; it shows an emotionally numb community. Dixon is not that at all. Dixon is my hometown, and I visit every summer as

an openly gay man and I'm accepted, without reservation, by everyone. Johnson should write a new play showing how small towns can transform and remake themselves. Dixon sure has.

When one small-town high school gives the world the likes of Johnson, Reagan, Reed and Klamman, there is something very special about that. When a small town opens its arms to gays and lesbians there is something remarkable about that. A small town should not be judged by the cover of its past, but by the strides it is making for the future. If I could miraculously get Johnson, Reed and Klamman back to Dixon now I know their past conceptions and prejudices would be greatly altered.

The nation and world have been enriched with great art that has filtered out of Dixon, Ill., from four individuals who call Dixon home. That a town of 15,000 in the middle of an agricultural zone can produce such extraordinary talent is an amazing story. That a small rural town can be accepting and nurturing to the gay community is someone else of which we can be proud.

**Phillip Lefevre, who is currently self-employed, grew up in Dixon and is a 1981 Dixon High grad. He has taught in public schools in Boston and New York City.**

## LETTERS

## History in New York

Dear friends and colleagues,

I have been truly blessed having had the opportunity to meet all of you over the course of my lifetime and throughout my professional career. So many of you have contributed to my ability to live the American dream allowing me to achieve the success I have with little discrimination in both my personal and professional life.

The discomforts I have experienced have been overshadowed by the constant support and encouragement of people like you. I never felt my life was different than anyone in the United States until Bob, my partner of 23 years, and I file taxes or experience challenges attempting to visit each other in the hospital or obtain medical information in an emergency situation, or when we attend so many of our friends beautiful weddings—only to realize this is only for them and not us.

Actually, there are approximately 1,200 laws in our country that discriminate against the LGBT community. These are the times when I realize my friends treat me with equality but my life is not considered equal in the eyes of many and the laws of our country.

This is why I am so proud and excited to be the co-chair of the National LGBT Leadership Council and a member of the National Finance Committee/Advisory Board to President Obama's re-elect campaign. President Obama has moved forward our laws to protect the safety of all our citizens and has moved us closer to equality in the past two years than all presidents combined in the history of our country. I am confident that with Obama, we will continue to move closer to the full equality under the law that every U.S. citizen deserves.

For the first time in U.S. history President Obama will address LGBT Americans, straight allies, celebrities, friends and other political dignitaries at the LGBT Obama 2012 Gala in New York. (It will take place Thursday, June 23.) It will be an amazing event hosted by Neil Patrick Harris and include entertainment from world-renowned artists and speakers. I would like to extend a personal invitation for you to consider attending this event and support full equality for all Americans.

I know many of my friends and colleagues have personal and philosophical reasons to support other parties and or candidates. This is what

makes our country great, our ability to share differences of opinions but still hold on to our respect for each other. I would hope that even if you are not a supporter of President Obama that you would consider sending this invitation to any of your friends in the LGBT community or supporters that you know would be interested in this opportunity to spend the evening with the president.

I hope that I will have a chance to see all of you in the near future and please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

Warm regards,  
 Wally Brewster  
 Chicago

## Looking at Catholic Charities

Dear Editor:

Should Catholic Charities be able to discriminate against LGBT couples?

If they can do that without receiving public monies they certainly have a right in our society, under freedom of religion. However, Catholic Charities also supports one of the Church's most ancient moral teachings: "From the apostles to the present, the magisterium of the church has insisted that those in power are morally obliged to preference the needs of the poor." We live in a complex world.

It would be easy to paint Catholic Charities with the broad brush stroke of homophobia, but would that tell the whole story? As a Catholic I am opposed to any form of discrimination based on sexual orientation. That leaves me with one

option: to find another path that may speak to compromise.

Is it possible I wonder to seek some form of common ground so that Catholic Charities can continue its good work on the adoption front, while at the same time not discriminating against same-sex couples?

I am asking for people of good will on both sides of the divide to engage in a form of dialogue that respectfully challenges the other without cutting off dialogue. Currently, the Illinois Catholic Conference seems incapable of such a form of dialogue, as does some of our gay politicians.

Joe Murray  
 Rainbow Sash Movement

## Stevie Nicks disconnect

Dear Editor:

I feel disappointed that Stevie Nicks blew at least four opportunities to demonstrate she's capable of reflecting on why gays connect with her music and what it means in a larger context [in an interview in the May 25 issue of *Windy City Times*]. Instead, her answers became a self-indulgent digressions and ruminations on her fairy-tale world. To each his own, but I like a diva who knows how to ride a unicorn and think on her feet.

Eugene Skala  
 Chicago

Send letters and viewpoints to  
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 Items may be  
 edited for  
 length or clarity.

## GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION

Photo  
by Joan  
Marcus

## THE 'HEART' OF THE MATTER

From left: Lee Pace, Jim Parsons, Joe Mantello and Patrick Breen star in Larry Kramer's *The Normal Heart* on Broadway. See more below.

## BOOKS

**Bob placement.**  
Page 32.

*PR photo of Bob Smith*



## REAL ESTATE

**Inn Andersonville.**  
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*Photo of Nina's B&B  
by Lisa Klein*



## SPORTS

**'Wealth' care.**  
Page 38.

*Cover of Tyler Hoffman's book,  
Desperate Wealth*



## SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

## Playing AIDS for comedy and tragedy on Broadway

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

In the 30th-anniversary year of the first reported cases of HIV/AIDS, it's interesting to note that the Broadway shows *The Book of Mormon* and *The Normal Heart*, two strong contenders for 2011 Tony Awards, both touch upon the still-incurable disease in utterly different ways.

Seeing both shows on the same day during a recent trip to New York offered up an unexpected and unsettling chance to reflect on the way that each dramatized HIV/AIDS (and to generally weigh in on the merits of both critically acclaimed productions).

*The Book of Mormon* seems guaranteed to triumph when the Tony Awards are handed out on Sunday, June 12 (broadcast on CBS-TV at 7 p.m.). *The Book of Mormon* leads the musical field with 14 Tony Award nominations, which is the second highest number of nominations in the history of the Tony Awards after the 15 nods *The Producers* received in 2001. Although *The Normal Heart* has just five nominations, many Tony handicappers are predicting that Larry Kramer's seminal 1985 AIDS drama is favored to win the trophy for best revival of a play.

The AIDS references in *The Book of Mormon* are all played for gallows-humor laughs. But what would you expect when you look at the credentials of the show's creators?

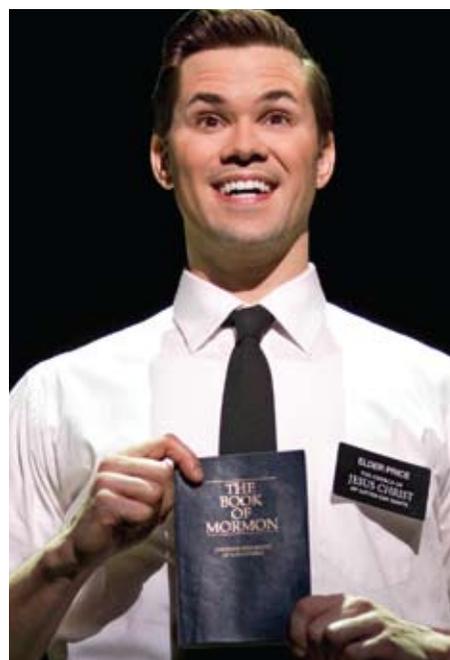
Matt Stone and Trey Parker, the hypocrisy-exposing jokesters behind the award-winning animated TV comedy series *South Park*, are making their Broadway debut with *The Book of Mormon*. Joining Stone and Parker for his second Broadway show is Robert Lopez, a Tony Award-winning co-creator of the hit 2003 *Sesame Street*-spoof musical *Avenue Q*.

Let's just say that *The Book of Mormon* lives up the authors' infamous reputations in terms of delivering a smartly irreverent and uproarious profanity-filled show that gently mocks its characters while being simultaneously sweet about them. As expected, Stone, Parker and Lopez rightly take aim at many of the quirkiest aspects of *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (official name of the Mormon church), but it's not a mean-spirited exercise religion bashing since the show also emphasizes the positive aspects of faith and devotion.

Boy, are the beliefs of its leading characters supremely tested in *The Book of Mormon*. Golden boy Elder Price (a freshly scrubbed and powerfully voiced Andrew Rannells) isn't so happy when he's paired up with a sci-fi loving and known liar companion like Elder Cunningham (goofball Josh Gad). Both missionaries are sent to civil war-torn Uganda, where they are at a loss to find lessons from their faith to cope with the country's rampant problems including poverty, murderous warlords, female genital mutilation and disgustingly bizarre AIDS superstitions.

*Book of Mormon* co-directors Parker and Casey Nicholaw (who is also the show's choreographer) bring out plenty of staging flash for this joke-filled and often deliberately juvenile fish-out-of-water story, but they help to keep emotion genuine for the conflicted (albeit generalized) characters.

Although the score to *The Book of Mormon* is relentlessly catchy and funny, one could quibble about the authors' lack of originality since they are all far too keen to make so many of their songs meta-parodies of numbers from other musicals. Hence the God-cursing song "Hasa Diga Eebowai" is actually scathing spoof of *The Lion*



**Andrew Rannells in *The Book of Mormon*.** Photo by Joan Marcus

King's "Hakuna Matata," or how the "Spooky Mormon Hell Dream" apes the style and irreverence of the Hades-set Act II of Jerry Springer: *The Opera*.

Also, there's no doubt that the Act II number "Joseph Smith America Moses" is directly inspired by the "Small House of Uncle Thomas" sequence from *The King and I*. But the whole number serves as a hilarious summation that highlights how religious stories can be used to help people in troubled times and situations.

If *The Book of Mormon*'s characters' lack of concrete information about preventing HIV/AIDS offers gross-out humor in *The Book of Mormon*, it's much more outrage-inducing in *The Normal Heart*. Larry Kramer's 1985 drama *The Normal Heart* has all the power of a from-the-trenches dispatch in a terrifying battle where there is little-to-no official help in fighting the

murderous enemy of AIDS.

In depicting the start of the AIDS epidemic in New York between 1981 and 1984, Kramer fashioned *The Normal Heart* into an angry indictment of the deplorable inaction by the administrations of President Ronald Reagan and New York City Mayor Ed Koch. However, Kramer also takes aim at the gay community for its rampant internalized homophobia that hindered a successful mobilization to get information out about the stigmatizing disease.

Directors George C. Wolfe and Joel Grey keep things powerfully simple in this staging set largely in set designer David Rockwell's simple white box environment that is filled with bas-relief text and newspaper headlines about the AIDS crisis. The starry cast drawn from stage, screen and TV fame brings great passion to Kramer's fact-stuffed text, straddling the play's difficult tone of didacticism and wrenching emotion without going overboard in either direction.

Actor-turned-director Joe Mantello returns to his roots by portraying a very human Ned Weeks, the agitating and often irritating fictional stand-in for Kramer himself. Equally impassioned is Ellen Barkin as the feisty Dr. Emma Brookner, whose tough-love arguments for abstinence are understandably brushed off as unreasonable.

Though a period piece, *The Normal Heart* remains vital as a rallying call for the LGBT community to continue to fight for its rights and to not backslide when it comes to the dead-serious matter of battling the spread of HIV/AIDS.

*The Book of Mormon* plays in an open run at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre in New York. Visit <http://bookofmormonbroadway.com> for more information. *The Normal Heart* plays in a limited run through July 10 at the John Golden Theatre in New York. Visit <http://www.thenormalheart-broadway.com> for more information.

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

## THEATER REVIEW

**Brothers of the Dust**

Playwright: Darren Canady

At: Congo Square at the Chicago Center for the Performing Arts, 777 N. Green

Phone: 312-733-6000; \$30

Runs through: June 6

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

It's a premise straight out of Eugene O'Neill: Seven years earlier, the Colton family farm was bequeathed to the clan's three surviving sons, but with no boundaries to mark each individual's portion. Now it is 1958 and big oil companies

**Brothers of the Dust.**

are looking to drill on the site. Oldest son Roy refuses to abandon the land he has tilled with his own hands, middle son Wilson needs the money from its sale to rescue his failing business, and youngest son Oliver is on the run from angry vigilantes. Who deserves the final say over the property's disposal?

The Colton brothers have all paid a price for

trying to better themselves in a nation still riddled with racial segregation and prejudice: Roy's devotion to his agricultural patrimony has led him to alienate his wife and son. Wilson's foray into the world of commerce has left him nearly bankrupt—misfortune that his materialistic spouse will not tolerate. Oliver fled north to the big city, where his sexual needs soon undermined his writing career, despite a well-placed mentor's intervention. Add to these tensions the desire of Roy's teenage son for a college education, and you have a recipe for conflict to strain the bonds of filial loyalty.

These situations sometimes erupt in a fury almost exceeding the confines of Congo Square's cozy auditorium, but at no time does the cast assembled by director Daniel Bryant lose control

of its text, however earthy its language, violent its threats or operatic its emotions. James T. Alfred, Anthony Irons and Austin Talley make the contentious siblings a trio of contrasting personalities, as do Shanesia Davis, Velma Austin-Massey and Tracey N. Bonner's portraits of the women on whom they rely, with Edgar Miguel Sanchez rounding out the ensemble in the role of the restless young Jack. The technical team of Andrei Onegin, Casey Diers, Samantha Jones, Rick Sims and Jesse Gaffney—who collectively locate us within our environment with pinpoint accuracy—should also be commended.

To city-dwellers, a patch of soil may seem a curious treasure to rouse such passions as Canady has us witness, but at a time when countless citizens face the loss of their homes, his efficiently crafted parable reawakens our awareness of the reasons that men have fought throughout history for possession of the only enduring fortune a vast country like ours can offer its people.

**'Darkest Before Dawn: A Gay Cabaret' in June**

Following its sold-out premiere in Oak Park, Passion Theater's "Darkest Before Dawn: A Gay Cabaret" transfers to Center on Halsted June 16-18 in honor of Pride Month.

Eighteen LGBT and gay-friendly performers, including accomplished actors and a former American Idol contestant, perform contemporary songs and monologues celebrating the struggles and triumphs of the LGBT journey.

Tickets are \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door; visit <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/178171>.

**Chad Ramsey is Trogg, the caveman in Hell in a Handbag's TROGG! A Musical. Photo by Rick Aguilar.**

## THEATER REVIEW

**Trogg! A Musical**

Written by: David Cerda

At: The Chopin Theatre, 1543 W. Division

Phone: 800-838-3006; \$15-\$28

Runs through: July 3

BY JERRY NUNN

The gang from Hell in a Handbag circles back in time to bring a prehistoric musical to life with Trogg!

This production is loosely based on the Joan Crawford 1970 horror movie Trog. Donning his pantsuit and heels David Cerda leads the cast of beach loving teens while they find a caveman in their midst. Dancing in the sand can be fun but when the neanderthal is discovered and unleashed on the town science begins to clash with the population.

Cerda's deadpan Joan as Dr. Joan Cannon really takes the cake and has several bust out loud laughing moments. Her flash card therapy has mixed results on the pet troglodyte, lucky for the civilians music takes over to calm down the furry creature. Chad Ramsey

as Trogg has an energy that is hoot to watch. Ed Jones as Carol Ann is a standout as usual having appeared in several of the Handbag's shows. The crowd loved Alex Grelle as Peanut who adds a lot to role that could have been a throwaway. Dig in to the atheist chili as this camp will make you pray for more. The music is fun and matches the beach theme with a style Frankie Avalon could appreciate.

"Barbara, please" don't stop wearing that wig furnished by BC Kalz, like many of the outlandish hair stylings this could win an award on its own. The family dynamics of characters is great fun to watch. The strong drive that Joan resonates with her test tubes reminds everyone of why Mommie Dearest is an over the top favorite. So if you are fan of drive-in movies and campy classics this is the play you have been craving. If not, somehow I don't think Joan will mind if you stay at home and scrub your floor.

This was Crawford's last big-screen appearance but will definitely not be the last for this comedy crew. If you have not checked out The Joans make plans to this summer.

Remember: No flash photography at the show or "Trogg will become enraged."

**CRITICS' PICKS**

**The King and I**, Porchlight Music Theatre at Stage 773, through June 5. Porchlight Music Theatre's first Rodgers and Hammerstein musical turns out to be an intimate and fine farewell from departing artistic director L. Walter Stearns. 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

**Soul Samurai**, InFusion Theatre Company at Theater Wit, through June 5. Not another chop-socky spoof, but an adrenaline-pumping multi-media roller-coaster ride through a post-apocalyptic Freudian universe as dark as your favorite graphic novel. MSB

**Watership Down**, Lifeline Theatre, through June 19. Rabbits have always numbered among the most empathetic of folk-tale creatures, and never more so than in this classical myth transposed to lapin culture with all the heroic violence and glory intact. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

## THEATER REVIEW

**You're Being Ridiculous...my first time**

Directed by: Eric Hoff

At: Gorilla Tango Theatre,

1919 N. Milwaukee

Phone: 773-598-4549; \$15

Runs through: June 3

BY JERRY NUNN

Jeremy Owens presents a cast of five with stage readings of the members' first sexual experiences. With no introduction, Anne Taylor starts a little slow but—much like foreplay—warms up by the end of her segment. Jeremy then re-

counts his days of sleeping with a girl through gay colored glasses. Ryan Hastings gets graphic with talk about Greece and Joseph Varisco describes an adventure on Craigslist gone wrong. Kathleen Gibson brings the black back like a new Lisa Lampanelli to stir the house and finish the show.

First Time is fast-paced but could stand to have a straight man's story, with three openly gay men cast members not leaving a lot for some audience members to latch onto. (What a switch this is with a Windy City Times reviewer looking for straight instead of gay content.) Think of the show like the Penis Monologues that can get a little one-sided. While the atmosphere is relaxed, the performers could stand to set down their drinks and get off book a bit more. Everyone seems to be having fun, though, with some classic moments that, for the most part, is well-written by the no-longer-virginal cast.

**Cast of You're Being Ridiculous...**



From left: Thomas J. Cox, John Mahoney and Rondi Reed in *The Outgoing Tide*. Photo by Michael Brosilow

**THEATER REVIEW**

**The Outgoing Tide**

Playwright: Bruce Graham  
 At: Northlight Theatre at the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts, 9501 Skokie, Skokie  
 Phone: 847-673-6300; \$30-\$50  
 Runs through: June 19

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Carolyn Heilbrun, the pioneering feminist scholar also known as whodunit-author Amanda Cross, had long proclaimed that on the day that she saw no future but “inevitable deterioration”, she would take her own life. That day arrived October 9, 2003, and, at the age of 77, she did as she promised, leaving a note reading “The

journey is over. Love to All.”

So you see, there’s a real-world precedent for the argument proposed in Bruce Graham’s intelligent and highly original play premiering at Northlight Theatre. Its premise is simple enough: feisty Gunner Concannon is gradually succumbing to Alzheimer’s disease and suddenly his wife’s favorite expression, “Have you lost your mind?” isn’t funny any more. Graham doesn’t take the easy route in discussing his discomfiting topic, however—Gunner is not reduced, dramatically, to a passive victim whose fate is left for others to debate and ultimately determine. No, Gunner has made his own departure plans, and they don’t include geriatric services aimed at prolonging length of days, but not of consciousness. (“I didn’t work all my life to give it away to a bunch of doctors!”)

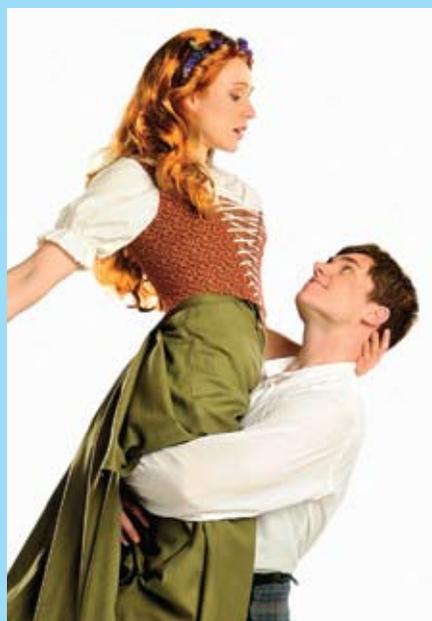
Why would someone choose suicide as his de-

liverance from this mortal coil? Fear of intolerable physical or psychological abuse (and only each individual can determine what comprises “intolerable”) figures in Gunner’s decision. So does redemption—the insurance money paid upon his death will redeem the past sacrifices made by his loved ones on his behalf. The only snag in his patently rational proposal is his need to explain himself to his distraught spouse and ambivalent son, pursuant to receiving assurance of their understanding and approval.

It takes a likewise steadfast production team to pull against the urge toward knee-jerk emotionality—after all, this is America, where frontier

values declare every life worthy of preservation (an attitude diminishing in popularity under economical pressure, but that’s a subject for another play). Director BJ Jones and a cast led by John Mahoney, with muscular support forthcoming from Rondi Reed and Thomas J. Cox, never flinch from Graham’s unswerving candor, commanding our attention right up to the final moment when Andrew Hansen’s superlative seaside soundscape signals Gunner’s farewell ferry ride on the Chesapeake Styx.

**SPOTLIGHT**



If you’ve never seen Lerner and Loewe’s classic 1947 Broadway musical **Brigadoon** about two New Yorkers who stumble upon a magical Scottish village, then don’t miss Light Opera Works new production. As always, Light Opera Works features a full orchestra to do justice to such song standards like “Heather on a Hill” and “Almost Like Being in Love” (though try not to snicker too much during the romantic ballad “Come to Me, Bend to Me”). Light Opera Works’ *Brigadoon* plays six performances only at Northwestern University’s Cahn Auditorium, 600 Emerson, Evanston. Performances are at 8 p.m. June 4, 10 and 11, with 2 p.m. matinees June 5, 8 and 12. Tickets are \$32-\$92; call 847-869-6300 or visit <http://www.lightoperaworks.com>. Photo courtesy of the company

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## THEATER REVIEW

## Fifty Words

Playwright: Michael Weller

At: Profiles Theatre, 4147 N. Broadway

Tickets: 773-549-1815;

http://www.profiles theatre.org; \$35-\$40

Runs through: June 26

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Jan and Adam have a night alone. Their 9-year-old son finally is away on his first sleep-over, accompanied by his pet hamster that the troubled kid imitates by piling up clothing in a closet as a nest. For Jan and Adam it's a night of Chinese food, champagne and monkey sex—or so Adam hopes—but his hopes quickly are dashed by Jan, whom Adam, in short order, calls “a withholding, anxious, critical bitch.”

Yeah, they have issues which have led to Jan's withdrawal of physical affection despite evidence that they still love each other with passion edg-

ing towards ferocity. On this particular night, Jan harbors suspicions that Adam has been unfaithful on his frequent business trips. However, the real issue here would seem to be a profound and fundamental difference in personalities, perhaps relating more than a little to self-image and notions of self-worth. Broadly speaking, Jan is buttoned up and Adam is *laissez-faire*.

Michael Weller's taut little play—he never explains the meaning of the title, but suggests that audiences will know—has an abundance of brilliantly written, flowing language; not poetic stuff but everyday speech taken to richly rhythmic and, sometimes, witty heights. It's delivered with gusto and utter authenticity by Katherine Keberlein and Darrell W. Cox, who are thoroughly engaging and horrifyingly believable as Jan and Adam, as telling in their quiet moments as in their explosive ones. These are in-your-face performances (and, I should add, sexually graphic) in a very intimate storefront space.

Weller writes as knowingly about relationships and the male/female dichotomy as any play-

Katherine Keberlein and Darrell W. Cox in *Fifty Words*.

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wright I know, although his sympathies tend towards Adam (or, at least, as I perceived things). I've witnessed first-hand, and been in, relationships in which one partner withdraws physical intimacy—a situation that both stirs up and is the result of a hornets' nest of issues. In *Fifty Words*, Weller piles on revelation after revelation with regard to Jan's and Adam's personalities, past histories and current motives: Jan is a work-obsessed perfectionist, Adam's little architectural firm is failing, Jan never wanted to be a parent in the first place, Adam indulges their son, Jan hates Adam “for making me have

a child” and Adam hates Jan for “the way you refuse to let me love you the way I want to.”

Eventually, the ever-thickening sheaf of issues becomes too much for a 90-minute play, but it's held together—and saved from tipping towards the ridiculous—by the strength and veracity of Keberlein and Cox as staged by Profiles artistic director Joe Jahraus, who embraces the play's swiftly changing rhythms. The play is abetted by scenic designer Thad Hallstein's stylish, colorful but claustrophobic upscale kitchen in a Brooklyn brownstone.

## THEATER REVIEW

## Porgy and Bess

Composer: George Gershwin; Libretto:

DuBose and Dorothy

Heyward, Ira Gershwin

At: Court Theatre, 5535 S. Ellis

Phone: 773-753-4472; \$45-\$65

Runs through: July 3

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Court Theatre definitely deserves an “A” for ambition in tackling The Gershwins' *Porgy and Bess*. Too bad the end results aren't always satisfactory.

Although it first opened on Broadway in 1935, many critics have since championed *Porgy and Bess* as “The Great American Opera.” So it took considerable effort by Court Theatre to reduce and revise *Porgy and Bess* to squeeze into its intimate 260-seat space.

Undoubtedly director Charles Newell and music director Doug Peck were aiming to bring out more layered and nuanced performances by condensing *Porgy and Bess* to just a 15-member ensemble. And since so many jazz artists have covered immortal *Porgy and Bess* tunes like “Summertime,” and “It Ain't

Necessarily So,” it's not sacrilege to alter vocal keys or scale down composer George Gershwin's original orchestrations to be played here by just six musicians.

However, to my taste, much of the epic dramatic sweep of *Porgy and Bess* is lost in this Court Theatre adaptation. The physical limitations of the Court's space are often distracting, particularly for some character entrances (notably Todd M. Kryger as the crippled title character of Porgy) and at the end of a few climactic scenes (like the Kittiwah Island aftermath of Crown's rape of Bess).

The abstracted white design concept imposed by Newell and his design team smacks of high-concept artiness (particularly the dominating square platform and descending fabric strips of John Culbert's set and Jacqueline Firkins's bleached costume scheme). Even worse, the lack of specificity to locales is potentially baffling for some first-time audiences.

However, aside from these staging shortcomings, Court's *Porgy and Bess* still can move audiences thanks to the impeccable musicianship of its cast and band performing the glorious Gershwin score.

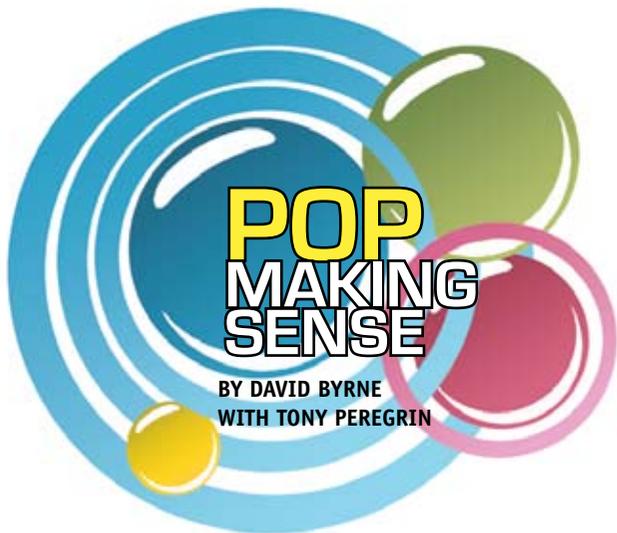
Sean Blake is appropriately cocky and slinky as the drug-peddler Sportin' Life, while Bethany Thomas masterfully navigates the growling passion and soprano sobs of the funeral lament “My Man's Gone Now.” James Earl Jones II's Crown is also sung with plenty of power and macho swagger.

There's no denying that Kryger and Alexis J. Rogers sing marvelously in their respective title roles of the beggar Porgy and the good-time girl Bess. But I wanted more chemistry and complexity from the two (I also wanted more emotional extremes in the Bess of Rogers, whose take on the role shows more calculation than desperation).

Now there is always room for great works of American musical theater to be smartly reconceived on an intimate scale, as the Court Theatre has shown in the past with such award-winning productions as *Man of La Mancha* or *Caroline, or Change*. But in the case of such an operatic and iconic property like *Porgy and Bess*, bigger is better in my book.



Porgy and Bess. Photo by Michael Brosilow



over the Rainbow," while Sting guests on a remake of his own "Let Your Soul Be Your Pilot." Sir Elton John appears on a medley of "Mona Lisas and Mad Hatters / Rocket Man." Former 'N Sync member JC Chasez contributes the upbeat "Don't Stop Dancing" and "Hey." "My Name," "It Don't Matter to the Sun" and the Kris Allen-penned "Still Got Tonight" prove to be solid pop ditties. Morrison's debut is fun, romantic and schmaltzy—well suited for his loveable character, Will Schuester.

Morrison canceled some of his scheduled solo appearances so that he can open for the wildly popular New Kids on the Block and Backstreet Boys tour. Unfortunately, the dimpled Broadway veteran has no Chicago-area dates currently listed.

Can't get enough **Glee**? Members of the cast have three concerts lined up for Friday, June 3, and Saturday, June 4, at Allstate Arena, 6920 N. Mannheim, Rosemont.

Fans of P!nk should check out **Jessie J.**'s *Who You Are*. The British newcomer shows her feisty side on "Price Tag" and "Nobody's Perfect." The album's showstopper is the YouTube breakout "Big White Room," based on the singer-songwriter's hospital stay when she was 11. "Casualty of Love" recalls the big, passionate vocal delivery of Joss Stone.

J. is one of the co-writers behind Miley Cyrus's hit "Party in the U.S.A." It is also refreshing to hear that this young artist does not smoke or drink unlike her peers P!nk, Adele and Lily Allen.

For the first time since the '80s, **kd lang** has



Lady Gaga.

a proper band, Siss Boom Bang, backing her up. The results found on *Sing It Loud* are rewarding. lang gives her best Elvis Presley impersonation on "I Confess" and seamlessly returns to her country roots on "Inglewood." The remake of "Heaven" by The Talking Heads is absolutely godlike.

The Grammy winner and the Siss Boom Bang will be at Ravinia in Highland Park on Thursday, June 23. lang hints that this tour will mark her last time performing "Hallelujah," as writer Leonard Cohen wants to put the often-covered classic to rest.

Also coming Ravinia are **The Go-Go's** and **B-52's** with a show on Friday, June 17. Both beloved bands have queer members and they have

toured together in 2000.

The Go-Go's just released a 30-year anniversary edition of the debut *Beauty and the Beat*, which contains "Our Lips Are Sealed," "How Much More" and "We Got the Beat." The reissue has a bonus disc with a concert from 1981, notes from each of the five members, a photo of the set list from bassist Kathy Valentine's first concert with the all-female-band and Charlotte Caffey's notes as she wrote "We Got the Beat."

I fondly remember checking out *Beauty and the Beat* and Blondie's *Parallel Lines* on cassette from the library often as a little kid. Thirty years later, it aged well. Last year, lead singer Belinda Carlisle came out with her autobiography, *Lips Unsealed*.

**Haberdashery's** synth-pop outing, *Tonight the Angels*, is not "computer blue." It is bubbling over with early Depeche Mode-like endearing, love songs. The title track is an electronic lullaby, while "Tonight Is Forever" serves as a security blanket.

All of the material on *Tonight the Angels* is written, arranged, performed and sung by local artist Stephen Pearlman. Haberdashery is going to release all 10 tracks as singles, complete with a B-side, remixes, cover art and a music video for each. Some of the material is posted at <http://www.haberdasheryinfo.com> as a free download. *Tonight the Angels* is due out June 21.

On **Party Groove: White Party 11**, DJ David Knapp serves as a parade marshal, welcoming summer. The continuous set opens with bursts of sunlight, courtesy of the uplifting "Freefallin'" by Zoe Badwi. Chicago's very own Cyon Flare joins Edson Pride on the beckoning anthem "Free Your Body." Timeless club divas Ultra Nate, Crystal Waters, Kathy Brown and Jeanie Tracy deny White Party 11 from any lulls with their respective cameos. The set also includes dance remakes of the radio staples "Firework," "Commander" and "Only Girl (In the World)." Party Groove: White Party 11 is out now.

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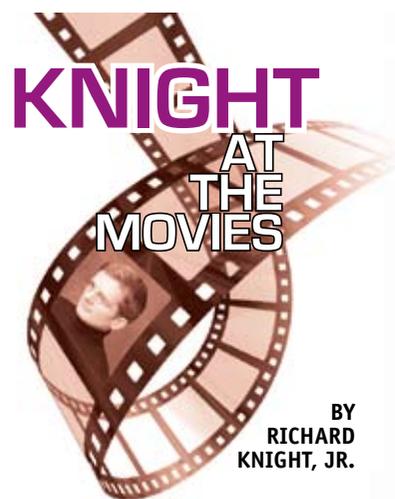
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BY  
RICHARD  
KNIGHT, JR.

## L'Amour Fou; The Tree of Life; film notes

French fashion genius Yves St. Laurent and Pierre Berge, his lover and business manager for 50 years, created a dynasty that survived until St. Laurent's retirement in 2002. Together, the duo wrought what is perhaps the most groundbreaking fashion/merchandising enterprise in history. However, unlike the glorious, lavish, sensual excesses of other recent fashion documentaries—with Valentino: The Last Emperor being the supreme example—director Pierre Thoretton's *L'Amour Fou* (which translates as "mad, crazy love"), opening June 3 at the Music Box, doesn't seem mad or crazy about either the clothes or the man who created them.

Also, there's not much love in this ultimately and rather surprisingly chilly movie, either. Instead of fashion—which was at the epicenter of the couple's life—Thoretton focuses on the story of Berge's disposal of the couple's vast art holdings after Laurent's death in 2008. However, in doing so, he doesn't bother with the how, where or why the duo found the time to accumulate such an overwhelming collection (which we are shown in detail) or, more importantly, whether it brought either of them any real pleasure.

Apparently Berge isn't interested in revealing that, either. What does become obvious

sale of these artifacts (all 733 pieces of them)? "No," Berge replies without hesitation, regret or guilt.

There's not a whiff of sentimentality in either Berge's reminiscences about life with Yves or Thoretton's film, and it's not until we discover Berge's passion for gay rights and AIDS activism that he displays a bit of fire (a passion that, apparently, YSL did not share). Unspoken but riding just under the surface are a lot of unanswered questions about the intricate nature of the relationship between the two men, and Thoretton doesn't bother to address them. (Whoever interviewed Berge obviously followed a lot of ground rules and stayed within the barriers in exchange for this unprecedented access.)

The film, which concludes with the record-breaking auction of the artwork (attended by a suddenly gleeful Berge), doesn't even give us the tally (\$261 million at a first auction, \$13.4 million at a second) or tell us that most of the profits were donated by Berge to AIDS charities. However, that last fact might have destroyed the irony behind the film's title and revealed a touch of warmth that would have sullied the otherwise rather fascinating but admittedly dour spell that Thoretton and his principal subject cast on their audience.

It's been six years since writer-director Terrence Malick's last movie, *The New World*, and years elapsed between that and the one before it and more years before the one that preceded it. Like Stanley Kubrick before him, each new Malick film arrives with "event" status. *The Tree of Life*, which just won the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival, certainly lives up to that standard.

Like his other films, *The Tree of Life* fuses the natural world to Malick's narrative. However, unlike *Days of Heaven*, *The Thin Red Line*, et al., the movie—which ostensibly tells the story of a stern autocrat (Brad Pitt) holding sway over his wife and his three sons in Waco, Texas during the 1950s—is light years beyond what Malick has previously attempted. At one point, the movie digresses into a 25-minute retelling of the birth of the cosmos, earth and civilization (complete with dinosaurs). The sequence is reminiscent of Kubrick's 2001. (Get your acid tabs out, folks.) Then, seamlessly, unbelievably, Malick returns to the story of Pitt and his family without missing



*L'Amour Fou*.

as Berge narrates on camera and Thoretton illustrates with archival footage and vintage photographs, is that YSL was nothing if not a complicated man; he was plagued by addictions (drugs, drink, sex) and lengthy depressions that the taciturn Berge, nonetheless, endured. Interspersed among Berge's somewhat hazy retelling of the couple's history (augmented by friends who are not identified and will only be familiar to insiders), we see workmen packing up the fabulous collection and preparing it for a Christie's auction. Would YSL have approved of the

a beat. (It evolves into a variation on the Cain and Abel story amidst the loss of innocence of the eldest son.)

Stuffed with gorgeous imagery, fluid camera-work and marvelous performances from Pitt, Sean Penn, Jessica Chastain and newcomer Hunter McCracken (most of whom speak their dialogue in voiceover), Malick's movie is a true hybrid—a dense mixture of so many film, art and music elements I wasn't sure at its conclusion whether I had attended a movie or a religious service. Audiences will argue the merits of this ground-



Brad Pitt in *Tree of Life*.

breaking work for decades to come but I'm convinced that I've witnessed a masterpiece.

### Film notes:

—The Chicago Council on Global Affairs is hosting **Restrepo: A View from the Trenches of Afghanistan** Wed., June 1 at the Spertus Institute, 610 S. Michigan. Sebastian Junger, best-selling author of *WAR* and the co-director of the Oscar nominated 2010 documentary *Restrepo* (along with photojournalist Tim Hetherington, who was recently killed while on assignment), will discuss the film with audiences after a 5:45 p.m. screening and then sign copies of the book at 8:15 p.m. Registration and a cash bar kick off the evening at 5:15 p.m. <http://www.thechicagocouncil.org>

—Musician Genesis Breyer P-Orridge has long been a seminal figure in the world of industrial music. (P-Orridge helped create Throbbing Gristle and Psychic TV.) Genesis and his partner-in-crime, Lady Jaye, have also been gender pioneers (via surgeries, etc.) in an attempt to blur their physical identities. They allowed filmmaker Marie Losier to document the process and the

resulting film, **The Ballad of Genesis and Lady Jaye**, is getting its Chicago premiere as part of the Gene Siskel Film Center's Underground Film Festival. The movie will be shown at the center, 164 N. State, Friday, June 3, and Thursday, June 9. <http://www.siskelfilmcenter.com>

—**Out in the Silence**, a documentary from co-directors Joe Wilson and Dean Hamer that focuses on the struggle for LGBT equality in small-town America follows the story of the controversy that erupted when the announcement of Wilson's impending same sex marriage appeared in the local paper. The film is being shown on Sunday, June 5 at 2:30pm and Monday, June 6 at 7pm at Facets Cinematheque (1517 W. Fullerton Avenue) as part of the ninth annual Chicago Human Rights Watch Film Festival. The co-directors will attend both screenings and participate in post-screening discussions. <http://OutintheSilence.com>

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

## Artemis Singers concert June 11

Artemis Singers, Chicago's lesbian feminist chorus, will celebrate Pride month with a concert and dance Saturday, June 11, at Broadway United Methodist Church, 3338 N. Broadway.

Featuring songs about dancing and songs to dance to, "Shall We Dance?" is open to the public. The concert begins at 7:30 p.m. A dance follows the performance. Tickets are a

suggested donation of \$15; the price includes admission to both events.

For the June 11 concert, Artemis Singers will perform songs by artists ranging from the Pointer Sisters to Shania Twain, plus two jazz numbers. The program also includes Holly Near's "Sky Dances" and Georje Holper's "Away Ye Merry Lasses" from the 2010 Sister Singers Network festival that Artemis Singers hosted in Chicago.

See <http://www.artemissingers.org> for more info.



Artemis Singers.

## NUNN ON ONE

## Chaz Bono on transitions, Cher and offensive words



BY JERRY NUNN

The public has seen Chastity Bono grow up before their very eyes as the daughter of Sonny and Cher. She was outed as lesbian in the '90s and wrote two books, *Family Outing* and *The End of Innocence*. Recently realizing that she was in the wrong body, Chastity changed her name to Chaz and underwent breast-removal surgery, documenting it on the OWN network.

Transition is the new book that chronicles the personal history of the life of Chaz that has not been revealed.

**Windy City Times: Hello, Chaz. We met at Howard Brown when you were speaking there in Chicago.**

Chaz Bono: Right, I remember.

**WCT: I told you that we would be doing an interview and today is the day. Are you tired of interviews at this point?**

CB: Unbelievably so.

**WCT: Is there one that you think went particularly well?**

CB: I enjoyed the Letterman one a lot. I felt like it was a challenge and it gave me a unique opportunity to really talk about the basics.

**WCT: How are you holding up?**

CB: A little tired but looking forward to the holiday weekend.

**WCT: Are you all over the place at book signings?**

CB: I'm not, no. Unfortunately they don't really do that anymore. It is not cost effective and there are not a lot of bookstores. I did two in L.A. and one in New York. I am going to trans conferences and doing some signings there over the next couple of months.

**WCT: You are coming back to Chicago to do a book-signing here.**

CB: Right, at Be-All, which is a trans conference.

**WCT: You are speaking there as well as the**

**book-signing?**

CB: Yes, I am.

**WCT: From an outsider it seems like you are an introvert and your girlfriend, Jenny, is an extrovert.**

CB: Yes, definitely. That is definitely the case.

**WCT: It is important to educate people about being transgender no matter how difficult it is to be public. I know cases where when someone transitions from a man to a woman and still wants to be with women so is a lesbian technically.**

CB: Usually your sexual orientation doesn't change. The two things are not really related. People get confused with "you are gay now, you are straight or you were straight and now you are gay" instead of just looking at it as someone is attracted to women before and still attracted to them now or men before and still attracted to men.

**WCT: I watched the documentary *Becoming Chaz*. *World of Wonder* is great at producing docs and reality shows.**

CB: Yes, they do really good stuff and are very talented.

**WCT: How has everyone's reaction been from the doc?**

CB: Great; we have gotten great reviews, very positive reactions. People seem to really like it a lot.

**WCT: I liked watching you play video games with RuPaul.**

CB: Oh yeah, that was good.

**WCT: Do you have a favorite video game right now?**

CB: No, it is kind of a lull right now in the video-gaming season. Usually the best time of year for video games is the holiday season, as you would imagine. Sometimes though you will get a nice one in February or March if someone misses their deadline. You might get one or two good games over the summer if you are lucky. I am very unfulfilled in the gaming world at the moment.

**WCT: I just bought the Playstation Move and that is fun.**

CB: That is for casual gamers, which is totally great for kids but none of the ones I like to play are motion detection stuff.

**WCT: What was the reaction of our brother, Elijah, to your coming out publicly as transgender?**

CB: It was difficult at first and then once he was actually around me after I started transitioning, he told me that it was something that sounded like a really big deal but in reality it just wasn't.



Chaz Bono.  
Photo by  
Brenna  
McEwen.

**WCT: Was your mother, Cher, judgemental of this process?**

CB: I don't think "judgemental" is the word but she was not comfortable with me being as masculine as I was before transitioning.

**WCT: Your relationship seems to be getting better with her, right?**

CB: Yes.

**WCT: You mentioned that you weren't comfortable taking pictures throughout the book. Is that better now?**

CB: Yes, I am comfortable now. It is not my favorite thing. My photo shoots are still kind of a pain. That is just part of my work, but no, I don't have that same issue that I had before. I used to not like to have my picture taken because I didn't like the way that I looked.

**WCT: You want more facial hair, correct?**

CB: I don't have more because I can't grow more right now. It takes a long time for facial hair to grow in. I have some but not in the form that one would want to grow it.

**WCT: How do you feel about the word "tranny?"**

CB: I have a problem with it. It is a derogatory statement, in my opinion. I think people shouldn't use it. A lot of gay men use and think it's okay to use it; it just isn't. That is not to say that there are not some transgender people would not have a problem with their friends saying that, just like lots of people in those settings are fine with it. It is not appropriate with some people and not a good idea. I have gotten on *World of Wonder's* case about that with RuPaul's *Drag Race*. They have to stop using that on there.

**WCT: RuPaul even has a song called "Tranny Chaser."**

CB: Yes, it is really different than I think people realize. Doing drag and being transgender are completely different issues. That line gets blurred sometimes and that word gets used and people need to be aware of it.

**WCT: Any word that people are mistreated over is not good.**

CB: Right, exactly.

**WCT: You and Jenny are engaged currently.**

CB: Yes.

**WCT: She is a knock out and has a great energy.**

CB: Thank you.

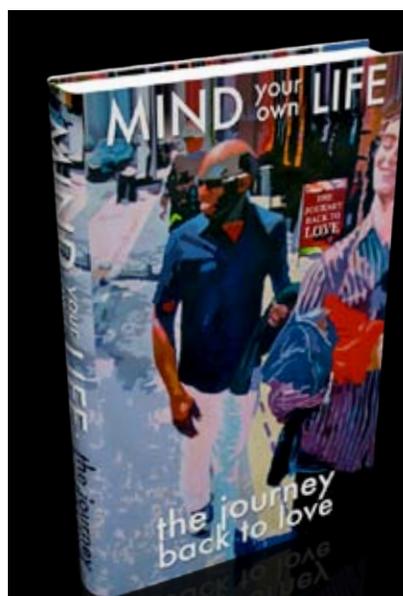
**WCT: Anything else you want to say about the book?**

CB: I would say there is a universal theme to it that people aren't really getting. It is very much about overcoming fear and growing up.

**WCT: You have written other books but this one goes back and explains how you were really feeling.**

CB: Absolutely. It is the most I have ever felt like revealing about myself. It is about working through your issues and becoming who you are, whoever that is. For me it was transgender but I think everyone has certain things about themselves that they can't get to because of fear or issues in the past.

**Purchase the book by visiting <http://www.chazbono.net> and read the real story of Chaz Bono. On Saturday, June 4, Bono will speak at the Be-All transgender conference, and hold a book-signing. See <http://www.be-all.org>.**

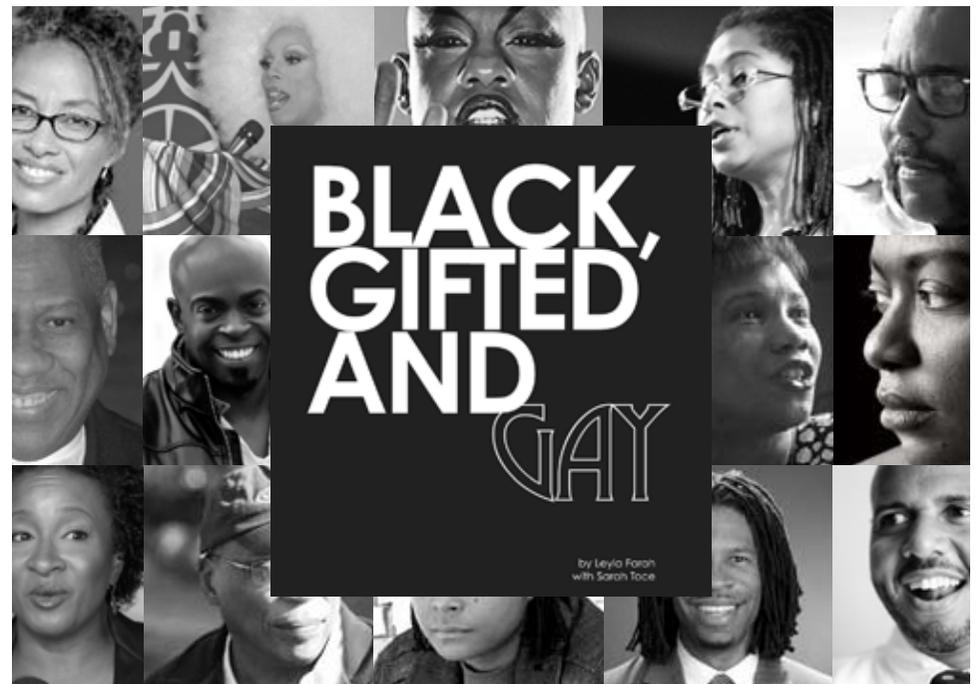


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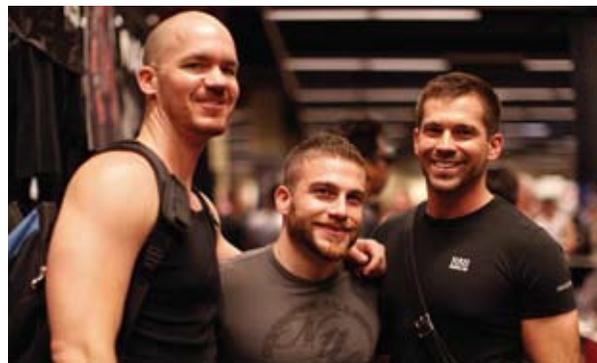
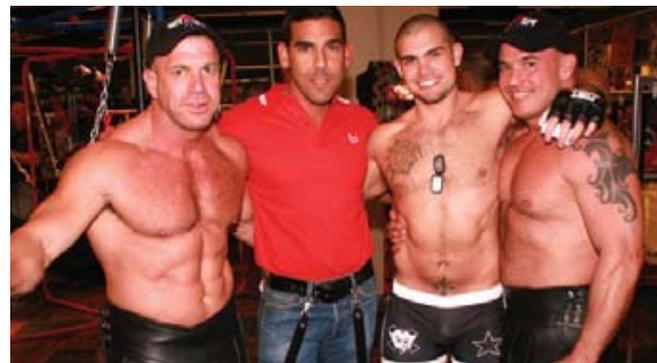
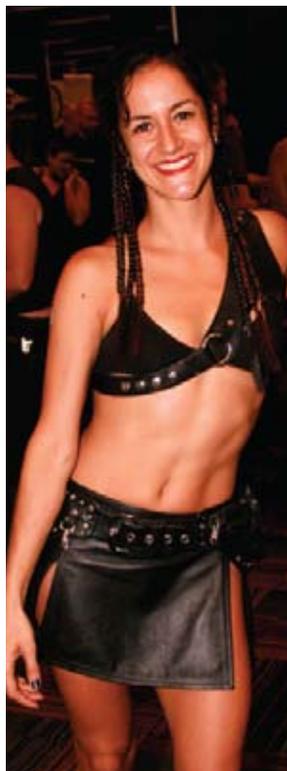




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Memorial Day weekend means lots of vacationers—and it also means the annual attendance of hundreds of International Mr. Leather (IML) enthusiasts. Among the many events were the leather market as well as parties and competitions. Eric Gutierrez, Mr. Leather Europe 2010, was named Mr.

IML 2011; Douglas “D” Pamplin, Mr. Mid-Atlantic Leather 2011, was first runner-up and Anthony Rol-lar, Mr. San Diego Leather 2010, was second runner-up. Jim Deuder was crowned International Mr. Bootblack 2011. Above: Photos of the final competition and the “Pecs and Personality” segment by Verdell Shannon; Below: Photos of the Leather Market by Dave Ouano. Many more online at <http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com> and [www.facebook.com/nightspots](http://www.facebook.com/nightspots). Also, see more photos in next week’s issue of Nightspots.



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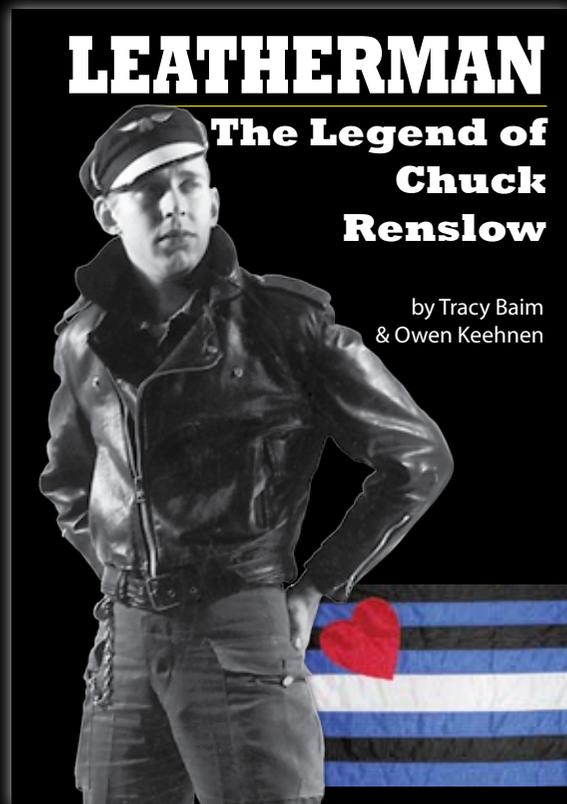
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### BOOKS

## 'Democracy Remixed': Cathy Cohen on Black youth and LGBT politics

BY ROD MCCULLOM

Cathy J. Cohen offers a rare and unique perspective on the intersection of race, sexuality, social movements and politics. The author, feminist and academic activist is one of the leading voices in LGBT academics and is currently the David and Mary Winton Green Professor in Political Science and the College at the University of Chicago. Cohen is also the deputy provost for graduate education.

Cohen—who is Black, lesbian, partnered and a parent—is the principal investigator on the Black Youth Project, a national research project launched in 2003 that examines the attitudes and culture of African-American youth ages 15 to 25, and how these influence their decision-making on sex, health, and politics. Black youth have largely rejected the narrative of a “post racial society” and are socially conservative on issues such as abortion, same-sex marriage and LGBT rights, writes Cohen in her latest book, *Democracy Remixed: Black Youth and the Future of American Politics*, published by Oxford University.

“But they can moved with the right incentives and interventions,” Cohen told Windy City Times. “The question is how.”

“There is a narrative out there that says, ‘We have a new generation that is extremely tolerant. They all support same-sex marriage, they support sex education, women’s reproductive rights, 10 years in the future all of these will be non-issues,’” said Cohen. “The data show that is not completely true.”

In an interview with Windy City Times, Cohen discussed *Democracy Remixed: Black Youth and the Future of American Politics* and its implications on LGBT politics, as well as some of the negative stereotypes around Black youth.

**Windy City Times: Let’s talk about that narrative you brought up on marriage ...**

Cathy J. Cohen: When our understanding of “young people” is based only on surveys of young whites, we get a distorted view of “youth” thinking. We don’t allow that there are very significant differences in the youth population.

Black youth from the ages of 18 to 25 tend to be the most socially conservative group. I’m not suggesting young Blacks are much more homophobic than everyone else—but some are. The idea is not to demonize them, but think about the necessary, culturally relevant interventions that will allow them to develop. They do think about same-sex issues, gay rights and morality of homosexuality ... so we want to move and to organize people around these issues. It’s an important finding in *Democracy Remixed*.

**WCT: What are some of the possible interventions?**

CC: We have to support the work of organizations that are already out there. In Chicago, think of organizations such as Affinity or Gender JUST. Or in the Latino communities, think of the work of Amigas Latinas. These organizations are important. They have legitimacy in communities of color. We have to credit them with the work



Cathy Cohen.

[they are doing] ... and not only what national LGBT organizations [say] they should do. They have issues and agendas that are important to their entire communities.

Affinity and Gender JUST support the work of young people. Other organizations we can support do not work on exclusively LGBTQ issues, but work with youth of color and expand their opportunities, such as the Chicago Freedom School.

**WCT: Gender JUST has done some very good work with LGBT youth of color in Chicago, especially organizing LGBT youth in Chicago Public Schools.**

CC: Absolutely! Affinity has also done some very good work, too, and has a very good youth program. And so has the Chicago Freedom School, which primarily works with youth of color. There are many local organizations doing some excellent work around sexuality, education and the intersection of those issues. If we can highlight that type of leadership, it can go a long way toward reversing some of the findings presented in the book.

**WCT: In *Democracy Remixed*, there is a chapter on what you call “The Obama Effect.”**

Turn to page 32



## The Quest For Brian

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Amos Lassen - *Literary Pride*, *ReviewsByAmosLassen.com*

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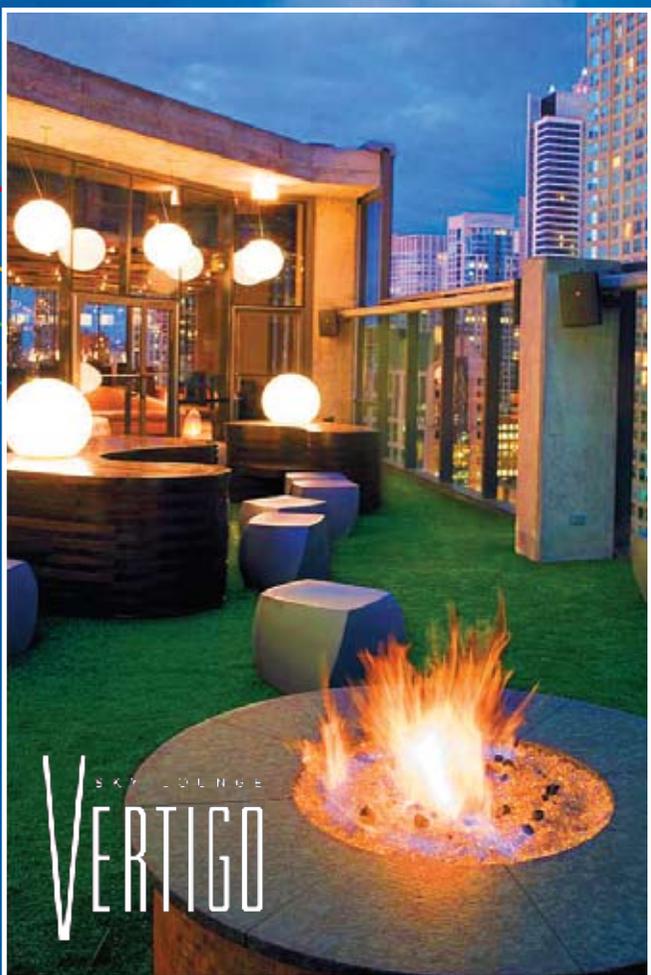
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## BOOKS

## 'Remembrance' with Bob Smith

BY TIM MILLER

Bob Smith's new novel, *Remembrance of Things* (272 pages; Univ. of Wisconsin/Terrance; \$26.95) *I Forgot* has done the impossible—it more than lives up to its blurb!

I have never felt a book so thoroughly fulfill its advance promo as *Remembrance of Things I Forgot* did in relation to Edmund White's comment, "If H.G. Wells had been funny and Oscar Wilde obsessed with time travel they might have mated and produced Bob Smith, who has written the funniest and wildest ride imaginable through the recent past and near future." I have read all of Smith's earlier memoirs and his first novel, and in this new book his extraordinary gifts as a writer, humorist and keen observer of gay identity have reached new heights.

The novel is built around a notion of a gay man who accesses a handy time machine to go back in time to connect with his young gay self, stop Bush-Cheney in their tracks and to prevent his sister's suicide. Like all of us raised on Saturday afternoon TV viewings of *The Time Machine* or *The Time Tunnel*, Smith has followed his nose into real pay dirt. The beautiful reach of the time-travel conceit allows the humor and the emotion to be wed in moments that are Chekhovian to the max in their simultaneous crying-while-laughing and laughter-through-tears moments.

Early on in the book, when the main character's partner—and the inventor of the time machine—informs our narrator he has invented a time machine and says, "Today I proved time travel was possible—I sent a condom back to 1979." I first laughed out loud and then almost wept at the power of that notion of a condom sent back to stop AIDS in 1979. The suspension of disbelief that Smith makes happen vis a vis the time travel narrative device, allows a thrilling set of speculative "what ifs" to happen. There are gorgeous set-pieces from the time travel this brings us throughout the book like a conversation with your younger self or a visit to the museum with a now departed parent. Indeed, to add my own two cents to Edmund White's blurb, *Remembrance of Things I Forgot* taps a beautiful and particularly rich and darker vein of American humor and literary traditions much like the later speculative and fantastic novellas such as "The Mysterious Stranger" by another stand-up humorist: Mark Twain.

Diagnosed with ALS /Lou Gehrig's Disease in 2007, Smith has dug down, dared to ask the huge questions and come up with a new book that is rich in humor and heart. At a time when so many novels have become careful and small in their reach Smith has made a gorgeous leap into a really bold and fantastic device that lets him go to such rich places as a novelist. The capaciousness and sheer fun of it makes it a thrilling and emotionally rich reading experience. I caught up with Smith to talk about time travel and how to turn the word "Cheney" into a curse word.

**Tim Miller: Your new novel is so fantastic. What was the initial nudge that took you to *Remembrance of Things I Forgot*?**

Bob Smith: About six years ago, my brother Jim gave me a photo of myself he'd taken in 1986. I'd never seen it before and was shocked at how handsome I was since I always thought of myself as my high school graduation picture: a geek with big eyeglasses. I immediately joked to friends that I needed a time machine to go back and give me the heads up. That picture was my Proustian Madeleine and later I found the idea of a gay time travel story funny, creepy and novel since you could be sexually attracted to yourself. I hadn't read a time travel story with a gay protagonist and finally decided to write one.

**TM: The novel really combines all the stron-**



Bob Smith.

**gest juice from your memoirs, your stand-up and your first novel into a charged new creation. What is the balancing act between fiction and materials from your own autobiography in this work?**

Smith: I've always thought of my stand-up act as a fictional autobiography and I've started to see that my novels are autobiographical fictions. My first novel *Selfish and Perverse* is a novel, but I did have a very romantic and sexually exciting fling with a hot gay salmon fisherman in Alaska. And in *Remembrance*, everything about Carol's suicide is true and the mother is based upon my mother, and most of the opinions are mine, although I'm not quite the opinionated New Yorker as my main character is and I've never lost my hair.

Right now, I'm working on a novel set in Ancient Greece and you'd think that strange world would be completely alien—and much of it is—but during my research I read Xenophon's *Symposium* and it opens with a comedian who offers to entertain at a dinner party in exchange for a free meal. The comedian bombs and I immediately knew I could write about that culture. I've told jokes in exchange for free vacations so I could identify with that universe. My new novel is set in the ancient Greek theater world and in 2500 years that sub-culture hasn't changed as much as you'd think.

**TM: The time-travel concept really sets up a great template to go to amazing places. What lead you to this device (and did you watch the TV show "Time Tunnel" as a kid)?**

Smith: I've always liked time-travel stories, especially the works of Jack Finney. So I wrote a short story where a gay guy goes back in time and meets his younger self. In the intervening years he's built himself into a hunk and his younger self is attracted. Friends of mine read it and one of them the writer Michael Carroll suggested that it should be a novel. At first, I didn't see it, then it hit me. There's a convention in time-travel stories that if you change the past you might alter the future, but the more I thought about time travel, the more convinced I became that everyone would want to change their pasts.

From telling myself to hit on that hot jock in high school I once shared a single bed with, and who I suspected was open to experimenting with man on man action, to trying to prevent my sister's suicide. Then there would also be the temptations to make money and really alter history—prevent someone from becoming president. But I want to emphasize that *Remembrance* is a comic novel with a sci-fi launching point. Once the main character is back in the past, I made very effort to have the novel play out realistically—what would you change about your past and how would you go about doing it?

That's where I found the real comedy in the book derived from.

And, yes, I loved the *Time Tunnel* as a boy and watched every episode.

**TM: While I expected the humor to shine through as it always does with your work either as a writer or performer, I was deeply moved by how poignant and deeply felt the humor was. How do you maintain this connection between the humor and the heartfelt?**

Smith: Well, the writers I really admire such as Shakespeare and Chekhov or the novelists Barbara Pym and Stephen McCauley aren't afraid of mixing the comic and the tragic. I just think of a story first and then write what the story requires. I tend to primarily think comic but every novel—even comic novels—needs real moments of disappointment, reflection and sadness.

**TM: Leaping deftly from the hysterically funny to the existential, the novel really has a big generous heart of facing these hard times—AIDS, Reagan-Bush-Bush fascism and the like—that we have been traveling through head on. How has dealing with ALS these last years informed this novel and all your creative work?**

Smith: Well, the last five years have been some of the best and worst of times in my life. I became a donor to a lesbian couple and have two amazing children, and I was also diagnosed with a terrifying disease. While I was writing this novel, I seriously thought about living through the Reagan era when our president sat back and watched gay men die to today when the Republicans have broadened that policy to sit back and happily watch everyone die without health insurance.

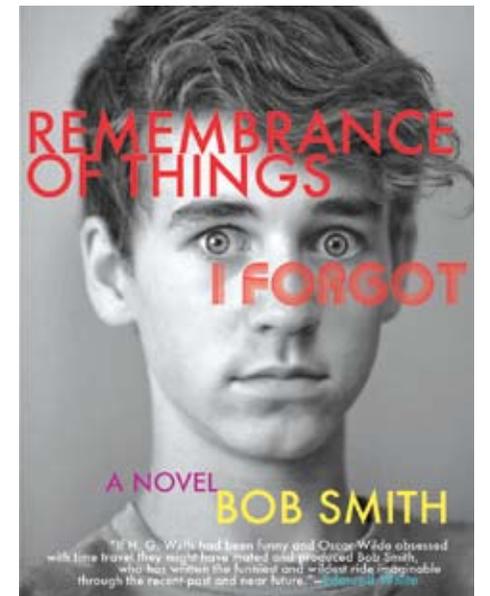
I've also been what I jokingly call in the novel a same-sex tree hugger since I was a kid. And Reagan began the Republicans' anti-environmental assault, which I take personally since my children will have live on that ruined planet. I also believe Bush and Cheney have become historical villains like Richard III and it's the duty of play-

wrights, novelists and historians to ensure their diabolical policies aren't forgotten. Most of all also thought the nauseating idea of having a Republican boyfriend was a great comic premise.

**TM: Bob, if you could use that time travel device and fling yourself in the future one hundred years, what could you tell us from that vantage point?**

Smith: I'd like to think that in a hundred years, gay rights and environmental sustainability will be universal values, calling someone a "Cheney" is universally recognized vile insult, and no one will believe in a God who's meaner than I am. (I'm pretty easy-going, so yes, Smith will have to be the measure of meanness.) All my books will be downloadable to your brain. And they better have a cure for ALS!

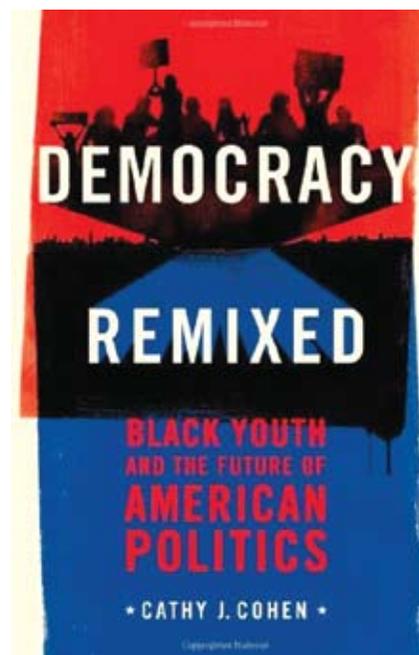
**Tim Miller is a solo performer and the author of the books *Shirts & Skin*, *Body Blows* and *1001 Beds*. He can be reached at his website [www.TimMillerPerformer.com](http://www.TimMillerPerformer.com).**



## COHEN from page 30

**Can you talk about that and the possibility that young Black voters could be swayed to support things such as gay rights, same-sex marriage or the Employment Non-Discrimination Act?**

CC: Barack Obama mobilized Black youth to historic levels. Some 97 percent of young Black people voted for Obama. We have never seen that percentage of young Blacks go to the polls. And what might be considered "wedge issues" nationally such as same-sex marriage or DOMA [the Defense of Marriage Act], had very little or no effect on the votes of African Americans or African-American youth in 2008.



I think Obama could motivate [young Black voters] to support these issues. I'm just worried that right now he could have lost the opportunity to motivate many voters to those and many different positions.

**WCT: Oh, yeah. That's another article, though.**

CC: Yes, yes. [Laughs] The window of opportunity is closing on some issues. But if we're going to try to move people, especially Black youth, to think in a broad way about LGBT issues, it's important that young Black voters listen to someone that they respect. President Obama is that person.

But there are issues that young Black people are much more concerned about than same-sex marriage. If you were to ask them what their [primary] concerns are, many would likely say schools, finding a job, the violence in their community, or housing. We can try to talk to them about same-sex marriage or LGBT rights .... but these issues are not really a concern to most young Black people, who have very few resources. If we want to organize Black youth around [LGBT rights], we need to talk about the issues that impact Black people and young Black people.

Not to suggest that same-sex marriage doesn't or will not impact the lives of young Black people. Of course it does. But the issue of education or jobs is broader and impacts many more people.

**Cathy J. Cohen is also author of *The Boundaries of Blackness: AIDS and the Breakdown of Black Politics* published by the University of Chicago Press. *Democracy Remixed: Black Youth and the Future of American Politics* is published by Oxford University Press. It is also available on Kindle.**



# Lesbian-owned B&B puts a modern twist on the business

BY LISA KLEIN

Tucked onto a quiet street in Chicago's Andersonville neighborhood, Nina's Bed and Breakfast brings a distinctly modern yet homey feel to the city's accommodation options.

"Most B&Bs have that old feeling," said co-owner Sheila Henley. She and her business partner (who wished to remain anonymous in this article) wanted to make theirs more contemporary for the sophisticated traveler looking for something a little bit different. (Incidentally, "Nina" is the nickname of the silent partner, given to her by her brother when he was young because he couldn't say her actual name correctly.)

After traveling to B&Bs across the country, Henley and her partner realized that "there's always something missing for the woman traveler." They decided to open their own B&B to accommodate women's needs, and did so in Chicago last September.

Although an opposite-sex couple has stayed at Nina's, the B&B caters specifically to women and lesbian travelers. Henley said they provide things that all women need and won't have to ask for, including some "special surprises."

"Our services can match any five-star hotel downtown," said Henley.

Nina's is in an old Victorian house, built in 1896, with a completely renovated inside. The two guest rooms are on the top floor and Henley and her business partner live on the bottom.

The 500-square-foot master suite features vaulted ceilings, a sitting area, fireplace and Jacuzzi. It also comes with a personal robe and slippers for each guest.

The smaller, cozy guest room has its own private bathroom across the hall.

Both rooms feature plenty of natural light and modern décor. Coffee, tea and a microwave are available near the entrance.

Guests have access to the newly-renovated kitchen area in the morning, when "everyone congregates around the table" for breakfast, accompanied by the "resident dog," Rusty. There's also a sitting porch outside in front of the house and a patio in the back.

Henley, who grew up in Chicago, and her busi-

ness partner did a lot of research before deciding on the perfect location for their B&B. Henley said their customers are looking for a "unique urban setting," and get that in Andersonville.

Henley said that about 80 percent of their guests end up never leaving the neighborhood, enjoying walks down the "nice, tree-lined streets," and browsing the boutiques close-by. If they want to go downtown, the EL is down the street, making things easy.

"It makes them feel like they're at home," said Henley of Nina's neighborhood setting.

Henley said they've had a wide range of guests visit so far, including women from Panama, Australia and Spain. To her, meeting different types of people is the best part of running a B&B.

Henley and her business partner plan to open two more B&Bs in different cities, staying within unique urban settings.

"It's been a blessed experience," Henley said, adding that their goal is for customers to walk away thinking Nina's was a really unique bed-and-breakfast.

**Nina's B&B is located at 1303 W. Winona St. The summer room rate per night is between \$125 and \$200. Amenities include DVD players, non-alcoholic beverages, in-room mini refrigerators and off-street parking. Visit <http://www.ninasbedandbreakfast.com> for more information. Photos by Lisa Klein**



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# Celebrations

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

## Jan Dee's civil-union stand

Jan Dee Custom Jewelry, 1425 W. Diversey, is showing support for civil unions with a unique window display. Civil unions will take place in Illinois June 2. Photo by Dave Ouano



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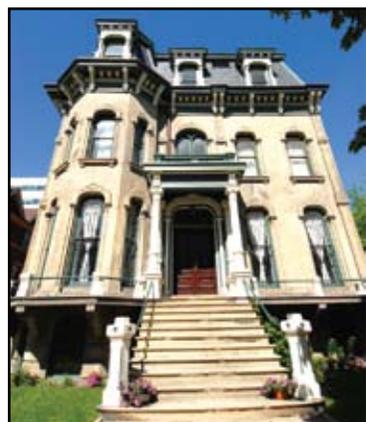
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Got something to celebrate? Send us information on your civil union, anniversary, adoption, marriage or any other joyous moment in life to appear in our new section,

# 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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nightspots

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## Wed., June 1

**Hope & Healing Support Group: LGBT Loss** 6:30 p.m., 847-556-1777, Japanese American Service Committee, 4427 N. Clark, <http://www.carecenter.org/news-events/events-calendar/view/197/date/2011-06-22>

**Broadway United Methodist Church Pride Open House** Broadway is an inclusive congregation welcoming all persons interested in worshipping, studying or serving with us; building is fully accessible to persons with disabling conditions. 7 p.m., Broadway United Methodist Church, 3338 N. Broadway, <http://www.broadway-churchchicago.org>

**Pride Films and Plays: Gay UK** First night in a series through June 19 of staged readings celebrating LGBT works from the United Kingdom including the Chicago premiere of Alexi Kaye Campbell's *THE PRIDE*, directed by Nick Bowling, \$12 each reading, or \$50 for a five play pass; film and theater industry members and students are \$6. 7:30 p.m., Theatre Wit, 1229 W. Belmont, <http://www.pridefilm-sandplays.com>

**June QSC - The '90s** Come celebrate the decade that brought us ubiquitous flannel, Vanilla Ice, Beanie Babies, pump-up shoes, Urkel, Dawson's Creek and inline skates. Nineties tunes start around 8 p.m. \$2 Hams, \$5 Hammesons, \$3 Bottled Beer. 8 p.m., Archie's Tavern, 2600 W. Iowa, <http://www.facebook.com/qsc.archies>

**Under a New Moon** celebrating civil unions in Illinois Celebrate Civil Unions in IL. Six couples will win a free wedding - including a group civil-union ceremony at

## FAMILY TIES Saturday, June 4

Meredith Baxter will be at the Printers Row Lit Fest.

Photo by Stephanie Brusig/  
Sarah Toce



midnight on June 2. 10:30 p.m., Catalist Ranch, 656 W. Randolph, Suite 3W, <http://www.facebook.com/pages/under-a-new-moon/190402664334983>

## Thursday, June 2

**Illinois Civil Union Ceremonies** In celebration of the first day of civil union ceremonies in Illinois, the City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations' Advisory Council on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues will host 30 civil-union ceremonies in Wrigley Square at Millennium Park. 10 a.m., Millennium Park, Randolph Street and Michigan Avenue, <http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cchr/provdrs/lgbt.html>

**Birds of a Feather, Wed Together** Join us as we celebrate a giant milestone and an historic event for the LGBT Community in Illinois. EnGAYged Weddings will be hosting a group wedding event, "Birds of a Feather Wed Together". We will rejoice in same-sex couples' commitment and love for one another and the victory of legalizing Civil

Unions in Illinois. 5 p.m., 561-929-9929, Stan Mansion 2408 N. Kedzie, <http://www.engaygedweddings.com/il/illinois-civil-union-wedding-packages.html>

**PFLAG Celebrates the Heartland** Co-chairs John and Char Cepek; honorees Greg Harris, IL State Rep.; Kim L Hunt Executive Director, Affinity Community Services; officer Jose Rios, Chicago Police Department LGBT Liaison, 23rd District and VP LGPA/GOAL Ghicago; 6 p.m., Hotel Palomar, 505 N. State, <http://www.pflag.org/chicago>

## Friday, June 3

**Glee Live! In Concert!** tour Lea Michele (Rachel), Cory Monteith (Finn), Amber Riley (Mercedes), Chris Colfer (Kurt), Kevin McHale (Artie), Jenna Ushkowitz (Tina), Mark Salling (Puck), Dianna Agron (Quinn), Naya Rivera (Santana), Heather Morris (Brittany), Harry Shum Jr. (Mike), Chord Overstreet (Sam) and Darren Criss (Blaine). Matthew Morrison (Mr. Schuester) will not be a part of the tour; 3 p.m., Allstate Arena, 6920 N. Mannheim, <http://www.livenation.com>

**Unite with Pride: a Community Celebration** Join The Civil Rights Agenda as they begin Pride Month in Chicago at Unite with Pride: A Community Celebration, an opportunity for couples to be Civilly United in an historic outdoor community civil ceremony on the picturesque "Uihlein Plaza" at the Chicago History Museum. 5:30 p.m., Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark, [http://www.jointcra.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=62&Itemid=75](http://www.jointcra.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=62&Itemid=75)

**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 St, <http://www.equalityillinois.org>

**Edgewater Historical Society LGBT History Exhibit** opening night reception Exhibit chronicles the history of businesses, leaders, and organizations that have made contributions to establishing equality and making Edgewater (composed of several neighborhoods including Andersonville) known for its diversity including a large LGBT presence; cocktails and appetizers, free to the public, donations always welcome. 7 p.m., 773-506-4849, 5358 N. Ashland, <http://www.edgewaterhistory.org>

**Thank GLAAD It's Friday** Join GLAAD for our popular Thank GLAAD It's Friday events! Catch up with local LGBT professionals and allies, enjoy delicious ABSOLUT® cocktails and win great prizes, such as a

pair of Field Box tickets to a Chicago Cubs game, four courtside tickets to the June 23 "Pride Night" WNBA Chicago Sky game, and some great gift certificates from local restaurants and retailers. Tickets are just \$20 and include two hours of hosted ABSOLUT cocktails. 8 p.m., Crew Bar & Grill, 4804 N. Broadway, <http://www.worlds-greatestbar.com>

**Sex with GayCo** GayCo Productions presents Sex with GayCo, a super-sexy night of sex stories and a sexy sassy sketch comedy revue, directed by Andy Eninger. \$10 tickets can be purchased at the door or online. 10 p.m., Playground Theatre, 3341 N. Lincoln, <http://www.gayco.com>

## Saturday, June 4

**Chicago History Museum Walking Tour: Out in Lakeview** Explore the history and architecture of Lakeview, America's first officially recognized gay neighborhood. Learn about its status as a burgeoning suburb in the early 1900s, the opening of Wrigley Field, and the LGBT businesses that helped the area boom in the 1970s, \$15, \$10 Chicago History Museum members; 10 a.m., Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark, <http://www.chicagohistory.org>

**Reception featuring art by lesbian and gay artists** Urban Art Retreat gives the opportunity for Lesbian & Gay folks to show their art as part of a larger homosexual art show. Everyone is welcome to attend. 1 p.m., 542-912-6773, Liz Long Gallery at Urban Art Retreat 1957 S. Spaulding, <http://www.urbanartretreat.com>

**Transgender Be-All Conference** The Be-All Conference, one of the premiere Transgender events held in the Spring of each year, presents special guest speaker Chaz Bono with book signing at 2PM. 1 p.m., 708 302 1803, Double Tree Suites and Conference Center, 2111 Butterfield, Downers Grove, <http://www.be-all.org>

**Kenyan minister speaks on gay and lesbian rights** Amazwi Contemporary Art will welcome Rev. John Makokha, a Methodist minister from Kenya who, along with his wife Anne Baraza, is working to promote acceptance and respect for gays and lesbians in that country; visit coincides with opening of "Can Ya Kenya?" exhibition featuring work by popular Kenyan painters; 1 p.m., 269-857-5551, Amazwi, 249 Culver, Saugatuck, Mich., <http://www.amazwi.com>

**A Night With Jamie Foxx, Gene Siskel Film Center** Robert Downey, Jr., will return to Chicago to fete and lead a conversation with Foxx, a close personal friend who co-starred with Downey in the films "The Soloist" and "Due Date." Tickets \$400 for a single ticket and \$5,000 for a table. 6 p.m., 312-846-2072, Ritz-Carlton, 160 E. Pearson, <http://www.siskelfilmcenter.org>

**Meredith Baxter at Chicago Tribune Printers Row Lit Fest** The largest free outdoor literary event in the Midwest returns for two days. 6 - 10 p.m.; Check website for times and places. <http://www.printersrowlitfest.org>

## Sunday, June 5

**Rainbow Brunch** North Shore Rainbow Brunch is a way for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (GLBT) men and women in the suburbs to meet new friends and socialize in a low-key, friendly environment. 10am, Old Country Buffet, 8780 W. Dempster, Niles

**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. 10:15am, Urban Village Church, Spertus Institute, 610 S. Michigan, <http://www.newchicagochurch.com>

**Vital Bridges' Kickoff Pride Brunch** HIV/AIDS agency Vital Bridges is hosting its "Kick off to Pride" brunch at ACRE restaurant at 11 a.m. Guests will enjoy a delicious buffet, champagne and martinis, all



## FULL OF GLEE Friday, June 3

The Glee tour stops in the Chicago area for one night as cast members sing at Allstate Arena, 6920 N. Mannheim.

while supporting Vital Bridges and their initiatives. ACRE restaurant 5308 N. Clark, <http://www.vitalbridges.org/>

**Breast Cancer Awareness Day** Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association, in partnership with the Howard Brown Lesbian Community Care Project (LCCP), are teaming up to paint the park pink in salute to breast-cancer survivors in our ranks, as well as to promote breast cancer prevention; run an LCCP informational booth, putting up pink banners at all dugouts, and playing with pink balls. 12 p.m., Waveland Field, [http://www.chicagomsa.org/cmsa\\_new](http://www.chicagomsa.org/cmsa_new)

## Monday, June 6

**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>

**Exploring the Spirituality within the LGBTQ Community** As part of United Latino Pride Week, Amigas Latinas and The Faith Project of Chicago are joining together to create a safe place for dialogue surrounding issues of faith and sexuality. The dialogue will be in a mixture of Spanish and English, and will seek to address the issues faced by the LGBTQ and faith communities. 6 p.m., Little Village Lawndale HS, 3120 S. Kostner, <http://www.amigas-latinas.org>

## Tuesday, June 7

**Out of the Office - Networking Mixer** OUT of the Office - a networking mixer for LGBT Professionals to kick off Pride Month in Chicago. 5 p.m., Vertigo Skylounge, 2 W. Erie

**Join the Impact Chicago planning meeting** Join the Impact Chicago is a politically independent organization of Chicago-based grassroots activists fighting for full equality for LGBTQ people in all matters governed by civil law in all 50 states. Through education, community organizing, and direct action. 7 p.m., 600 S. Michigan, Columbia College - basement, <http://jointheimpactchicago.com/>

## Wed., June 8

**"Woke Up Black" Screening** Filmmaker/activist Mary Morten's new independent documentary places at its center the voices of Black youth - their ideas, attitudes and opinions that are often overlooked in today's society. 7 p.m., ICE Theater, 210 W. 87th St., <http://www.wokeupblack.com>

**Out in America** Documentary captures a collection of unique transformative stories by filmmaker Andrew Goldberg, featuring interviews with Andy Cohen, Armistead Maupin, and Chely Wright, among others; 8 p.m., public television



## CIVIL CORE

### Thursday-Friday, June 2-3

Mass civil-union ceremonies will take place throughout Chicagoland, marking the new Illinois law.

Photo of Tony Harper and James Abernathy, slated to take part in TCRA's June 3 ceremony, by Adam Bouska

# BILLY MASTERS

"At the end of the day, of course I'm gonna have a gay son. I'm not gonna have a straight son, am I? That doesn't make sense."—Belinda Carlisle talks about her son, James Duke Mason, coming out.

You know what they say: What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas—unless you're Billy Masters. In that case, what happens in Vegas will get broadcast around the world! This column is being filed from my palatial suite overlooking the Vegas Strip, but don't get too impressed. I'm at the Rio All-Suite Casino and Resort, where all of the rooms are suites! Since the sun is coming up as I just stumbled in to write this, let's get down to business.

The Rio was my first stop because I was seeing my buddy Jeff Timmons (formerly of 98 Degrees) appear with the world-famous Chippendales. Even though I've known Jeff for over a decade, I was absolutely shocked by how incredible he looks. At 38, he looks better than ever—and that's saying something. He's also one of the genuinely nicest people in the world—a trait that lends itself perfectly to his gig hosting the Chippendales. Of course, that face and body don't hurt! Then there's the voice, which is so associated with hits from his boy-band days—songs that are featured in this show, in addition to his solo work. In short, this is a match made in heaven—and judging from the sold-out houses and the extension of his contract, the Rio agrees. And let me tell you something—this ain't your mother's Chippendales. This is a slick, well-produced, intricate extravaganza that lives

teenager again ... if only I could find my Bugle Boy jeans. (Ironically, Timmons wears Bugle Boy parachute pants with the Chippendales.) Back to The Go-Go's—I cannot recommend this show enough. Catch them when they come to a city near you. I'll run some photos, including one of Belinda and Mary Wilson, a founding member of The Supremes (and a Vegas resident).

I'm sure you all tuned in for last week's long, drawn-out farewell to Saint Oprah. I'm sure she's assembling documentation to present to the Vatican for her canonization. Now, don't take my attitude as a jab at the lovely Miss Winfrey. I respect her. I think she's done some amazing things. But then again, to whom much is given, much is expected. My issue is simply how she does it. I wish things were done with a slightly less "Look at me, I'm THE OPRAH!" kinda attitude. She's almost like Donald Trump. At some point, I expect we'll see her name on a casino or hotel or some Eurotrash bleached blonde skiing paramour.

Then there was the American Idol finale and all that drama. Would Lauren sing? Was she too sick? Would Haley push her down a flight of stairs? And when Scotty sang that ghastly "I Love You This Big," I kept thinking, "Exactly how big are we talking about?" Not that I care really, but when you sing a song with that title, you can't be surprised if I go there.

We had a handful of e-mails from fans regarding the "Idol" finale, so we'll do an informal "Ask Billy" segment. The dancer who was humping Lady Gaga onstage was Mark Kanemura, a finalist from season four of "So You Think You Can



**Belinda Carlisle is in a cool band and has a gay son—qualifying her for gay-icon status.**

up to the hype. Of course, the guys are gorgeous, but they can also dance and deliver a fun, fast-paced, and sexy show.

Jeff and I caught up in his dressing room and did a fun little interview where he talks about his gay fans, that his first solo gig was performing at Chicago Gay Pride and the fact that the boys reading this column will also enjoy this "ultimate ladies night." In fact, I was seated next to a very sexy boy—former American Idol contestant Ace Young. You can see photos and the interview on BillyMasters.com.

The main reason for my trip was to go to the opening night of The Go-Go's national tour, "Ladies Gone Wild." It never ceases to amaze me what a great band this is. It's been more than two years since they've performed together, and yet they sound as tight and solid as any current band. However, more than that—the girls (as I continue to refer to them) are having a blast. This is no meandering trip down memory lane. These are rockers who love what they do and connect with the audience on every level. I have to single out Belinda Carlisle, who not only looks incredible, but really threw herself into the show with the abandon of someone half her age. Her voice is stronger and brighter than ever, as if she's turned back the hands of time. I felt like a

Dance" and a native of Kaneohe, Hawaii. And the hot fiddle player featured during many of Scotty and Lauren's songs was Nathan Stoops—a talented musician, singer and jewelry designer. While I don't know Mark, I do know Nayte, which is how he spells it (and yet he's straight—go figure). Remember when I told you about going to a play last week with Bruce Vilanch and a group of friends, including one straight guy? That straight guy would be Nayte—who had a ball and was delighted to hang out with this gaggle of gays. I'll post some delicious photos of both boys on BillyMasters.com.

When the Idol showdown was more like a hoedown, it's definitely time to end yet another column. It's also definitely time for me to shut down my WeHo abode and head back to Boston. As I said, I'll be with The Go-Go's (and special guests, The B52's) on June 9 (pre-Pride) at the Bank of America Pavilion. After that, I could be anywhere—and, of course, I'll be keeping you up to date on <http://www.BillyMasters.com>. If you want to send me a question, drop a note to [Billy@BillyMasters.com](mailto:Billy@BillyMasters.com) and I promise to get back to you before I winch into my old Bugle Boy parachute flight suit! Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

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# Gay ex-umpire gets into the wealth game

BY ROSS FORMAN

He once worked in professional baseball. Now he's in the world of prose.

Tyler Hoffman was a minor-league umpire whose last professional game was during the 2000 spring training in Arizona. He then worked on and off for semi-pro and college games from 2001 to 2009 near his home in Vancouver, B.C., but now doesn't even own any gear any more. "The desire isn't there," he said.

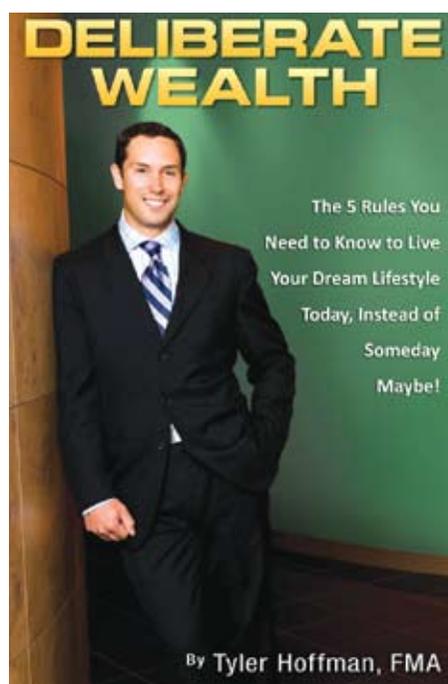
Now 35, Hoffman is a financial management advisor for a large wealth advisory firm, for which he has worked since leaving the game in 2000. In April, Hoffman's first book was released: *Deliberate Wealth: The 5 Rules You Need To Know To Live Your Dream Lifestyle Today, Instead Of Someday Maybe!*

"The book had many launch dates, and took over three years to complete, but was finally launched [on] April 1," said Hoffman, who is

gay. "The one thing I learned is that a book is never really done. I kept rewriting, adding and deleting, but finally reached a point where I was confident that I had shared what I set out to: a little about me and a lot about how we make or don't make money work for us because of the way we think, feel and act.

"Professionally, I work with people every day and I hear too often, 'Oh, I'd love to be able to do that, but don't have the money.' I also see people make excuses in their lives for not being where they want to be and thought that if I could share my experience of how I made it, and stayed, in baseball that might make for an interesting book, especially if I put the financial twist on it."

Hoffman grew up in Qualicum Beach, B.C., and said the book is geared for "anyone wanting more from life or from money." Due to the sports connection, he admits the male sports fan, age 25 to 55, probably will identify with the tales.



"The book is really a course; it comes with a workbook, so for those who really dive into [it] and put it into practice will be the ones to ben-

efit from it," Hoffman said. "There has been a lot of talk about creating multiple streams of income lately, so for anyone on that hunt of increased cash flow, they too will run away excited about some of the ideas I share.

"I don't really talk about wealth from the conventional standpoint. I talk about how to create the lifestyle you want today instead of someday maybe. Wealth is as much about building the golden nest egg as it is about using it to fund your life now and that's where my differentiation with this book is."

Will the book help the LGBT community?

Hoffman feels it definitely will. "There are a lot of double-income, no-kid relationships out there and this book will help those couples channel that cash flow," he said.

Hoffman admitted it took him a long time to truly feel confident that leaving professional baseball was the right decision. "I can say I don't miss the long road trips, and the lifestyle, but [I] do miss the roar of the crowd. That, I will always miss," he said. "Baseball could never give me the kind of life I have now."

For more about Hoffman's book, go to: <http://www.deliberatewealth.com>.

## Red Stars join WPSL

The Chicago Red Stars has announced that it is joining the Women's Premier Soccer League (WPSL) for the 2011 season, according to a press release.

The Red Stars played during the Women's Professional Soccer (WPS) league's 2009 and 2010 seasons; however, the team took a hiatus from WPS to shore up its investment group.

Two home games take place on July 2 and 10 at the Village of Lisle-Benedictine University Sports Complex, 5700 College, Lisle. The full 2011 WPSL schedule and roster additions will be announced soon.

Tickets are \$10 for general admission seating. For more information, visit <http://www.ChicagoRedStars.com>.

## Sky season starts June 4

The Chicago Sky women's basketball team will open its season in June 4 at Indiana, and will conclude Sept. 11 at Seattle—with plenty of action in between those dates as well. The first few games are at follows:

- June 4 @ Indiana, 6 p.m.
- 10 vs. Connecticut, 7:30 p.m.
- 11 @ Washington, 6 p.m.
- 17 vs. New York, 7:30 p.m.
- 19 @ Connecticut, 12 p.m.
- 21 @ Atlanta, 11 a.m.
- 23 vs. Connecticut, 7 p.m.
- 25 vs. Phoenix, 7 p.m.
- 28 vs. San Antonio, 7 p.m.

See <http://www.wnba.com/sky> for more information.



The Sky's Sylvia Fowles. Photo courtesy of the team



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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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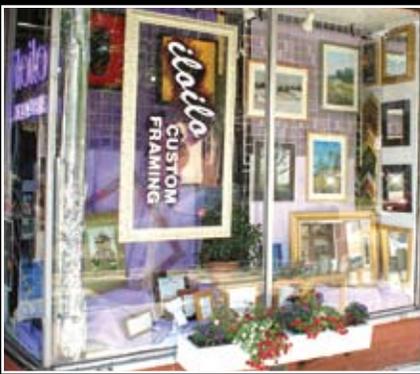
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