



**SHIRLEY
MACLAINE
TALKS
WITH
WCT**

PAGE 23

WINDY CITY TIMES

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

JUNE 15, 2011
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NORIEGA**

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Looking forward

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Leaders in Chicago's LGBT and HIV/AIDS communities speak with Windy City Times about the future. Included in this special section are (left to right, starting from top) AIDS Foundation of Chicago President David Munar, PFLAG's Toni Weaver, Chicago House CEO the Rev. Stan Sloan, Equality Illinois CEO Bernard Cherkasov, Association of Latino Men for Action Board President Julio Rodriguez, Gay Liberation Network co-founder Andy Thayer, University of Illinois at Chicago's Gender & Sexuality Center Assistant Director Liz Thomson, Gerber/Hart Library President Karen Sendziak, Howard Brown Health Center CEO/President Jamal Edwards and Center on Halsted Executive Director Modesto "Tico" Valle.



Riding the Midsommar wave

Andersonville kicks off the summer with its annual Midsommarfest.

Photo by Jerry Nunn

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Gimme some Mo'

Comedian Mo'Nique was among the many performers at this year's Milwaukee Pridefest.

Photo by Jerry Nunn

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Photos on cover (left, from top): Shirley MacLaine PR photo; Mona Noriega photo by Hal Baim; Dustin Lance Black photo from Facebook; Mike McRaith photo by Ross Forman; Paris Hilton photo courtesy of Oxygen



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LIKE A ROCCO

Rocco DiSpirito (left) talks about his reality-TV show, Rocco's Dinner Party.

PR photo



Sugar & Spice looks at eateries that are hidden gems, such as Ada's (above).

Website photo



It's a Mexican standoff as WCT hits Puerto Vallarta.

Photo by Jerry Nunn

STILL WATERS

John Waters came to the Music Box, and WCT was there.

AROUND TOWN

Find out about AVER's BBQ & Beer Bust along with the anti-DOMA rally in Lake View.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

This week's entertainment round-up includes items on Lynda Carter, Whitney Houston and Michael Strahan.

plus DAILY BREAKING NEWS

Your Windy City Gay Idol finals voting guide.

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Judge seems unlikely to vacate Prop 8 ruling

BY LISA KEEN
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

SAN FRANCISCO—It now seems unlikely that a federal judge will vacate a landmark decision in which a gay judge ruled that Proposition 8 is unconstitutional. The evidence? U.S. District Court Chief Judge James Ware said, following a three-hour hearing June 13, that he plans to issue his ruling concerning a motion to vacate within 24 hours.

Judges typically take months to write decisions of consequence, and a decision to vacate the August 2010 ruling from former Judge Vaughn Walker declaring Proposition 8 unconstitutional would be of enormous consequence. To expect that Ware would write in 24 hours a decision that would undo two years of litigation—including issues pending now before the 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals and the California Supreme Court—seems unlikely.

Also, there was little in Ware's questioning of Yes on 8 attorney Charles Cooper during the June 13 hearing in federal court in San Francisco to give proponents of Proposition 8 much to hang their hopes upon.

Ware noted that it is an unusual event when a judge is put in the position of deciding whether a colleague should have recused himself. Judge Vaughn Walker, in August 2010, ruled that the state ban on marriage licenses for same-sex couples violates the federal constitutional guarantees to equal protection and due process. Eight months after that ruling and two months after



Judge Vaughn Walker.

retiring from the bench, Walker acknowledged to reporters that he himself is gay and that he has been in a relationship for the past 10 years with a man.

The courtroom erupted in laughter June 13 when Yes on 8 attorney Cooper said that Walker should have disclosed to attorneys before the January 2010 trial on Proposition 8 not only that he had been in a relationship with a man but that he had no interest in marrying that man. Cooper argued that Walker's longtime relationship was circumstantial proof that Walker would benefit from a ruling that enabled same-

sex couples to marry.

Ware challenged Cooper to explain how a long-time relationship constitutes proof that Walker would benefit from such a ruling, noting, "you can be in a longtime relationship without being in it for purposes of marriage."

However, a "reasonable person," said Cooper, could believe the judge had a potential to benefit from a ruling striking Proposition 8. Cooper also said that Walker's relationship put him in a position "precisely" the same as the two plaintiff couples in the case.

The U.S. Code dealing with "Judiciary and Judicial Procedure" states that "Any justice, judge, or magistrate judge of the United States shall disqualify himself in any proceeding in which his impartiality might reasonably be questioned." It also states that a judge "shall also disqualify himself" if "He knows that he ... has a financial interest in the subject matter in controversy ... or any other interest that could be substantially affected by the outcome of the proceeding...."

"What fact would you have court rely on to know that Judge Walker wanted to change his relationship [and marry, as the two plaintiff couples sought to do]?" asked Ware.

"It's common sense," said Cooper, "and a reasonable person would conclude that Judge Walker had an interest in marrying."

"So, there are no facts to suggest Judge Walker wanted to change his relationship to marriage," stated Ware.

Cooper then sought to persuade the judge that the very fact that Walker did not disclose his relationship to attorneys and did not disclose whether he had any interest in marrying the man reasonably called Walker's impartiality into question.

"But how does failure to disclose serve as evidence that he wanted to change the relationship?" pressed Ware.

Ted Boutrous, an attorney on the legal team headed by high-profile political attorneys Ted Olson and David Boies, said Cooper had no evidence and that Walker was under no obligation to disclose either his sexual orientation or his relationship.

"Where would the disclosure requirements stop?" he asked.

Boutrous also refuted Cooper's contention that it would be reasonable to presume Walker was "similarly situated" with plaintiffs and wanted to marry his longtime partner.

"Just because people are gay doesn't mean they're all alike," said Boutrous. "Some do want to marry, some don't.... There is no evidence that Judge Walker intended to get married."

Walker was not in the courtroom Monday. Ware had excused him from appearing on a second motion before the court—one to require that all copies of the videotape of last year's trial be turned over to the court. Walker turned over the videotapes and requested to be excused from appearing.

Interestingly, Ware started off discussion of the motion concerning the videotapes by disclosing that, as the court's new chief judge, he had presented Walker, the retiring chief justice, with a personal copy of the trial's videotape during Walker's retirement ceremony. Ware started off discussion of the motion to vacate by informing Cooper that he had presided over the marriage of a same-sex couple. Cooper made no response to the same-sex marriage ceremony, but said he would not consider the presentation of the videotapes during the retirement ceremony to be grounds for Ware to recuse himself from this matter.

After hearing brief arguments, Ware ruled from the bench and rejected Yes on 8's request to have all copies of the videotape turned over to the court. He indicated he would, at a later date, hear arguments on a motion from plaintiffs seeking to allow public release of the videotapes. Ware said he hoped to have a written decision concerning the motion to vacate on the court's website within 24 hours.

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NATIONAL NEWS

—Report: Rev. Eddie Long (left) settles for \$25M

—Lesbian students suspended for hugging

—Constance McMillen gets another award

HHS provides more same-sex guidelines

Health and Human Services' (HHS) Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has provided guidance to state Medicaid agencies clarifying that they are able to offer same-sex couples many of the same financial and asset protections available to opposite-sex couples when a partner is entering a nursing home or care facility, according to a press release.

In a letter, CMS advised state agencies of their ability to ensure that same-sex partners can remain in shared homes without Medicaid liens being applied. The guidance also clarifies that states have the flexibility to protect same-sex partners under estate recovery and transfer of assets rules.

"Low-income same-sex couples are too often denied equal treatment and the protections offered to other families in their greatest times of need," said HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. "This is now changing. Today's guidance represents another important step toward ensuring that the rights and dignity of every American are respected by their government."

Orbitz agrees to review advertising with Fox News

Washington, D.C.—After a three-week campaign by high-profile LGBT organizations urging Orbitz to examine numerous examples of rampant anti-LGBT bigotry on News Corp's Fox News Channel, the gay-friendly travel agency has agreed to review its advertising policy to ensure that it spends its ad dollars on programs that are consistent with its core corporate values of tolerance and non-discrimination.

Rick Jacobs, the founder and chair of the Courage Campaign, said he appreciates Orbitz taking this review and thanked them for their continuing support of equality for all Americans.

"Orbitz holds itself to high standards, which is why advertising on Fox News is so inconsistent," said Jacobs. "Their actions can set the standard for other companies that understand business is not just making a quick buck, but also building long-term loyalty through a consistent corporate ethos. As we go forward, we and our members intend to trust but verify the actions of Orbitz and other companies."

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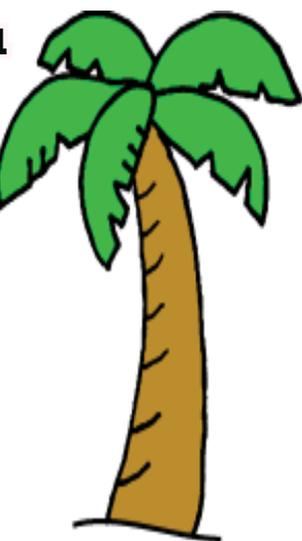
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GLAAD under fire for backing merger

BY ERICA DEMAREST

The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) came under fire last week, following a turbulent media storm that's left many second-guessing the organization's leadership and goals. Amid allegations of mismanagement and trading corporate favors, some activists have called for President Jarrett Barrios to resign.

On May 31, GLAAD submitted a letter to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) endorsing the impending merger between telecom giants AT&T and T-Mobile. Although opponents say the controversial alliance will create a monopoly and drive up consumer prices, GLAAD lobbied on behalf of the deal. In a letter that reads like a press release for AT&T, Barrios said the merger would create "more access, faster service, and competitive pricing" that would augment online activism efforts.

GLAAD's endorsement left many baffled. It seemed odd that a leading LGBT-activism group would take a stance on a corporate business deal, and many began to question whether AT&T's recent donation of \$50,000 to GLAAD motivated the endorsement.

Sirius XM OutQ radio host Michelangelo Signorile invited Laurie Perper, a former GLAAD board co-chair, to his talk show June 7 to help clarify GLAAD's support. Perper, who resigned from her post in October 2009 (one month after Barrios took helm of the organization), made serious allegations and called for GLAAD to be dissolved.

"The brand name has been so tarnished at this point that it can't be revived even if you could find a way to go in and replace the board and



Jarrett Barrios.

the president," Perper said. "I'm of the opinion that the organization needs to go away and stop using gay dollars."

Perper claimed Barrios was an ineffective leader who seriously jeopardized GLAAD's fundraising efforts. She said his poor management led to the resignation of more than a dozen board members and senior staffers, and she claimed Barrios traded favors with Troup Coronado, a GLAAD board member who once served as vice president of external affairs for AT&T. Perper's allegations made waves in the blogosphere, with writers at The Atlantic, Queerty and the Bilerico Project weighing in.

"Laurie's claims should not be reported as facts," GLAAD Communications Director Rich Ferraro told Windy City Times in an email. "In



Michelangelo Signorile.

fact, they are verifiably incorrect." The organization released a press statement June 7 that attempted to debunk Perper's allegations, calling them "factually inaccurate, uninformed and misleading."

GLAAD released financial data that showed fundraising efforts improving over the past year. To negate Perper's claims that corporate backing has dwindled, GLAAD highlighted its work with IBM and American Airlines and said 2011 corporate support was "breaking records."

Still, many questioned the group's allegiance to AT&T. Signorile asked Barrios to appear on his OutQ talk show June 8, but Barrios refused to be interviewed unless he could be accompanied by Gary Bitner, a GLAAD board member who heads one of the largest public-relations firms in Florida. Signorile rejected interviewing the pair, saying Bitner would "coach" Barrios.

Ferraro claims that was never the goal. "The president cannot speak on behalf of the board regarding board matters, which is what much of Laurie Perper's interview was about," Ferraro emailed. He told Bilerico last week: "If [Barrios] were to be asked, 'Does the board support you?,'

the board didn't feel comfortable with Jarrett saying, 'Yeah, the board supports me.'"

Bitner said in the same interview that Barrios is taking GLAAD in the right direction. "We had difficult economic times in 2009," Bitner said, citing the group's \$1.2 million deficit. "But we're ahead of budget this year, and we're in a more solid place fiscally than we've been in years."

Complicating matters further is an anti-net neutrality letter Barrios sent the FCC on Jan. 4, 2010. Net neutrality is the concept that Internet access should be free of restrictions from both Internet service providers and the government. GLAAD has long supported net neutrality, but AT&T opposes the measure, which would limit its financial gains.

On Jan. 15, 2010, Barrios sent the FCC a second letter asking that his Jan. 4 statement be retracted. "I have never seen this letter," Barrios wrote, "and it is not my signature. Furthermore, the contents of the letter do not accurately reflect the views of our organization."

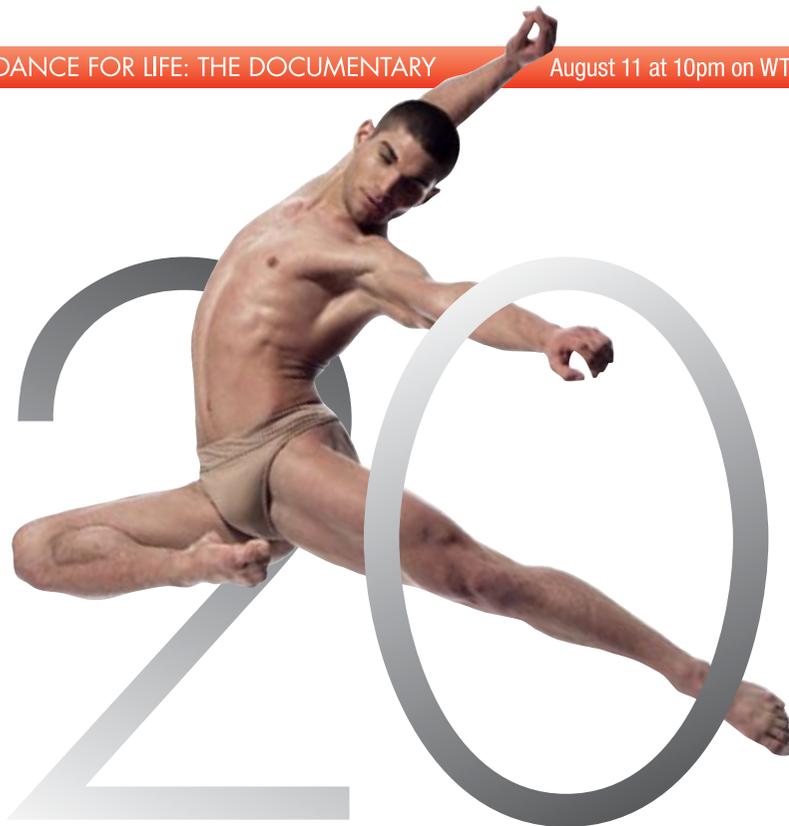
Perper mentioned the Jan. 4 letter in her OutQ interview last week, but Barrios denied having ever seen or approved it. He later changed his story, admitting the letter did come from his office and he did approve it—albeit accidentally. "We made a mistake," Barrios told Bilerico. "I authorized my assistant over the phone to sign and submit [the] letter... When I realized she had inadvertently submitted an anti-net neutrality letter, I withdrew it. At the time, I had never seen the letter that was filed, and did not recognize the signature."

GLAAD released a statement June 3 saying it does not endorse AT&T's net neutrality position, but still supports the AT&T and T-Mobile merger.

Regardless of the group's stance on AT&T, many are left marveling at GLAAD's apparent disorganization. Adam Polaski of Bilerico said, "For a media organization to be this off-message and out of sync with its various parts is disconcerting and leaves more questions than answers."

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NYC healthcare mandates LGBT cultural competency

BY CHARLSIE DEWEY

On May 25, the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) became the first public healthcare system in the nation to mandate LGBT cultural competency training for all staff members.

All 38,000 employees of the HHC will now be required to participate in a training program called Reexamining LGBT Healthcare. The program was developed to begin to address recent reports that have indicated substantial disparities in healthcare for LGBT people as well as to take action on recommendations made by the Institute of Medicine and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

"The New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation stands ready to respond to the diverse needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender patients under our care and lead our colleagues across the country in cultural competency," said HHC President Alan D. Aviles in the press release distributed by the HHC. "With this training, we reaffirm our commitment to serve LGBT New Yorkers—and all of our patients—in the most respectful and responsive way, while we provide safe, quality healthcare."

The National LGBT Cancer Network worked with HHC to create a 15 minute and 60 minute curriculum. Both of which are anchored by a powerful video piece titled, "To Treat Me, You Have to Know Who I Am."

"This is everybody and that's the only way change is going to happen, when our people can walk into a health facility and know that every single individual they meet, starting with the very first person, will have some training in how to respectfully welcome LGBT patients into their facility," said Liz Margolies, founder and executive director of the National LGBT Cancer Network.

The 15-minute curriculum addresses three key points: the importance of knowing who LGBT patients are, making sure that healthcare professionals do not assume heterosexuality of their patients and understanding that it is okay to feel awkward and even make a mistake in adopting a new approach.

The most important point, Margolies said, is to realize that there is a mistake in thinking "I treat everyone the same." Instead, she said that hospital staff needs to follow a policy of "treating everyone the way he or she wants to be treated."

"The default assumption, the 'I treat all people the same,' ultimately comes down to I treat



Scout. Photo courtesy of Scout

everybody like they are heterosexual and that's not okay," said Margolies. "When I treat everybody the same means I allow for a broad range of gender and sexual expression and relationship forms then it's fine to treat everyone the same, but that's not what that means today."

The 60-minute curriculum, which is not mandatory, delves deeper into disparities experienced by LGBT people as well as individual and system wide changes that can be made to increase cultural competency in the healthcare environment.

Margolies hoped that other hospital systems will follow HHC's lead and adopt the LGBT cultural competency program that her organization has developed.

There are many indications that HHC will not be the only hospital to take action on the recommendations for decreasing disparities in healthcare for LGBT people. Recently, the Joint Commission, the largest organization that accredits hospitals in the country, announced that to earn accreditation a hospital is required to have a non-discrimination policy for LGBT people. President Obama's executive order on hospital visitation is also changing the landscape of patient and family rights in the healthcare environment.

The Cook County Health and Hospitals System, which employs more than 6,000 people, does do some LGBT competency training, but acknowledges it is not system wide. Sonja Vogel, public affairs for the J.H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County, said that she expects to see LGBT competency training increase as the organization has recently hired a new director of Multicultural Affairs, Miriam Gonzalzes, who is planning on developing LGBT competency training on a broader level. Gonzalzes will most likely work with the Ruth Rothstein CORE Center, the HIV and infectious disease center, to develop the training.

"The Ruth Rothstein CORE Center already do a lot of outreach with the LGBT community," said Vogel.

Joann Montes, customer community relations coordinator for the CORE Center, explained, "In the past we've had some training on cultural sensitivity around LGBT issues. These were delivered by the ACLU and Center on Halsted addressing access to care for the LGBT community. It was open to all staff but targeted our nursing staff."

The organization is in discussion with the Center on Halstead about enhancing their training program: "In conjunction with our Consumer Advisory Board, we will be assessing our cultural sensitivity and competency with assistance from the Center on Halsted and offering more training as needed. Because we are in the planning stages of this project, we are still to decide whether we will be making this voluntary or mandatory to all staff."

In addition, the Chicago Department of Public Health is also working to fill a vacant director position for their LGBT Office of Health. Jose Munoz, deputy commissioner for community affairs of the Chicago Department of Public Health, said, "It is a priority of the commissioners [Dr.

Bechara Choucair] to get the position filled."

The LGBT Office of Health does community engagement as well as trainings upon request both internally and with providers. In the past they have worked with universities, particularly with first year medical students, with clinics and health systems. Munoz said that the office is also involved with the Chicago Trans Coalition and works closely with Howard Brown.

Following the announcement by the HHC, Margolies and Scout, Ph.D, director of the Network for LGBT Health Equity, conducted a successful webinar titled "LGBT Cultural Competency Strategies" for members of the Institute for Diversity in Health Management. Scout said he was impressed with the number of participants from the Department of Health in Illinois; thirty people were on the call from that office.

He said about the HHC mandate, "It's not business as usual for the healthcare system. They are finally catching up with the 21st Century."

Scout also noted how little choice LGBT people often have in an emergency situation in deciding where to go for treatment. It is imperative to an LGBT individual's health that he or she is treated with respect every step of the way or there is a greater chance that in the future that person will not participate in his or her follow up care or will avoid seeking treatment for a future illness or emergency.

In order to really see change occur a cultural shift is necessary. HHC's decision to mandate LGBT competency training is an important step in the process. It opens the door for many patients to feel comfortable in disclosing their full health information and to speak openly with their doctor about their needs.

"It's not about sensitivity. It's about respect. It's about humanitarian response to a human being in general," Lavern Jackson, family nurse practitioner, says in the video.

Lesbian Syrian blogger a fraud

Many followed the "saga" of the Syrian woman behind the blog "A Gay Girl in Damascus," who was supposedly kidnapped last week—but it turns out that it was all a fraud.

According to the Washington Post, Tom MacMaster—a 40-year-old U.S. man from Georgia working on his master's degree at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland—had been writing the blog for years under the pseudonym "Amina Arraf."

On June 6, a post on Arraf's website supposedly written by her cousin said armed men grabbed Abdallah while she was on her way to a meeting. "Amina was seized by three men in their early 20s," "Rania Ismail" wrote. "One of the men then put his hand over Amina's mouth and they hustled her into a red Dacia Logan." Thousands went on Facebook and

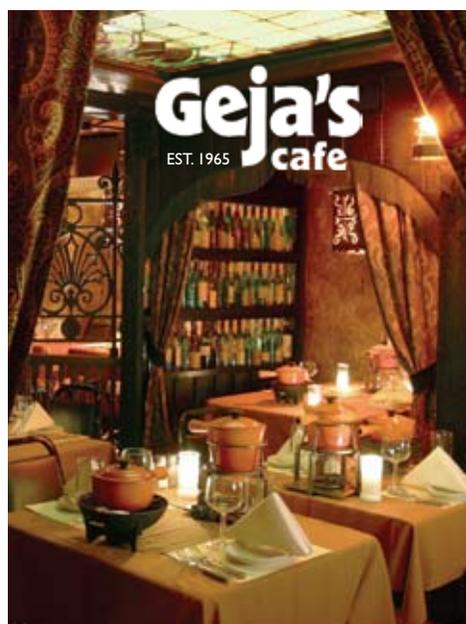
Twitter to demand her release.

After "news" of Arraf's supposed arrest, fans found evidence that led back to MacMaster.

On June 12, MacMaster, a Middle East peace activist, apologized on the blog. "While the narrative voice may have been fictional, the facts on this blog are true and not misleading as to the situation on the ground," he wrote. "I do not believe that I have harmed anyone—I feel that I have created an important voice for issues that I feel strongly about."

The BBC reported that MacMaster said, "I really felt a number of years ago, in discussions on Middle East issues in the U.S., often when I presented real facts and opinions, the immediate reaction to someone with my name was: 'Why are you anti-American? Why are you anti-Jewish?'"

"So I invented a name to talk under that would keep the focus on the actual issue." He added that the popularity of the blog surprised him.



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Gay nonprofit 1VU abruptly folds

BY TERRENCE CHAPPELL

After much anticipation, fundraising, and community outreach, One View: Uniting People (1VU,) a gay nonprofit with a green focus, has suddenly dissolved.

Co-founded by Stephen Crawford and partner Billy Lullo in July 2010, 1VU's mission included building a monument to LGBT military veterans in Space Park, 815-817 W. Roscoe.

However, with 1VU's recent reported dissolution, Americans Veterans for Equal Rights (AVER) took over an already-planned Memorial Day event in the park as a tribute to LGBT veterans. No monument was erected by 1VU and no one was in attendance from 1VU.

Although LGBT veteran Marquell Smith did not attend the Memorial Day service at Space Park, he had been excited to learn about 1VU, its

Crawford was unable to supply exact figures for how much was raised at any of the fundraising events. He does note that with approximately 120 attendees, the charity boat cruise was the most successful fundraising event for 1VU. Only one person purchased a \$35 priced dog tag and "that person will be reimbursed," said Crawford.

"I'm deeply saddened that the organization ended the way it did. Unfortunately, the people who are suffering here are the people we were benefiting," said Crawford.

Crawford said that, as a grassroots and volunteer-based organization, "1VU did not have a whole lot of funding to work with" and that "no one took a salary." A portion of the money raised from fundraising events was put towards 1VU's operational costs, according to Crawford. "Any money after operational costs was going strictly towards the monument," said Crawford. Operational costs included webhosting, web design services, marketing materials such as flyers

and pamphlets, along with costs related to the events, according to Crawford. Although Crawford had not chosen a charity benefactor as of the press deadline, he said he plans to donate the money raised from the fundraising events to a charity.

"Because we are all volunteers, we are jug-

gling this along with our own separate responsibilities. Unfortunately, I do not have a set timeframe as to how long this process will take, but I ensure you that we are working to get everything taken care of as soon as possible so we all may pursue other avenues," said Crawford.

'Pride and Joy' at Circuit June 20

The Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame will begin its 2011 fundraising efforts with its annual Pride and Joy Reception, 6-10 p.m., at Circuit Night Club, 3641 N. Halsted, on Monday, June 20.

The evening will feature a buffet of hors d'oeuvres. The 2010 Hall of Fame exhibit will be on display, and nomination forms for 2011 inductions will be available. Entertainment will be provided by members of the Circuit Night Club cast.

Money raised from this event will be used to cover the expenses of the 2011 Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame induction ceremony, which is scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 8, at the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington.

The ceremony is free and open to the public. In addition, a portion of these funds will be earmarked to support the Hall of Fame's Web site, <http://www.GLHollofFame.org>.

Anti-drug rally June 17

A rally to mark the 40th anniversary of former President Richard Nixon's declaration of the war on drugs will take place Friday, June 17, 12-1 p.m., at the Thompson Plaza in the Loop.

Confirmed speakers include St. Sabina's Father Michael Pflieger, the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless' Ed Shurna and AIDS Foundation of Chicago's Rev. Doris Green.

To RSVP for the event, call 312-341-2141 or email nmichaels@roosevelt.edu.



Jim Darby (left) said that he was "sorry to hear of 1VU's recent" demise.

mission, and its plans to honor LGBT veterans. Smith said 1VU's status was unfortunate because its vision attracted much praise and attention for and by a segment of the LGBT community. Smith was in the Marine Corps for more than six years.

"I thought they [1VU] were great in recognizing a group of people who had to remain silent," said Smith. "I think it's disappointing."

Jim Darby, AVER's local president, found out a day before the event that 1VU dissolved and would not be erecting the monument. Though taken back by the sudden news, Darby continued with the Memorial Day ceremony to honor LGBT veterans. In moving forward, Darby and his group have plans to erect a monument honoring LGBT veterans at a famous, national cemetery. Darby was "very sorry to hear of 1VU's recent dissolution status."

1VU was recognized as an incorporated nonprofit under Stephen Crawford July 29, 2010, according to Secretary of State Jesse White's website. There is no record of 1VU as a registered charity under the charity database of Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan's website. Illinois Attorney General's office spokesperson, Robyn Ziegler, confirmed with Windy City Times that the agency has never registered with that office.

Since its incorporation, 1VU has carried out fundraising efforts including a Halloween party at Parlour, where the bar donated a portion of proceeds from to 1VU; a \$35 charity boat cruise for last year's Air and Water Show; and most recently \$35 dog-tag sets and \$50 engraved versions with the names of service members on the back. At the time, buyers had the option to have their tag sealed inside the monument that 1VU had planned to build.

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The futures of the LGBT and HIV/AIDS communities: Leaders weigh in

COMPILED BY ANDREW DAVIS

After looking at the LGBT and HIV/AIDS communities' pasts in last week's issue, Windy City Times asked the leaders of various organizations about their views and hopes for the future of LGBT individuals as well as the local HIV/AIDS demographic. Here is what they had to say:

—**Bernard Cherkasov, CEO of Equality Illinois:** "Our community has much to celebrate, including the recent enactment of civil unions. However, we still have a long way to go. From transgender inclusion to federal recognition to full marriage equality, we have a lot of work to do before we have full equality. And this work has to be done by every single supporter of LGBT equality. All the progress we've made recently has been because individuals reached out and shared their stories with co-workers, neighbors, families and friends. We have to keep building on that work."

—**Toni Weaver, PFLAG's Woodstock/McHenry County chapter:** I am angered when I see HIV portrayed in magazines as a disease that can be easily and readily controlled with the right drug or combination of drugs. The men in the ads are strong, sexy, virile, and oh, so together. Fortunately, the college-age demographic with whom I work are taking HIV prevention seriously, lauding the fact that our campus (McHenry County College) now offers free HIV testing monthly, courtesy of Open Door Clinic in Elgin. I'm hopeful that we'll see a cure for HIV/AIDS within 20 years. Until then, practice safe sex. Be smart. Don't break your parents' hearts.

—**Modesto "Tico" Valle, CEO of Center on Halsted:** "We have more adults over the age of 50 living with HIV than ever before, as more and more people are able to live decades longer than they used to with the help of medications. HIV can complicate the aging process, and we must adapt new ways to ensure the health and quality of life for our seniors."

"Additionally, we need to revamp our prevention efforts across the board, as HIV infection rates are rising in both older and younger peo-

ple. Culturally competent and age appropriate safer sex education is necessary throughout the life span, and prevention efforts must be targeted, expanded, and fully funded in order to impact HIV transmission rates. It will take each one of us, working together with committed and passionate effort, to ensure that we do not see another 30 years of HIV/AIDS. We can and will end this pandemic for our brothers, sisters, friends, clients and ourselves—those living and those who we have so sorrowfully lost."

—**Jamal Edwards, Howard Brown Health Center CEO/president:** "Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC) has been a pillar of the LGBTQ community for nearly 40 years as a community health center, research pioneer and human service provider. Even before the first confirmed HIV diagnosis and the HIV/AIDS epidemic, HBHC has been a leader in serving the unique health and wellness needs of the LGBTQ community, locally and nationally."

"Over the past 30 years of collective service in the fight against HIV/AIDS, we have learned many things about healthcare, such as the important role culturally competent and compassionate primary care and research plays in preventing all types of disease and improving health outcomes. That's why, as we look forward, HBHC will be taking strategic steps to increase its provision of comprehensive primary care (medical, behavioral and more) and wellness programs for all LGBTQ people, our allies and our families, and throughout the entire lifecycle—from birth through aging."

"As more and more of us are being united or married under law and creating families; as the colors, languages and religious views of our community become more diverse; and, as more of us are aging proudly and beautifully, HBHC is excited about what the future holds for the LGBTQ community and is proud to be of service as the LGBTQ community's lifeline."

—**The Rev. Stan Sloan, CEO of Chicago House:** "Chicago House has had the great fortune of seeing HIV/AIDS medications move from being non-existent to being available and life-sustaining. We see the future of HIV/AIDS con-



Modesto "Tico" Valle.

tinuing along this same positive trajectory, and we are building programs that help to further its potential.

"Employment programs, programs that help people 'graduate' from entitlements and supports, and 'self-care management' need to be our emphasis now, creating spots in the HIV/AIDS systems for those newly diagnosed and most desperately in need of care and support. Also, of course, we still look forward to the day even those programs are not needed ... when the cure is discovered and widely available."

—**Liz Thomson, assistant director at the University of Illinois at Chicago's Gender & Sexuality Center:** "At UIC, we've had monthly testing and sexual health education through the Gender & Sexuality Center. My hope is that in the future, students see being tested as normative as their annual dentist visit; that the fear and stigma is lessened. I also hope funding is increased for all levels—prevention education, testing services and post-testing care."

—**David Ernesto Munar, AIDS Foundation of Chicago president:** "After 30 years, the fight against HIV/AIDS has reached a critical juncture. We now have the essential tools and technical know-how to make unprecedented progress reducing new HIV infections and saving lives."

"The recent high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS at the United Nations resulted in the nations in the world agreeing to a declaration to increase HIV treatments to 15 million people with HIV/

AIDS by 2015, and our own country's National HIV/AIDS Strategy aims to reduce new infections by 25 percent and ensure that 90 percent of HIV-positive people receive needed testing, care, treatments and support by that same year. Reaching these targets is doable. Our actions in the period ahead will define our generation in the face of the worse epidemic in human history. This crisis has caused too much suffering and loss to relent until we have successfully changed the story of the pandemic."

—**Andy Thayer, Gay Liberation Network co-founder:** "Looking to the next 30 years, I believe that the most important factor affecting this country's response to AIDS, and any reform struggle which demands significant resources from the public or private sector, is economics, and more specifically, class. The overall trends since the mid-1970s have not only been the United States' economic decline relative to most other powers, but also a gradual decline in the rate of return on productive investment worldwide. Sure there will be expansions and contractions, speculative bubbles and busts, but the overall economic trend over the past four decades is downwards."

"And this affects AIDS and other issues how? Already we've seen the start of attacks on social service programs across Illinois; more direct attacks in places like Wisconsin and Ohio; and truly titanic struggles in places like Greece and Spain."

"With the U.S. government showing no signs of giving up its military domination of the world—spending as much on its military as the rest of the world combined—there is now a bipartisan consensus that says that it is "necessary" to begin direct attacks on nearly all social service programs, from Medicare to Social Security. We already live in a country where your life expectations and opportunities are increasingly governed by what class you are born into, and it looks likely that this will accentuate over the next few decades. If you are among the tiny minority of LGBTs who are well-to-do, this may not affect you much, but for the rest of us, it very much will."

"Finally, as history has repeatedly shown, economic crises have a nasty way of giving birth to nasty, scapegoating political movements. The most extreme example of this was the rise of the Nazis, which virtually obliterated the epicenter of the world's first gay movement in Weimar Germany. I'm not saying that anything like this is on the horizon right now, but the scapegoating politics of the Tea Partiers, especially towards immigrants and public sector workers, shows that we can ill afford to be complacent."

"If we are going to ensure a scientific, compassionate response to AIDS, we must be vigilant in preventing these irrational elements from gaining the upper hand in U.S. politics. One necessary lesson we must learn from the history of all such previous scapegoating movements, is that 'mainstream' politicians of both parties will not do this for us. In fact, their behavior is often directly responsible for enabling the rise of these irrationalist elements."

—**Julio Rodriguez, Association of Latino Men for Action board president:** "As a 50-plus Latino gay man, when I think about the first time, I really learned about HIV/AIDS, when someone I knew, my friend Lau, found out he was positive in 1986. I just couldn't help think that this horrible thing that was happening to my friends and my community, that people everywhere wouldn't find it in their hearts to look pass their prejudices, ignorance and politics to do something to help; unfortunately, I was very wrong."

"Now years later, I still find myself asking the same questions. Why are people continuing to let prejudice, ignorance and political ideology guide the way they look at this disease and the people whose lives it still affects and the individuals who are impacted but invisible to society, like the undocumented or immigrants? With every new law that gets passed in this country

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AFC president gets national honor

BY ROSS FORMAN

David Ernesto Munar, president of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC), was filled with emotion at his latest honor, courtesy of the White House—although he is not even certain how his name got in the mix for the award.

This month, the White House announced Munar as one of nine Champions of Change in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The other honorees are Jury Candelauro, Christian F. Castro, Dee Dee Ngozi Chamblee, Hadiya Charles, Dena Fontno-Gray, Beri Hull, Cleve Jones and Ron Simmons.

"It's a tremendous honor and I'm thrilled the White House chose to commemorate this emotional milestone in the company of openly HIV-positive advocates from across the country," said Munar, 41, who lives in Chicago's Lincoln Square neighborhood.

"For me, this honor represents a new outlet to promote all the incredible hard work and accomplishments we are making collectively in Chicago to respond to the burgeoning epidemic. We should all be proud of the united and collaborative response by local agencies and governments to the HIV/AIDS crisis. While we have tremendous unmet need and hard work ahead, we can be proud of the systems we've put in place in these last three decades."

Munar assumed the title of AFC's president in January, replacing friend Mark Ishaug.

"This honor is a very nice addition to my resume and my agency's homepage," Munar said. "I hope it generates renewed enthusiasm for AFC's important work, events, and services."

So how and why was Munar considered for the award?

That's a mystery, even to Munar.

"I've enjoyed a great working relationship with Jeff Crowley, Director of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy, and his staff on issues pertaining to the National HIV/AIDS Strategy, so this may have contributed to my nomination, but I'm not entirely sure who initiated this recognition or why I was selected over many other hard-working, dedicated advocates," Munar said.

"[This award] is very special. My sister thought I was presented with some sort of presidential metal of honor, so I had to explain to her that this was more of a professional commendation and [a] chance to brief high-ranking federal decision-makers about my views on 30 years of the pandemic and the important lessons to keep in mind as we chart the next phase of the fight against HIV/AIDS.

"I certainly never imagined any [honor] like this. It's great to be recognized, but the work itself, on an issue so near and dear to my heart, is by itself enormously rewarding. This is icing on the cake."

Hopefully Munar's honor will shine further on AFC, he said.



David Ernesto Munar. Photo by Andrew Collings

"AFC and our partners in Chicago have pioneered creative system-level approaches to address needs in our large metro area," Munar said. "I hope this [honor] shines a light on our great accomplishments and results in more communities and causes, beyond HIV, adopting the best lessons we've learned in creating integrated, collaborative approaches. Our system is by no means perfect or adequately funded, but I think we have demonstrated a strong commitment to do all we can, in a collective manner, with the scarce resources at our disposal."

NEA-GLBT caucus holding reception, dinner

The National Education Association's (NEA's) GLBT caucus will hold its Ichabod Crane reception Thursday, June 30, at Side-track, 3356 N. Halsted, 6:30-9 p.m. This event is free for caucus members.

In addition, the caucus will hold its Robert Birle Memorial Dinner Sunday, July 3, at the Chicago Hilton, 720 S. Michigan. The reception is 6-7:30 p.m.; dinner and dancing will follow. Tickets are \$75 each; see <http://www.nea-glbtcddinner.com>.

For more information, email csmler@pacbell.net.

FUTURE from page 8

that moves the gay-rights movement further towards true equality, I am concerned that some individuals have forgotten that we still have members of our community who are fighting every day to get access to vital medications, good basic healthcare.

"Now, under the healthcare-reform laws, some members of our community (the undocumented) will no longer be able to access resources to prevent or treat this horrible disease. My hope—as our battle to get full equality at federal, state and local levels continues—is that, as a community, we remember that we still have an ongoing war to win against HIV/AIDS and its one whose victims

are sometimes invisible to us and the rest of society."

—Karen Sendziak, Gerber/Hart Library president: "Gerber/Hart Library and Archives looks forward to the end of AIDS. We look forward to the time when our repository, and others, will pull dusty books about AIDS from the shelves. We look forward to a time when we receive our last request from our last researcher who wants to study AIDS. We look forward to the time when the last lid on the final box of papers of an AIDS organization can be closed and won't ever be open again. May the lessons that need to be learned from the history of this epidemic be learned so that the unbearable toll of human suffering never revisit the earth again."

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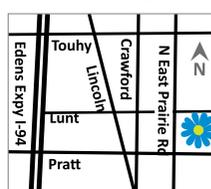


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Civil-union law a victory for trans community as well

BY JOSEPH ERBENTRAUT

For Chicagoan Vicki Byard, June 16 is a day she is anticipating gleefully. That day, she and her partner have planned to mark their new civil union before family and friends.

The union, Byard said, is particularly meaningful to her family because, as a trans-identified couple, she and her partner have struggled with a great deal of stigma from both inside and outside of the LGBT community. With their new legal recognition arrives a moment the couple, together for two years and the parents of two children (Kate, 11, and Alex, 14) who Byard adopted as newborns, can't wait to celebrate.

"To us, it's a really pivotal celebratory time," she told Windy City Times. "I feel that my family will be united in a way I've never had in my entire life to this point."

Yet, the moment is also bittersweet as Byard has felt frustration with the fact that little media coverage of the Illinois civil union victory has featured families that "look like hers," as she explained.

While her partner, Eli, identifies as a transgender man and she as a cisgender woman, qualifying them in the eyes of the law as a heterosexual or different-sex couple, they do not identify with that designation themselves. Their discomfort with being "lumped in" with heterosexual couples made them hesitant to marry. A civil union represents the achievement of the legal recognition they need without the baggage of a categorization that felt disingenuous, she added.



The Byard family: Kate, Alex, Vicki and Eli (from left). Photo courtesy of Vicki Byard

"Marriage didn't feel entirely comfortable because we're a trans-identified family and it felt like we were somehow finding a loophole," Byard said. "We would be taking advantage of certain sorts of rights others in the LGBT community couldn't have. For us, that wasn't a choice we would consider."

The North Park couple's unique identity has left them in a bit of a no-man's land that was most recently reflected when Byard was signing the couple up for the Equality Illinois- and Lambda Legal-sponsored Civil Union Tracker. The tracker,

she said, presented no opportunity to differentiate her family from a heterosexual, non-trans-identified one. Neither organization responded to her e-mail messages expressing concern over what she considered to be an oversight.

"There are aspects of our live every single day that are impacted by the fact that we're a trans-identified family," she said. "It was incredibly disheartening to see even organizations that have worked very hard for this civil union law

to be the most attention-getting debate in the community these days, it can be become a focal point for that feeling," Silverman said. "It raises the question if we are missing a major opportunity to talk about trans people and how their families are just like anyone else's family by not including trans voices in the marriage equality discussion."

"But ultimately we rise and fall together," he added.

In addition to their civil-union ceremony, they will also be celebrating son Alex's eight-grade graduation before their friends and family the same weekend.

Hundreds of couples apply for civil-union licenses

BY KATE SOSIN

Within the first week since the Illinois Religious Freedom Protect and Civil Union Act went into effect in Illinois, more than 800 couples have registered for licenses in the state.

Official statistics for the entire state will not be available for months, but Windy City Times polled Cook County and the 12 other counties with the largest populations to get a picture of just how many couples are registering for unions.

As of June 9, 471 licenses had been issued in Cook County, which issued 203 of those licenses in just the first day, June 1. By the following Monday, the county had issued 366.

No other county came close to matching Cook, but most had reported at least 20 licenses obtained. DuPage issued 42 licenses, while Will County issued 41. Of the 12 other counties polled, at total of 346 licenses were issued.

Lake County, which is the third largest in the state, issued just 24.

Many of the counties interviewed have also installed systems on their websites to allow couples to apply for civil union licenses online, and others are advertising similar programs coming soon.

Champaign is one county with an online system up and running. Champaign boasted a large number of couples registering given its population, reporting 37 licenses.

Peoria, which also processed the state's first same-sex divorce filing on June 1, has issued just 19 licenses. (See page 13 for more on said divorce.)

Of course, not all of those unions are same-sex. In Cook County, 18 of the licenses were unions between a male and female. Female same-sex couples got more civil union licenses than male couples in Cook County, with 245 licenses as opposed to 208.

In Cook, 303 of the couples reside in Chicago. Oak Park, which issued 15, and Evanston, which had 23, had the most in the suburbs.

According to Courtney Greve at the Cook County Clerk's office, the county has also issued civil union licenses to couples in Indiana, Wisconsin, Missouri and Kentucky.

It is possible that not every license issued will result in a civil union. Couples have 70 days to tie the knot and send that paperwork to their county clerk's office. Those offices have 45 days to report unions to the Illinois Department of Public Health. Consequently, official numbers won't start becoming available for at least 115 days, mid-September.

Here are the counties surveyed and their reported numbers as of June 10: Cook: 471, DuPage: 42, Lake: 24, Will: 41, Kane: 31, McHenry: 18, Winnebago: 24, Madison: 28, St. Clair: 20, Sangamon: 29, Champaign: 37, Peoria: 19 and McLean: 33.

not realize that there are more families impacted by the law than solely those identifying as either same-sex or heterosexual couples. We shouldn't be overlooked."

Representatives from both organizations defended their "tracker," created so that newly civil-unionized couples could more easily access legal resources should they encounter any hassles, but acknowledged that feelings of being excluded from broader LGBT victories can be all too common within the community.

This victory is, indeed, a significant moment for trans Illinoisans in opening the door for legal recognition of queer couples of all types, said M. Dru Levasseur, Lambda Legal transgender rights attorney.

"We are always fighting for people to have the most rights they can have and, for trans people, we want their gender identity to be respected at the same time," Levasseur told Windy City Times. "The bottom line is we all benefit from marriage equality."

Trans couples sometimes find themselves in legally precarious positions where recognition is either incomplete, fleeting or not there at all, particularly in situations where one partner within a heterosexual marriage transitions, drawing that marriage into a legal gray area due to the Defense of Marriage Act.

While some judges who have encountered the issue in court have both respected a trans person's gender identity and relationship, that has often not been the case in states lacking marriage equality for LGBT persons, as evidenced in the case of Nikki Araguz, the trans widow of a firefighter. Following his death, his family sued Araguz in an attempt to block her from receiving her late husband Thomas' death benefits. A Texas judge ruled last month that, indeed, their marriage was invalid because Araguz is a trans woman.

Despite the struggles of some, others in the trans community simply do not identify with the issue of marriage, which appears connected to a certain invisibility when it comes to conversations of marriage equality. Michael Silverman, executive director of the New York-based Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund, noted the organizational messaging around the Empire State's campaign for marriage equality has largely been painted as an LGB issue, a fact he finds troubling.

"There's an overarching question we often see in the trans community concerning where we are reflected in the larger LGBT community and since the marriage equality debate is seeming

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Mike McRaith starts new chapter in Washington, D.C.

BY ROSS FORMAN

There is great joy and great sadness for Mike McRaith who, on Monday, June 13, started his new job as the new director of the Federal Insurance Office (FIO), based in Washington, D.C.

The office has bipartisan support, is widely accepted as a necessary step in the evolution of financial sector regulation—and McRaith said he’s “fortunate, honored and deeply humbled” to be appointed to the post.

However, that also meant saying goodbye to Chicago.

“On a deeply personal level, there was a great reluctance to leave the City of Chicago, to leave the friends, to leave the [LGBT] community that we are so lucky to have in Chicago. I’ve been through a lot with a lot of great people here in Chicago, so, my first reaction was, what a loss it will be on a personal level to leave Chicago.”

That means, for instance, missing Andersonville’s annual Midsommarfest, which, for McRaith, has long meant hanging with friends, drinking beer out of plastic cups and listening to Sixteen Candles.

“Those were great days, great memories,” said McRaith, who has spent the past two years as the head of the Illinois Department of Insurance.

McRaith is the first person to hold this new job, and was appointed by Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner. McRaith will serve as a non-voting member on a new federal panel created to determine which financial firms present a risk to the financial system and be the U.S.’s public face in negotiating international insurance agreements.

The FIO was created in 2010, and McRaith is required to submit a report to Congress by early 2012 on how best to modernize and improve insurance regulation.

“I was fortunate enough to be a partner at a great law firm and when [the job as head of the Illinois Department of Insurance] was presented, my thought was [that] it was my chance to do my part, to make a difference,” McRaith said. “My view about my new job is the same. I’m

going to do my best—however constrained that might be—to make a difference.”

McRaith, 45, left his West Lakeview home this past weekend while thousands attended Andersonville’s popular street fair—where McRaith admitted he wanted to be.

Recently, there have been emotions aplenty for McRaith, who was an integral part of the basketball competition at the 2006 Gay Games in Chicago and a participant in the annual Coady Roundball Classic, the nation’s largest and longest-running gay basketball tournament, since 1991.

“We have accomplished many great things in the last six-plus years, especially the last few years with Gov. Quinn’s leadership,” McRaith said. “Just this session, we passed the most expansive mental health parity law in the country; we passed worker’s compensation reform, civil unions, and much more. It’s been a great privilege, and I say this with a profound sense of humility, to work as the Director of Insurance in Illinois, working on behalf of the people who are unable to hire lobbyists, representatives ... people who need someone to represent them.”

“It’s very humbling in the sense that the responsibilities are enormous, so too have been the challenges—but it’s been a great, rewarding experience. There are the practical, functional, regulatory responsibilities that include solvency of the insurance companies, the policy forms [that] properly [need to be] drafted, to handling complaints for individual consumers who have problems with an insurance company. etc.”

McRaith said the most rewarding aspect of his Illinois job was the people he worked with—from all over the state and the country. “It’s a wonderfully diverse and generally decent [state],” said McRaith, fighting back tears.

“It feels as if just a week ago I left the law firm where I was a partner; it’s been very fast. Tremendous challenges too, of course. We had not just tremendous public-policy opportunities under Gov. Quinn’s leadership, but [also] the greatest economic collapse in our country since the Great Depression—and the insurance sector was right in the middle through AIG and other



Michael McRaith. Photo by Ross Forman

companies.

“There were challenges that I never could have envisioned, but, through those challenges, the time has gone real fast.”

However, as he said goodbye to his ninth-floor office at the Thompson Center, McRaith made sure he saluted those around him. During his photo shoot for Windy City Times, for instance, McRaith personally asked if the publication could photograph him along with his administrative assistants, Blanca Repetto and Betty Veasey.

He also said goodbye to his beloved Chicago Cubs, at least on a local basis, as well as the Chicago Bulls.

McRaith also said farewell to his basketball teammates, although he plans to return next

April for the 2012 Coady Classic.

“We’re very lucky to be gay for many reasons,” McRaith said. “One of the most important reasons for me is the great variety of people who we get to spend time with, interact with—that’s socially, athletically, in community programs, whatever and wherever. The [LGBT] community is such an integral part of who I am and not a day passes when I don’t feel grateful for just being able to live here and just have the friends who I do. There are so many great people in Chicago.”

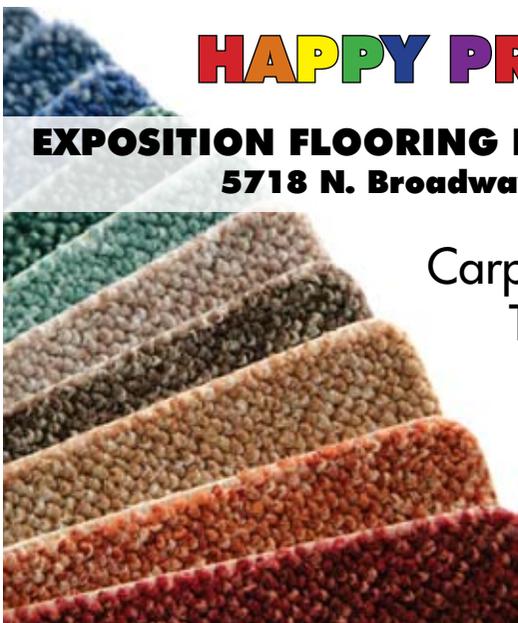
There are great events, too, such as the count-

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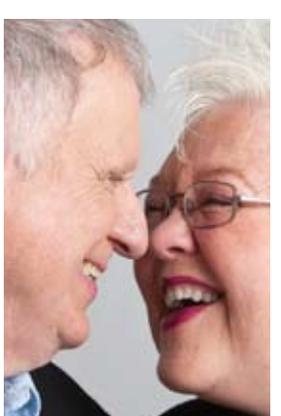
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Noriega honored



Community activists and friends honored Mona Noriega, the city's new commissioner of The Department of Human Relations, on June 13.

Noriega, who co-founded Amigas Latinas and the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund Midwest Regional Office, was greeted with loud applause from all who attended the reception at the National Museum of Mexican Art.

In attendance were longtime activists from Amigas Latinas, the Association of Latino Men for Action, The Civil Rights Agenda, the Center on Halsted, and Chicago Dyke March Collective, Affinity Community Services, the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC), and the Gender and Sexuality Center.

Community members praised Noriega's longtime commitment to community and activism.

"Mona, what you created was nothing short of magical," said Rosa Yadira Ortiz from Amigas Latinas. "Thanks to your leadership, Latina LBQ women have been able to have a home away from home."

David Ernesto Munar, president of AFC, said he "couldn't think of a better person" for the job. "Why the City didn't pick you 15 years ago..." he said, trailing off with laughter.

"This work is not really about any one of us," Noriega said. "It's not about what any one of us achieves because without one of us, without each one of us coming out and making a statement and working together, we would not have this community that we have here."

The city council confirmed Noriega's appointment June 8. Text by Kate Sosin and photo by Tracy Baim; more online at <http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com>

Lesbian activist Mona Noriega on new post

BY KATE SOSIN

Less than a week after Mona Noriega became one of the first in Illinois history to get a civil union, the longtime lesbian activist celebrated her confirmation as the new commissioner of the Chicago Department on Human Relations June 8. LGBT activists across the city lauded Mayor Rahm Emanuel over his decision to appoint Noriega, who co-founded Amigas Latinas as well as the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund Midwest Regional Office.

Windy City Times caught up with Noriega after her confirmation to talk about her plans as commissioner, her thoughts on the mayor's commitment to LGBT issues and just how far the city has come in promoting diversity.

Windy City Times: So, I have to ask: You must have been surprised by this appointment?

Mona Noriega: Oh, yeah; I was surprised—absolutely. But you know once they asked me if I wanted to do it, I was like "absolutely." But, yeah, I was, I was surprised. ... This is an honor. I'm honored that the mayor asked me to do this.

WCT: Tell me about your sense of the mayor and LGBT issues.

MN: The one thing that I've become more clear about the mayor is he really does value equality. The issues that are really important to me, I think he really [also feels they are relevant]. I don't think it is just lip service; I think he really does value them—and that's refreshing.

WCT: For people who are not familiar with the role of the Commission on Human Relations, can you explain why it is important both in the LGBT community and generally?

MN: The commission actually has a mandate to enforce the human rights ordinance and the Fair Housing Act, and those are both about addressing discriminatory behavior. LGBT is one of many categories that are protected classes, so it's important not just to the LGBT community but all communities that might be victims of discrimination.

WCT: What about the job appeals most to you?

MN: Well, there's an opportunity to work on issues of equality. You know, none of us are single-issue people. You know, who we are is multiple things and so I'm always happy to try to work on issues of equality. To have this opportunity to do it—oh my God, it's amazing.

WCT: Is there anything within the commission you are looking to improve or change?

MN: Right now my first task is to understand how the commission works. The mayor's mandate is that everybody look at their department and evaluate them for what they do and how to improve on efficiencies. How can we do it better? So I'm really in the process of just understanding what people do here.

WCT: What do you think are some key issues the commission needs to be taking on?

MN: Well, you know, right now the mandate is to look at what the commission currently does—which is about discrimination—and to see how we can do that better. It's about all discrimination; it's about the protected classes. So everybody here is committed to fighting discrimination and we do that through education, mediation, enforcing the law around those two ordinances.

We also address hate crimes. We offer support services to hate-crime victims. We try to prevent hate crimes.

WCT: There has been some debate in past years about how effective the commission can be in preventing hate crimes. What does the commission do currently to prevent hate violence and is that something you are looking at improving at all?

MN: There's the Intergroup Relations Unit



Mona Noriega. Photo by Hal Baim

here that when incidents of hate are reported to them, they go out to the community and talk to people, try some interventions, educate them about what a hate crime is and what the penalties are and try to resolve any conflicts so that you prevent hate crimes. ... I'm still trying to meet everybody, talk with everybody, get an idea of what people do, how it intersects with each other, so you'll have to ask me like six months from now. But right now I'm really interested in trying to understand what the work is, how the work happens, how it flows. What are the outcomes? Are they efficient? Are they effective?

WCT: Are there any issues that you are passionate about that you feel like the commission has yet to take up?

MN: No. The issues that I'm really passionate about are pretty well-represented here, actually.

WCT: What are the issues that you're passionate about?

MN: Well, [there are] immigration issues. We have an Advisory Council in Immigration Issues, LGBT, there's a Women's Advisory Council. There are currently councils that address the issues that are of concern to me. There are eight advisory councils. [Also,] I'm not a veteran, but I'm concerned about that. I'm not African-American, but I am concerned about those issues.

WCT: A lot of LGBT people are really excited about your appointment and that's not only because you are respected in the community but that you really represent the community and its history. How far has Chicago come in your lifetime?

MN: Well, in my lifetime in Chicago, Chicago was notorious for raiding bars and enforcing the law that required three pieces of clothing that were appropriate to the wearer. So to come from that to the state endorsing civil unions is quite a lot in a lifetime.

Parade names grand marshal

The grand marshal for the Chicago 42nd Annual Pride Parade on Sunday, June 26, is Fernanda Rocha, the newest cast member of the Real Housewives of Orange County on the Bravo Network.

This is the sixth season of the hit franchise and Rocha is the first lesbian cast member.

The parade itself—which kicks off at 12 p.m. at Halsted and Belmont in Lake View—will feature 250 registered entries including floats, decorated vehicles, performance groups a marching band and walking contingents. Hundreds of thousands of attendees are expected.

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First same-sex divorce filed in Illinois

BY KATE SOSIN

At the same moment that many LGBT couples were waiting in line for the first civil-union licenses in Illinois on the morning of June 1, one Peoria man was filing for the state's first same-sex divorce. Citing "mental cruelty and irreconcilable differences," Mark Bayer filed for a divorce from Dr. Nathan Fredrick, his husband of five years.

Bayer's attorney, Joshua P. Haid, submitted the paperwork June 1 at 8:30 a.m., when the Peoria County Circuit Court opened for business, the first moment possible to file for a same-sex divorce in Peoria. Consequently, he is thought to be the first person to file for a same-sex divorce in Illinois history.

Haid released a statement about the split later that day, saying that Bayer was seeking alimony.

"This is about recognizing that partners in a same-sex marriage now have equal rights to partners of traditional marriage under the law in Illinois," Haid said in the statement.

In 2006, Bayer and Fredrick eloped to Quebec City, Canada, because they could not legally wed in South Carolina, where they lived at the time, according to the statement. Two years later, the couple relocated to Peoria with Bayer's son from a previous marriage because Fredrick, who is an emergency room physician, had been offered a job. Haid said that Bayer left his lifelong home in Myrtle Beach to support Fredrick's career, putting his own nursing career on hold.

Bayer spent the next two years rehabbing two historical houses that the couple purchased consecutively. According to a 2010 article in the Peoria Journal Star, the couple sold the first renovated house when they saw a house across the street go up for sale, and Bayer stayed home to renovate the second property while Fredrick continued to work.

According to Haid, Bayer seriously injured his back during the second renovation and had to undergo multiple surgeries, forfeiting his nurs-

ing career.

"Among the complaints in this petition is that Dr. Fredrick knowingly and willfully denied Mr. Bayer equitable career opportunities, financial security and emotional support," the statement said.

Haid said that because Bayer put his career on hold to renovate the Bayer-Fredrick's home and because Bayer is now unable to work, he is entitled to alimony. Haid would not disclose in what form or amount Bayer was seeking alimony.

"He is seeking the same spousal rights that anyone would be," Haid told Windy City Times.

Illinois will likely see other same-sex divorces as the advent of civil unions allow same-sex couples to now dissolve marriages and unions they got in other states like Iowa, where same-sex marriage has been legal for more than two years.

In Cook County, Circuit Court Clerk Dorothy Brown released a statement June 1, stating that her office was prepared to handle same-sex divorces.

"Of course, we wish everyone joined together in a civil union a long and happy life together, but if there is a need for a dissolution, then we are ready with the necessary court forms," said Brown in the release.

Haid would not say how long his client had been waiting to get a divorce, and Bayer declined to be interviewed.

Haid told Windy City Times that he and his client chose to release information about the divorce because he knew the news would be important to LGBT people. "The historical significance is that many of the rights conferred through marriage become very important when someone gets a divorce," he said.

Despite the timing, Haid said that he and his client were not aiming to make history when they filed. "I think it just sorta came out that way," he said. "I just had to be [at the courthouse] early that day."

MCRAITH from page 11

less street fairs and gatherings sponsored by such organizations as the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC)—as well as the groups' personnel. The same holds true for the American Foundation For Suicide Prevention, an association near and dear to McRaith; his former partner took his life about 15 years ago.

"The opportunity to be part of something that is bigger than the individual. ... I think that's what makes our community so special, the awareness that we're all in this together," said McRaith, who tagged AFC's 25th anniversary gala, held in 2010, as one of his most memorable Chicago moments.

"That [gala] really stands out. The room was filled with people who had spent, in some cases, decades fighting HIV and AIDS, and also hundreds of people who lived through that era when gay men were dying weekly, or daily, in Chicago's gay community. That evening was so unique and so empowering. It felt like the fight was worth it. So many of us, myself included, owe so much to the men in our community who died."

Quinn attended the gala, among other luminaries, "and it truly was a great night and a reminder that the fight is worth it," McRaith said.

McRaith and former AFC President Mark Ishaug had been friends for 18 years, dating back to an intense Victory Fund training for gay and lesbian political leaders in the making.

"I knew [during] that [training] weekend

he was going to be a superstar, and he proved me right," Ishaug said of McRaith. "Soon after I was named CEO of AFC I recruited him to the board [of directors] for his leadership skills, community connections, legal insights and fundraising prowess. But mostly I wanted him because he was smart and kind and determined to help us improve the lives of those living with, and affected by, HIV/AIDS.

"It's been amazing to witness his meteoric rise in Illinois government and we are all so lucky that he is taking his skills and his passion to D.C., to have an even bigger impact. And how lucky for me personally to have such a friend and colleague in D.C. with me. AIDS United [where I now work] will be in touch soon, Mr. McRaith."

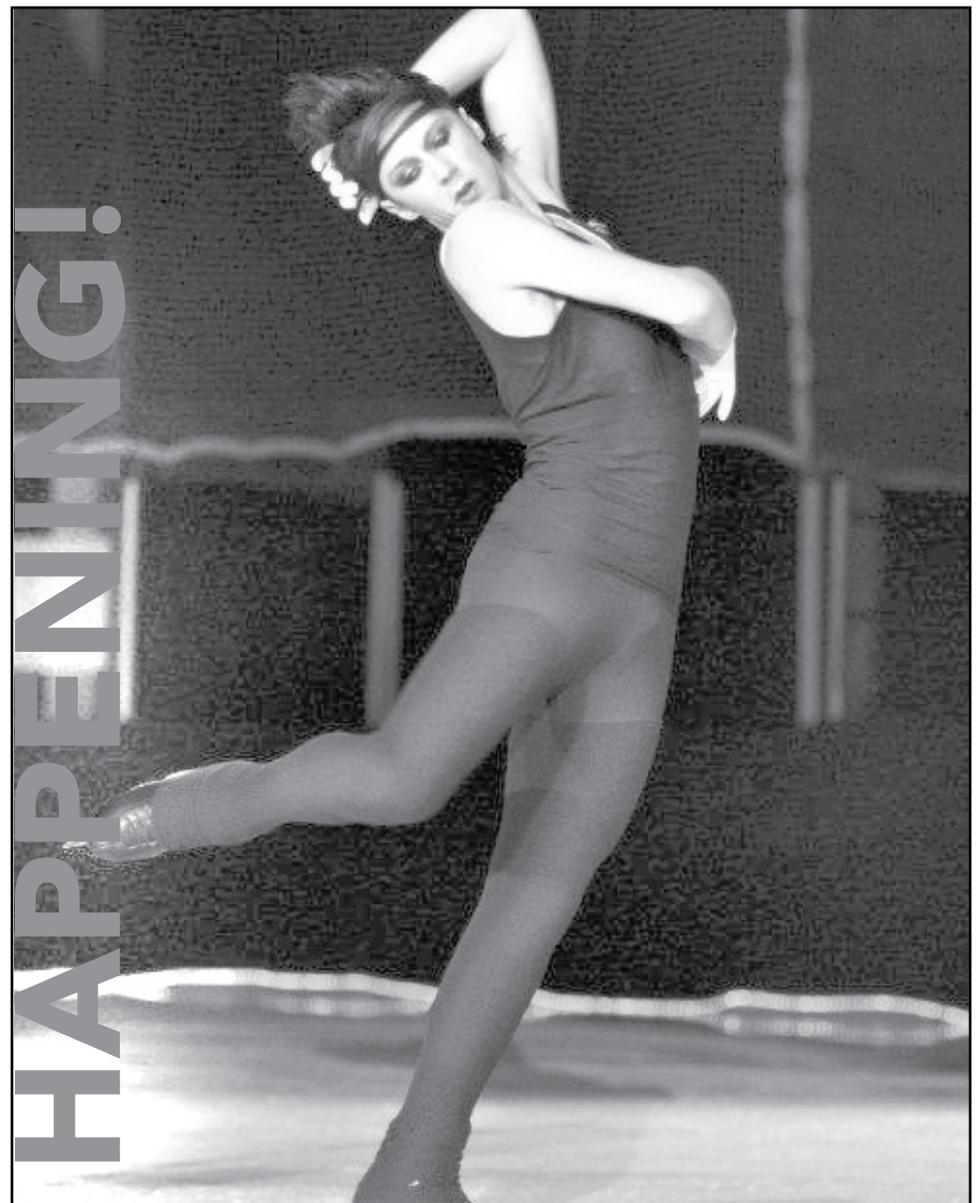
More Michael McRaith:

—Gay sports: Has also played flag football and tennis in Chicago

—On Washington D.C.'s gay community: "It's very different in that very few are originally from D.C. It appears to be as diverse, as warm and as welcoming as Chicago."

—Things you will miss about Chicago: Bicycling along the lakefront, long runs along the lakefront while listening to music, the great restaurants, and listening to live music, such as 2010 Lollapalooza

—On Gov. Quinn: "He is really a good man and really cares about doing the right thing. I say that because it's been an unmitigated privilege to work with Gov. Quinn. Civil unions would not have passed if not for his hard work."



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CENTER ON HALSTED

Lesbian artist part of Walgreens initiative

BY ERICA DEMAREST

Jacquelyn Kennedy was walking down West Pico Boulevard in her native Los Angeles in early 2010 when something caught her eye: a "For rent" sign in one of the storefront's windows.

The artist and T-shirt designer had rented space in that same building almost a decade earlier and dreamed of opening her own boutique there. "There was never a storefront available because people would stay there forever," Kennedy said. "When I noticed [the sign], I was like, 'Ooh, I need that space. I want that.'"

Kennedy called the landlord, inquired about rent prices and submitted a deposit the next day. She gave her two weeks' notice at the "nine-to-five" academic counseling job she'd held for the past several years, and went home to tell her partner, popular Latina comic Sandra Valls, what she'd done.

"I was like, 'Excuse me?!'" Valls recalled, laughing. "She gave up this six-figure job... I didn't have any doubts about Jackie, but in general in my life, I'm more of a 'measure twice, cut once' type of person. And she's just like, 'I'm going to make it happen because I'm going to make it happen.' And that's it. Just do it. Just believe it."

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Kennedy has had a creative streak since she was a child. Constantly drawing and designing, she studied at the Fashion Institute of Design and Marketing (FIDM) and went on to earn a business degree from California State University. After working as a stylist, fashion show make-up artist, illustrator and T-shirt designer, Kennedy switched gears and moved into the more lucrative field of career counseling.

Although she enjoyed her work, she thought there was something missing. "I just really felt like I was just so much more than four walls," Kennedy said. "I've always tried to do creative



Jacquelyn Kennedy. Photo from Kennedy

things outside of work, but there was never enough time." When she saw that fateful 'for rent' sign, Kennedy knew she had to go for it.

She launched Dewberries Boutique in July 2010. The hip, colorful store caters to women and the LGBT community. It carries a well-curated collection of predominantly "rainbow and blingy" clothing, accessories and jewelry from local designers, and highlights Kennedy's own Dewberries t-shirt line. The line features stylized illustrations of women with attitude; its hallmark image portrays a Black woman in a bikini, hand on her hip, rocking a huge afro.

Dewberries are small blackberry-like fruits that grow bunched together and are often difficult to remove from the vine. "I incorporated dewberries with women," Kennedy said, "and how basically whether we are mothers and daughters, sisters, partners or best friends, we're either going to make each other, or we're going to break. You're going to have a good attitude, and you're going to help your mom or your friend get to the next level with positivity."

Kennedy regularly hosts community events in her Los Angeles boutique, hoping to create a positive, safe environment for women and members of the LGBT community. Once a month, a life coach visits the boutique to offer inspirational words on selected topics for Motivational Mondays. There are also monthly Women's Wellness Wednesdays, which have included massages and healthy eating advice in the past. Also, every other Tuesday the boutique hosts a poetry slam.

Kennedy said the boutique has been a life-changer. "I've met so many people and had so many great opportunities since I've opened this storefront," she said. "People are coming at me. I've had many...

different opportunities that I wouldn't have even ran into if I'd still been in the corporate world."

This month, Kennedy is set to embark on her biggest opportunity to date. She is the first member of the LGBT community to be featured in Walgreens' Community Corner initiative. A supplier diversity program that just entered its second year, the Community Corner showcases products from minority designers. It's featured women, African Americans and Latinos in the past.

In honor of Pride month, Walgreens will begin selling in mid-June an 18-pack cooler bag designed by Kennedy. Perfect for toting beverages at Pride parades, the black bag will be available in nearly 100 stores for \$19.99 while supplies last. It features a rainbow yin-yang symbol meant to promote inclusivity.

"I wanted to do something that was universal, yet really, really for the LGBT," Kennedy said. "Now, when you get into the yin-yang, that could be anybody. There's a little bit of boy and girl in all of us. There's a little bit of masculine energy, but there's feminine energy as well... I just wanted to do something that wasn't so in

your face, not so bold, but yet kind of bright."

The bag will be carried in major cities such as Chicago and Los Angeles. A complete list of locations can be obtained from supplierdiversity@walgreens.com.

"Like the other diverse supplier groups we've recognized through the program, the LGBT community is loyal and has strong purchasing power," said Walgreens Senior Director of Supplier Diversity Gleatha Glispie in a press release. "We feel confident that shoppers will be pleased to see the Pride bag at their neighborhood Walgreens and will recognize the opportunity to support a small, community-built business."

For her part, Kennedy is thrilled to be the new face of the Community Corner, especially during Pride month. "Looking at me, you would never think I was part of the LGBT community, you know, with kids," said the African-American mother of three. "People like me need to come out more so that other people can feel comfortable knowing that it's okay... We need to be more visible."

Find out more about Dewberries at <http://www.luvthatdewberries.com>.

Walgreens carries female condoms

BY ERICA DEMAREST

With the decision to carry the newest version of female condoms in 400 of its stores, Walgreens has become the first—and only—pharmacy chain to stock female condoms nationwide.

"This is a huge move forward in really raising the visibility of the product," said Jessica Terlikowski, co-founder and co-chair of the Chicago Female Condom Campaign. "I think it's really going to help with increasing acceptability and access."

The second generation of female condom, or FC2, is thinner and softer than its predecessor, which was created almost 20 years ago. FC2 manufacturers use a production process similar to the one used for male condoms, which creates a seamless, hypoallergenic product that allows for greater sensation.

"This is such an important tool for women and for men, for any receptive partner," Terlikowski said. "It enables them to initiate protection on their own, to make sure that they're able to take an important first step in reducing their risk of STIs and HIV." Terlikowski stressed that while the name might suggest otherwise, many people will find female condoms beneficial, as they can be used for both vaginal and anal sex.

A pack of three FC2 condoms retails between \$5.99 and \$7.99, which is about a third of the price of original female condoms. "The price point on the original was a bit high compared to what a male condom costs," said Glen Pietrandoni, manager of HIV and hepatitis programs at Walgreens. "But now this new product, the FC2, is more in line with what a male condom costs."

Activists hope the drastic price change will increase female condom usage and make it easier for healthcare professionals to stock the product. Terlikowski, who educates ser-

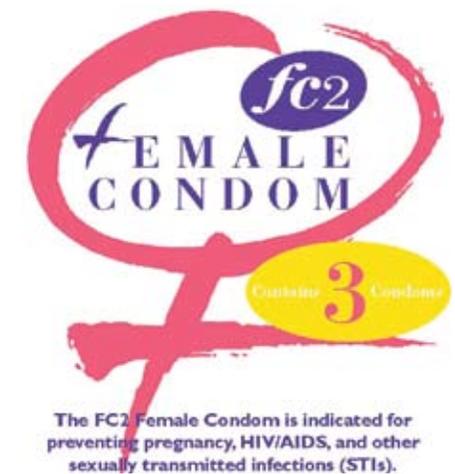
vice providers throughout Chicago about the FC2, said she often piques people's interest and then can't direct them to an accessible product in a local store. Walgreens' decision will change that, she said.

Walgreens has almost 7,700 stores nationwide, and it's selling the FC2 in 400 of them—only about 5 percent. Pietrandoni said the decision is strategic. Not every community has a demand for female condoms, he said; those that do will stock FC2s. If demand changes over time, product distribution will, as well.

Although CVS stores in Washington D.C. currently stock the FC2, the chain does not carry them nationwide. Also, no other national pharmacy sells female condoms at a large scale.

"I'm hoping that by having Walgreens [carry the FC2] their leadership is going to inspire and encourage other corporate pharmacies to also step up to make a priority of increasing access," Terlikowski said. "We'll see female condoms being made available at more commercial outlets around the country."

To find a Walgreens that carries the FC2, visit <http://www.walgreens.com>. To learn more about the many uses and proper application of the FC2, visit <http://www.ringonit.org>.



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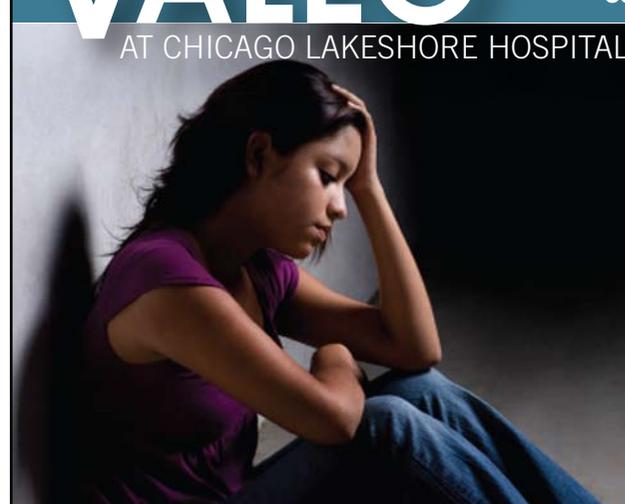
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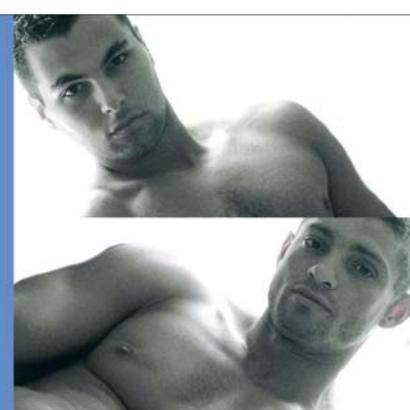
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a GAY in the LIFE

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY ROSS FORMAN



Bartender/musician/actress
Sami Grisafe



Sami Grisafe was playing in a key volleyball playoff match during her senior year at Redlands (Calif.) High School, but her mind was elsewhere ... where she was supposed to be at the time.

Grisafe was to be performing in the school's rendition of The Larrabee Project, so, when volleyball ended, with a victory, she literally ran to the theatre. And they had held the start of the show for Grisafe.

Grisafe's high school run is, well, not much different from her current gigs in Chicago.

She's the standout quarterback for the Chicago Force, in her fifth season with the women's tackle football team. Grisafe also has been a bartender at The Closet in Lakeview for three years and is an aspiring actress. Plus, she sings vocals and plays the ukulele for The Wick, a four-person, Chicago-based band that describes its musical genre as rock/soul, or, provoc-rock. Lyrically, the subject matter of their songs range from social struggles, such as addiction and suicide, to love and sex.

The Wick was established last November and has already recorded its debut album, "The Wick on Wax," which was released on iTunes this spring.

"I've always had an eclectic, dynamic day-to-day lifestyle," Grisafe said.

Grisafe played baseball in her native California for nine years, then became the first woman in California to play quarterback in a varsity Division I football game. She quarterbacked Team USA last summer in Sweden to the gold medal in the first Women's International Football Competition.

"Playing on the Force is like having 45 sisters; it's really a great support system," Grisafe said. "The Force is more than just teammates; it's like my family, especially since my real family—my mom, dad and brother, Kyle—are in California and I now usually only see them once a year."

That includes Force owner/general manager Linda Bache.

"Linda has been like a mom to me. She's really helped me develop and grow up. She's been a huge influence to me and I'm very thankful to her," Grisafe said.

The Wick will be performing Wed., June 22, at Martyrs, 3855 N. Lincoln, starting at 10 p.m.

"I love the band. We have so much fun together and have done so much in such a short period of time," Grisafe said.

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Sami Grisafe uninterrupted

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the stats

Name
Sami Grisafe

Age
26

Neighborhood
Rogers Park

Favorite football team
San Francisco 49ers

Favorite football player
Joe Montana

Relationship status
Dating Ren

Favorite musical group
Counting Crows

Favorite performer
Ani DiFranco

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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.



KATE SOSIN

Speaking trans: A primer for LGB folks

Pride, for me, is both a joyous time and a difficult reminder that what many of us mean when we say "LGBTQ" is really just "gay and lesbian." As a transgender community organizer, I often feel resistance from many major gay organizations when it comes both to putting transgender people in visible and empowering advocacy roles and in adopting respectful practice. With Pride upon us, it feels like a good time to remember that gay people can still be great allies. Here are 10 things we all need to do to be better towards gender-variant people in our community.

1. Always ask; never assume: A lot of us assume that we know someone's pronoun preference or identity at a glance. The truth is that we can't possibly know. Asking is always better than messing up, even if it is a little awkward. A good way to navigate this is not to ask what someone's pronoun is, but if they have a pronoun preference. This allows for people who are certain about their pronouns to say so, and it usually won't put someone on the spot who is not certain or has never had to answer that question before. Note: it is polite to offer your pronoun preference in return. Note, again: using gendered words when talking about people you don't know could also be rude (avoid "sir" or "ladies" etc. for strangers).

2. Asking/ talking about someone else's body is generally, always rude: Some of us get so excited to learn about transgender issues that we forget common sense manners. This often results in foot-in-the-mouth questions like "did

you have the surgery" and "do you feel like a girl in a boy's body?" How would you feel if strangers always asked you to describe your genitalia? Invaded, hmm?

3. Don't use the "T" word if you're cisgender (cisgender=not transgender): Calling someone a "Hot t***y mess" is wildly offensive to transgender people, especially transgender women. That word is a slur that carries the weight of a history (and present reality) of unimaginably horrific violence and discrimination. Think of anti-gay slurs you hear that we don't tolerate.

4. Correct yourself and move on: Yes, it's a little awkward when we mis-pronoun someone. It's more awkward when we fall all over ourselves to apologize. Think about a moment when someone messed up when talking about you. Maybe they assumed your parents are still together when they're not or that you are straight when you aren't or that just because you are gay, you're not religious. It's more painful when you over-correct.

5. Learn what issues are important to transgender people on your own: A lot of transgender people are put in the uncomfortable position of having to educate others about trans issues. Take an hour one Sunday and learn about why bathrooms are contentious spaces for gender-variant folk, why healthcare is hard to access, why transgender people are disproportionately unemployed and subjected to hate violence or any number of things. Chicago is home to some of the country's best-known transgender activists and artists. Learn who they are!

6. Don't try too hard to affirm someone's gender: A lot of people make the mistake of trying to make transgender people feel "more legit." Everyone is complicated, so this rarely works the way it is intended. It feels funny to have someone actively try to make you feel more like yourself. Commenting on how well someone "passes" or on what they can do to "look more like" the gender you think they're aiming for is the equivalent of your mother telling you what she thinks your weight should be. It is presumptive and not necessary.

7. Don't use the wrong pronoun just because you're talking about them in past tense: It is never necessary to use someone's old name

or pronouns if they have asked you to use new ones. Sometimes when talking about transgender people in past tense, we think it is okay to use an old name/pronoun/identity/other gendered word, but this is generally considered disrespectful of how they identify now (and in some cases, has always identified). If you are about to say, "when Johnathon was a girl," think about saying "when Johnathon was a kid." Even if you are talking about someone's transition, use that person's preferred name and pronouns. It's common courtesy.

8. Check-in now and then: Some people will tell you that they prefer one pronoun and later change their minds, or they will want you to use one pronoun and someone else to use a different one, depending on who they are comfortable with. If you think someone might want to be addressed in a new way, simply ask: "does 'he' still feel like the pronoun you want me to use for you?" Asking in this way puts minimal pressure on someone else.

9. Correct others who use the wrong pronoun: It is sometimes awkward to correct the way that someone addresses you if you're gender-variant. You can be a great ally by correcting others for them (make sure you know their pronoun preference first). We all make mistakes so go easy on the person you're correcting. Just say "Hey, _____ prefers to be called _____."

10. Put transgender people in positions of power: A lot of us learn about trans issues and decide that we should do things for transgender people. However, trans people are largely left out of conversations that deeply impact their lives. Advocating for transgender communities is great, but putting trans people in positions where they can advocate for themselves is far better.

A lot of people have different ideas about the best way to approach transgender issues, so look around for other resources like this one. Remember, transgender people and gay people are marginalized in some of the same ways. After all, the LGBTQ community shares an acronym for a reason: we're all breaking old rules about gender.

Kate Sosin is a senior writer for Windy City Times.



MARK SEGAL

Silly queer: Pride is for those with gay pride

Last week, I posted a question on my Facebook page: "A week from this Sunday is Gay Pride in Philly. Are you ready?"

It was a simple question. I had no idea of the reaction or comments it would receive.

Some 50 comments later, I was left with mixed emotions, hence the title of this column.

A little LGBT history lesson is in order to put this in perspective. The first Gay Pride march was in New York City on June 28, 1970. We organized that march to commemorate The Stonewall Riots, which took place the year before. That represented to us that we could fight back against oppression and that we were proud of our community and, to prove that, we marched across the city from Christopher Street to Central Park's Sheep Meadow. We had no idea if anyone would show up. Thousands did.

At about 23rd Street, I climbed a pole and I still could see marchers coming out of Christopher Street—some 15 blocks away. The chills that went down my spine—I felt them again

when we entered Sheep Meadow and the people just kept coming—were my strongest-ever feeling of pride.

Now, think of your first gay-pride march or parade. I bet you to had a similar experience—a feeling that you were not alone and a sense of community. That is what gay pride is all about.

That simple sense of pride has now become global. In many countries, gay-pride celebrations are the only time gays try to assemble. Sometimes they go to jail. In Poland and Hungary, it takes 2,000 police to protect the marchers from protesters. In Budapest, the police erect an eight-foot chain fence the entire length of the parade to protect the marchers. In Moscow, the mayor refuses to give them a permit; when they dare march, there is no protection and they are beaten and jailed. For those marchers, it is not only a march of pride; it is a march of defiance. Many of us from the original march might be

unhappy with the way some of the marches have lost their roots, but we still understand the need for those marches. It's all about that one person feeling a sense of pride in his/herself for the first time and pride in their community.

As for me and the others from those early years, we continue to communicate. We have an email group that has taken on the air of a Gay Liberation Front meeting. Each time there's one in my inbox, it brings a smile to my face. We'll most likely debate almost any item in our community, but one thing we have given the world and have ourselves is pride. To all of you, I wish you happy Gay Pride!

Philadelphia Gay News Publisher Mark Segal is the nation's most-award-winning commentator in LGBT media. He can be reached at mark@epgn.com.

Send letters and viewpoints to
Andrew@WindyCityMediaGroup.com.
 Items may be edited for length or clarity.

FRI. 6.24 & SAT. 6.25

2011 CHICAGO PRIDE FEST

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FRI. 6.24

FESTIVITIES START AT 3PM!
NORTH STAGE
 5:00PM & 8:00PM
 PRIDE DRAG SHOW
 6:30PM **DEBORAH COX**
 9:00PM **ULTRA NATE**
SOUTH STAGE
 6:00PM **THE PERSONNEL**
 7:30PM **CHICAGO SPIRIT BRIGADE**
 8:00PM **SIXTEEN CANDLES**

SAT. 6.25

FESTIVITIES START AT 11AM!
 1:00PM **MISS FOOZIE'S PET PARADE**
 (KICKS OFF AT NORTH STAGE)
NORTH STAGE
 1:30PM, 3:00PM & 5:30PM
 PRIDE DRAG SHOW
 2:30PM **MYA**
 4:30PM **XELLE**
 7:00PM **CRYSTAL WATERS**
 8:00PM **KIM ENGLISH**
 8:30PM **INAYA DAY**
SOUTH STAGE
 12:00PM **LAKESIDE PRIDE SHOW BAND**
 2:30PM **CHICAGO REDLINE**
 3:00PM **CHICAGO GAY MEN'S CHORUS**
 3:30PM **ROD TUFFCURLS & THE BENCHPRESS**
 6:00PM **RIGHTEOUSLY OUTRAGEOUS**
TWIRLING CORPS (RTOC)
 6:00PM **ROCK CANDY**
 7:30PM **WINDY CITY COWBOYS**
 8:00PM **WEDDING BANNED**

MYA
DEBORAH COX
CRYSTAL WATERS
KIM ENGLISH
ULTRA NATE
INAYA DAY
XELLE



Mark Ishaug pushes AIDS agenda in Chicago and far beyond



Mark Ishaug. Courtesy of Ishaug

BY SARAH TOCE

Humanitarian Mark Ishaug has been working zealously for social justice surrounding the often-taboo subjects of hunger, homelessness, healthcare, HIV/AIDS and civil rights for more than 30 years. His work in developing the program CARE International-Mozambique in 1990 landed him on the global map, funneling into the underserved population. Later, he would join AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) and ACT UP.

Today, Ishaug serves as the CEO of AIDS United (a merger between the National AIDS Fund and AIDS Action) in Washington, D.C. In addition, Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn appointed the passionate pioneer to be one of the 22 statewide leaders on the new Commission to End Hunger.

Windy City Times: Your work in Africa led you in 1990 to develop CARE International-Mozambique. How did that career opportunity transpire?

MI: I was actually in grad school at Northwestern University, working on a Ph.D. (which I did not get, I got a master's degree), but I was working. While attending Northwestern, I got a MacArthur Foundation scholarship that took me to Mozambique. And while I was doing research there at the university, I ended up getting, maybe, a six- or eight-month gig with CARE International Mozambique, working in its emergency-relief program. It was really an amazing experience.

WCT: Can you tell us a few things about how you were personally affected by your work in Africa?

MI: My first trip to Africa was in 1983, so almost 30 years ago, and I actually ... I've known about HIV and AIDS for 30 years, since the first case was reported in 1981. When I went to Africa for the first time, I remember thinking that with how it's transmitted and, you know ... it was possibly going to be a hot spot in the world. I actually remember coming back, really, really sick, in 1983, and one of my friends who was with me, her folks were doctors, and they were actually talking about the potential of HIV in Africa back then.

And then I went to Zimbabwe in 1987, and it was really an interesting time in 1987 in Zimbabwe, because there was basically, like, official

denial in Zimbabwe and Mozambique that HIV and AIDS was a problem at all. I remember reading articles in the paper and talking to people from Zimbabwe, that said, "Oh, no, this is a European—this is an American problem, there's never going to be HIV in Africa. This doesn't affect ... this won't affect Africans, it will only affect white people." I remember being so frustrated because of course knowing by then many people, Black and white, from all over the world, who had become infected with ... and were living with or had died of HIV and AIDS, it was so frustrating to me, back then, 25 years ago, to just ... to watch the complete and utter denial of a disease that has now devastated the continent.

WCT: You joined AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) in 1991 as a policy analyst and worked as policy director. At that time, how was the city of Chicago directly affected by HIV and AIDS?

MI: Oh, horrifically. I was working during grad school [as a waiter at Ann Sather restaurant owned by Tom Tunney, who is now an alderman] in Chicago, so from 1988 to 1991, I remember working there and just meeting hundreds of people that were affected by HIV and AIDS. And we saw in the mid- to-late '80s just how Chicago was being ravaged by this epidemic. Organizations like Chicago House and Test Positive Aware Network and Howard Brown and the AIDS Foundation, in the mid- to-late '80s, were trying to do so much for the hundreds, if not thousands, of people that were dying, when there was so little to offer them. I know it sounds like a cliché, but when I started doing this work, we were really helping people die with dignity. There was one drug, maybe two, and they were somewhat life-extending, but they were not life-saving in any way. So it was a very ... it was a very dark and depressing time.

On the other hand, it was also a time of great hope and great inspiration because individuals were rallying to save their own lives and to save their friends and their brothers and their sisters and their loved ones. And ACT UP was an unbelievable force for change, and what the folks at ACT UP/Chicago did to raise awareness, to demand government support, to push the private sector, to raise media awareness, to get the

American Medical Association (AMA) to change its policies ... just so much exciting stuff that really did change the course of the epidemic.

So that time, 20 years ago, was full of contradictions. Because it was about death and dying, but it was about life and great hope. It was ... "The sky is falling, but everything's going to be great." It was a difficult time.

I also started at the AIDS Foundation right after the Ryan White Care Act was passed and one of the first things I did, new on the job (I had only been there a week or two), was lobby for the first Ryan White Care Act appropriation in Washington, D.C. So it was a very, very exciting time, in the spring of 1991, to be on the Hill, fighting for what would be that hundreds of millions of dollars for emergency AIDS relief in places like Chicago, San Francisco, Boston, New York, and L.A. And we were successful, our first year out. We went from no appropriations to hundreds of millions of dollars. Desperately needed and not enough. ... So that's how I started my career in HIV, 20 years ago.

And so ironically or coincidentally now, I'm in D.C., most of the time, fighting for health-care reform; and fighting for Ryan White appropriations; and figuring out new and smarter and more efficient ways that we can care for people and to prevent new infections.

WCT: That's an amazing body of work in 20 years. Do you think that because Ryan White was a straight little boy, that maybe Congress was more willing to listen, instead of it being a gay person that they were speaking to? Do you think there was some discrimination or compassion because he wasn't gay?

MI: Well, I mean, Jeanne White and Ryan White really changed the course of this epidemic. He was the inspiration for millions of people. I mean, obviously the inspiration for key individuals like Elton John and others. Elton John will even say that he wasn't involved in this work until he met Ryan White, and Ryan White changed his outlook on life, and so Ryan and Jeanne have just been an inspiration to millions. And we literally wouldn't ... it's possible that we wouldn't have the [Ryan White] Care Act today, and the billions of dollars that we have for treatment and drugs, if it weren't for his inspirational life.

It was really easy then—and it's still easy now, in some ways—for people to compartmentalize their compassion and/or their fears. HIV was, and in many ways still is, in many parts of the world and in the United States, a stigmatized disease. So clearly, Ryan White, a boy who was infected through a drug transfusion, as opposed to unsafe sex, unclean needles, or prostitution, or any of the stigmatizing quote-unquote behaviors associated with HIV, drug use, et cetera ... yeah. We were lucky that Ryan White's story and his sheer force of personality inspired so many people. It's ... it was just the reality of the times. It says a lot both about the discrimination that so existed in this country 20-plus years ago. It also showed the enormous heart and compassion that people can have for people that are sick and dying. It's truly a double-edged sword.

WCT: Are there any distinct incidences that stand out to you in the past 20 years, that you look back upon and say, "Okay, I was involved in this series of events and it definitely made an important imprint" in regards to fighting the epidemic?

MI: A couple of things. You know, clearly on the care and treatment side. You know, this [interview] is not just about me, this is about the AIDS Foundation and the sector, but I think our mobilization around the Ryan White Care Act and our fierce and effective lobbying for the Ryan White Care Act is just a ... it's a huge success. I think that the advocacy to get the drug companies to invest in better treatments, to discover better treatments, to make those accessible ... I mean, just a generalized advocacy, I think, of the AIDS movement really has inspired many others, and women's groups, and those suffering from other life-threatening or chronic diseases. So I do think that our voices and organizing of people living with HIV has really changed the landscape in America. So that is, of course, one of my proudest accomplishments.

I think our work around needle exchange and making access to clean needles available in Illinois and many other places is a huge contribution to the fight against AIDS, and a very tough battle that we waged in Illinois for years, almost a decade. You know, when the science was incontrovertible, we still couldn't get lawmakers

to agree to support something that in fact would save lives and save money and not increase drug use, because of fear, because of stigma, because of ... people were either putting their heads in the sand and not dealing with the fact that clean needles save lives, but just focusing on the stigmatizing behavior of drug use. But that, I think, was a major accomplishment in really turning the tide.

Also, the work of many of my colleagues in Chicago around prenatal transmission, prevention (people like Anne Statton from PACPI and Mardge Cohen and many others) has been one area of advancement in treatment and prevention, where we're basically eliminating mother-to-child transmission in America and really have the potential to do it across the world.

And of course being at the advent of just these amazing antiretrovirals and other therapies—again, which I had nothing to do with—but I am just so ecstatic that we have such amazing therapies that are reducing viral load, making the virus almost undetectable.

The other thing that I'm really excited about ... again, I played a small role in this—it's been mostly Jim Pickett at the AIDS Foundation and others—but I have played a role in microbicide advocacy, including rectal microbicide advocacy, for many years now. Not as a leader, but as a supporter of Jim Pickett and others that are doing this work. But I think we've really ... we're moving the needle on prevention technologies. It's not just the condom; it's also the microbicide and it's the rectal microbicide, and so on.

For me, the bottom line is that because we've had such success over the last 20 years and there are so many potential successes on the horizon, especially in HIV prevention and the use of biomedical interventions for prevention, that I just have such great hope that we really are going to end this epidemic in America in my lifetime. And that's what keeps me going. That's what energizes me and that's what gets me out of bed every morning to do this work.

WCT: You are quick to recognize all of your colleagues in this effort to eradicate HIV/AIDS. Do you feel that support throughout the community as a whole?

MI: It really is about the collective. I mean, what inspires me about doing this work is that I feel like I have thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of colleagues. I might only work with 30 at AIDS United directly, or work with 70 at AIDS Foundation, but I think about the thousands of people that I get to work with every day, through all these different organizations, not just HIV but sort of broader healthcare and advocacy groups.

I think the future to ending this epidemic are all of us who are doing this sort of AIDS-focused work to do it through a much broader coalition, connecting with the domestic violence groups in a much deeper way because of the intersection of HIV and domestic violence, and working closely with all the other disease-specific entities. Folks looking at diabetes, and folks working to fight cancer, and folks working to fight heart disease ... everything that affects our clients today we didn't even think about 20 years ago. We were so busy fighting AIDS [back then] and now we're helping people live with HIV and a whole host of other chronic medical conditions. So I just think it's ... it's a really exciting time, and if we could all collectively focus our energy on making sure that healthcare reform is implemented in 2014, and if we all work together on the National HIV/AIDS Strategy, I really do believe ... again, it's cliché: we sent a man to the moon, there's no way we cannot end this epidemic.

WCT: There are an estimated 600,000 people living with HIV that are not receiving the life-saving access to care they need. And I'm wondering if you're also drawing this correlation that a lot of us seem to be: that now that

we have all of these drugs, people are a little bit more lax about prevention, possibly because they have these new life-saving drugs that can be used following diagnosis?

MI: Well, I think the rise in ... or at least the leveling of ... new infections in this country between 50,000-60,000 per year ... the reasons are complicated. Yes, I think there is some, what is called "behavioral disinhibition," because people don't see their friends, especially their young friends, becoming emaciated and dying, and so there's less fear, in part because the drugs are so successful and people can be living on medications for what appears to be a long, long, long time.

But I think it's deeper than that. I think stigma is driving the epidemic for sure, homophobia is driving the epidemic, violence ... violence against men and violence against women is driving the epidemic. And lack of access to care. People are much less likely to become infected or to transmit HIV if they have quality healthcare. But in many places in this country, it's really hard to get an HIV doctor. Not just in the South and in the rural areas, but in many urban areas as well. ... [We] know from our own experience in Chicago and throughout the country that even if there are AIDS docs, there's not often access to these clinics and to these programs for people who need them most. There could be cultural competency issues, there could be issues of hours that they're open, when people can't get there, there's issues related to child care. There's a whole host of issues, both internal to people living with HIV, and external to them, like the systems of care that don't welcome them. I think all of these factors are contributing to the 50-60,000 new infections we have in this country every year.

If only there was a simple explanation for why there are 50,000 new infections ... but I think you have to look at all of these reasons together to see what contributes to it. There are just not enough resources, and especially not enough resources in primary HIV prevention, targeted to the communities and individuals who need this the most. We had eight years of a [George W.] Bush administration where the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control] couldn't even talk about ... gay men ...

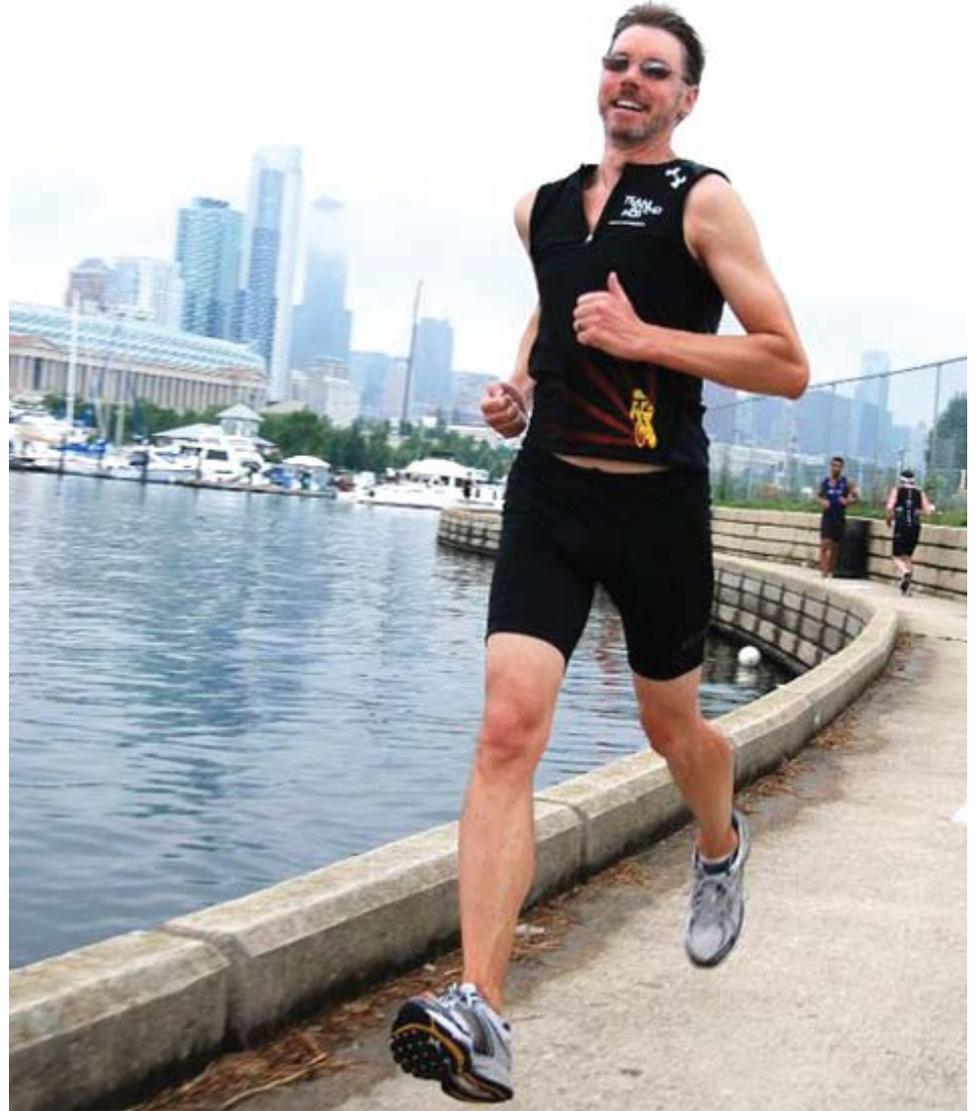
WCT: Condoms.

MI: ... and condoms. So you have a website that doesn't talk about condoms, or you have researchers that can't put in proposals targeting men who have sex with men, because ... it won't make it past review. We had almost a decade with a deeply chilling effect on how we talk about HIV and how we reach those most at risk.

WCT: How do you feel that President Obama and his administration are doing in fighting this epidemic?

MI: Well, overall, I am delighted. We have a National HIV/AIDS Strategy—which we never had before, for 30 years—and the Obama administration released its National HIV/AIDS Strategy with very specific goals and objectives for the next five years. And most importantly, we have a president that fought for and won access to healthcare through the Affordable Care Act. And this healthcare reform is the game-changer for people with AIDS. Our folks who have heretofore been denied care, because they don't qualify for Medicaid-like programs, in 2014 will have access to Medicaid, and will have access to a source of financial support to pay for their primary care and for their drugs.

So, yeah, there are things that the administration probably could be doing better, we all could be doing better, but I think when you look at the investment in Ryan White, the lifting of the ban for federal funding on syringe exchange, the National HIV/AIDS Strategy and the Affordable Healthcare Act ... this is it. It's not perfect, but



Mark Ishaug. Courtesy of Ishaug

it is key ... all of these things combined are key to ending the epidemic. No president in the 30-year American history ... has done all of this in two years.

WCT: I read a story recently from AIDS Connect that you wrote about a woman who stuck up her middle finger at you and said, "I hope you die."

MI: Mhmm, yeah.

WCT: And this happened roughly 20 years after another person did the exact same thing to you, at a healthcare rally. How do you gracefully move past that? Your response was great. Your response was, "Well, I'm going to die eventually, but not anytime soon, I hope." That reaction was much more dignified than her attack on you.

MI: Yeah, well, that was a really ... it was an amazing moment for me. I was at a healthcare reform rally, and I was wearing my T-shirt that said, "Healthcare is a right." I was really inspired, on this really beautiful summer day, thinking that people would come and join us. And while we had a nice crowd and some press, the woman walking over to me really was a wake-up call. I didn't know it then, but those folks were the beginning of the Tea Party movement—the very folks that are trying to dismantle healthcare reform and undo all of the progress we've made. But, yeah, just the irony for me was the 20-year expanse between, you know, somebody shouting that at me when I was involved with ACT UP, and then 20 years later shouting at me when I was CEO of the AIDS Foundation.

But what it mostly speaks to is the need to just keep up the fight. And to keep vigilant, and to keep diligently raising the issues and raising hell and raising our voices until we have healthcare for all, and until we are living in a country without HIV and AIDS.

So yeah, you know, you can't get mad—or I can't get mad—about this stuff. I can only get motivated.

WCT: Those are the game-changers, right there. Getting motivated, giving in ... you have to choose one. So Gov. Pat Quinn appointed you to be one of the 22 statewide leaders on the new Illinois Commission to End Hunger. Can you tell us a little bit about this venture in Illinois to improve food security and nutrition through education, better coordinating services and increasing access to programs?

MI: We had our first commission meeting [recently]. I'm just thrilled about this opportunity. It's being chaired by the executive director of the Chicago Greater Food Depository and the deputy governor, Cristal Thomas, and it includes all these powerhouses, from Sargent Shriver Center on Poverty Law, to Grace Hou, who's the deputy director of human services for the state of Illinois, and all these advocates for women and children and the hungry. It's a really diverse coalition of people that are committed to ending hunger in Illinois. And I'm involved because I know that you cannot address chronic health conditions like HIV/AIDS and everything else unless you have the basics in your life to address your healthcare concerns. And for me, that is food and shelter. So, for my whole career in doing this work, I have been an outspoken advocate for AIDS housing and housing in general—for everyone—housing for all. I have always been a big, big supporter of food and nutrition programs. It's something that most of us just take for granted, that we get to get up every morning, or at least I do, and have an amazing breakfast, an amazing lunch. I've never, for one second, been hungry.

And so for me, it's a passion: I have a passion for music, I have a passion for endurance training, I have a passion to end AIDS, and I just believe if we cannot ensure that every person in our country—and really, the world—but in Illinois and the country, cannot have a decent,

Anthony Fauci at the Center of the AIDS Story

BY BOB ROEHR

One man has been at the center of AIDS treatment, research, and policy since the beginning—Anthony Fauci. He has been giving a series of speeches, a personal reflection on the 30-year journey through that global pandemic.

Fauci was a young researcher at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) when he read that first report of a cluster of five gay men in Los Angeles with pneumocystis carinii pneumonia that appeared in the June 5, 1981 issue of the then obscure journal Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR).

How odd, he thought, because it is a rare disease “that you never ever see in someone with a normal immune system.” The mark of his native Brooklyn is heavy in Fauci’s voice, even though he has not lived there for decades.

A month later another issue of MMWR landed on his desk, this one with a report of 26 young gay men in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York City, otherwise healthy, who presented with pneumocystis carinii and/or the unusual cancer Kaposi’s Sarcoma, also seen in immunocompromised persons.

“It was the first time in my medical career that I ever got goose pimples, because I knew this had to be a new disease,” said Fauci. He quickly decided to make the mysterious new disease the focus of his research, despite contrary advice from his mentor and colleagues.

These reports marked the first official notice of what would become known as the global HIV pandemic. The disease had been around much longer; we simply had not recognized it. But that would change as the virus grew with exponential ferocity to ravage and kill millions of human beings.

Fauci’s decision to focus on the unknown pathogen proved to be not only a good career move, but also an important one for the gay community and people living with HIV because

of the role he would play in shaping government policies over the ensuing decades.

Fauci was named director of the NIH National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NI-AID) in 1984. It would become the center of research and research funding for AIDS. At 43 he was the youngest institute director ever at NIH. When some on the Institute staff opposed creation of the Division of AIDS, he said, “I had to do something I don’t like to do and that is get rid of them.”

Five presidential administrations have relied upon him for council.

It started with Ronald Reagan. While Fauci acknowledges the criticism of Reagan for not publicly addressing AIDS earlier than he did, he also defends the man: “When we were asking for more money for HIV [Reagan] was actually more generous than people thought.” He would also “encourage and allow people like me and Jim Curran from the CDC to go out there to the bathhouses, go to the crack houses and try and find out what was going on and develop a research program for it.”

The director praises George H.W. Bush for taking the time to learn about AIDS when he became a candidate for president. “He came and spent about three to four hours at the NIH, which for those of you who know presidential visits, that’s a lifetime for a president to spend. They usually come in and say hello and leave.”

Activism

AIDS activists “stormed the NIH” in the late 1980s bringing surly, chanting throngs and smoke bombs to the bucolic research campus. The police were about to arrest them when Fauci said no; he invited them to send five leaders up to his seventh floor office to talk.

“These guys came in with Mohawk haircuts, multiple earrings, black leather jackets, making a lot of noise; scientists ran for the hills. They

could be preaching the gospel and scientists wouldn’t listen to them,” he said.

“They were challenging our paradigms of how we do clinical research and how we regulated drugs” for people who had no viable therapies, he added. “By the time the FDA approved it, everybody who needed it would be dead. That was something that we just didn’t get here in this city of Washington.”

“But what they said made really great sense. They wanted a parallel track” to make the drug available while a trial was underway. When Fauci stood up at a meeting in San Francisco and supported the idea, the FDA went wild and tried to have him fired.

“Fortunately I had a good friend; that was George H. W. Bush,” he said. “When I explained [parallel track] to him, he thought it was a good idea.”

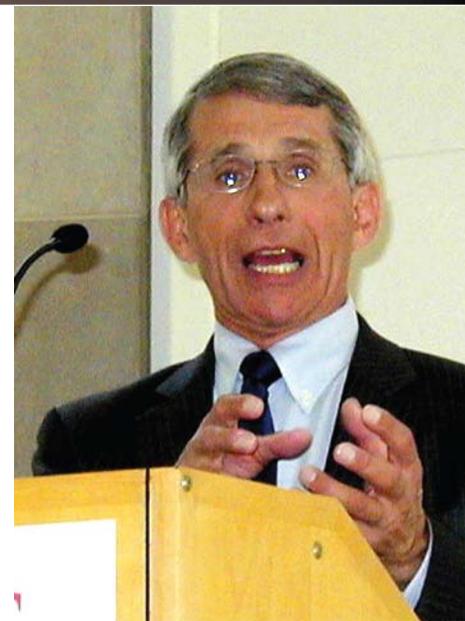
Fauci recalled how playwright/activist Larry Kramer once wrote “an open letter to an incompetent idiot Anthony Fauci.” However, from that confrontational start, the relationship between the two evolved to one of dear friends.

PEPFAR

Few recall that a young George W. Bush worked in his father’s White House office, where Fauci came to know him and other junior staffers. Those relationships came to mature when he was asked to play a leading role in creation of the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the international effort better known by its acronym PEPFAR.

The program launched in 2003 and Fauci proudly ticks off the accomplishments: “close to 4 million lives have been saved by providing treatment for individuals; 450,000 infants were saved from being infected by treating them and their infected mothers; and about 11 million people came under care.”

“The sobering news is that only 40 percent of



Anthony Fauci. Photo by Bob Roehr

the people who need therapy are actually getting therapy. For every person you put on therapy, 2-3 people get newly infected.”

The NIH investment in HIV research has been staggering. When Fauci became director of NI-AID in 1984 AIDS funding was just \$20 million, but today it is \$1.3 billion, about 11 percent of the annual NIH budget. The cumulative total has reached \$45 billion, but he says it is well spent.

“If you take a problem seriously, and make well-thought-out investments in biomedical research, you will get benefits from that, for sure,” he said.

Fauci said the changes in HIV/AIDS over the last 30 years have been dramatic. For the first eight years of his HIV practice, “every one of my patients died” and the average survival was 27 weeks. The corner was turned in 1996 with introduction of protease inhibitor-based combination therapy and other subsequent drugs. Now when a person initially starts treatment, “according to mathematical models, they will live an additional 52 years,” he said.

Remembering Diana



In 1997, Chicago photographer Mark Brown donated images to Chicago House of Princess Diana. The Sept. 17, 1997 press releases stated:

“While a student at the University of London in 1987, Mark Brown shot several photos of Princess Diana outside the Canterbury Cathedral in Canterbury, England. Since returning from England, Brown has kept the photos in his personal collection. However in the wake of the Princess’ death, Brown has decided to use them to benefit one of Diana’s favorite causes. Two of Brown’s favorite images from the shoot are current for sale with the proceeds benefiting Chicago House, a not-for-profit organization that provides housing to underprivileged people living with HIV/AIDS. Earlier this month, Brown’s Princess Diana photos were part of a silent auction at Chicago Houses Art of Caring gala where they raised \$1000 each.”

Princess Diana was well known for fundraising and visibility efforts on HIV and AIDS.

Pictured are Mark Brown’s Diana photos, and an image of him with one of the photos. Courtesy of Mark Brown. See www.markbrownphotography.com



Shaine Wynsma learns lessons from HIV

BY ROSS FORMAN

Shaine Wynsma was living in Grand Rapids, Mich., in the late 1990s, halfway through what would ultimately become a four-year relationship. Wynsma, who grew up in nearby North Muskegon, found out that his partner had, in reality, been involved in an open relationship.

"He had just forgot to let me know," Wynsma said. "At least that's what he told me when I confronted him about it."

So Wynsma knew, since they had stopped practicing safer sex, that he had to be tested, immediately—and he bought one of those at-home HIV-testing kits, which were popular at the time.

Wynsma sent in a blood sample and eventually called for the results from an empty back office of the service bay at a car dealership where he was working.

The woman said the results were positive.

Wynsma was speechless, alone, in a dusty, dimly lit office in the back of a garage at work, not able to tell anyone. "My survival instinct kicked in and I just asked, 'OK, what do I do next?'" said Wynsma, who wanted to have another test taken, just to confirm her report.

"She also said that I seemed pretty upbeat for someone who was just told they were HIV-positive. I told her that I have had some circumstances in my life that just left me shattered and I learned to just pick up the important pieces and build off of them," he said.

Wynsma immediately told his boyfriend and then went to a nearby clinic for another test of his blood.

The next two weeks were excruciating, he said.

The clinic confirmed that Wynsma was HIV-positive.

"[My] boyfriend never got tested and [our] sex life became non-existent [at that point] and he even told me to not tell anybody because it would make people think he had [the disease, too]," Wynsma said. "That hurt and made me feel 100 times worse than finding out alone in that office. Like I was the one who was trash and worthless and did something wrong, when it was him [who] I was faithful to and clearly the one who infected me.

"I never told my family; they would not have known how to deal with it very well then. It was definitely the beginning of the end for that relationship with my boyfriend."

However, the two stayed together for two more years, which he now admits, "that [still] confounds me to this day."

Ultimately, after a major verbal blow-up between the two, Wynsma packed his car and left.

He moved to Chicago about 11 years ago.

Now 38, Wynsma lives in Wrigleyville and is self-employed as a personal trainer and his business is, appropriately named, Shaine Fitness.

He's healthy and happier than ever, but single, which does make him sad, he admits.

"I am healthier than I was [when living in Michigan]," Wynsma said. "I didn't workout as much [back then and my] diet was pretty poor; I didn't invest a whole lot of thought into my own medical needs. It must be that survival instinct/competitive drive of mine.

"But, I decided I was not going to be one of the people they showed, shriveled and miserable and alone in a hospital room on the news. That image just did not fit. I have also learned to be more self-sufficient. When you are confronted with a drastic event and your own part-

ner doesn't want to deal with you, you learn at an incredible pace how to take care of yourself. It's ironic that something that is supposed to end my life early has, in reality, caused me to become stronger, healthier and now I will probably live a better and longer life than I would have before.

"Dating, though, is kind of tough when you are HIV-positive. You meet a nice guy, you hit it off, there is some sort of connection, then you have 'the talk' and in my experience, it is a major deal breaker. When you are HIV-positive, you take a huge risk of being rejected. You could just decide to date others who are HIV-positive, but that dating pool is small and there is no guarantee that the right one is there. It seems just as hypocritical to reject someone because they are [negative] as it is for them to reject me because I am positive. I understand that people need to protect themselves, and they should, so I do not belittle anybody for taking that action.

"One can argue that it should be the first thing you talk about. But, on the other, my thought is, if sex is not going to happen, then it is none of their business. I have to protect myself as well and that includes emotionally. I had a friendship end because they felt they needed to be told. It has never been violent, though. [But] I have heard stories of people freaking out when they have been told, verbally abusing, shoving and then talking about behind their [partner or ex-partner] behind his back. Thankfully that has never happened to me."

Wynsma added: "I have done a lot of work to realize that being positive doesn't make me a bad person, or filthy, and at times I have been really insulted by some people's ignorance. It was just a lack of judgment at a young age. That has been the biggest impact, realizing how much work, even in the gay community, there is to erase the stigma of HIV."

Wynsma has been dedicated to helping find a cure for HIV/AIDS for years—very dedicated, in fact. He has participated in the annual Ride For AIDS the last four years—and his fifth time on the two-day, 200-mile bicycle ride from Chicago to Elkhorn, Wis., and back is set for July 9-10. The event is the largest grossing annual fundraiser for the Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN).

"When I first did the Ride, there were only 60 riders. It has since grown to about 300," said Wynsma, who is in his third year as a co-chairman for the event. "Being a part of the growth [of the Ride] has been just as amazing as the first time I finished it. Marathon runners can relate to the satisfaction you get from finishing a high-endurance event; it is addicting and wonderful. I would love to see this become the premier event people do in the first part of the summer, just like the [Chicago] Marathon seems to be [every October]."

"Initially, my doctor told me about the Ride and I thought it would be a great challenge physically. I am not a big runner, but have always ridden my bike. Before the first Ride I did, a friend of mine, Greg Fanning, died. He was found in his apartment. He was Positive and struggled with some issues, [and yet] if he knew TPAN could help, he just might still be around. That's part of why I ride—I want people to know that there is a place for someone who is positive, [perhaps] struggling with addiction problems, that there is a non-judging, safe and effective place to get help. The money I help bring in makes sure those programs stay afloat and the doors stay open."



Shaine Wynsma. Courtesy of Wynsma

The other co-chairmen this year are Angie Frank, Rick Heinz and Matt Daniel, while Richard Cordova, Billy Struber and Rhett Lindsey (who now works for the AIDS Foundation of Chicago) have been key in production of the Ride.

The Ride, Wynsma said, "proves HIV is not a death sentence."

"Someone who is positive doesn't have to lie down, suffer and wait for death," he said. "Riding 200 miles, in two days is no easy task, even for an experienced athlete and to see people both positive and negative take this on, and complete it, makes you feel like a superhero, and I know several, healthy negative people who wouldn't even attempt this Ride."

Wynsma has, for the past several years, captained his Ride team. Naturally, it's called, Team Shaine—and it has about 30 riders this year, up from 11 last year.

"The people of Team Shaine are some of the coolest and most passionate people I have met," Wynsma said. "We were not the first ones across the finish line [last year], but that's not what [the Ride] is about. It is, instead, coming in as a team, and I wanted everyone to share that feeling of accomplishment and being cheered in together." (For more on Team Shaine, go to: www.teamshaine.com.)

Team Shaine members this year range in age from their early 20s to late 40s, male and female, positive and negative members.

"The goal of the team is to bring in as much money as we can, have a blast doing it, and always support our teammates," he said. "The team is incredibly good-looking, incredibly strong with a fun personality. We have a ball together. I can't wait to ride in with them, in July."

The co-captains on Team Shaine this year are Brian Harder, Bill Fischer and Paul Hirsch.

"My future vision for Team Shaine is to use it as a way for people to get involved with charity bicycle rides," Wynsma said. "Providing training and fundraising help. I think it would be a great goal for my clients and anybody else to go for."

Wynsma will be among many Ride participants this year sporting an orange flag on their bicycle to symbolize that, yes, they are HIV-positive.

"The purpose of the [orange] flags is to show how intermingled people are, people who are positive and people who are negative, and to show we are all in this together, fighting for the same result. Surviving and living," he said.

And certainly not alone, dying or dead, stuck in a dark, dusty office with no voice.

Teddy Green keeping pace with AIDS

BY ROSS FORMAN

His title this summer with the AIDS Foundation of Chicago's (AFC's) Team To End AIDS (T2) endurance training program is site assistant, meaning, Teddy Greene does anything and everything needed.

"I am a certified water boy out on the course," he said, laughing. "Seriously, I am there to assist the coaches in whatever they may need. Running errands, running to help set up, and just being there to support those who need it with anything."

Greene, 29, a Lakeview resident and hair stylist at Salon V, has run the Chicago Marathon in the past and is now training for the annual Ride For AIDS in July, his second time doing the two-day, 200-mile bicycle ride.

"T2 is organized, efficient, and the friendliest staff that makes people jump over hurdles everyday," Greene said. "T2 means the world to me. When I decided to start running three years ago, I needed something to push me and keep me motivated. The staff did that for me. Any questions I asked were answered quickly, any slight injury was put at top priority, and any doubts I had [about] not finishing that first marathon was out the door before I started at the actual marathon in 2009."

Greene has completed three marathons in support of T2, with his best time (4:52) being in London this past spring.

"I will continue running and supporting T2 until my body says, 'No more of this crazy stuff,'" Greene said. "I remember saying last year, 'I will run a marathon any day instead of doing the Ride For AIDS again.' Funny thing, I'll be riding again this July."

Also, Green is a co-captain for the bike team known as Richard's Riders.

"The ride is just another mental challenge to push through," Greene said. "There is no reason why anyone cannot complete the Ride For AIDS. Anything is possible when you put your mind to it, especially when you have your friends and the wonderful support TPAN gives during training and the day of the ride."

Greene, who is single, has been working at Salon V for four years. He has been living in Chicago for more than seven years and is originally from Tallahassee, Fla.: "I definitely owe it to this city. Chicago has made me into the person I am today. This city gives me passion and allows me to dream big and accomplish goals that I set for myself."

Greene has been HIV-positive for almost four years.

"I can't forget the day I learned I was HIV-positive. I was in shock," Green said. "I was in a committed relationship for about three years at that point, and thought the trust we had for each other was strong enough to not cheat on each other. I was wrong. Not only did I find out I was cheated on, I found out I was living with the disease that I promised my mom and dad I never would contract. I still remember saying, 'That won't happen to me; I won't get HIV.'"

However, Greene is now healthy and happy, two years after starting his medication. In fact, a doctor at Howard Brown Health Center recently told him, "You're healthier than the average person."

"The emotions of living with this virus have definitely been hard," Greene admitted. "I'm not worried about death any sooner than before.



Teddy Green. Photo by Alberto Perez

I'm not worried about being able to do anything I desire to do. I am, though, worried about the stigma this virus still has. I hate thinking that people look at me like I have, 'the gay disease.' I hate when people cry when I tell them [that I am HIV-positive] because I am OK living with this."

Greene is a spokesman for AFC, thanks to a five-minute video made and produced about Greene. All T2 marathon runners saw the Greene video at marathon training opening day in late April.

"Since finding out [that I am HIV-positive], I feel like I have been given a second chance at life, been given a chance to prove to myself that I can do anything, given a chance to change the world," Greene said. "With the people and friends who I have met over this journey of fundraising [for HIV/AIDS] and endurance sport activities, I couldn't have done it without any of them. By doing these things, it's given me power, confidence and strength to believe I have anything I want to do, and anything I set my mind to. HIV has changed my life for the better. Does that mean I like living with this disease? No, of course I would rather not be HIV-positive, but I stand behind myself and scream out loud that the disease won't beat me down."

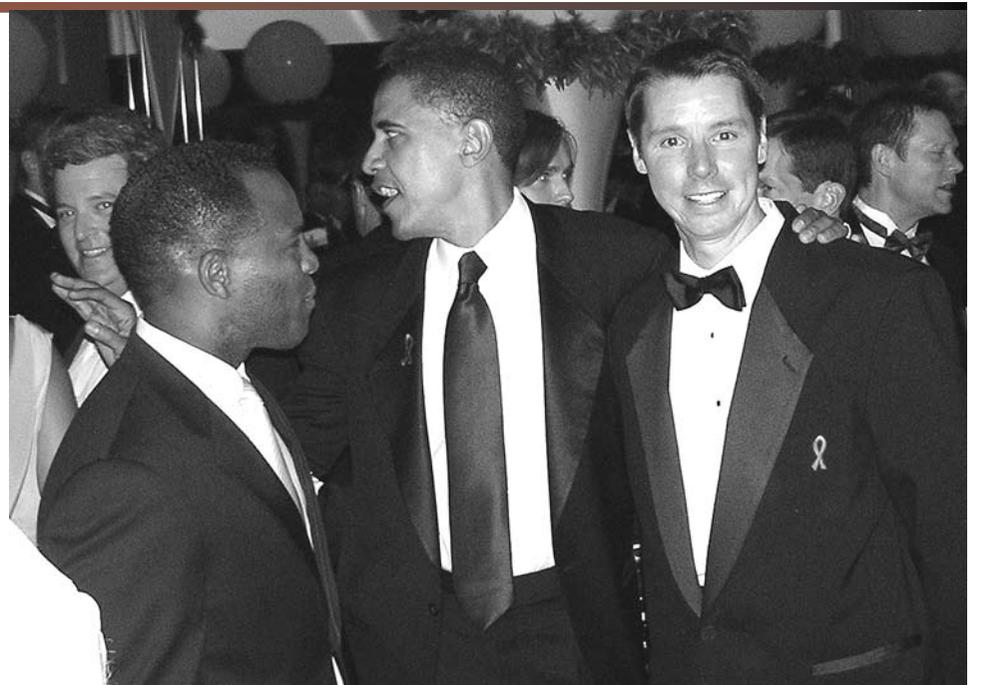
"I am proud. My friends support me; my family supports me, my co-workers support me; my clients support me; my community supports me. I am fortunate to have such a wonderful group of people in my life."

"I'm faced with the disease every day when I take my meds, but it doesn't faze me one bit because I am a better, stronger person because of it."

Greene admitted he was in "awe and shock," not to mention "nervous" when T2 representative Dan Lakin asked him in 2010 to be a part of the video.

"The Ride For AIDS and the T2 gives me passion to finish strong, gives me support that I can accomplish the feat, gives the community around me, meaning, those living with the disease, have the chance to get their meds, housing and support they need through the fundraising efforts I defeat everyday," Greene said.

To support Greene's fundraising for the annual Ride For AIDS, go to: <http://bit.ly/Teddys2ndRideforAIDS>



Barack Obama (middle) at the 2005 AIDS Foundation of Chicago gala, with Isiah Crawford (left) and Mark Ishaug.

ISHAUG from page 15

nutritious meal every day, we're failing. And from my AIDS statistics work, there is no way we'll be successful in keeping people healthy, keeping them on their meds, unless we make sure that they have food and nutrition. So I'm excited, and again, it's about the intersections. ... I think one of the reasons they're interested in me is that I come to the anti-hunger and food advocacy world from a different world. I'm coming from an AIDS world and from a healthcare world. So that's exciting.

I'm always looking for the intersection. I'm doing a big project with the National Network to End Domestic Violence, helping build curricula for DV providers and AIDS providers. That's the kind of stuff that really energizes me: looking at where we can intersect our worlds. Because people with AIDS don't live in a silo, they're not just people with AIDS—they're people with everything else. So that's where I'm at, and that's where I'm going.

WCT: You are now with AIDS United. It's a merger between the National AIDS Fund (NAF) and AIDS Action combining three decades of HIV/AIDS policy and advocacy. Was there a defining moment when you knew that it was time to switch over from a local office in Chicago to a national office?

MI: I tell people I woke up one morning and I was 47 and I'm like, "Oh my God, I've been at the AIDS Foundation of Chicago since I was 27, I've got to do something else!" I want to be clear: I love, love, love, love—I can't say it enough times—the AIDS Foundation of Chicago. I really think it is the best—not one of the best; it is the best AIDS organization in the whole world. And I love it. I love the staff. I love the board. I love the community. And together with all these people, I really took the AIDS Foundation, I think, to a great place, doing great work with great impact.

I just felt that it was really a great moment for me to try to do something else on a national level, to have an additional impact, not a better impact or a bigger impact, just a different impact. To sort of bring those skills, and all that good energy, to the national arena, and try to help folks throughout the country collectively figure out if there's a better, more effective way we can be doing our work.

And I was so lucky, just so lucky, to be offered this opportunity to run this new organization and to try to do some really hard work in a really challenging environment. AIDS United is much smaller than the AIDS Foundation of Chicago.

It's got a smaller budget, a smaller board, fewer staff, and it has many, many fewer resources. But I felt like I had an opportunity here, especially with the National AIDS Strategy and healthcare reform, to do something just a little bit different.

But you know, I have to say: I never would have stepped away or stepped up to this challenge if it weren't for David Munar, my deputy director, who was able to—and did—step in as CEO. We didn't miss a beat. So I didn't know when I was going to leave the AIDS Foundation of Chicago, but I knew that I could leave because I had worked closely with David for almost 20 years, and I believed—and then the board believed; the board hired him, I did not—that he was the right person at the right time to lead the organization and take it to the next level.

So I am so proud of so many things at the AIDS Foundation of Chicago, but among the things that I'm most proud of is David. And our relationship, and his willingness to ... he was both a great teacher and mentor to me, but he was always wanting to learn, every single day, so that when the time came for him to step up, he could do it, and here he is now.

WCT: And here you are now.

MI: And here I am now. It's funny how things work out. I had no plans. If you would have asked me a year ago, "Oh, well, are you going to leave the AIDS Foundation at the end of the year?" I would have said, "Are you insane?" But you just know when it feels like it's the right time, and it felt like it was the right time. And I also think that the AIDS Foundation will be a better and stronger and even cooler place now than I'm gone.

WCT: Why do you say that?

MI: Because change is good, you know? Just like I think my arrival at AIDS United is going to be good for AIDS United and the sector. There is a regeneration and a rejuvenation when there's change. You've just got to seize the moment.

WCT: Carpe diem. The world is a better place with you in it.

MI: Thank you. I just feel like the luckiest guy in the whole world, that I get to wake up in the morning, sometimes in Chicago, sometimes in Washington, sometimes in New York, but that I get to wake up in the morning and to do this good work. It's a privilege, and I feel that every single day. At the end, hopefully I'm changing the world a little bit, and hopefully I'm adding value to the fight, and to peoples' lives, most importantly. But I don't think for one minute that I am not privileged beyond words to be able to do this work.

GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



Photo courtesy of TV Land

A FRAN-DO ATTITUDE

Fran Drescher and John Michael Higgins star in *Happily Divorced*, based on her marriage to gay ex Peter Marc Jacobson. Jacobson's on page 33.

THEATER

Go 'west.'
Page 28.

Photo courtesy of
The Gift Theatre



MUSIC/TV

All that Caz.
Page 29.

PR photo of Cazwell



COMEDY

Laughter effects.
Page 40.

Photo of Cameron Esposito
courtesy of Esposito



NUNN ON ONE

Shirley MacLaine: Legend discusses films, androgyny



BY JERRY NUNN

Named after Shirley Temple, Shirley MacLaine has had a life growing up in show business since she was very young. Nominated many times for Academy Awards before winning for *Terms of Endearment*, from *The Trouble with Harry*, her first film, to *Steel Magnolias* and *Postcards From the Edge*, this actress knows how to create memorable roles.

She just released her book *I'm Over All That and Other Confessions*. She talked about what she is over these days.

Windy City Times: Hello, Mrs. MacLaine.

Shirley MacLaine: Hey, Jerry. How are you doing?

WCT: I am good. I am writing a travel story in Mexico so wanted to call you up while I was

here.

SM: Oh, golly. Be careful down there.

WCT: I wrote a story in New Mexico recently where you live. The locals told me that you shop at Whole Foods there.

SM: [Laughs] Oh, yeah; sure I do!

WCT: I was in Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Truth or Consequences.

SM: Don't you just love it there? It is so beautiful.

WCT: It's amazing. You have a big house there?

SM: Yes, I actually have a house in Santa Fe and a ranch out in Abiquiu. I do my past life seminars out at my ranch.

WCT: There are a lot of ghosts out there, aren't there?

SM: Well, there is a lot of energy that is still alive. Well, everything is alive. That is why Georgia O'Keefe was so fascinated with it. Jerry, you know she had a sense of being able to feel other dimensional frequencies. That is why she painted it all of the time.

WCT: I went to her museum while I was there and it was breathtaking.

SM: Yes, it is. She was quite a person. She was not as much of a female liberator as you think. Well, she thought she was.

WCT: For her time, maybe...

SM: Well, maybe but even then she was always under the influence of men really.

WCT: How do you stay so young? Is it diet or hiking with your dog Terry?

SM: I am not so sure I stay young. [Laughs] But I will tell you, once you decide that life itself is show business and everything you do is a theatrical choice, an act, there is no point in getting upset about anything.

WCT: I liked in your book how you don't get caught up in the whole celebrity business.

SM: Yeah, I never have. I don't know why. Well, maybe because I am a dancer so that is basically it. I am disciplined and a team player. I never did like the red carpet stuff. I didn't impress the designers either because they didn't want me to wear their dresses.

WCT: One of your fans wanted me to mention *Sweet Charity* and how underrated it is.

SM: It was Fosse's first picture. We had quite a history together. He found me in *Pajama Game* and then I brought him out to Hollywood to do movies. Lew Wasserman did not believe that he was going to be able to direct and thought of him as just a choreographer. I knew how he felt about Fellini and what a fan he was of some of the Italian greats. I just spoke to Nicole the other day about something that she is doing. To have a conversation with his daughter so many years later was really fascinating for me.

WCT: What movie role has been the most similar to you as a person?

SM: I would *Aurora Greenway* was quite similar to me from *Terms of Endearment*. I won the Oscar for it and I am not sure that I was acting. I was just playing myself.

WCT: It is such a compliment that you won an award for it.

SM: Yes, it was. She was an extraordinary character. She was my favorite by the way.

WCT: Are you working on current movie projects?

SM: I am going to do one in August. We are waiting for it all to come together. But my date is on August 22nd to start that. Then I have another one in November. I am writing another book. I like to work, well not work so much but I like to be creative. That is basically what I do.

WCT: That might be what keeps you young!

SM: That is probably it, absolutely.



Shirley MacLaine.

WCT: Pictures seem to be very important to you and you have a whole wall of life in your house. Do you have a backup in case of a fire?

SM: Oh, sure I do. Of course I do and put them on digital because you never know what can happen. I don't even like to think about that. They will be all right if anything happens.

WCT: In the book you write about different lifetimes, explaining homosexuality and transgender. That is an interesting idea.

SM: Well, it is and I think it's true. More and more people that experience this way of thought are seeing that the soul itself is androgynous. It is a perfect match and balance of yin and yang. Those are the only two energies, as I learned it, in the cosmos. So okay you have a soul with a typically balanced yin and yang then why wouldn't you want your body to reflect that perfection. I think that is what a lot of these people are doing. Then I have the audacity to say this is what I believe to be in a body that is both or I am in the wrong body and want to

Turn to page 39

WINDY CITY MEDIA GROUP PRESENTS



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2011 VOTING GUIDE



9th Annual WINDY CITY GAY IDOL

Presented by Windy City Media Group



Christine
The Glenwood **1**

Single or taken?
Single and loving friends!

What do you do when not singing?
I write music; it never stops!

Who's your gay idol?
Still Ellen--her swag is amazing!

Most played on your iPod?
"Beautiful" by India.Arie.

Fav part of performing?
Definitely audience response.

Why should you be the next Gay Idol?
Because I openly represent and support my people wholeheartedly. The voice is a bonus!



E
The Glenwood **2**

Single or taken?
Taken.

What do you do when not singing?
I travel and do gardening.

Who's your gay idol?
Susan, the DJ at The Glenwood.

Most played on your iPod?
I don't use an iPod.

Fav part of performing?
The audience.

Why should you be the next Gay Idol?
As a gay man I would love to represent the gay community. It would be an honor!



Ben
Crew **3**

Single or taken?
Single.

What do you do when not singing?
Strive to be filthy/gorgeous.

Who's your gay idol?
David Bowie.

Most played on your iPod?
"Waterloo Sunset" by The Kinks.

Fav part of performing?
The propositions for casual sex.

Why should you be the next Gay Idol?
Freddy Mercury said so in his will.



Amy
DS Tequila Co. **4**

Single or taken?
Single.

What do you do when not singing?
Teach social studies.

Who's your gay idol?
My softball team (big chicks gone wild!).

Most played on your iPod?
Currently anything by Adele.

Fav part of performing?
The drink after.

Why should you be the next Gay Idol?
To follow in the footsteps of many hags, such as Lady Gaga, Bette Midler, and so on.



Shaun
Parlour **5**

Single or taken?
Single.

What do you do when not singing?
Run the Palm Court at the Drake Hotel. Come see me for tea!

Who's your gay idol?
Tim Gunn, for his impeccable style.

Most played on your iPod?
Anything by Whitney!

Fav part of performing?
The crowd having fun and singing along.

Why should you be the next Gay Idol?
I love performing and it would be a dream of mine to hold this title.



Casey
Scarlet **6**

Single or taken?
Taken. In a relationship with someone truly special for over 3 years now.

What do you do when not singing?
I am an actor.

Who's your gay idol?
Dan Savage because of his amazing "It Get's Better" campaign.

Most played on your iPod?
"Bloody Mary" by Lady Gaga.

Fav part of performing?
Definitely audience response.

Why should you be the next Gay Idol?
I've always enjoyed being onstage and performing.



Sylviette
Jackhammer **7**

Single or taken?
Taken.

What do you do when not singing?
I work as a certified nursing assistant and travel in my spare time.

Who's your gay idol?
Luther Vandross.

Most played on your iPod?
"Spend My Life" by Tamia and Eric Benet.

Fav part of performing?
Getting in front of the crowd and making them groove.

Why should you be the next Gay Idol?
I'm a vibrant young woman who isn't afraid to let the Creaoke world hear my song.



James
Jackhammer **8**

Single or taken?
Taken.

What do you do when not singing?
Study journalism at DePaul.

Who's your gay idol?
My incredibly accepting and supportive mother, who comes to every show. (Hi, Mom!)

Most played on your iPod?
It's likely something by Adele at the moment.

Fav part of performing?
The feeling of being onstage performing for an audience.

Why should you be the next Gay Idol?
I believe I have shown the vocal talent, versatility and dedication to deserve this year's title.



TJ
T's **9**

Single or taken?
Taken.

What do you do when not singing?
Program Coordinator for the International Human Rights Law Institute.

Who's your gay idol?
Whitney Houston (pre-, intra-, and post-) drugs/ Bobby Brown.

Most played on your iPod?
"Make Your Own Kind of Music" by Mama Cass Elliott.

Fav part of performing?
The fear you get beforehand and the processes of working through that.

Why should you be the next Gay Idol?
Because ... it gets better.



Jennie
T's **10**

Single or taken?
Taken.

What do you do when not singing?
Dancing.

Who's your gay idol?
Hmmmm ...

Most played on your iPod?
"Turning Tables" by Adele.

Fav part of performing?
The adrenaline rush and making people smile.

Why should you be the next Gay Idol?
I am unique, have fun, and can see the brighter side of anything.



Michael
Roscoe's **11**

Single or taken?
Married since August 2010.

What do you do when not singing?
Teach at North Park U, lead worship at Achurch4me? MCC, and coach people through P90X.

Who's your gay idol?
Levi Kreis.

Most played on your iPod?
"Hardly a Hero" by Levi Kreis.

Fav part of performing?
Inspiring others to be their best.

Why should you be the next Gay Idol?
To use this opportunity to launch a performing career. I will not take this chance lightly.



GLB
The Call **12**

Single or taken?
Single.

What do you do when not singing?
Freelance illustrator and indie singer/songwriter/producer.

Who's your gay idol?
Don't have any.

Most played on your iPod?
A lot of Adele, as well as Sarah McLachlan.

Fav part of performing?
I like to look for different ways of conveying the feelings behind the song.

Why should you be the next Gay Idol?
I'm always up for different ways to express myself as an artist.

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John Arthur Lewis and Jill Connolly in *Lips Together, Teeth Apart*. Photo from the company

THEATER REVIEW

Lips Together, Teeth Apart

Playwright: Terrence McNally
At: Remarcable Productions
at Viaduct Theater, 3111 N. Western
Phone: 773-296-6024; \$18
Runs through: July 2

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

When Terrence McNally's off-Broadway drama *Lips Together, Teeth Apart* debuted in 1991, it could have been lumped together with a number of "AIDS plays" at the time.

However, as evidenced in Remarcable Productions' revival at the Viaduct Theatre, *Lips Together* now comes across more as a conflicted play that underscores the subtle and overt homophobia of two heterosexual couples. This prejudice, along with a myriad of other issues and secrets, come to the fore as the couples spend the 1991 Fourth of July weekend cooped in a beach house in the largely gay enclave of Fire Island, N.Y.

This fish-out-of-water set-up occurs because Sally has inherited her late gay brother's oceanfront property following his death from AIDS. Along for the weekend are Sally's uncouth New Jersey husband, Sam; his chatterbox suburban sister, Chloe; and her snooty husband, John.

McNally clearly modeled this drama on Chekhov, complete with metaphorical incidents (like the suicidal swimmer possibly representing the heterosexual community's complicit inaction on so many AIDS deaths) and the general emotional malaise that affects all the characters. However, McNally seems to take the easy route out dramatically by having his characters soliloquize

their exact and often blunt thoughts rather than having other characters or incidents draw out their feelings.

McNally also features a physically violent struggle in the middle of *Lips Together* that is oddly resolved as if it never happened. But this unconvincing bit of conflict could also extend from the feeling that Remarcable's *Lips Together* cast under Seth Remington's direction isn't always up to the demands of embodying the characters' deeper emotional truths.

As the annoyingly bubbly and musical theater-loving Chloe, Jeanne T. Arrigo's continual blabbing comes off as more effortful instead of second nature. (We also need to get a better sense of Chloe over-accommodating to paper over cracks in her troubled marriage.)

I would have liked a more stark fear of mortality from John Arthur Lewis' take on haughty John, while Jill Connolly's quiet meekness as Sally doesn't plumb the depths of a grieving woman questioning the unfairness of her personal life. Christopher Marcum gets the right amount of tough-guy earthiness down for Sam, though he could work on his comic delivery.

Asking an audience to spend time with these often unlikable characters with varying degrees of homophobia isn't exactly an exciting proposition in *Lips Together, Teeth Apart*. (It becomes contemptible when we learn how everyone avoids the onstage swimming pool because they fear getting infected while taking a dip.) Hopefully, we can look at McNally's play nowadays as both a period piece and reminder of how far more Americans have progressed when it comes to AIDS education and LGBT awareness.

SPOTLIGHT



Time is running out to catch a unique collaboration between Steppenwolf Theatre and Northwestern University directing and designing students called **Next Up**. Three plays, Rajiv Joseph's *Animals Out of Paper*, Lucy Thurber's *Where We're Born* and Suzan Lori-Parks' *Venus* rotate in repertory as theater professionals work with the next generation of theater artists. Next Up productions of *Venus*, *Where We're Born* and *Animals Out of Paper* play in repertory through June 19 at the Steppenwolf Garage Theatre, 1624 N. Halsted. Tickets are \$20 or \$45 for each performance. Call 312-335-1650 or visit <http://www.steppenwolf.org>. Photo of Shane Kenyon and Caroline Neff in *Where We're Born* taken by Michael Brosilow.



Baird & Warner hosts 'OUT of the Office' 2011

BY CONSTANCE RUHOLL

Baird & Warner celebrated its annual "OUT of the Office" LGBTQ Pride Month event June 7 at the Vertigo Sky Lounge downtown.

Chicago publicist Andrew Hayes said, "It's one of the first events to kick off the month and it's just professional. People give a donation at the door and they get a drink in exchange. Every year we benefit a different charity."

The event, in its sixth year, serves as a fundraiser for a charity in the community; this year the beneficiary was Vital Bridges. Vital Bridges is a non-profit organization that provides food, nutrition, housing, case management and prevention services to people throughout the community who are suffering and impacted by HIV and AIDS. The organization recently announced that it will merge with Heartland Alliance July 1.

Open Hand Co-Founder/ Vital Bridges Food Program Coordinator Lori Cannon said, "We are

grateful. We are the city's only meals on wheels and groceries program for men, women, and children all living with HIV and AIDS. We started the program about 25 years ago when our friends were homebound, bed-ridden, and dropping like flies. We couldn't save them; all we could do was feed them."

Baird & Warner Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer Jim Schiefelbein said, "We need to support those who support us in the community. Times are tough and they are especially tough for people living with HIV and AIDS who are seeing their funding and food literally ripped from their mouths. We need to stand up as a community as we've done in the past and help those people out."

Even though there was only a suggested donation of \$10 at the door, the generous donations from attendees helped Vital Bridges with \$1,114.

Photos by Hal Baim



THEATER REVIEW

The Chicago Landmark Project

Playwright: Various authors

At: Theatre Seven of Chicago

at the Greenhouse, 2257 N. Lincoln

Phone: 773-404-7336; \$15-\$30

Runs through: July 10

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The Chicago Landmark Project is divided, festival-style, into two "programs" of six short plays apiece, but in fact, the two parts taken together comprise a running time no longer than your average high-end night at the theater. Unlike most snapshot anthologies, however, the roster is not a simple medley of comedy sketches, snippets from plays-in-progress, group poetry-recitals and



esprit de l'escalier ruminations (though elements of all these genres make their appearance).

Theatre Seven's project proposal was for a number of playwrights to each select a corner of their city as the subject of a 10-minute play. Introducing the geographical theme is Marisa Wegrzyn's speculation on the inventor of the State-and-Madison city grid pitching his idea to his wife ("You'll never be lost! The whole city is yours!"). From there, we proceed through Oz Park to a liquor store at 63rd and Garfield, then to Humboldt Park and Logan Square, stopping at a fashionable coffee shop in Hyde Park, a record shop in Lincoln Square, a vintage dress shop in Wicker Park and many other urban enclaves, concluding our tour amid the haunted ruins of Riverview.

CRITICS' PICKS

The Front Page, TimeLine Theatre, through July 17. Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur's classic 1920s Chicago journalism comedy gets a crackling good production that is so intimate that the audience practically gets to be on top the action. SCM

The Outgoing Tide, Northlight Theatre, through June 26. The seventysomething Gunnar has a degenerative disease and would sooner die than vegetate. What do his wife and son think? Thorny subject, intelligent writing, wonderful acting with John Mahoney at his acerbic best. JA

A Twist of Water, Route 66 Theatre at the Mercury, through June 26. Chicago's historical legacy comes to the aid of lovers and families in what may prove to be Chicago's next breakout hit, following in the wake of *Osage County* and *Chad Deity*. 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

As with most such pageants, the quality is far from uniform: some cultural references may be lost on playgoers from outside the site under scrutiny. Jamil Khoury's discussion of Arab-American relations is no less didactic for being conducted by two attractive women in athleticwear, as is J. Nicole Brooks' analysis of urban decay as explained by a street artist to a West Coast tourist. The Red Orchid Youth Ensemble enlivens a lengthy sermon on the gospel according to L. Frank Baum, but adolescent fury cannot bridge the ellipses in Yolanda Nieves' muddy saga of family conflicts, and Robert Koon's father-daughter confidences never lose sight of who's guiding the conversation.

On the other hand, Brian Golden's chance meeting between a pair of U. of C. eggheads—one "out," one undecided—offers an opportunity for a deftly-wrought exchange of academic double-entendres, and Laura Jacqmin's two buskers at a farmers' market forge a plea for unity—and a few clever songs—from the catalogue of wares for purchase, before Aaron Carter sends us home after our adventures with a ghostly reminder that even legendary fantasy-kingdoms had—and continues to have—their shadowy side. Hey, would it be still be Chicago any other way?



The Chicago Landmark Project's "Division & California" (left) and "Logan & Milwaukee" (above). Photos by Amanda Clifford

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THEATER REVIEW

Northwest Highway

Playwright: William Nedved

At: Gift Theatre Company,

4802 N. Milwaukee

Phone: 773-283-7071; \$25-\$30

Runs through: July 17

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

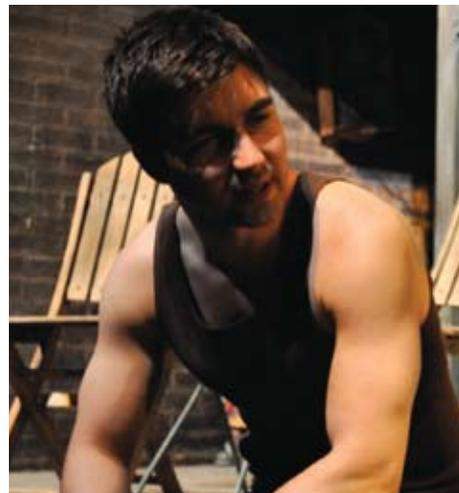
Once its inhabitants have assimilated into middle-class culture, a ghetto ceases to be a ghetto and becomes "The Old Neighborhood," its parochialism recalled with nostalgic affection by those safely distanced therefrom. These altered perceptions do not necessarily reflect hypocrisy. The decision to abandon the security of having your life's path pre-determined by others for the uncertainty of making your own way among strangers is a choice fraught with trauma, but one that must be confronted to achieve true adulthood.

The Chicago community whose foundation is the highway of our play's title is rooted in blue-collar Irish/Eastern European values, spawning Catholic school-educated clans of teachers, firemen, policemen and parents. Our thirtysomething hero is a product of this insular environment: a law enforcement officer (albeit with a college degree in *philosophy*, of all subjects), now encumbered with a hoggish (and possibly crooked) work-partner, a barmaid girl friend (who's just announced that she's pregnant), and the family house (filled with the detritus of generations). Oh, and a pair of dueling real estate agents guiding him to a suitable environment for a family man—one of them, his boyhood buddy (who is now out-and-proud gay) and the other, his bossy aunt (who, at 42, fled to embrace the yuppie lifestyle with a vengeance).

This is enough premise to fuel an entire television series, ripe with promises of subsequent intrigues both sudsy-dramatic (cops under

investigation over missing drugs, a reformed-addict romantic rival) and cuddly-comic (Aunt Joyce's African-American Hyde Park-academic husband, Colin's propensity for Latino boys). Under Si Osborne's deft direction, however, what could have deteriorated into domestic hankie-wringing emerges a surprisingly uncluttered 90 minutes on Gift Theatre's snug stage, its weighty complications proceeding at a tempo neither overly-rushed nor cloyingly maudlin, even as its physical action never seems cramped by Adam Lucas Veness' museum-replica backyard/porch/basement-stairs scenic design.

None of this would matter if the actors did not likewise resist the temptation to mock the stereotypical aspects of their characters, instead delving to the heart of the identity crises facing the denizens of a district much like that right outside the theater, but could just as easily be any place perceived by restless youths as better to be *from* than to be *in*. Isn't looking back always more comfortable than venturing forward?



Northwest Highway. Photo courtesy of the Gift Theatre

THEATER REVIEW

Lighthousekeeping

Playwright: Georgette Kelly from

the Jeanette Winterson novel

At: New Leaf Theatre at

the Storefront Theatre, 66 E. Randolph

Tickets: 312-742-8497;

<http://www.dcatheater.org>; \$25

Runs through: July 17

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

I'm told Lighthousekeeping is a magical novel with a huge following, so I wanted this world-premiere stage adaptation to enchant me. It didn't because I couldn't hear it, or at least not enough of it. Sure, I could hear the sound of words, but I couldn't understand them. I missed important exposition and events in this narrator-driven story, and I missed them for two reasons.

First, director Jessica Hutchinson and scenic designer Michelle Lilly chose to use the Storefront Theater in a so-called alley configuration, with the audience on two sides and the stage running the length of the theater between them. This meant that half the time the actors were facing away from me, speaking to the folks across the alley in an acoustically unfriendly hall. Second, the actors frequently spoke at the level of an off-stage intimate conversation. This is all too common in smaller Off-Loop houses: actors and directors forget that projection is necessary even in intimate spaces. Acting is *not* real conversation. Audiences cannot fill in the blanks—if there are blanks—as directors and actors can, having heard the lines over and over in rehearsal.

It's a shame for me more than for the production, because I got enough of Lighthousekeeping to find it intriguing but not enough to understand its mysticism. It's a story inside a story, although the narrative of the life of Silver, the 20th-century orphan hero, and of her mentor, lighthouse man Pew, and of Babel Dark, the 19th-century son of the lighthouse builder, all are supposed to be true. Obviously, repetitive cycles of behavior are important involving "fallen" women (in the Victorian sense), opportunistic men and illegitimate children. Also important are personal and communal narratives as means of self-definition, and there's a great deal about



From left: Tim Martin and Daniel McEvilly in Lighthousekeeping. Photo by John W. Sisson, Jr.

love, duality and nature/nurture. Robert Louis Stevenson and Charles Darwin make cameo appearances to expound on the latter two issues.

The physical staging is quite fine, notwithstanding how it exacerbates acoustical issues. Lilly's expansive and imaginative scenic design features second-story platforms at either end of the alley stage, topped by semi-abstract pinwheels of bricks and sculptings suggesting refracted light. Among the principal performers, Ron Butts as Pew is warm and charming, Tien Doman and Caroline Phillips as Silver/Young Silver have earnest and waif-like appeal and Daniel McEvilly's Babel Dark is all tormented sensuality. They offer good performances in Rachel Sypniewski's costumes, appropriate both to period and character. However, if you adapt a novel to the stage, retaining large chunks of third person narration and telling far more than you show, then clarity—both figurative *and* literal—needs to be job one. I didn't dislike Lighthousekeeping, but it wasn't all there for me.

CULTURE CLUB

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CHERRY FOUNDATIONTonys show
has 'Heart'

The Broadway production of Larry Kramer's *The Normal Heart* took three honors at the June 12 awards show, which aired on CBS.

Heart, which was first produced off-Broadway in 1985, focuses on the early years of the AIDS epidemic in New York City. It won the Tony for Best Revival of a Play, and won awards for Ellen Barkin (Best Performance by an Actress in a Featured Role in a Play) and out actor John Benjamin Hickey (Best Performance by an Actor in a Featured Role in a Play).

In his speech, Kramer said, "Dearest loving mother to *The Normal Heart*, Daryl Roth, generous Paul Boskind, and everyone, thank you for this magnificent production. To gay people everywhere, whom I love so. *The Normal Heart* is our history. It could not have been written had not so many of us so needlessly died. Learn from it, and carry on the fight. Let them know that we are a very special people, an exceptional people. And that our day will come."

The evening's big winner was *The Book of Mormon*, a musical-comedy about missionaries in AIDS-ravaged Africa; the production took nine awards, including Best Musical.

Among the many other winners were Frances McDormand (Best Performance by an Actress in Leading Role in a Play, for *Good People*), a tearful Nikki M. James (Best Performance by an Actress in a Featured Role in a Musical, for *The Book of Mormon*) and Kathleen Marshall (Best Choreography, for *Anything Goes*).

Lookingglass Theatre Company received a Regional Theatre Tony Award. It's the fifth Chicago company to be honored. Tony winners Laura Benanti and Katie Finnerman presented the award.

Eve Ensler—who has a huge feminist/lesbian following because of her work, *The Vagina Monologues*—received the Isabelle Stevenson Award. The award is named after the late president of the American Theatre Wing.

Openly gay host Neil Patrick Harris was widely praised, setting the tone for the evening with a number entitled "Broadway ... It's Not Just for Gays Anymore!" Among other things, he performed a song-and-dance number with Hugh Jackman.

Windy City Queercast contributor Colman Domingo was nominated in the category Best Performance by an Actor in a Featured Role in a Musical for his role in *The Scottsboro Boys*, but lost to John Larroquette (*How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*).

MUSIC/TELEVISION

Cazwell: Not just another DJ

BY JOE FRANCO

Cazwell is often called a "gay hip-hop" artist but the man and his music are more than that. Windy City Times got a chance to chat with Cazwell June 10 about his new music video show, Boombox, which airs exclusively on here!TV, and about his music, his videos (including "Ice Cream Truck") and his life.

Windy City Times: Hey Cazwell! How are you?

Cazwell: Well, I just flew in and they lost my luggage—so not great.

WCT: Well that's a big bummer.

Cazwell: Eh. It happens.

WCT: Well, you've got a new show premiering soon, don't you?

Cazwell: Yes, I do! I think it actually premieres tonight on here!TV.

WCT: How did you end up landing that gig?

Cazwell: Well, the producers of the show sought me. They sought me up and down. I think they narrowed their search to just 12 potential hosts. We had some meetings. I did my screen test and I *aced* it. I got the job.

WCT: Do you get any say-so or creative direction on the kind of videos you'll be playing?

Cazwell: Yes! I work with here!TV and my manager. We'll be featuring everything from alternative to rock to dance and some pop. What surprised me the most was the amount of effort it takes to get a video on the air. It's not like I'm streaming YouTube videos. It can be difficult but it's getting better.

WCT: Which artists will you feature?

Cazwell: Oh, man. Well I know Hunx and his Punx, Chris Willis, Ultra Nate, Crystal Waters, who is making a comeback. She's got lots of new stuff out now. Roxy Cottontail, J.P. Samson, Beth Ditto and Peaches. I love Peaches; she's kind of an inspiration to me.

WCT: Is there anyone that you really would love to see on the show?

Cazwell: Wouldn't it be amazing if Lady Gaga premiered a video on here!TV? The ratings would be through the roof. Sort of like back in the day when Madonna would premiere something and the world would stop to see it. She's still around. She just needs more Latin in her life.

WCT: I'm definitely old enough to remember the old-school Madonna videos. Do you remember your first video?

It was probably something by Cyndi Lauper—maybe "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun?" I love that—how it's a mini-movie. Videos today follow a format. Okay, lets take three dancers. Now three scenes. Now dance and sing and cut. There is no story. I think some artists are doing more stories now and I like it.

WCT: Well about some old-school throwback videos?



Cazwell.

Cazwell: Throwback videos! That's such a good question ... Like Missy Elliot's "The Rain." That video made a mark. I know we'd like to keep the majority of the videos current, like in the past year or year and a half. But I would love to get some older ones, though—especially if I can use it to reference another video.

WCT: What's going on in the NYC music scene now?

Cazwell: Well, there's lots going on in Brooklyn right now. But I'm so busy with my own shit that it's hard to keep up. Electrohouse is big right now. It's not the best, though. There is way too much top 40 music being played in gay clubs. It's so hard to differentiate between what is club music and what's a top 40 song. Like Ke\$ha. Her music is a super-fast beat but you hear it all over the radio.

WCT: Now I heard a rumor you were coming to Chicago in July. Where are you performing?

Cazwell: It's not at all confirmed, but I'd like to. Chicago is a great music town. I've performed at Berlin and Hydrate a few times. I love Greg [Haus] at Berlin—good stuff.

WCT: Berlin plays your video for "Ice Cream Truck." How did that video come together?

Cazwell: Basically, I had no money and a small budget for time. It was for a friend's movie, called Spork. I was like, "I don't want to do this song. Can't you just use one of my old ones?" He just wouldn't take no for an answer. So I had 45 minutes left before the deadline and it all came to me. My manager suggested I shoot a short video for it. Everything was shot in my apartment. The backgrounds were all spandex. It's dedicated to the hot Latino boys in my neighborhood.

WCT: Wait. Those guys live in your neighborhood?!

Cazwell: Well those guys are actually all friends of mine that I get to work with.

WCT: That must make for some fun...

Cazwell: What—orgies?

WCT: Oh, no!

Cazwell: Ha, ha! I kid. No. The guys are really engaging. I think that's why people pay attention. The most popular go-go boys at a bar are the ones who are engaging, who smile. I made them smile. So they make you think that you could approach them ... or even better ... that they'll approach you. Cute but with some attitude.

WCT: Are there other artists you're working with?

Cazwell: Peaches! I love her. I just did a song with her. It's very rock-dance. Very easy to like. I don't have a name for the song yet but we're between a couple titles.

WCT: You're often described as a "gay hip-hop artist" or "rapper" but from what I have heard, I think you're probably more than that.

Cazwell: Thank you! I'm not a hip-hop artist. I was introduced to hip-hop when I lived in Boston. I started rapping since I really can't sing. I tried hard to get accepted by that community. They came to the conclusion that no matter how good my music was or how good I was, straight hip-hop people don't like hanging out with gay guys. You can't be a fag and be in hip-hop. If you are? You better not be out. I like to create a sound that let's people be as creative as they want to be. If I think like that then my music shows it.

WCT: What do you want to say to your Chicago fans?

Cazwell: Follow me on Twitter! I'm cazwellnyc. Second, if people like my music then please buy it. Don't download it for free. If I get paid, I can actually create more music. It's just how it works. Also, demand me! I want to be a resident there, even if it's just bimonthly.

Cazwell's new show premiered June 10 on here!TV. The network is available on most major cable providers by selecting "Premium" from the On Demand menu and then selecting "here! On Demand". You can also subscribe on-line through <http://premium.heretv.com>.

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MOVIES

Local filmmaker tries to get gay love story off the ground

BY CONSTANCE RUHOLL

I Am the Water, You Are the Sea is a documentary by Malachi A. Leopold about the love of two men that survived political upheaval and continental distance. In Leopold's words, it is a story about breaking down various barriers, including those of religion, politics and hate. The documentary follows the story of Alex and Ali as they try to reunite after 33 years of longing separation.

Windy City Times: Where did the idea for the film come from?

Malachi A. Leopold: I've been working on *I Am the Water, You are the Sea* for two years. We were wrapping production on another documentary at the time (*22 Years From Home*, which airs on WTTW Sunday, July 10, at 1 p.m.) and I was looking for my next project. I had been working on a number of possible stories which, in one way or another, were addressing how the "West" views and behaves towards Islam and Muslims.

Given the rising tensions with Iran, and the efforts within Iran itself for reform, I felt a story about Iran could be great way to show what the everyday people of Iran are like, versus the constant crap we see about their political leadership—their leadership which is *not* representative of who Iranians are, what they believe and what they want their lives to be about.

I knew my uncle (Alex) had served with the Peace Corps in Iran, so I approached him about his story. What he told me was astounding. A secret gay love relationship in 1960s and 1970s in Iran, during the rule of the Shah—a relationship which was interrupted when he fled the coming Iranian revolution. And a relationship which has survived to this today, despite the distance. After the revolution had sort of leveled



Alex and Ali. Photo courtesy of Malachi A. Leopold

out, they'd found each other again (via mail), and have now kept in touch (and in love) for years. So my uncle and I spent the last two years working on getting the full story of their time in Iran together down on paper.

WCT: Where does the film's title come from?

MAL: The film's title comes from a love letter from Ali to Alex—Alex talks about the letter and the film's title in this video we posted here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XEV8w7DaZGM>

WCT: What does filming his story mean to you?

MAL: In one sense, what this film means to me is that I simply get to continue doing what I love most—making a positive impact on the world around me. A few years ago I stopped asking myself what I wanted to do, and started asking what I wanted my life to be *about*. And what I knew was that, regardless of what I actually did on a day-to-day basis, as long as I was aligned with my values, as long as my time was spent being about what was most important to me, then the details of the doing could really be anything from being a financial advisor (which

I was for several years) to making movies—although I much prefer making movies.

This project also means that I can share with others my personal story of moving from a place of homophobia and intolerance to a place of support and advocacy for the LGBT community. In other words, as much as I want to create positive social change in the world, I have to be adamant about making sure I'm being the change I want to see, not just encouraging others to do it.

WCT: What about filming do you enjoy most?

MAL: On a personal level, I feel like I'm doing what I should be doing with my life; I'm very fulfilled doing this work. [It's] not so much because it's creative or about "making movies," but really because I see my life as being about making the world a better place—and how I do that is through producing and directing films which further positive social change.

On another level—when it comes to the actual filming itself—I love the unique access a camera gives you. Access to people and places you would just never be allowed if you weren't filming something. It's so cool sometimes! I can only imagine what that moment is going to be like filming Alex and Ali seeing each other again for the first time in more than 33 years.

It's one of those things you really have to prepare for, because the emotion of that moment—something that literally will and can only happen once in the history of the world—that moment can so easily overwhelm you. And instead of being focused on making sure you're capturing the moment on camera with proper light and sound and angles and so forth, you're dabbing your eyes and wanting to hug everyone around you. Moments like that are very challenging, because they're so beautiful to witness, but my job being there is to capture it, not dissolve into tears. The tears usually have to wait until we finish a film.

WCT: How is the film being funded?

MAL: We're funding the filming of the reunion

through our Kickstarter campaign. We need \$25,000 for a small crew to accompany Alex from the U.S. to the Middle East where he'll be reunited with Ali—we'll be on location there for a few weeks this fall.

WCT: Will the film be produced if you do not find enough funds from Kickstarter.com?

MAL: Well, yes and no. Look, where there's a will there's a way. I am determined to tell this story no matter what. But I truly believe there are enough people out there who will be inspired by this story and what it means, what it represents, and get us to our goal. If the "worst" happened—well, I guess I'd figure something out. But one way or another, I'll be there to film the reunion. This is a story that has to be told.

WCT: How are you raising awareness about the project?

MAL: A combination of individuals within my network, outreach to media (blogs, TV, newspapers, magazines, etc), and connecting with organizations such as the Human Rights Campaign, Human Rights Watch, Immigration Equality and GLAAD as we build and roll out our social action campaign.

WCT: What kind of audience are you hoping to reach with the film?

MAL: Like I say in my pitch video—at its heart, this is a love story, and I think the tenderness and beauty of it will really touch people. I think anyone can connect to the feeling of wanting something so bad, but having a hard time getting it. There is, of course, a natural, built-in sort of audience within the LGBT community because of the film's themes and our social action efforts. But *I am the Water, You are the Sea* is about breaking down barriers—barriers of fear, intolerance, misunderstanding, hate. Barriers of politics, religion, laws. Barriers that, for me as I was growing up, were rather formidable. But I was able to change.

If you would like to help fund the campaign for *I am the Water, You are the Sea*, visit <http://www.kickstarter.com> by July 1.

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MOVIES

Ky Dickens on her 'Sole' ambition

BY TULLY SATRE

For a long time after the release of the LGBT documentary *Fish Out of Water*, award-winning director Ky Dickens was anxious to start a new project. "This is like when you go out and try to look for a boyfriend or a girlfriend," Dickens joked, "You have to wait for it to find you." Dickens said she knew the right film would eventually come to her.

Dickens' ideas for a new project started last May. She recalled reading about a 9-year-old Dutch boy named Ruben van Assouw. Assouw was the sole survivor of Afriqiyah Airways Flight 771, which crashed on approach to Tripoli International Airport in the early evening hours of May 12, 2010. Struck by his amazing story of survival, Dickens was intrigued. She continued to look into other aviation accidents yielding sole or "lone" survivors.

"The more I researched the more I found that many [sole survivors] were children," Dickens said, "[who] just appeared to walk away unscathed from accidents where nothing was left." At the time, Dickens was not set on the idea for a film, she was just curious.

Her career was already off to a great start. *Fish Out of Water*, Dickens' first feature film, explored the seven Bible passages notoriously used to condemn homosexuality and arrest the struggle for equality. The documentary received awards and nominations in festivals all around the country, and more importantly, provided the LGBT community with a tool they did not have before.

"*Fish Out of Water* felt like the most difficult thing that I have ever done," Dickens recalled, "Because I felt like I needed to give it my full undivided attention for three to four years every

day." She felt desperate for a break.

Dickens headed to the Burning Man festival in the Black Rock Desert of Nevada, just outside of Reno, in August of last year. During her research about sole survivors she recalled an accident in Reno with a lone survivor; Galaxy Airlines Flight 203 crashed shortly after takeoff in the early hours of Jan. 21, 1985, killing 73 people. George Lamson, 17 at the time, was the sole survivor. Dickens reached out to him.

The Chicago filmmaker and the sole survivor met for lunch before Dickens headed into the desert for the five-day festival. "We started talking and had an 'a-ha' moment," said Dickens. The two bonded over similar experiences. In high school, Dickens was involved in a fatal car accident, which left her with guilt she still carries. Still unsure if she is ready to talk openly about what happened, Dickens recalled writing a paper about the accident for an English class. Without her consent, the paper was made public. Dickens said the publicity made the situation worse and only intensified her feelings of remorse and responsibility about the events that unfolded after the accident.

Although her conversation with Lamson, Dickens began to realize how a survivor's trauma was often misunderstood. "I think that we're all guilty of this to some degree," said Dickens. "If you hear a guy just came back from war and everyone in his contingent was killed, many people would say, 'you're so lucky' ... or someone who survived AIDS, while all of his friends died, or the only house standing in an Alabama neighborhood after a tornado...we don't realize the damage of something dying with that person that day, too. When you witness an entire community obliterated, a great deal of damage is done."



Ky Dickens.

She said society tends to assign to survivors the need to feel lucky or grateful. After the accident, Lamson was praised in the media as a hero and the product of a miracle, complicating his own sense of identity. "We don't take the time to assimilate someone back into society with the resources they need," said Dickens. With no one to relate to, Lamson was indeed a lone survivor.

On her way back from Burning Man, Dickens had six hours to kill before her flight. Though she barely knew him, she called Lamson to see if he would like to meet for breakfast. Lamson picked Dickens up from the airport. After passing several restaurants, Dickens asked why they had not yet stopped. "He said, 'I am going to take you somewhere,'" remembered Dickens. "I immediately said to myself, 'My mother told me not to get into a car with a stranger!'"

They stopped at a field on the side of the road

and Dickens was instructed to get out of the car. "I thought, 'This is it,'" said Dickens, "But then he started telling me, 'this is where the plane went down,' and then he looked at me and said, 'I've never told anyone this...I've never come back here.'" Lamson told Dickens he wanted to make a film with her.

"I told him if he put his whole self into it, then I'd put my whole self into it. It was kind of a dramatic moment," laughed Dickens; that was when she knew she would be making her next film.

Having completed a successful bid for \$20,000 on Kickstarter, production for *Sole Survivor*, is well underway.

Sole Survivor will be the second feature film for Yellow Wing Productions, Dickens' Chicago-based production company. The film focuses on lone survivors of airplane crashes as they, "embody the experience of all types of survivor because their experience is acute, public and dramatic." The documentary follows George Lamson, one of fourteen sole survivors in a commuter plane crash. With Dickens, Lamson will embark on a journey across eleven countries, three generations and a myriad of cultures to connect with the thirteen other sole survivors of large-scale commercial plane crashes.

"I think there are two things that I like to do when deciding what project to work on," said Dickens, "I like to find a story or topic that has not been covered in a specific way ... and I like it to have a spiritual element."

"There were many films that looked at spirituality," Dickens recalled when she first began filming *Fish Out of Water*, "but no film that had looked through the unique passages. None of the stories in *Sole Survivor* have ever been collected in a book or for a film. This film penetrates questions about purpose and random chance."

Dickens hopes to wrap up production by the end of the year with an intended release in 2012. More information is at <http://www.solesurvivorfilm.com>.

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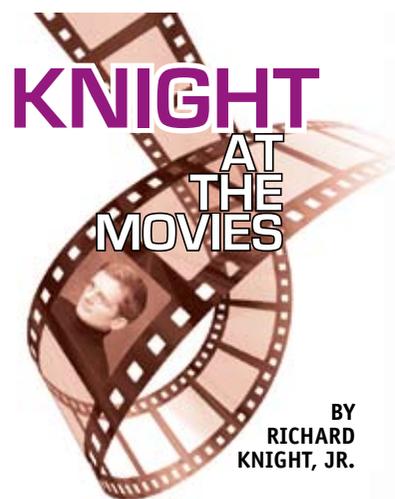
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photo of Hollis Resnik from *Over Drive* Directed by Andrea Campbell



BY
RICHARD
KNIGHT, JR.

Stephen Sondheim's Company; film notes

Neil Patrick Harris is the latest in a long line of gay actors to successfully portray the role of the straight, single, middle-aged Bobby with all the married friends in **Stephen Sondheim's Company**. This most recent edition, taped before a live audience with the New York Philharmonic in April, is coming to movie theatres for just four dates—June 15, 16, 19 and 21—a rare chance for fans of musical theatre to merge with fans of movie musicals. Need I mention that both categories are chock full of Our People who shouldn't miss this rare opportunity to see, hear and glorify in all things Sondheim?

Harris is supported by an illustrious cast of well-known television and theatre actors (Martha Plimpton, Stephen Colbert, Kate Finneran, Christina Hendricks and Anika Noni Rose, among them) with the legendary Patti LuPone stepping into the role of diva Joanne, who memorably belts out "Ladies Who Lunch" (made famous by the previous generation's legend, Elaine Stritch). Harris is a superb choice for Bobby—the irresistibly boyish bachelor doted on by his married women friends ("Poor Baby" they sing about their Bobby Bubby) and envied by their horndog husbands (who offer dating advice via the song "Have I Got A Girl for You")—and he brings not only his affable charm and made-to-order singing voice but also the certain bitter-sweet, reflective qualities the material needs.

Company is considered a landmark musical, and for good reason: It's the first of the truly "modern" musicals that eschewed romantic, light-hearted, feel-good musical-comedy progenitors and replaced them with a much more realistic and often-cynical approach. Company set the bar and went further by refusing to tether Sondheim's amazing songs to an integrated



Patti LuPone in Stephen Sondheim's Company.

book. (Instead, the freestanding songs comment on George Furth's sometimes humorous and often acrid vignettes.) The result left one feeling disquieted and reflective rather than joyful (as it still does,) though Sondheim's lyrical insights and gorgeous melodies have always helped ease the pain of the dark aftertaste that comes from the bulk of this and many of his other shows.

Longtime Sondheim collaborator Lonny Price has staged the show with revolving, modular set pieces; minimal but clever choreography; and retro costumes harkening back to 1970, when Company opened on Broadway—all of which certainly help. The bulk of the performances surrounding Harris' solid work at the center also are blessings. Sondheim's sensational score is sung well, if not particularly memorably (Harris and LuPone's solos aside), backed by the 35-piece orchestra playing Jonathan Tunick's beautiful arrangements (under the baton of another longtime Sondheim collaborator, Paul Gemignani). At times the eerily perfect voices make one miss the personality inherent in those of the original cast and, though the actors are pitching hard in their individual vignettes in which Bobby the bachelor observes the lives of the five married couples, Furth's sitcomish material is still awfully thin and the wait for one of those indelible Sondheim songs can seem interminable.

What's most fascinating about yet another production of this much-beloved, rather icy musical—aside from the joy of it finally being shown in a movie theatre—is, as previously mentioned, taking pleasure in watching another gay actor successfully essaying a straight role that has, in its 40-year history, generally eluded the gifts of the heterosexual actors who have attempted the part. This oddly fascinating conundrum might have something to do with the fact that, as New York magazine columnist Adam Feldman has said, Bobby's "straightness seems a

requirement of the plot but not of the character." Perhaps gay men just have a higher comfort level with a guy who is clearly more at ease with the ladies than the men? (Another intriguing matter bubbling right under the surface of the show is why Sondheim and Furth, both gay men, created a landmark musical about the plusses and minuses of marriage in the first place.)

Sondheim and Furth have always contended that Bobby is not, never will be and never could be queer (the duo's updating of the material in the mid-'90s includes Bobby stating emphatically, "I'm not gay") and it's true that Company, in its original and this updated form, wouldn't really work if the character was. However, at the point that same-sex marriage becomes a national reality in this country, I'm betting the duo give the show yet one more facelift and we'll see Roberta, the bachelorette, content to be single as she peeks in the lives of the five married gay couples who are her best friends.

Film notes:

—When his mother passed away, filmmaker Mark Wexler tackled his grief in part by exploring his own mortality—and maybe, how to prevent it. The resulting film, **How to Live Forever**, is an eye-opening, sobering and surprisingly—given its subject matter—entertaining tour that takes in an undertakers' convention, a visit to a cryogenic installation and other end-of-life industries as well as advice on the subject from Suzanne Somers, Phyllis Diller, Ray Bradbury and a host of scientists working on extending life well beyond its current expiration date. The film's Chicago premiere opens at the Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State, Friday, June 17. Wexler will be present for post-screening discussions the opening weekend. www.siskelfilmcenter.org

—The Siskel is also celebrating gay pride with a 20th-anniversary screening of Todd Haynes' seminal queer classic **Poison** on June 18 and 22. (A new 35mm print will be shown.) The 1991 indie feature kickstarted both the new queer cinema movement and Haynes' subsequent filmmaking career, and was at the epicenter of cultural controversy—all of which I will explore in depth in next week's annual pride issue.

—The Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington, along with a batch of co-presenters including WTTW-11, has scheduled a Pride Month screening (Saturday, June 18, at 2 p.m. in the Claudia Cassidy Theatre) of the documentary **Two Spirits**. Directed by Lydia Nibley, the film, according to press materials, "explores the life and death of Fred Martinez and the ancient Native American two-spirit tradition" which accepts persons with integrated genders. The screening will be followed by a panel discussion moderated by Kirsten Cox, a communications professional and former drag performer. Panelists include Kokumo Kinetic, a transgender spoken-word artist and filmmaker; Kate Sosin of GenderQueer Chicago; Avi Rudnick, of the Transformative Justice Law Project of Illinois; and Dr. Dorene Wiese, president of the Illinois American Indian Association. The event is free and open to the public. <http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/two-spirits/>

—Thirty-three years ago Alex, a young Peace Corps volunteer in Tehran, was separated from his Iranian lover, Ali, just as the stage was being set for the Iran revolution. In the ensuing years the men have been in contact but have not seen each other since the fateful day of their parting. Now, local filmmaker Malachi Leopold, Alex's nephew, has begun a Kickstarter campaign to help fund a documentary (and potentially a feature film down the road) titled **I am the Water, You are the Sea** that will explore both the couple's reunion (scheduled for this fall), their love affair which began in 1967 and the issues that forced their separation in the first place—issues that continue to plague thousands of gay couples worldwide. You can find out more about the project and help Leopold realize his dream by contributing to the campaign (which is ongoing until July 1 in honor of gay pride) at <http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/malachileopold/i-am-the-water-you-are-the-sea>.

www.kickstarter.com/projects/malachileopold/i-am-the-water-you-are-the-sea.

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

Tracy Morgan goes on anti-gay rant, apologizes

Comedian and 30 Rock actor Tracy Morgan has been accused of homophobia.

Kevin Rogers reported on his Facebook page that, while attending Morgan's stand-up act in Nashville, Tenn., Morgan went on a viciously anti-gay rant. Rogers alleges that "Morgan took it upon himself to mention about how he feels all this gay s*it was crazy and that women are a gift from God and that 'Born this Way' is bulls*it, gay is a choice, and the reason he knows this is exactly because 'God don't make no mistakes.'"

Morgan sent the following statement (through a spokeswoman) to Windy City Times: "I want to apologize to my fans and the gay & lesbian community for my choice of words at my recent stand-up act in Nashville. I'm not a hateful person and don't condone any kind of violence against others. While I am an equal opportunity jokester, and my friends know what is in my heart, even in a comedy club this clearly went too far and was not funny in any context."

However, some were not satisfied with an apology. Human Rights Campaign Vice President of Communications Fred Sainz said in a statement, "Tracy Morgan exercised extremely poor judgment and he did the right thing by apologizing. But that's just not enough. He's a role model and Morgan now has a responsibility to make amends for his horribly hurtful and dangerous 'comedy' routine."

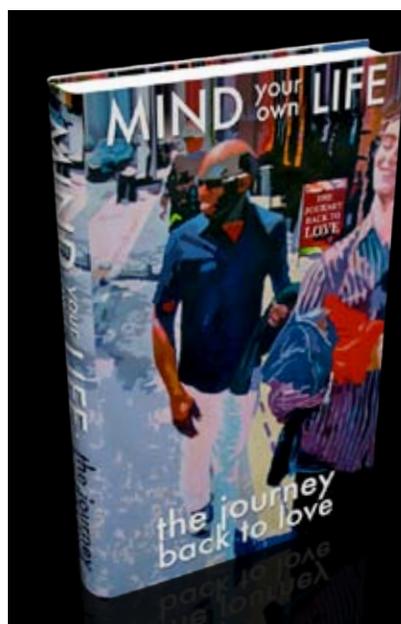
The statement also cites a comment 30 Rock lead actress Tina Fey said to TMZ.com: "The violent imagery of Tracy's rant was disturbing to me at a time when homophobic hate crimes continue to be a life-threatening issue for the GLBT community. It also doesn't line up with the Tracy Morgan I know, who is not a hateful man and is generally much too sleepy and self-centered to ever hurt another person."

Truth Wins Out Executive Wayne Besen was fine with Morgan's apology but wanted to know more: "We at Truth Wins Out appreciate Tracy's apology. We are glad that he recognizes that he hurt and offended people. However, questions, sadly, remain.

"Where do Tracy Morgan's anti-gay sentiments come from? ... Does he understand why people—LGBT or not, in Tennessee and beyond—were so hurt by what he said?"

GLAAD issued a press release June 13 stating that it had met with Morgan. The release said that "During a call with GLAAD President Jarrett Barrios and members of GLAAD's staff today, Morgan committed to meet this week in New York City with LGBT youth from the Ali Forney Center who have been hurt or left homeless by parental rejection as well as family members who have lost children to anti-gay violence." Morgan also will participate in GLAAD's upcoming "Amplify Your Voice" PSA campaign to combat anti-LGBT bullying.

Morgan stated to GLAAD: "I know how bad bullying can hurt. I was bullied when I was a kid. I'm sorry for what I said. I didn't mean it. I never want to use my comedy to hurt anyone. My family knew what it was like to feel different. My brother was disabled, and I lost my father to AIDS in 1987."



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TELEVISION

Peter Marc Jacobson: Gay producer works with ex Fran Drescher on new show

BY CONSTANCE RUHOLL

Peter Marc Jacobson is currently working as an executive producer for the TV Land show *Happily Divorced*, starring Fran Drescher. The show is based on Jacobson and Drescher's real-life relationship, including their marriage, divorce and the life together that ensued afterwards. It is a witty family comedy that is sure to please a variety of audience members.

Windy City Times: Hello, Peter. During my research for this interview I found that you have produced and written several shows but you have also done some acting of your own. Were there any specific actors or shows that inspired you to begin an acting career?

Peter Marc Jacobson: You know, when I was a kid I was fascinated by sitcoms. I was a big fan of *I Love Lucy* and it all started from there. I moved to Los Angeles and started doing commercials, modeling and sitcoms. It was a great ground to learn.

WCT: After acting for so many years, what made you switch to producing and being behind the camera?

PMJ: You know, I drove myself nuts as an actor. I would always question myself and my abilities. It felt like I was doing it just to prove to myself that I could do it even though I wasn't having fun at it. When I was acting Fran used to say you should quit acting and go behind the scenes. With directing and producing you have more control. I was at peace when I started producing shows like *The Nanny*.

WCT: What was the first show you produced?

PMJ: The first show I created was a spin-off for *Who's the Boss*. The show wasn't picked up so I went back to acting. I also wrote a show called *CCPD* that was sold to Fox but they decided not to produce it. *CCPD* was a sitcom similar to that of *Reno 911!* Around that same time I sold *The Nanny* to CBS.

WCT: Besides your current projects, what production or show did you enjoy working on the most?

PMJ: When you're lucky enough to have a show like *The Nanny* that becomes a hit in the '90s on CBS and you have a great actress like Fran working for you, it really feels like a gift. How lucky am I to be able to do what I love and write for amazing actors. I can't believe it was me that actually got to do it. It's very strange to think of but wonderful at the same time.

WCT: *The Nanny* was co-created by both you and your then-wife, Fran Drescher. Was it difficult to work with your wife in a professional setting?

PMJ: We worked well together. Of course, we would yell and scream when we disagreed but we knew that the show had to be nurtured and we weren't going to mess it up. It was our baby. She is brilliantly funny and it was a gift to work with her. The hardest part was that during the show our life together was breaking up.

WCT: It says a lot about your relationship that you are still able to continue working together even after the divorce. On a lighter



Peter Marc Jacobson. Photo courtesy of TV Land

note, I'm sure you have answered this question hundreds of times but did Fran, your wife, really laugh like that or was it a character choice for her?

PMJ: Nope. [Laughs] That's the way she laughs and that's the way she speaks. When I met her in high school she stuck out to me. She has such a unique persona. When I met her parents they had no idea she had a funny voice. She has taken some classes to give her more variety for acting though.

WCT: Has the producing dynamic changed since the divorce, seeing as you were married for the production of *The Nanny*?

PMJ: Now the show is based lightly on our relationship but I think we work better now than we did then. It has definitely changed. When I wasn't dealing with who I was I would get angry and work could be frustrating. It's a much easier ride this time.

WCT: Whose idea was it that your situation could be made for television?

PMJ: Fran and I went to Paris on vacation when we were divorced. It still felt like we were husband and wife, and we discussed the idea. Fran had a meeting with TV Land and they asked Fran what kind of show she would like to do if she were to return to television. She said she wanted to do a show about her relationship with her ex-husband. She said that she wanted to do the show with me and they bought the idea at the meeting. We wrote the script and they bought ten episodes.

WCT: I understand that Fran is playing her character counterpart in the show. Why did you opt to choose another actor to portray your character counterpart? How do you feel about him playing you on the show?

PMJ: Well, A: I'm writing; there isn't enough time during the day, and B: we discussed it for a while but John Michael Higgins came in and I would be stupid to pass him up. He is so talented and he makes me look good. We found him on the last day of casting. He's so good that I'm thrilled to have him on the show. He and Fran have amazing chemistry. It seems like they are married and you just can't fake that.

WCT: *Happily Divorced* premieres June 15. What kind of audience are you hoping to reach with the show?

PMJ: People who like to laugh. It's not offensive; it's a funny adult family sitcom with a twist. Some of the jokes on the show have double entendre so both adults and children will be able to enjoy it. I think they will enjoy a lot of it. If you've ever loved someone a lot but it just didn't work out this show will speak to you. Many people will like it for different reasons. I hope that people give it a chance and tune in.

The TV Land show *Happily Divorced*, starring Fran Drescher and John Michael Higgins, Wed., June 15, at 9:30 p.m. CT.

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Dustin Lance Black on his new project, gay pride and more

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Oscar-winning screenwriter Dustin Lance Black (Milk) has a new project. The Courage Campaign has launched a nationwide video challenge with Black called "Testimony: Take a Stand," in which they look for stories from everyday Americans regarding LGBT equality.

Windy City Times: I know this is two years late, but congratulations on the Oscar win. I have to ask: Where do you keep your award?

Dustin Lance Black: Oh, thanks man—that seems like a lifetime ago. I actually gave the Oscar to my mom; she has it in Virginia.

WCT: Now on to the Courage Campaign. Could you talk about the "Testimony" project? It was launched on Harvey Milk Day [May 22].

DLB: Sure. I'm involved with the American Foundation for Equal Rights, or AFER; we're the ones involved with the federal case against Proposition 8 in California, and it's looking incredibly likely that it's going to end up in the U.S. Supreme Court. I look at that and I look at the time between now and then ... and I realized that we need to make it clear that America is trending towards equality.

There was a little bit of brainstorming about the most effective way to change minds and, with a little bit of research, it seemed that having gays or lesbians who feel unequal to actually meet other gays and lesbians, so that they can dispel the myths about gay and lesbian people. So we thought, "Hey, why don't we start to collect stories from across the nation—especially stories about diversity?" This diversity is not racial, but it's religious, it's geographic, it's about what kind of job you hold, what your family looks like. We want to demonstrate that the [gay community] is everywhere, that we're represented in every community and that we can defy preconceived notions about who and what we are.

Some of the ones we've received already have been very surprising. There are stories from religious communities, about people who are trying to reconcile their belief in God with their sexuality. However, this movement has a bunch of white guys running it—and we do need to hear from other racial communities. We certainly have to reach out to Black and Latino communities and change minds.

Over the summer, we'll share some of these stories on the Courage Campaign's website and on the radio. Say we get a moving video from Bedford, Texas; I'd like to show that video back in that area of Texas so that people there know that there are others in the community who are suffering from inequality.

In the end, we'll select three stories and I'll go to those hometowns to shoot those as public-service announcements. The idea is to take this video project to some of the groups in some of those areas.

WCT: Are you more inclined to go with smaller towns, where some think more outreach is needed?

DLB: The final three is determined by budget, but I also think that those three need to be incredibly diverse. So, I doubt that all three will be from a big city. There'll probably be one that represents a more metropolitan area, but these small towns need help. I hope, in the end, that the stories are incredibly surprising; I think that's what's going to be incredibly illuminating.

WCT: The campaign kicked off on Harvey



Dustin Lance Black. Facebook photo reprinted with permission

Milk Day. If you had five minutes with Harvey, what would you ask him or say to him?

DLB: Oh, boy. If I only had five minutes, I would ask him what his next steps were going to be.

I think the man had such strength and such a strong conviction that we are equal. He, unlike so many leaders today, was able to shed that self-loathing many of us grew up with. He was unapologetic about who he was and how God made him. I think that's why he was able to make incredible progress so quickly. He made bold moves in the face of people saying, "Don't go there. It's not time yet." So I'm very curious about what he would've done next.

I know he wanted to march on Washington, D.C. In his last few weeks, he talked about taking the fight [for gay rights] to [then-President] Jimmy Carter. That propelled me to say, "Hey, let's take this fight to the federal government." However, I can only infer that, so it'd be great to hear what his actual strategy would've been.

[Milk's death] was such a great loss. We haven't seen the likes of him since.

WCT: As you know, June is Pride Month. What are you proud about concerning the LGBT community?

DLB: I think we have a lot to be proud of right now, in terms of our progress in the gay movement. Finally overturning "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" is something to be incredibly proud of. Winning this case in California in federal court and being that much closer to an eventual federal decision that would give marriage to all Americans in all 50 states—that's something to be incredibly proud of. Attached to that is the progress we've made in everyday Americans' opinions of equality for gay and lesbian people.

Sometimes I have to step back and say, "Boy, we've come a long way in a short amount of time." It seems that this new energy in the movement started at about 2008, and so many things have happened in that time and so many gay and lesbian groups have contributed.

That said, it's not time to let up. Civil rights is this [constant] game of winning and losing; it's this pendulum. We need to make sure we protect our gains as we move forward. I do think, to bring it full circle, that we do that by continuing to be out and to introduce ourselves to others.

That's the difference between us and other minority groups: Some of us are not immediately identifiable.

We have to continue to tell our stories, and they don't have to be depressing. It can be about how joyous it was to have your first kid or to be married or your first kiss or how surprisingly wonderful it was to come out to your parents.

Record and upload a video no more than

two minutes long telling a story in support of LGBT equality by no later than 11:59 p.m. PT on Wed., June 15; see <http://www.couragecampaign.org/page/s/dustin-lance-black-testimony-challenge>. At the end of this search, Black's film crew will choose three; fly to three separate locations to film these stories; and share them with the country in a television ad campaign.

ART

Community art space features LGBT locals for pride

BY KATE SOSIN

On a bright, tree-lined lot in North Lawndale, a house decorated with LGBT-themed art sits waiting for the Pride crowds to come through.

No one is coming. It's 3:30 p.m. on a Sunday, and a discussion about how the gay community can support transgender people should have started a half hour ago. The talk was slotted as part of a monthlong gay and lesbian exhibit at Urban Art Retreat (UAR), but few artists even registered for the show and even fewer LGBT people came to see it.

Dianna C. Long, who oversees the daily operations at UAR, 1957 S. Spaulding, barely notices when no one shows up for the discussion.

"Every year that we've been in Chicago, we've done something for Pride," she said. Every year, few come to see the exhibit. However, Long and her team have continued to curate the show.

UAR, a kind of artist's oasis among the area's grassy lots, draws people from all walks into its tangled gardens and paint-splattered walls. It attracts neighborhood youth, the elderly, people with disabilities, people with HIV, people with mental illnesses and people without money. The second floor of the two-story residence houses female artists, some who barter for a place to stay and many who come from abroad.

In keeping with its mission to both cultivate and showcase the talents of under-represented communities, UAR has hosted shows themed around trauma survivors, housewives and feminism, artists with disabilities, outsider artists, people of color, and children artists. The organization holds classes and workshops for emerging artists as well as people who do not identify as artists at all.

The June Gay and Lesbian show exhibits both local and international artists. This year's exhibit features nine artists, most of them little-known. They are Brian Skinner, Kathleen Elizabeth, Sandra Taylor, Simone Bouyer, Kate Bronwyn, and Chicago-based artists Kenya Molette, Cindy Hall, Dianna C. Long, and P. Anthony, who died of HIV a few years ago. The show will run through Satur-

day, June 25, in the Liz Long Gallery.

Long said that few LGBT people know about UAR, but the organization has worked over the past two decades to appeal to queer people.

"This is a very friendly place for lesbian and gay people to come," Long said.

The phone rings incessantly at UAR. Mostly, it is telemarketers, Long said. However, every now and then someone calls needing advice on coming out as LGBT. A lesbian herself, Long spends hours on the phone on those days.

People with HIV also come to UAR for support. One day when Long was working outside in the garden, a young man came up to the fence and asked her for help. He just found out he had HIV, he said. He didn't know where to go. UAR volunteers took him to get services at a local YMCA.

Long said that UAR is a unique space for queer people. For one, its events and activities are free. They're also a queer-friendly alternative to the club scene. Long sometimes hosts gay gardening groups in the summer, and regular events tend to be alcohol-free, making the house a safe place for recovering alcoholics.

The next step Long said is figuring out how to support Chicago's transgender community. "I'm a big believer in saving yourself, but let's give some help," Long said. "So many trans people are not even in a position to do anything [to improve their situations]."

Long has wondered over the years why, when UAR, attracts such a diversity of communities, it tends not to see as many LGBT visitors. "We put together an art show, and usually it's pretty easy to get people to respond" she said. Not so with the LGBT community.

Part of that problem could be location. For people who live and play in Lake View, UAR is more than an hour commute by CTA. Also, some people think North Lawndale is unsafe, although Long rejects that thought as stereotype. UAR has collaborated successfully with some LGBT organizations in the past, including Affinity Community Services.

Long said that lack of involvement may mean a discontinuation of its gay and lesbian show next year because it attracts less attention than other shows. Regardless, Long said UAR will remain a queer-friendly space.

The Pride show will be open through June 25 between 11-4 p.m. each Saturday and by appointment. For more information, call 773-542-9126.



Show at the Liz Long Gallery at the Urban Art Retreat. Photo by Kate Sosin

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Emanuel hosts first Pride reception

BY ERICA DEMAREST

Continuing a long tradition held by Mayor Richard M. Daley, Mayor Rahm Emanuel hosted his first LGBT Pride Month Reception at the Chicago Cultural Center June 9. Though Daley originally started the event to make up for not marching in the city's annual Pride Parade (he refused to work on Sundays), Emanuel announced to loud applause that he would march in this year's parade, slated for June 26.

As a congressman, Emanuel often walked in the Pride parade alongside his wife and three children. Laughing, he shared a story about his then-3-year-old daughter's reaction to her first Pride parade: "The dads like to dance!" Daley marched just once during his 22 years as mayor.

Spirits were high in the Cultural Center, as guests mingled, networked and enjoyed complimentary Garrett Popcorn, wine provided by Barefoot Wines, and buffet-style food from Star of Siam. An estimated 1,000 people attended the free event, which was sponsored by Equality Illinois and State Farm insurance.

Mona Noriega, recently confirmed by the City Council as Emanuel's choice to head the Commission on Human Relations, addressed the packed room, surrounded by politicians, appointed officials, members of the Advisory Council on LGBT Issues, and many more. The commissioner applauded Illinois' decision to allow civil unions and said she hoped to work with Emanuel for similar advances. She and her partner Evette Cardona were among those having a civil union June 2 at Millennium Park.

Emanuel said LGBT Chicagoans shouldn't just consider themselves part of a community: "You are family." Barely audible over waves of applause, he stressed that with positions ranging from schoolteacher to doctor to police officer, LGBT citizens are an integral part of the city. "When you come from a Jewish home, family's family, man," he said.

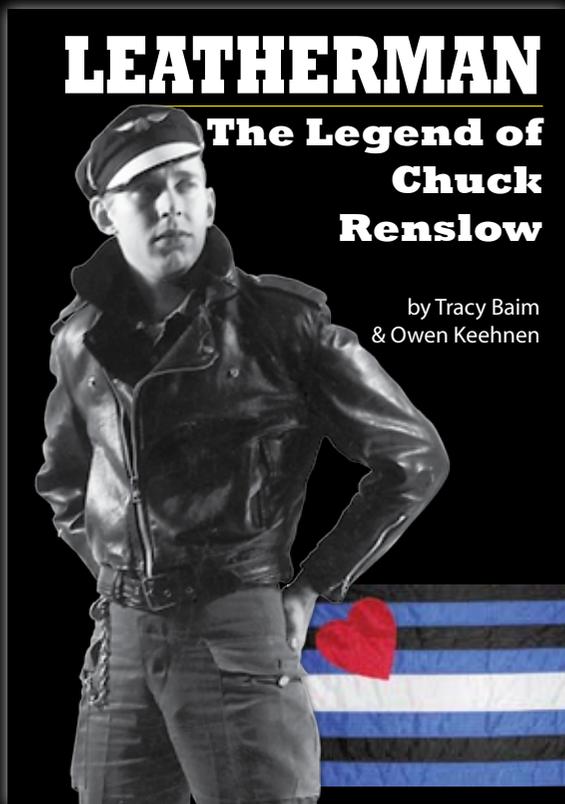
The mayor honored Proud to Run, an annual 10K and 5K charity run that celebrated its 30th anniversary this year. The event, now hosted by Frontrunners/Frontwalkers of Chicago, started with just 40 runners and has grown to include more than 1,200 people. In 30 years, it has raised more than \$300,000 for local charities.

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



LEATHERMAN

The Legend of Chuck Renslow



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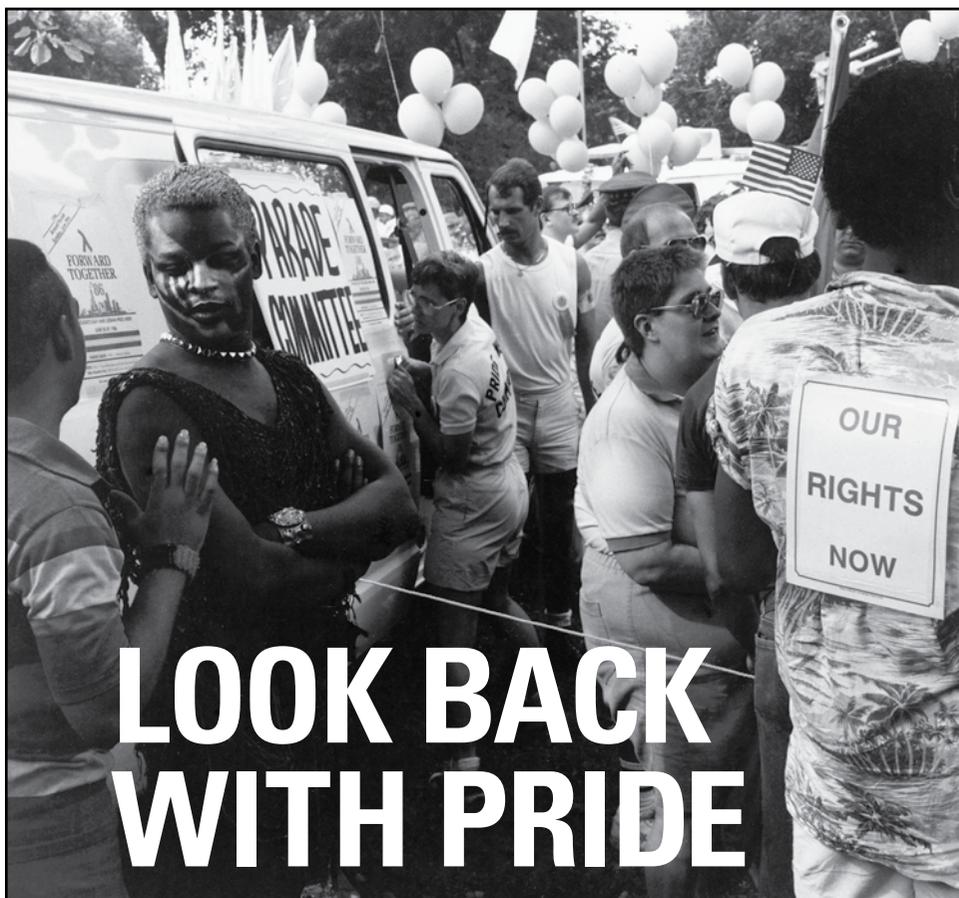
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Parade walkers gather in Lincoln Park for the Pride Parade in 1986.

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BOOK REVIEW

A Single Year

by Dawn Mueller

\$15.99; DM Publishing;

262 pages

REVIEW BY SALLY PARSONS

Why do we read memoirs? To get the inside dish from a well-known personality (Steven Tyler's newest, Judi Dench's, for example). Or to explore a landscape foreign to us, such as an insider's view of the food industry (Medium Raw by Bourdain), or growing up in a nonconformist family of nomads (The Glass Castle by Walls). To our surprise, we often learn something about ourselves as well. This is especially true when the author is describing his or her emotional and psychological terrain.

Dawn Mueller delivers, in *A Single Year*, on two of the above hooks. She's not a celebrity, but her struggle to understand her own sexual and intimacy needs makes a fascinating read. At times, it is touching, as when she reveals that, with each new woman she meets, if she can get that person to like her, maybe Mueller will begin to like herself again.

There's plenty of self-revelation for the reader to identify with—the need for someone to care about and love you, the need to love oneself, the need to “... find balance between running around like crazy and sitting comfortably in my own skin.”

Mueller is someone many Windy City Times readers may have brushed shoulders with or actually know. She is a Chicagoan (North Side) and the year's journey she recounts (circa 2005) takes place on the local scene, a bonus for the reader. In these pages, you will find her at Early to Bed and Cupid's Treasure, a Capricorn party, at Circuit, Sidetrack, T's, and a Mountain Moving concert, among other popular venues. While Mueller has changed the names of the people she encounters, you may still recognize some from



the context.

There's Corbin, her confidante, who steadies her as she traverses her sexual/emotional terrain; Vann, with whom the sexual spark burns long and easy; Neal and Mimi, the couple with whom she forges an unbalanced sexual threesome; Jamie, the patient pursuer; and the ever-faithful Mousse, her chocolate lab retriever.

A Single Year recounts Mueller's sexual odyssey the year following the breakup of a nine-year relationship. Given that she's an alcoholic (in recovery since July 1995), this peek into her year is fraught with glimpses of awkward moments and avoidance of meetings with her AA mentor that depict the delicate balance recovering alcoholics struggle to maintain.

Mueller tries to spark her dormant passion to write by following the exercises in Julia Cameron's *The Artist's Way*. Alas, as she attests, the affirmations Cameron urges her readers to practice seem to stimulate in Mueller a desire to explore

her sexuality more than to write. She checks out the ads in *The Reader's X-Matches* and—well, adventure ensues. One good thing, Mueller does faithfully journal everyday, providing her copious notes for this book.

Mueller is a rule breaker. As she prepares to meet her hookup couple for the first time, she wonders if the adventure is more about breaking rules than sex—her mom's rules, those of AA, society, and her own. Mueller has keen insights about herself, not that she necessarily changes any self-proclaimed troubling behavior immediately.

She gains confidence in herself through the triad she creates with Neal and Mimi and that's part of why she continues the association. She keeps going back “... at least until I can find another source to tap, or (heaven forbid) find a way to tap into myself.” By the end of our ride with her, she's begun to do just that.

Mueller is an excellent writer. She describes her adventures in great detail and the reader witnesses the pain, rawness, loneliness and intimacy of her escapades with parts fascination,

revulsion, and (for this reader) empathy. She also elicits a smile here and there when a turn of phrase brings out the humor with which she infuses some of her encounters.

Caution: Mueller portrays herself as an outsider. This means she's tough on the Chicago lesbian community at times. Humorously: “If you wrong the wrong person or someone finds out you've lied about your love for folk music, you're out.” Resentfully: “The lesbian community here is very insular and closed. If you don't fit a certain number of requirements, you don't fit in. Period.”

Even though this type of comment may raise hackles among some readers, there's still plenty of reason to read the book—a nostalgic romp through events and venues (some no longer with us), sexual titillation, and following someone's struggle for identity. Most will still cheer her on because her journey is universal and we can learn from her experiences and insights. She is honest about herself and one has to admire her spunk.

BOOK REVIEW

Transition

by Chaz Bono (with Billie Fitzpatrick)

\$25.95; Dutton; 245 pages

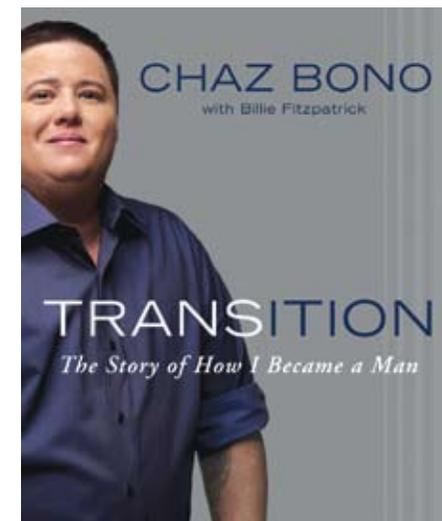
REVIEW BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

The face in the mirror is yours.

Yes, you recognize that chin, the eyes that droop when fatigued, the mouth that's etched parentheses around itself, as if to enclose something you said.

That's your hair. Those are your ears. That's your nose.

It's you there in the mirror—the outside you—but inside, well, what you see isn't what you know. In the new book *Transition* by Chaz Bono (with Billie Fitzpatrick), you'll read what it's like to feel like you're in the



ity colored his relationships with them and with his family. Still, he lived his life as a woman: falling in love, starting a band, buying a house, and trying to stay out of the public eye.

Bono's father seemed supportive of his lesbianism. His mother had trouble with it.

However, happiness eluded Bono and he turned to drugs to cope with the frustration. By then, though, he thought he knew what he needed to do...

On March 20, 2009, he says, “I drove myself to the doctor's office... I felt only confident that what I was doing was right.”

“After all the years of fear, ambivalence, doubts, and emotional torture, the day had finally come. I was on testosterone, and I have never looked back—not once.”

Bono says at one point that he was never very good at transitions. He did a pretty good job at this one, with a few minor bumps.

Transition is filled with angst, anger, sadness and pain, topped with wonderment and joy. It's also repetitious, contains a few delicately squirmy moments, and its occasional bogginess is a challenge for wandering minds.

For *wondering* minds, though, Bono is quick to defend and explain away his family's reluctance to accept his gender reassignment, but he's also willing to admit to being hurt by it. Still, contentment and awe shine forth at the end of this book, and readers will breathe a sigh of relief for it.

If you can face the slowness that crops up in *Transition* now and then, you'll find it to be a pretty good memoir. For you, it's a book to put your hands on.

Want more from Bono? Then look for his other books: *Family Outing: A Guide to the Coming-Out Process for Gays, Lesbians, & Their Families* (with Billie Fitzpatrick) and *The End of Innocence: A Memoir* (with Michele Kort).



Chaz Bono. Photo from Brenna McEwen

wrong body, and how a tiny Hollywood darling became a man.

On the wall of his home, Chaz Bono has a picture of himself and his parents, taken when he was a toddler. They all look happy, Bono says, but he doesn't remember that day, or much of his childhood.

What he does remember, though, is that he always felt like a boy, even though he was the daughter of Sonny and Cher.

Bono says that, as a child, he dressed in boy clothes as much as possible and answered to a boy's nickname. He played with boys at school and his best friend was a boy. Nobody thought much about it, he says. That's just the way it was.

Puberty was rough and Bono came out as a lesbian, but something still wasn't quite right. He didn't identify with women, gay or otherwise, and distant feelings of masculin-

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NUNN ON ONE: TV

Paris Hilton talks about her 'World'

BY JERRY NUNN

Paris Hilton is the Hollywood socialite who always winds up on the press. Her exploits have made her famous in the tabloids and on TV. Her appearances on *The Simple Life* with Nicole Richie and another show where she searched for a BFF left many viewers entertained and curious to know more—although it also left her a lightning rod for controversy among those who wondered what constitutes a “celebrity” nowadays.

The *World According to Paris* is her new endeavor—full of paparazzi, pets and popularity.

Windy City Times: Hi, Paris. Tell our readers about your new show and why you came back to reality television.

Paris Hilton: The *World According to Paris* is a look at everything I go through from the moment I wake up until I go to bed at night, every single day. And I really wanted to do a show to show who I really am because I feel like on the *Simple Life* and *My BFF* show I was playing a character and something I was doing for fun, but this is something that I'm really excited for all my fans to see.

WCT: Is it therapeutic for you to make a show like this?

PH: Well, I think I just learn that in everyday life. It was a good chance for me just to show who I am and that I'm a human and I go through the same things that everyone does. So I think when people watch it they maybe won't see me as such a cartoon character any more. They'll see me as a real person.

WCT: Is it hard to open yourself up to cameras this way?

PH: I never thought I would cry on TV. I think I just always wanted everything to be perfect and that's not how life is. In life, people go through things and people get upset and things happen. And I wanted the fans to see everything as real as possible and what's really going on. So even though it's embarrassing for people to watch me cry it's what really happens.

WCT: Do you regret doing the *Simple Life*?

PH: The reason I did it was that it was the beginning of reality television and I don't think there was any other reality shows on TV at this point. So I had never been on camera before. I had never done a reality show. I was really new to it. And the producers told Nicole just to be a troublemaker and have fun and kind of play that character.

And then they wanted me to play something like *Clueless* meets *Green Acres*, like, the dumb blonde character. I didn't realize this show would go on for so many seasons. So I had to continue doing that character every season. Also, I think I was very shy and it was kind of easier to hide behind that character.

Now when I think about it, it was so long ago and the show was such a huge success and really it was entertaining so I don't regret it because I think people really enjoyed that character. But now I'm an adult and I'm ready to show who I really am, I've been through a lot in life. I'm not afraid to show who I am and to be honest.

WCT: Would you ever do other reality shows like *Dancing with the Stars* or *Celebrity Apprentice*?

PH: Yes, I've been approached every season by both of those shows but I would never do them.

WCT: Why not?

PH: I wouldn't; I like doing my own show. I wouldn't want to be with a bunch of other people on a show who I don't know. Some of the people on those shows I really wouldn't want to be associated with. But, I love Donald Trump. He's been a great family friend of mine for a long



Paris Hilton. Photo courtesy of Oxygen

time so I love his show. But the *Dancing* show I wouldn't ever do.

WCT: On the first episode of the new series the paparazzi are chasing you everywhere. How do you deal with that every day?

PH: It's just something I've learned to get used to. It's been going on for so long. It's just a regular part of my life. I just try not to pay attention because they're going to be there. And rather than making myself go crazy and being annoyed about it I just say that it's normal and I'm used to it.

I think the only hard part is when there's so many of them, sometimes there could be, like, 30 or 40 of them and they're all chasing me in their cars and they're all trying to get through the red light and make sure they don't lose me. So it gets a little dangerous when everybody's trying to get behind me and it gets a little scary being in a car with them around.

WCT: What was it like having your mother on this show?

PH: Oh, I was so excited to have my mom as part of the show. She's such a character. It's so funny and always makes me laugh. So I just had to have her on the show. Plus, it's my whole life and my mom and I are really close and she's a big part of my life. So of course, she's going to be there with me on it.

WCT: What did you do for Mother's Day?

PH: For Mother's day, we all went to the house and then the whole family went to *Boa* for dinner and just spent time with my mom.

WCT: How do you feel about *Perez Hilton* using your name?

PH: I am flattered.

WCT: Are you planning on releasing any more music?

PH: Yes, I have a recording studio at my house so any time I have free time I'm always in the studio writing and working. So I've been working on this album a really long time because I want it to be perfect and I recently changed the direction of the album.

It was more pop before but now I'm getting rid of a lot of songs and I'm going into a different direction, just house music so it's going to be a lot more dance and club but it should be out really soon.

WCT: What is the biggest misconception about you and your family?

PH: I think just because of the Hilton last name people assume that I'm a spoiled brat who doesn't have to work or do anything for herself but, really, it's the opposite. I've been working since I was 17 and I've created a huge empire now. I have 17 different product lines and I'm working every single day, traveling the world. So I think people, just because I was a party girl before when I started out, they assume that's how I really am still. But when I'm at parties now it's for work. I'm either being paid to be there or I'm promoting a product or a different project I'm working on. I think that is one of the biggest misconceptions.

WCT: Are there any plans of you settling down and having children?

PH: I would love to one day. Right now I'm just so busy with work and traveling but one day I would love that.

WCT: What upcoming projects are you working on?

PH: Finishing the album. I'm writing another book. I have my newest clothing line coming out and sunglasses. I'm working on my new skin care line that should be out soon and makeup. And what else? I'm also doing some different projects overseas, opening my own beach clubs and next I'm going to be opening my own hotels.

WCT: With all that work what do you do to relax?

PH: I love to get massages. It's like when I relax. I try to do that at least once a week. And also I just love being in my backyard with all my pets and just playing with my puppies and all my animals and that really relaxes me. I just love being around animals, just make me really happy.

The *World According to Paris* is on the Oxygen network, airing on Wednesdays. Paris' beauty secrets and more are at <http://www.oxygen.com>.

Cathy Richardson in area June 17

Cathy Richardson, lead singer from Jefferson Starship, will perform at the Metropolitan Ballroom, 6 S. Vail, Arlington Heights,

Richardson, an out lesbian, is a Grammy nominee and four-time DIY Music Award-winning singer. She will perform with her latest project, the Macrodots. There will be a dinner show (with Richardson performing acoustically) at 7:30 p.m.; Cathy and the Macrodots will perform around 10:30 p.m. In between, a local youth band will perform at 9 p.m.

Concert tickets are \$25 in advance and \$35 at the door. Visit <http://www.brown-papertickets.com/profile/51573>.

Rihanna's tour to include J. Cole, Cee-Lo Green

Entertainer and pop-music superstar Rihanna confirms critically acclaimed lyricist and fellow Roc Nation artist J. Cole and singer/The Voicejudge Cee Lo Green will join her on the LOUD North American tour.

The North American leg of the tour begins June 4 in Baltimore, with 28 dates confirmed and more to be announced soon. Locally, the show will take place Wed., June 15, at the United Center, 1901 W. Madison. (Green is not slated to appear at this show.)

Tickets for the Live Nation produced tour are available at <http://www.ticketmaster.com> and <http://www.livenation.com>.

MACLAINE from page 23

switch that. In some ways that is quite courageous.

WCT: Speaking of that, I just met Chaz a week ago.

SM: I am very interested by what he is doing. I think his interviews are very insightful. What did you think when you talked with him?

WCT: I don't think Chaz is super-comfortable with interviews sometimes, so it is very brave to put himself out there like that.

SM: He didn't too uncomfortable with some that I saw so I was quite impressed.

WCT: You have a variety of fans, including many gay fans.

SM: What is the difference? People are people. I think they like my directness, everybody does, including old ladies!

WCT: [Laughs] That is refreshing to hear.

SM: When you get to be my age it is stupid not to be direct or say exactly how you feel, honestly.

WCT: Amen. So what are you currently over today?

SM: Well, today I went for a long hike with Terry, climbing up a mountain and I didn't like it at all. So I am over trying to be thin. I am going to take it easy for a bit.

WCT: Are you over Arnold Schwarzenegger?

SM: Man, is that some story! Talk about theatrical, whoa! I can't even imagine what he was thinking. Okay, stepping out of the marriage but good lord in their own house! To be having babies at the same time, that is the epitome of male power isn't it? To say that your housekeeper is pregnant and your

wife with your own sperm, wow! That's an Austrian. [Both laugh.]

WCT: You came in for Oprah Winfrey but when are you coming back to Chicago?

SM: Oh, I don't know. We will see what happens. When there is something there for me to do. I am having a good time doing my show around the country.

WCT: Tell our readers a little about your show.

SM: It is really good and the audience loves it. I tell old stories about old Hollywood. I find myself recalling things up on the stage that I hadn't voiced or talked about. What the hell? I just tell them what happened and what it really was like. I am having a good time with it. I miss the live audience.

WCT: People can follow the tour on your website, right?

SM: Oh, sure.

WCT: It has been 10 years for *Life is a Bowl of Cherries*.

SM: [Laughs] Is it 10? I don't know.

WCT: It was the tenth anniversary recently.

SM: Oh, yeah; that's nice.

WCT: It has been such a pleasure talking to you while I am down in Mexico.

SM: Well, you be careful down there all right? I worry about anyone that goes to Mexico now. I am not kidding. I hope it's worth it.

WCT: You are more worried about me than my own mother. I am trying to encourage people to come down here.

SM: Wow, you have some job ahead of you.

To find out why MacLaine's over travel, politics and money pick up her latest book and learn more about her at <http://www.shirleymaclaine.com>.

NUNN ON ONE: COMEDY

Cameron Esposito plays it for 'Laughs'

BY JERRY NUNN

Cameron Esposito is more than just a local one-trick comedian. The out lesbian has three performances at the Just For Laughs festival; teaches The Feminine Comique, the world's only all female stand-up course; and is the producer of Lincoln Lodge, Chicago's longest-running alt-comedy showcase. Grab Them Aghast, her debut stand-up album, was released last year. She recently appeared in the Bridgetown Comedy Festival in Oregon. We talked pirates, priests and presidents in a Nunn on One interview.

Windy City Times: Hi, Cameron. Where is your last name from?

CE: It is Italian; just ask my body hair.

WCT: Are you from the suburbs or the city?

CE: I am from the city. I live in Logan Square.

WCT: The first time I saw your stand-up act was in a little theatre opening for someone I interviewed named Elizabeth Keener. You have an interesting timing to your comedy.

CE: Yes, that is what people say. It is a slow burn...

WCT: Where does that come from?

CE: It is just the conversational nature of the way that my brain works. I really think of stand-up as a conversation but a lot of people don't. It

CE: No, I don't. I am just doing this.

WCT: Good for you.

CE: Thank you. I am so happy to share it with Chicago and be able to do that because I live in Logan Square and my rent is really cheap!

WCT: How did you get involved with the Just For Laughs? Because it is a big deal...

CE: I have done it for the past two years with smaller gigs but Steve Heisler who does the programming for the Chicago festival used to write for Timeout Chicago and somebody I had known for years. He had seen me when I was really terrible at stand-up and somehow decided to keep seeing me. He really is sponsoring this part of the festival and asked me if I wanted to do an hour and I said yes, thank you very much.

WCT: And you have three different show-times, right?

CE: Yes, the one that is a huge deal for me is the one at The Playground Theatre. It is an hour-long spot. I have my little face in the Just For Laughs pamphlet and everything!

WCT: That is huge. We are talking Ellen DeGeneres did it one year...

CE: Exactly, it's like Steve Martin on one page and then on another page... who is this? Oh, it's me. The other performance I am hosting some musical performers that are in from LA. They are great.



Cameron Esposito. Photo courtesy of Esposito

comes from me setting you up as an audience. I know what you want and I know how to get it. It is all very methodical.

WCT: Do you have comedians that you look up to or want to be like?

CE: I do. I was able to work with my comedic hero this past winter. I was so jazzed about it. Her name is Maria Bamford. Have you ever seen her?

WCT: No.

CE: I would recommend it because she is likeable and sweet. With that she can be as harsh as she wants to be. She can be super real and it is not off putting so it makes you love her more. I really like watching her.

WCT: I am going to look out for her. Did you always want to be a comedian?

CE: No, not at all. I wanted to be the president and a priest.

WCT: [Laughs] So those didn't work out...

CE: No but I am basically the president of any room that I am in.

WCT: And worshipping your act with the priest.

CE: Well, bringing the message to the people.

WCT: There you go! Do you have a day job?



Cameron Esposito.

will use the word gay onstage or lesbian or queer but sometimes I will just reference a girlfriend in the same way my male straight counterparts will reference a girlfriend. I think there is something really rad about being able to have you

digest it, I am with a woman and we kiss each other. It is a luxury that I have been afforded by the work that so many people have done before me. For me it is about going in to wherever and normalizing my sexuality.

WCT: I couldn't believe my friend last night didn't know Lily was a lesbian. I said, "I think so. It's a hunch of mine, along with Rosie and Sandra."

CE: That is crazy! Homegirl is wayyy out, too. I am definitely a gay performer. Kate Clinton for instance primarily performs in front of gay crowds. When she was coming up what other option did she have? I don't think it would be easy for her to go to Zanies and announce "Now for your lesbian entertainment of the night!" I think it is really cool that I can do that. It is important that people meet me and are not scared that I will take away their children.

WCT: What do you have going on after the festival?

CE: I am hoping to expand this show's run at The Playground Theatre in August so look for that. Hopefully a Monday night run of the show. People can come every week if they want to.

WCT: Do you have a website?

CE: Cameronesposito.com or <http://thereal-cameronesposito.com>.

WCT: What is the difference?

CE: I had my domain name was stolen for a while. Somebody was selling muscle mass builders and eczema treatment. They had my bio up there. It was really insane: "Cameron Esposito loves Muscle Milk!"

Cameron plays The Playground Theatre, 3209 N. Halsted, on June 15 and at the Lincoln Lodge, 4008 N. Lincoln, on June 17 and 18. For details and tickets visit <http://www.justforlaughschicago.com>.

BOOK REVIEW

Mind Your Own Life

by Aaron Anson
\$16.95; Balboa Press;
274 pages

REVIEW BY SALLY PARSONS

Aaron Anson has a message and he puts it out there relentlessly in his book *Mind Your Own Life: Trust your own intelligence to interpret your relationship with God (whom he often refers to as the Source). Do not allow others (the Church) to decide for you what this relationship should be. As you might surmise, Anson has had a rocky relationship with organized religion. A gay Black man born and raised Southern Baptist, he has experienced directly the stifling and hurtful atmosphere the Church can often engender toward those who don't fit the mold.*

Anson is driven to helping others create their own spiritual path. He is a proponent of the New Thought movement, for which he is a coach. New Thought, according to sacred-texts.com, espouses that "... a higher power pervades all existence, and that individuals can create their own reality via affirmations, meditation and prayer." Anson sees his audience as both those who have shunned the gay community as morally or spiritually inferior (he wants them to rethink the origin of their biased thinking), and secondly, gay teens, who might find inspiring his message to think for themselves and realize they are loved.

Some call *Mind Your Own Life* a memoir. Anson does sprinkle his message with a few stories from his life but in a way that leaves you wanting more detail. Basically, the book presents his views against the Church, the government, and the spiritual life unexamined. Condensed, it would make a powerful lecture on the public speaking circuit.

I have to admit my bias here. Free thinker as I am, I can buy into his message of figuring out your own relationship with whatever you hold to be a higher power. However,

although raised with a Christian-influenced ethic, I have not been exposed to, nor am I comfortable with, Christian rhetoric. Thus, I struggled with many of Anson's pronouncements. For example, "Our goal now should be to—without hesitation—reconnect and submit once again to the Source we once knew." Anson has a zest for life and a desire to share. While his basic message is a powerful one that no doubt will resonate with many, in my opinion he has not come up with enough different themes/topics to warrant a full book, settling instead for new ways to say the same thing. More detail of his own life story would have helped.

Anson is married and resides with his partner, Oliver, in Washington, D.C. Anson's book is being printed by an arm of Hay House, the hugely successful self-help publishing company.



Milwaukee with Mo'Nique, more

Pridefest in Milwaukee, Wis., started with rain and fog all day June 10, although there were plenty of rainbows to be found in this annual event. With bands and entertainment acts playing on eight stages, along with booth after booth of items to browse, there was plenty to do on this three-day excursion. Dance fans could boogie all day at pavilion designated for clubbers or brush up on their LGBT history in a separate museum.

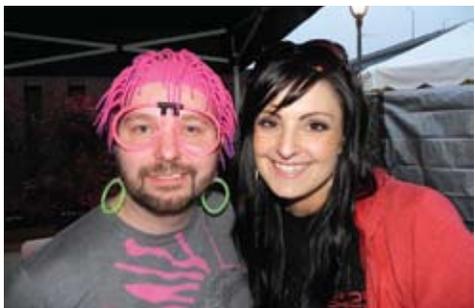
RuPaul's drag queens from Logo TV provided intros from lip-syncing to comedy before the main event hit the stage. Mo'Nique's friend, Ivy, performed a rendition of her stand-up act before the Oscar-winning actress/comedian—looking much thinner—strutted out to the screaming crowd.

Mo'Nique said that she felt like "Diana Ross in Central Park in the Rain" before launching into a tirade on the Bible versus homosexuality. The comedian was clearly pro-LGBT, admiring her gay brothers for tackling anal sex. This was a show for adults, with references to exploding blowjobs and a mouth that would make a sailor blush. She confessed that one of her young twins has a tendency to wear dresses and mentioned the support her family gives him.

She ended the show by performing a wedding ceremony marrying LGBT and drag-queen couples together on the stage; many onlookers had tears. For next year's festivities keep your eyes on <http://www.pridefest.com>.

Among the many other performers at Pridefest were LeAnn Rimes, Chely Wright, Salt-n-Pepa and gay Israeli singer Ivri Lider.

Text and pictures by Jerry Nunn



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Andersonville Midsommarfest

Summer in Andersonville kicks off with Midsommarfest, providing treats for big and small boy and girls. Photos by Kizzy and Jerry Nunn




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calendar

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nightspots

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Wed., June 15

Equality IL at Minibar Ultra Lounge and Cafe Celebrate June Pride month with Equality Illinois at Minibar! Come and enjoy dinner, drinks, or both and 20% of all sales (excluding daily special/before tax) will be donated to EQIL to support our important work fighting for LGBT rights in Illinois. 5 p.m., Minibar, 3341 N Halsted

Interfaith Annual Gala: 'Down Home Blues' featuring 'The Guy King Band Join Interfaith House for their Annual Gala event benefiting homeless individuals in Chicago. Featuring the Guy King Band and Emcee, ChicagoPride.com's Bill Pritchard; 6 p.m., 773-533-5013, ext. 254, Buddy Guy's Legends at 700 South Wabash (at Balbo), <http://www.interfaithhouse.org>

Exotic World and the Burlesque Revival (2011) Ellen Stone Belic Institute for the Study of Women and; 6 p.m., 312-369-8829, Film Row Cinema of Columbia College Chicago, 1104 S. Wabash, 8th Floor, <http://www.colum.edu/institutewomen-gender>

LifeLube Community Discussion Prevention Revolution or Magical Thinking? A robust public debate is under way about the potential use of anti-HIV drugs to prevent HIV infection (also known as pre-exposure prophylaxis or PrEP). Doors open at 6 p.m., taping begins at 7 p.m.. Free and open to the public with RSVP. Hoover-Leppen Theatre. 6 p.m., Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted, <http://www.lifelube.org/forums.php>

Songwriting Contest Hosted by Kat Fitzgerald, 20 performers, special guest judges, prizes \$500, a 1 year CTA Plus Card (unlimited), or 5 hours of recording time at

IT'S A HISTORY TO ME Thursday, June 16

Stonewall Uprising will run on WTTW.



Handwritten Recording. 6 p.m., Let Them Eat Chocolate, 5306 N. Damen, http://windycityopenmic.com/?page_id=96

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

Thursday, June 16

Transgender Casting Call Looking for trans men or women ages 18-23 to profile in a television series to follow the struggles and triumphs of young trans people. Please bring a photo, tell us about yourself (age, job, where you live, a little background on yourself, relationship with your family, etc.). 549 W. Randolph., 3rd Floor. 773-473-4100, casting @towersproductions.com; 12 p.m., 773-473-4100, 549 W. Randolph St., 3rd Floor

"Fish Out of Water" Q&A Screening for the critically acclaimed documentary of, "Fish Out of Water," that explores the impas-

sioned relationship between homosexuality and the Bible. Ky Dickens, the movie's director and a Chicago native will be on hand for an enlightening discussion and Q&A afterwards. Free, donations accepted. 7 p.m., 773-248-5683, Bodhi Spiritual Center, 2524 N. Lincoln, Suite 218, <http://www.bodhispiritualcenter.org>

Darkest Before Dawn: A Gay Cabaret Following a sold-out premiere in Oak Park, a limited engagement in honor of Pride Month with eighteen LGBT and straight gay friendly performers, including accomplished actors and a former American Idol contestant journey through contemporary songs and monologues celebrating the struggles and triumphs of the LGBT journey. \$15 advance, \$20 at door; 7:30 p.m., Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted, <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

"Stonewall Uprising..." on WTTW "Stonewall Uprising: American Experience" 8 PM on WTTW11 HD (11.1). Historical coverage of the Stonewall rebellion that is credited with kicking off the modern day LGBT rights movement. Repeated on June 18, 7 p.m. on WTTW Prime (11.2). 8 p.m., <http://www.wttw.com>

RuPaul's Drag Race Tour Roscoe's Tavern and Absolut Vodka present Logo's RuPaul's Drag Race Tour 2011. Live on stage catch the Top 6 Queens from Season 3 of RuPaul's Drag Race: Raja, Manila, Alexis, Yara, Carmen and Shangela. Hosted by Frida Lay. \$10 cover beginning at 9PM. 9 p.m., (773)281-3355, Roscoe's, 3356 N Halsted St, <http://www.roscoes.com>

CD4-Kickoff Party CD4-Chicago kicks off with this month's theme: Poz Box, like mailbox with a twist since the person your sending a message to just happens to be HIV positive or Pos friendly. Interact with other HIV Positive/Poz-friendly people by sending a flirt, phone number, message or even ask someone out on a date. Free BBQ and \$2 domestic and \$3 import beers. 7 p.m., Jackhammer, 6406 N. Clark, <http://www.jackhammer-chicago.com>

Friday, June 17

CD4-Kickoff Party CD4-Chicago Rally to End the War on Drugs Faith-based and community organizations will join together to talk about negative consequences of the war on drugs. 12 p.m., 312-341-2141, Thompson Place Plaza, http://https://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/515/p/salsa/event/common/public/?event_key=69669

Guerrilla Girl Bar Sapphic Adventures, the NFP professional social networking group, presents Guerrilla Girl Bar at C-View on the 29th floor of the hotel. Wear some rainbow accessories. 6 p.m., Affinia Chicago, 166 E. Superior, [http://www.sapphicad-](http://www.sapphicad-ventures.org)

ventures.org

Over the Rainbow The First NW Indiana prom for the LGBTQ community is presented by The First Unitarian Church of Hobart's Welcoming and Hospitality Committee as well as STITCH and Portage High School GSA. 7 p.m., 219-801-8180, First Unitarian Church of Hobart, Indiana, <http://www.sewingdiversitytogether.org/>

Saturday, June 18

Civil Unions: Impact on Same-Sex Parent Families The Civil Union Act of 2011, which goes into effect this summer, will have broad and sweeping effects on the rights of our gay and lesbian community. Learn what new benefits our same-sex community, and same sex parents in particular, will have under the new law as well as what issues to look out for. 10am, Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, <http://www.npnparents.org>

Howard Brown Health Center Brunch Guests are invited to enjoy an amazing brunch spread by Province restaurant, Chef Randy Zweiban. Benefiting Howard Brown Health Center; 12 p.m., 3125195896, Province Restaurant, 161 N. Jefferson, <http://www.dot429.com>

dot429.com event Online and in-person networking group for LGBT professionals sponsors an elegant brunch. 12 p.m., Province Restaurant, 161 N. Jefferson, Chicago, <http://www.dot429.com>

Windy City Gay Idol Finals Finalists face local celebrity judges to be chosen Windy City's ninth Gay Idol. 1:45 p.m., Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted, <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com>

No Secret Anymore: The Times of Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon No Secret Anymore reveals the inspiring public work and private lives of Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon, two legendary women known as the founders of the modern lesbian civil-rights movement who, in 1955, courageously launched the Daughters of Bilitis, the first public organization for lesbians in America. 2 p.m., Sulzer Regional Library 4455 N. Lincoln, <http://www.chipublib.org>

Free screening of Two Spirits Powerful and moving, Lydia Nibley's Two Spirits explores the life and death of Fred Martinez and the ancient Native American two-spirit tradition. 2 p.m., Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington, <http://www.itvs.org/films/two-spirits/photos-and-press-kit>

WCPC Pride Concert "Road Trip" - Windy City Performing Arts' 2011 Pride Concert featuring Windy City Gay Chorus and Aria: Windy City Women's Ensemble. Tickets \$20. 5 p.m., Senn Hall H.S. Campus, 5900 N. Glenwood, <http://www.windycitysings.org>

Sappho's Salon's three-year anniversary The bookstore's popular salon night for lesbians and their friends is turning three with a celebration featuring a performance by legendary lesbian musician, Tret Fure. Hosted by Kat Fitzgerald. Proceeds benefit the artists and the Women's Voices Fund. \$10 cover charge includes cake and champagne! 7:30 p.m., 773-769-9299, Women & Children First, 5233 N. Clark St., <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

"The Homosexuals" About Face Theatre presents "The Homosexuals," a play by Philip Dawkins exploring friendship through the lens of sex. This comedic and heartbreaking work is for anyone who's ever fallen in love with a friend. Tickets \$28. 8 p.m., 773-784-8565, Victory Gardens Theater, 2257 N Lincoln, <http://aboutfacetheatre.com>

Sunday, June 19

Pride On the Water by CHM The Chicago History Museum presents the Pride On the Water boat tour. Participants will learn about key moments in LGBT history and how the community has had an impact on Chicago history and culture during this boat cruise down the Chicago River into



JOY-WALKING

Monday, June 20

The Chicago Gay & Lesbian Pride & Joy Reception will take place at Circuit, 3641 N. Halsted.

Photo of Alexi Giannoulias and Bill Greaves by Emmanuel Garcia

Lake Michigan. \$60/ \$55 CHM members. Includes an open bar. Advance tickets suggested. 7 p.m., Chicago History Museum, 1601 N Clark, <http://www.chicago-history.org>

Monday, June 20

National HIV Testing Day Seminar, 9am Free, educational presentations on HIV/AIDS which will explore aspects of living with HIV infection, from understanding laboratory testing to other conditions that can complicate HIV treatment. Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted

20th Anniversary Pride and Joy Reception Presented by the Chicago Gay & Lesbian Hall of Fame. Meet and greet current and past Hall of Fame inductees, enjoy a delicious buffet of hot hors d'oeuvres and view the 2010 Hall of Fame exhibit. 2011 nomination forms will be available. \$20 admission; tickets available at the door. Proceeds benefit the 2011 Chicago Gay & Lesbian Hall of Fame. 6 p.m., Circuit Night Club, 3641 N. Halsted, <http://www.glhalloffame.org>

Tuesday, June 21

Queertopia: The Anti-Violence Project Based on true stories of youth in and around the Chicago area: the intertwining stories of Flea, a transgender boy who falls for a straight girl and feels pressure to take "T" (testosterone); Teddy, a fierce queer person dealing with harassment; and Lexi, a straight girl questioning all labels. 4 p.m., Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S State

Out in the Suburbs Speakers will include representatives from Equality Illinois, Lambda Legal, PFLAG, and our very own Pride Youth Program. 7 p.m., 847-441-6191, Northbrook Public Library, <http://www.linksyouth.org>

CD Release Party for C.C. Carter's new work FEELIN' GOOD Songs of the '80s and '90s; C. C. reintroduces some of her old time classic poems and puts a spin on new works. 8 p.m., Jeffery Pub, 7041 S. Jeffery, <http://www.pow-wowglobal.com>

Wed., June 22

30 Under 30 Awards Windy City Times will recognize 30 more outstanding LGBT individuals (and allies) who are under 30 years of age and have made some substantial contributions to the LGBT community, whether in the fields of entertainment, politics, health and/or other areas. 5:30 p.m., 773-872-7610, Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com>

Macy's welcomes Olympic Skater Johnny Weir Musical lunch hour with performances by Chicago Gay Men's Chorus and notable cabaret duo, Beckie Menzie and Tom Michael. 5:30 p.m., Macy's State Street, <http://pitch.pe/148551>



30 BUSINESS

Wed., June 22

Windy City Times' 30 Under 30 Awards will take place at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted.

Photo by Hal Baim

BILLY MASTERS

"I mean, every male secretly wants to have sex with Brad Pitt, but that's a given."—Adam Levine of Maroon 5 and The Voice reveals what men he finds attractive. Personally, I secretly want to have sex with Adam Levine!

Many gay men have strong, assertive mothers. OK, it's a stereotype, but we gay boys love a strong woman—and we love our ballsy moms. This past week, Big Mama Masters came out of a store to find her car being hoisted onto a tow truck. When she protested, the driver offered to lower the car—for half the price the tow would have cost. She balked, the driver shrugged his shoulders and went about his business ... until Big Mama reached into the truck and took his keys out of the ignition. "You're not gonna get very far without these," she said, brandishing the key chain like a war trophy. When he approached her, she defiantly said, "Touch me and I'll call the cops." Leave it to the mother of Billy Masters to turn a parking violation into a civil-rights moment, a feminist crusade and possibly a race issue (well, the driver was wearing gloves). Where's Johnny Cochran when you need him? Needless to say, the cops were already *en route* and while my mother didn't get her way, I was never prouder.

That's one of the important aspects of Pride that makes me ... well, proud. Let us not forget that the pride movement was started by people standing up for themselves. Admittedly, these stances don't always happen under ideal circumstances. I'm sure some innocent passerby got hit with a stiletto heel outside of the Stone-

political sphere. Nope, we also got a gander at some genitalia courtesy of Tito Ortiz. The fighting champ apparently finished tanning (already I'm confused) and decided to take a photo of the results with his cell phone. This is yet another dubious decision, which was compounded when this photo got sent out via Twitter, proving once again that nothing good happens on Twitter (but you should follow @BillyMasters). Tito says that his account was hacked and he didn't post the photo. Yes, and Monica was just looking for a place to put out that cigar! But back to Tito—he most definitely puts that poor Weiner weiner to shame. Remember Chris Brown's penis? It's a little like that. Well, not "little," as you'll see on BillyMasters.com.

The talented and tasty Chris Evans has some concerns over the upcoming Captain America. It's weighing on him so heavily, he wants to address it before the movie even comes out: "I'm losing my hair. The fear is that this can span 10 years so I can be doing this character until I'm 40. I'm supposed to be like this superior human. He can't be balding. How horrible would it be if this superior man has male-pattern baldness?" I suppose it would show that no one ... not even The Captain, is perfect. But what about Chris' perfect body? "That I can control. If I miss three or four days, I feel like shit. Last year, I got into running and I was like, 'I'm going to start running' and then I would run on the treadmill and feel great. But I'll get too thin and lose weight so quickly." Such a tragedy.

Since this column is coming to you on the eve of Boston Pride, we go directly to the kick-off



Adam Levine makes his thoughts about Brad Pitt known.

wall Inn, but them's the breaks. It's important to remember that amidst all the revelry that we associate with gay pride, there is one common theme. We aren't invisible. We matter. We want to be heard—and sometimes you have to take someone's keys to get their attention.

Another way to get people's attention is to send out a photo of your penis to two or three or a few dozen strangers via Twitter while your wife is pregnant. I swear to you, there is something wrong with men. I won't even say straight men because I can't tell you how many gay men have sent me photos of their junk while a spousal equivalent was in the other room making coffee! One of those penises belonged to Anthony Weiner. I just woke up, clicked on an e-mail from one of my favorite sources, and BAM ... there it was. No warning. No foreplay. No foreskin. Just a Weiner—and an erect one at that. After I saw it, I asked myself, "Is that all there is to a Weiner?" Well, Barbara Walters found it "impressive," but she doesn't get around as much as I do! My problem isn't that he's sending out dick shots. No, my problem is that he's stupid enough to get caught! I'm smart enough to post the photos on BillyMasters.com.

However, stray penii were not limited to the

concert by The Go-Go's and The B-52s. It was a perfect pairing, and one which brought out thousands of people. (The girls commented on how huge the stage was.) This was as intense a show as you were gonna get from either band—stripped raw and ready to party. The Go-Go's could have been marred by Belinda's defective ear monitor, but she's a game gal and didn't let it slow her down. She even brought out her openly gay son, James Duke Mason, to sing "Whole World Lost Its Head." We'll run video of that and some backstage photos on BillyMasters.com.

When I'm celebrating Boston Pride with the Go-Go's and the B-52s, it's time for me to leave the '80s and end yet another column. We've had so many out and proud stories that I only have time to remind you to keep tabs on www.BillyMasters.com, the site that's proud to have served millions of you ... just like its owner! If you've got a question or a concern, feel free to send it along to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before I bail Big Mama Masters out of the big house! Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

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Sky's Gay Pride game June 23

BY ROSS FORMAN

The inaugural Family Gay Pride Outing at a Chicago Sky game is set for Thursday, June 23, when the Connecticut Sun come to town. Tip-off is set for 7 p.m.

The Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA) has reserved a block of 250 tickets for the game at a discounted rate (\$12), and CMSA officials encourage attendees to bring their entire families.

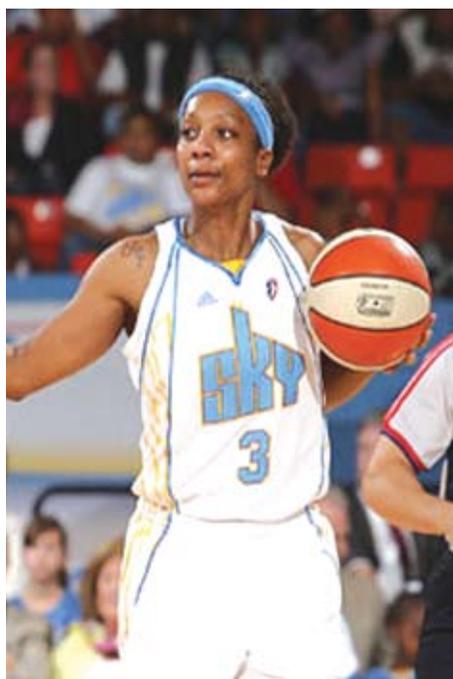
"I encourage everyone to participate and bring the kids out for a great time," said CMSA's Sam Hamilton, an event organizer. "Not only will the kids benefit from having the experience of attending and watching a women's professional basketball game, but, [they] will have the opportunity to spend time with other kids who also have gay parents or family members. This will help boost confidence and comfort levels and

help them realize that they are not alone or different, and there are other kids with the same parenting/family structure."

All who purchase a ticket through CMSA also will receive a free ticket to another regular-season Sky game. There will be an in-game raffle, held specifically for CMSA, and one person will receive a Sky autographed item. Plus, one person will win two courtside seats for a regular-season Sky game of their choice (based on availability).

"Though it will be a great opportunity for the kids, it also will be a lot of fun for the adults," Hamilton said. "There will be vendors with alcohol and snacks like at any sporting event. Come out and support the team and show your gay pride."

To buy tickets, use the promo code "CMSA" and visit <http://tinyurl.com/cmsasky>.



Dominique Canty. Photo courtesy of the Chicago Sky

Mayor: June 25 is 'Proud to Run' Day

Proud To Run received a special recognition award from Mayor Rahm Emanuel and many leaders of Chicago's LGBT community at the June 9 Chicago Pride 2011 Reception.

The award was given to the organization, in part, for "[r]ecognizing 30 years of outstanding contributions, through the field of sport, to Chicago's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities, charities, and service organizations."

Emanuel also proclaimed Saturday, June 25, Proud to Run Day in Chicago.

Both the 5K and 10K courses—which both begin at 8:04 a.m.—start at Montrose Avenue, approximately three blocks east of Lake Shore Drive. (The aerobic warm-up and stretch begin at 7:40 a.m.) At 10 a.m., the awards ceremony and a raffle will take place.

Register for the race/walk at <http://www.proudtorun.org>. The fee is \$30.

Proud To Run raises funds to help Chicago LGBT health and service organizations. It is presented in association with Frontrunners/Frontwalkers Chicago, Chicago's LGBT running and walking club.

Sheila Simon in Ride for AIDS

Illinois Lt. Gov. Sheila Simon and her husband, Pery Knop, will participate in Ride for AIDS Chicago (RFAC), which Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN) produces. This 200-mile journey, which will take place July 9-10, will raise awareness and funds for organizations that provide services to those living with HIV/AIDS in the Chicago area.

The ride has registered more than 350 riders and crew members and has raised more than \$250,000. Producers say the grand total will far exceed that amount by July 9.

Opening and closing ceremonies will take place on the east lawn of Northwestern University's Norris University Center in Evanston, rain or shine.

Information about RFAC and about making donations is at <http://www.rideforaids.org>.

Ex-football player supports marriage equality

Michael Strahan, the record-setting former defensive end of the New York Giants, has filmed a video with his fiancée for the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) as part of the group's New Yorkers for Marriage Equality campaign. In the video, the Strahan feels "it's unfair to keep committed couples from getting married." The campaign, which raises the public profile of marriage equality in New York, can be viewed online at www.hrc.org/NY4marriage.

"Michael Strahan is part of an ever growing list of professional athletes speaking out for marriage equality. There are a lot of tough New Yorkers, but none tougher than Michael Strahan, one of the most feared and accomplished defensive ends in history. He's our Super Bowl champion for New Yorkers for Marriage," said HRC Senior New York Strategist Brian Ellner.

Strahan holds the National Football League record for sacks in a single season with 22.5. He was part of the 2008 Super Bowl champion New York Giants team and is currently a football analyst on Fox NFL Sunday.



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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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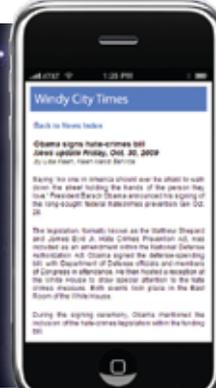


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