

GAY NBA EXEC RICK WELTS

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BAYARD RUSTIN CONFERENCE

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Citywide crime down in 2011, slight decline in Lakeview

BY ERICA DEMAREST

For the third straight year, the city of Chicago is reporting steady year-end crime decreases, according to data recently released by the Chicago Police Department (CPD)'s News and Affairs Office.

In 2011, the number of citywide crime complaints, or reported crimes, dropped 7.7 percent to approximately 85,000.

While most complaint categories posted modest shifts (varying from -0.7 to 2.4 percent), the city saw a 10 percent reduction in aggravated battery and a whopping 30 percent reduction in theft.

The 23rd District, which includes the heavily gay Boys-

town area and which found itself at the center of controversy last summer when several high-profile violent crimes rocked the community, posted a more modest 2.7 percent dip. Citizens reported 1,589 crimes in 2011, compared to 1,633 in 2010.

While murder and felony theft rates dropped dramatically (about 20 percent each), the number of reported crimes in the district—which spans Boystown and parts of Lakeview and Uptown—rose in other categories.

In 2011, there were six more reported criminal sexual assaults, 20 more aggravated batteries and 47 additional motor vehicle thefts.

In an interview last summer, then-Commander Kathleen Boehmer (who was recently appointed acting execu-

tive officer of the Area Central Detective Bureau) told Windy City Times that CPD officers had uncovered and were working to dismantle several auto theft rings. Citywide auto theft rates rose 1.8 percent in 2011.

Boehmer also noted that in the 23rd District's Boystown neighborhood, it's common for drunken revelers to forget where they've parked their cars and report the vehicles stolen. These complaints may have inflated auto theft data.

In terms of trends, both the 23rd District and the city as a whole saw crime upticks in summer months; these tapered down as 2011 drew to a close. Crime increases during warmer weather are standard.

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CANDACE GINGRICH-JONES AT NEIU

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MADONNA IN MOVIES, MUSIC

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Having a ball

About Face Theatre's popular Wonka Ball took on a prom theme this year at the Chicago Illuminating Company. Check out page 33 for more info and a full page of colorful photos.

Photo by Kat Fitzgerald, www.MysticImagesPhotography.com

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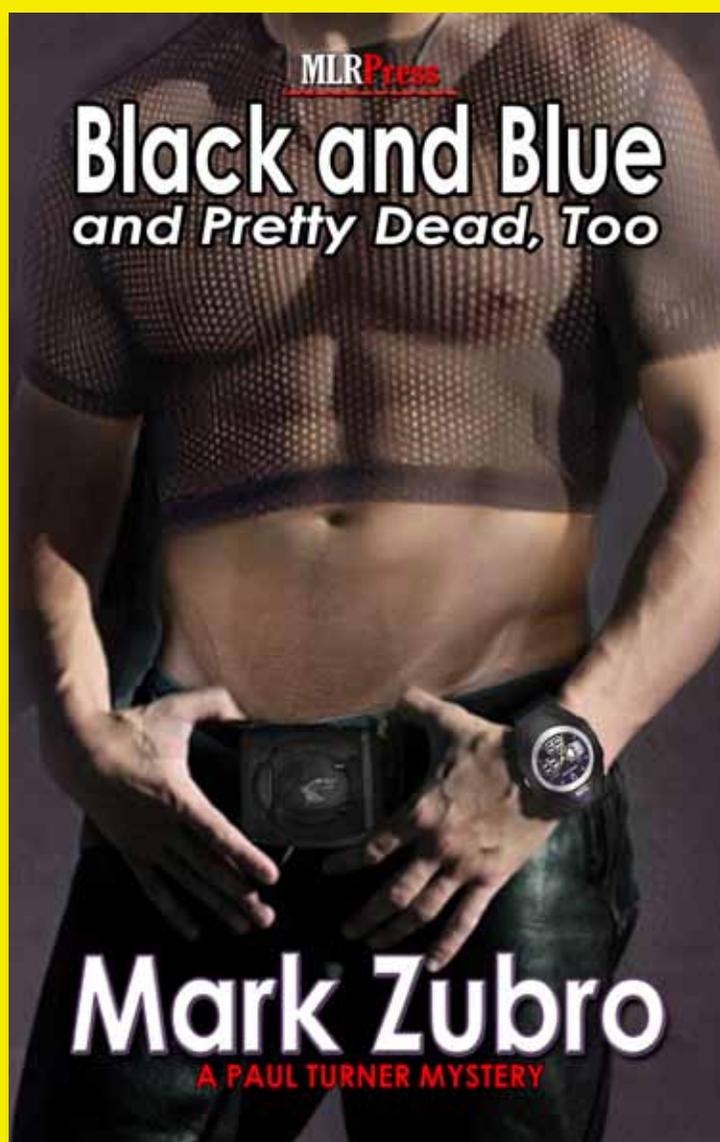
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Photos on cover (left, from top): Photo of Rick Welts from the NBA's Golden State Warriors; photo of Mandy Carter by Tracy Baim; photo of Candace Gingrich-Jones by Carrie Maxwell; Madonna PR photo

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CRUISIN'

Read about three trip ideas that will take travelers around the world.

Photo of a duplex on the Queen Mary 2 from Cunard Line



Read concert reviews of shows by Van Hunt (above) and the Chicago Scratch Orchestra.

Photo by Vern Hester



Starrlight is back, spotlighting another star of the silver screen: Ida Lupino.

Photo from Steve Starr

MONROE DOCTRINE

Read Rev. Irene Monroe's column, "Bayard Rustin: One of the tallest trees in the forest."

RAISING CAYNE

Transgender actress Candis Cayne was part of the festivities as Boystown spot Taverna 750 launched its lounge.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

Read entertainment news about Victoria Beckham, Charles Busch and the Daytime Emmys.

plus **DAILY BREAKING NEWS**

NAUTH-ERN EXPOSURE



Read an interview with Alex Nauth, who is a member of the band Foxy Shazam (above).

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Profiling the attorneys in the April 4 DOMA case

BY CHUCK COLBERT
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

When a panel of three judges on a federal appeals court hears arguments against the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), three openly gay lawyers will argue the law is unconstitutional. Opposing them will be one straight attorney.

Legal gay icon Mary Bonauto will once again make a case for equal marriage, arguing on behalf of seven gay couples and three widowers, all married in Massachusetts after the 2003 *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health* decision.

While the state affords them all the rights, benefits, protections and responsibilities of legal wedlock, the federal government, under DOMA, denies them more than 1,000 federal pro-



Attorneys Mary Bonauto (left) and Maura Healey.

grams, benefits and legal protections afforded to opposite-sex couples.

Perhaps best known for winning the 2003 Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruling in *Goodridge*, Bonauto is the civil-rights project director of Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD).

Goodridge was the first state Supreme Court victory for advocates of the freedom to marry for gay and lesbian couples.

Before Goodridge, Bonauto and two other attorneys won an important 1999 decision in *Baker v. State of Vermont*, a ruling that prompted lawmakers there to adopt what was then the ground-breaking option of civil unions. Civil unions afforded same-sex couples all the rights, benefits, and responsibilities of marriage, but not the word marriage. In 2009, Vermont lawmakers made same-sex marriage legal.

A May 2004 New York Times Magazine profile on Bonauto likened her to the late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, who, before becoming a judge, argued before the high court in the historic case of *Brown v. Board of Education*, which ended racial segregation in public education.

A native of Newburgh, N.Y., Bonauto is a graduate of Hamilton College in Clinton, N.Y., and holds a law degree from Northeastern University, located in Boston.

Bonauto and her wife, Jennifer Wriggins, reside in Portland, Maine, where they are raising twin daughters.

Just as GLAD won a favorable same-sex marriage ruling in the federal district court in Boston in July 2010, so did and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In a suit brought by the state's attorney general, Maura T. Healey, chief of the Massachusetts

attorney general's civil-rights division, argued that DOMA infringed on Massachusetts sovereignty, trespassing on the state's ability to determine eligibility for issuing marriage licenses.

During oral arguments, attorney Healey led a full-court press. In strong words, she told the U.S. District Court judge that DOMA "forces Massachusetts to engage in a kind of invidious discrimination."

How? By denying same-sex married couples of the same benefits received by opposite-sex couples—or risk losing federal aid.

Even worse, DOMA is "animus-based national marriage law," said Healey. She contended that the law infringes on Massachusetts sovereign authority and "forces the state to discriminate against its own citizens."



Like Bonauto, Healey is no stranger to high profile gay litigation. Prior to joining the Attorney General's Office, Healey was an attorney at the Boston office of WilmerHale, a prestigious law firm. There, she provided counsel to the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN) in a 2006 case, *Cook v. Rumsfeld*, that challenged the constitutionality of the armed forces' ban on openly gay service, a federal law and military policy known as "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."

Before law school, Healey, a New Hampshire native, played women's basketball for Harvard College. There, as point guard, she captained the school to an Ivy League championship. Afterwards, Healey went on to play professional ball in Europe. She is a 2006 inductee into the New England Basketball Hall of Fame. She holds a law degree from Northeastern.

For the April 4 arguments, GLAD's and the attorney general's lawsuits have been consolidated. They are referred to as *Gill v. Office of Personnel Management*.

When the cases were first heard in U.S. District Court, the Obama Department of Justice (DoJ) was still defending DOMA. But last year, DoJ said it would no longer argue the law is unconstitutional.

This time, the DoJ will be arguing against DOMA. And it will do so in the person of openly gay attorney Stuart Delery, promoted recently to serve as DoJ's Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Division.

Like Bonauto and Healey, Delery has experience with high-profile gay litigation. While a partner at WilmerHale in Washington, D.C., he was pro bono counsel of record for the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network's unsuccessful lawsuit in the First Circuit that challenged the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."

A graduate of the University of Virginia, Delery earned a law degree at Yale. He clerked for Supreme Court Justices Sandra Day O'Connor and Byron R. White.

Delery and his longtime partner, Richard Gervase, are fathers of two sons, according to the gay newspaper Metro Weekly of Washington, D.C.. Both parents are active in Rainbow Families DC, a non-profit organization for LGBT parents and prospective parents in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

DoJ is no longer defending DOMA, but the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group (BLAG) of the U.S. House hired attorney Paul Clement, former Solicitor General for President George W. Bush, to do so.

At that time, Clement was a partner at the law firm of King & Spaulding. When the law firm withdrew from the DOMA case, Clement resigned and joined another smaller firm, saying, "Representation should not be abandoned because the client's legal positioning is extremely unpopular in certain quarters."

"Defending unpopular positions is what lawyers do," said Clement, to Washington Post columnist Jonathan Capehart. "The adversary system of justice depends on it, especially in cases where passions run high. Efforts to delegitimize any representation for one side of a legal controversy are a profound threat to the rule of law."

A Wisconsin native, Clement, a graduate of Georgetown University, holds a law degree from Harvard. He clerked for Associate Justice Anto-

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NATIONAL NEWS

—D.C. group to honor Art Smith (left)

—President Jimmy Carter talks about gays in new book

—Study: Dolphins engage in bisexuality, homosexuality

nin Scalia of the U.S. Supreme Court.

When Clement arrives in Boston to defend DOMA, he will be fresh off an appearance this past week before the U.S. Supreme Court in landmark litigation seeking to overturn the Affordable Care Act. Clement will also be defending DOMA in other cases.

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Lesbian poet Adrienne Rich dies

Lesbian feminist poet Adrienne Rich died March 27 at her home in Santa Cruz, Calif., according to the Washington Post. She was 82; son Pablo Conrad said she died of complications from rheumatoid arthritis, SFGate.com reported.

Rich wrote more than 20 books of poetry.

In the 1970s, Rich was one of the first mainstream poets to write from a lesbian point of view. One of Rich's most famous books of poetry, 1973's *Diving Into the Wreck*, won the National Book Award. In her 1976 essay collection, *Of Women Born*, Rich started writing from an openly lesbian perspective, penning, "The suppressed lesbian I had been carrying in me since adolescence began to stretch her limbs."

"I write as woman, lesbian and feminist," she told *The Washington Post* in 1981. "I make no claim to be universal, neuter or androgynous."

In 1997, she refused to accept the National Medal of Arts, in part, as a protest against proposed funding cuts to the arts.

Rich was born May 16, 1929 in Baltimore, Md. Her father was a professor at Johns Hopkins Medical School; her mother mother was a former concert pianist.

Rich married economics professor Alfred Conrad in 1953. After they divorced in 1970, he committed suicide. Michelle Cliff had been Rich's partner since 1976. Rich also has three sons and two grandchildren.

Gay immigrant families file suit against DOMA

Five lesbian and gay couples have filed suit in the Eastern District of New York, challenging Section 3 of the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which prevents lesbian and gay U.S. citizens from sponsoring their spouses for green cards.

The lawsuit, filed on the couples' behalf by Immigration Equality and the law firm of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP, alleges that DOMA violates the couples' constitutional right to equal protection.

"Solely because of DOMA and its unconstitutional discrimination against same-sex

couples," the lawsuit states, "these Plaintiffs are being denied the immigration rights afforded to other similarly situated binational couples." Were the plaintiffs opposite-sex couples, the suit says, "the federal government would recognize the foreign spouse as an 'immediate relative' of a United States citizen, thereby allowing the American spouse to petition for an immigrant visa for the foreign spouse, and place [them] on the path to lawful permanent residence and citizenship."

"The families in today's lawsuit meet every qualification for immigration benefits, with the sole exception that they happen to be lesbian or gay," said Rachel B. Tiven, Esq., executive director of Immigration Equality. "Solely because of their sexual orientation, they have been singled out, under federal law, for discrimination and separation. That's not only unconscionable; it is unconstitutional. We know DOMA cannot withstand careful review, and we know we will prevail on their behalf."

A copy of the lawsuit, biographies of each plaintiff couple and other information are available at www.immigrationequality.org/lawsuit.

Gay-resort owners arrested in Nicaragua

Plans to build Nicaragua's first gay resort community have been suspended following the arrest of the project's two proprietors, Francis DeFranco, 50, and Jan Van Den Broek, 50, of Belgium, according to the Nicaragua Dispatch.

The two men, owners of Granada's Hotel Jolupa and the nearby gay development project known as Club Alegria, were arrested along with two tourists—a 55-year-old Canadian and a 65-year-old U.S. citizen—and the hotel's 18-year-old bartender. All five are charged with promoting tourism for the purpose of sexual exploitation, pornography and sexual abuse.

However, the number of people arrested is in dispute. According to a Seattle Gay News item, as many as 30 people may have been arrested, with two being U.S. residents. The discrepancy in the number of people arrested may be because some individuals linked with the hotel were reportedly apprehended in other locations.

DOMA hearing held involving widow beneficiary case

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

The motions for the interpleader action case (*Cozen O'Connor, P.C. v. Jennifer J. Tobits, et al. and Estate of Sarah Ellyn Farley*) involving a same-sex widow's pension plan proceeds were heard by Judge C. Darnell Jones II of the United States District Court, the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, March 12.

Sarah Ellyn Farley worked for six years as an attorney in the Chicago offices of Cozen O'Connor.

Tobits and Farley were married in 2006 in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

In 2010, Farley died at the age of 37 from a rare form of cancer.

Cozen O'Connor filed a lawsuit claiming that the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) prevents them from recognizing Tobits as the beneficiary

the law firm has several offices in states where same-sex marriage is legal, and also has diversity and non-discrimination policies that include sexual orientation.

At the hearing, the court asked all of the involved parties to address the constitutionality of DOMA. Both the United States Department of Justice (DoJ) and the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group (BLAG) of the House of Representatives have intervened in the case and are also parties.

The DoJ, under President Obama's instructions, is no longer defending the constitutionality of DOMA.

BLAG, under the direction of Speaker of the House John Boehner, R-Ohio, has convened to defend DOMA in the courts, and is doing so in this case.

The National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR)



Sarah Lynn Farley (left) and Jennifer Tobits on their wedding day. Photo courtesy of Tobits

of Farley's pension-plan death benefits. Their argument says that DOMA applies to private companies as well as the federal government. The firm has asked the court to determine who should receive the death benefits, Tobits or Farley's parents.

Tobits then filed a breach of fiduciary duty counterclaim against Cozen O'Connor, alleging that if the firm did not intend to recognize same-sex spouses, it had a duty to inform Tobits of that fact. Tobits wants to be recognized as the legal surviving spouse and beneficiary of her late wife's pension plan proceeds.

Farley's parents are also challenging the legality of the couple's marriage under DOMA, saying that Cozen O'Connor's pension plan is Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA)-qualified. ERISA is a federal mandate, however, and does not define the word "spouse."

Farley's parents never approved of her daughter's sexual orientation nor her marriage to Tobits.

Tobits has already been appointed as administrator of her late wife's estate by an Illinois probate court. In the Illinois case, the court rejected the Farley's claim that their daughter was single, and ruled that Tobits and Farley were legally married and entitled to all the rights and protections given to spouses under state law.

Cozen O'Connor's pension plan states that a spouse is a person to whom an employee has been married for at least one year. The pension plan does not indicate that the same-sex spouses are excluded from participating. Additionally,

and co-counsels Teresa Renaker and Julie Wilensky of Lewis, Feinberg, Lee, Renaker and Jackson, P.C.; and Benjamin L. Jerner, Tiffany Palmer and Rebecca Levin of Jerner and Palmer, P.C. represented Tobits in court.

H. Robert Fiebach of Cozen O'Connor's Philadelphia law office represented the firm in court while Thomas Brejcha and Peter Breen from the Thomas More Society, Randall L. Wenger from the Independence Law Center and Jonathan W. Michael from Burke, Warren, MacKay and Serritella, P.C. in Chicago are representing the Farleys.

During the hearing, which lasted more than four hours, Minter said, "An attorney from the U.S. DoJ appeared to argue that if DOMA applies in this case, then DOMA is unconstitutional and an attorney from BLAG argued in defense of DOMA."

The court also heard from Susan Katz Hoffman, an ERISA expert from Little Mendelson, who argued that DOMA does not prevent an employer from voluntarily providing benefits to a same-sex spouse, and that if an employer does not intend to do so, the employer must make that clear. Hoffman also wrote an amicus brief on behalf of the Human Rights Campaign, arguing that DOMA does not apply to this case.

"Judge Jones was very engaged and seemed to understand that Cozen's position, that DOMA prohibits private employers from recognizing same-sex spouses, would unsettle thousands of existing private pension plans," said Minter.

"We hope the judge rules that DOMA does not apply to private benefit plans and that Cozen

O'Connor must give Farley's death benefit to Tobits, as required by the plain language of the plan," said Minter, adding, "The U.S. DoJ agrees that DOMA does not apply to private employers, and is also arguing that if the judge holds that DOMA applies here, then DOMA violates the equal protection clause of the federal constitution and should be struck down. We strongly agree that if DOMA applies, it is blatantly un-

constitutional and should be struck."

If the court decides that DOMA applies to a private companies' (Cozen O'Connor) benefit plan and awards the benefits to the Farley's the ruling will extend DOMA to non-governmental actors. Currently, DOMA defines the terms "spouse" and "marriage" only in federal laws and regulations.

A ruling in this case is still pending and may not be handed down for a number of months.



From left: President William H. Taft and Archibald Butt.

Frank Millet, Archie Butt and the Titanic at 100

On the 100th anniversary of the death of the Titanic of painter Frank Millet, OutHistory.org has published transcriptions of all Millet's letters to writer Charles Warren Stoddard. The letters indicate that the two had a loving, sexual affair in Venice in 1875.

The intimacy of Millet and Stoddard is also described in a chapter republished on OutHistory from Jonathan Ned Katz's book *Love Stories: Sex Between Men Before Homosexuality*. Photos of Millet accompany Katz's history.

"A fascinating aspect of Millet's devotion to Stoddard," said Katz, "is that just eight months after he realizes that Stoddard will

never settle down with him in a domestic relationship, Millet is writing friends about his love for and impending marriage to Lily Merrill." Katz adds: "In this era, no homosexual-heterosexual divide told people they had to be either gay or straight, and Millet is a good example of that era's erotic fluidity."

This first transcription of all Millet's letters to Stoddard was the work of OutHistory volunteer Claude M. Gruener, a gay artist and writer in Albany.

OutHistory is also publishing an original survey of the personal life of Millet's friend, the bachelor Archibald Butt, who died with him on the Titanic. This study is by volunteer James Gifford, a professor of humanities at Mohawk Valley Community College. A photo of Butt accompanies the text.

The Titanic sank April 15, 1912.

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Rainbow Chronicle: An LGBT Yelp

BY DAVID-ELIJAH NAHMOD

Although he's not gay, Travis Lowry understands what homophobia looks like. He grew up in the Dallas area and saw firsthand how LGBT people are often forced to live. "If I had used a racial slur in high school I would have gotten into a lot of trouble," recalled the 24-year-old entrepreneur. "But if you call someone a 'faggot,' then it's OK."



From left: Conor Clary and Travis Lowry. Photo from Lowry

"I was disappointed in the disconnect with American values," he said via a telephone interview with Windy City Times (WCT). "Everyone is free to be happy, but that doesn't apply to gays."

One day, while working as a journalist in Massachusetts, he heard a radio interview with gay activist Dan Savage. Savage was talking about his now-famous "It Gets Better" Project. Lowry, who said that homophobia is rampant even in liberal enclaves like Cambridge, decided to do something tangible that might help to make things better. With high school pal-turned-business partner Conor Clary, who's also straight, Lowry launched Rainbow Chronicle, an online resource that he claims "puts the power of the web to better use."

The concept of Rainbow Chronicle is simple. Users can list and rate businesses, places and events for their gay friendliness, or lack thereof. "We ascribe a color code to persons or places that allow you to quickly and graphically judge them. Green is for the friendliest, red is for the least friendly. There are colors in between that allows users to look at a neighborhood, street, or business and judge how gay friendly it is or isn't. Is it a good place for LGBT couples or groups? What's the attitude of others?"

Launched Jan. 11, Lowry reported that the site is slowly picking up steam, with 4,500 infrequent users and 800 heavy users. "There's nothing like this online," Lowry said. "It's a hot-button issue. Hopefully it'll catch on."

The CEO of Texas-based Cinemark Theaters came under fire a few years ago for donating money to anti-gay causes. In the gay-friendly San Francisco area, individual Cinemark Theaters employ LGBT people at both the floor staff and management levels. WCT asked Lowry if Rainbow Chronicle might inadvertently hold individuals responsible for the actions of corporate executives over which they have no control.

"You can rate a specific theater or the corporation," explained Lowry. "It's another level of nuance that we offer."

The Rainbow Chronicle homepage is self-explanatory and easy to navigate. After registering, users can cast their ratings for the places, events and leaders they've encountered. There's a Hall of Fame section for the gay-friendliest places, and a separate link for places deemed unsafe for LGBT people. Users can add new listings at any time.

The site also offers an option for LGBT news links. Lowry himself posted a link March 14:

"100 Real Tweets From Homophobes Who Would Murder Their Gay Child."

"Local leaders, such as a sheriff or city council member, affect people's lives on a daily basis" said Lowry. "Their records are hard to find. Rainbow Chronicle can change that. Site members are welcome to post news links as well. Just write in your own titles, add a link and include a short description."

What if a business owner disagrees with a rating? Lowry said, "If you are acting in an open way, you should be able to rally friends to counter that review. If there is a concentrated effort to post a review in a false way, this can be handled administratively. Threats and violent posts get removed."

For more, visit www.RainbowChronicle.com.

Summer LGBTQ program at Mexican school

CETLALIC, a progressive Spanish immersion school in Cuernavaca, Mexico, is offering its LGBTQ social-justice programs June 16-July 6.

There is intensive Spanish language instruction integrating texts and discussions to supplement program focus, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday through Friday. Students are evaluated and placed at the appropriate level with a maximum of five students in each class. All levels are welcome, from beginners to advanced.

Topics/activists may include visits with artists, activists and community leaders; participation in Mexico City's gay pride march; and sharing coming-out stories with Mexican men and women. There will also be weekend excursions to Mexico City and the ruins in Xochicalco.

CETLALIC also offers a year-round regular program.

See www.cetalic.org.mx.



Gina Osting-Riddle and Andrea Riddle being married by Rev. Deeya Roberts. Photo from Dayne Roberts

Lake County accused of rejecting Indiana civil-union application

BY KATE SOSIN

An Indiana lesbian couple has filed a complaint against the Lake County (Ill.) clerk's office after being denied a civil-union license on the basis of their Indiana residency, they said.

Gina Osting-Riddle and Andrea Riddle drove more than four hours from their Fairmount, Ind., home March 29 to get a civil-union license in Waukegan, Ill. But they were rejected, they said, because the clerk's office employees told them that their home state prohibited civil unions.

"I was crying after we left the courthouse," said Osting-Riddle. "It was like a Julia Roberts moment. ... We have one girl flipping her hair and telling me I'm below her standards."

According to Osting-Riddle, County Clerk employees told them that because Indiana prohibited civil unions, Lake County could not issue them a civil union certificate.

Equality Illinois CEO Bernard Cherkasov said that the law in Illinois is clear about allowing couples from other states to obtain civil union licenses.

"No state prohibits a person from entering a civil union," he said. "A state can say 'we don't recognize it.'"

Illinois has issued many civil union certificates to couples out-of-state, including Indiana.

Osting-Riddle and Riddle were granted a civil-union certificate in Cook County March 30.

Lake County Clerk Willard Helander was out of the office at the time of publication. A spokesperson for the office said that Helander was the only person who could comment on the allegations and would not be available to talk until Monday.

Riddle and Osting-Riddle have been together for three and a half years and are currently raising three children together. They are hoping to expand their family and decided to get a civil union in Illinois.

Osting-Riddle's father will start chemotherapy April 2, and the couple wanted to have their civil union beforehand. They brought their extended family to Illinois to witness the ceremony, scheduled for March 30.

The couple will continue with their ceremony, but were not legally joined until March 31, after a mandatory 24-hour waiting period on their civil-union license expires.

Their ceremony was performed by Rev. Deeya Roberts. Roberts and her partner—Dayle Roberts, who is president of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays in Palatine—were wed in 2009 in Massachusetts. They said they will be using their resources to make sure Lake County addresses the issue swiftly.

Cherkasov said Equality Illinois is in the process of drafting a legal compliance letter to the

Lake County clerk's office. The couple is also contacting Lambda Legal. They have also filed a formal complaint with the Cook County clerk's office.

BREAKING NEWS: On April 2, Lake County Clerk Willard Helander called to let the couple know that, having received and reviewed their legal compliance letter, they have decided that they will—after all—issue civil unions to couples from jurisdictions where such unions will not be recognized.

WCT up for two Lisagor awards

The Chicago Headline Club has announced its annual Peter Lisagor Award nominations for Chicago-area news media. Windy City Times is nominated for two awards, both for in-depth reporting for a non-daily publication.

The WCT AIDS @ 30 series is nominated for the work of staff and freelance writers in that series, which began April 2011 and runs through April 2012. Most of the articles will be collected into a book available later this year. More than two dozen writers have contributed to the series.

The AIDS @ 30 series was also a finalist for the national Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) media awards in the newspaper article category, and lost to the Boston Globe. The New York Times was also a finalist in that category.

The second Peter Lisagor nomination is for the Windy City Times series, "Lakeview crime: The numbers," an investigation of crime statistics in the Lakeview neighborhood. The series was written by Erica Demarest, Kate Sosin and Andrew Davis.

The annual Lisagor Awards will be announced during an event Friday, May 4, 5:30 p.m. at a location to be announced.

For details, see www.headlineclub.org.

Bechdel exhibit has opening reception April 5

"Fevered Archives: 30 Years of Comics from the Not-So-Mixed-Up Files of Alison Bechdel" will have an opening reception Thursday, April 5, 4:30-6:30 p.m. at the Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality, 5733 S. University Ave.

Bechdel and Professor Hillary Chute (English) are the recipients of a Mellon Residential Fellowship for Arts Practice and Scholarship at the Richard and Mary L. Gray Center for Arts and Inquiry at the University of Chicago.

See <http://gendersexuality.uchicago.edu> or call 773-702-9936.

UIC celebrates Rustin centennial

BY JAMIE ANNE ROYCE

A Bayard Rustin Centennial Conference took place in Chicago last weekend to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the gay African-American civil-rights activist's birth. The University of Illinois (UIC) at Chicago Gender and Sexuality Center sponsored the March 30-31 conference.

Rustin is probably best remembered as Martin Luther King Jr.'s right-hand man during a significant portion of the civil-rights movement. King and his fellow organizers kept Rustin's sexuality under wraps out of fear he would tarnish their activism. When a politician threatened to expose Rustin, King accepted his resignation.

Rustin stayed in the shadows for three years until he was called upon to organize the 1963 March on Washington, causing infighting among movement leaders because some believed Rustin would embarrass the march—because he was gay.

"How do we honor Bayard Rustin properly?" said Megan Carney, an organizer of the conference and director of the center. "We knew it would require a forum of diverse voices and communication. . . . We really wanted to weave together different voices and experiences for the conference."

The conference kicked off with a keynote address from Mandy Carter, an African-American lesbian social-justice advocate who has been organizing since 1968. Jinna Holt, a UIC junior

majoring in gender and women's studies, introduced Carter.

Carter is the national coordinator of the Bayard Rustin Centennial 2012 Project of the National Black Justice Coalition.

As a young African-American woman living in an orphanage, Carter began to come out as a lesbian and looked for someone like her. At the time, she did not know about Rustin or his work, and she lamented not having him as a role model.

"This is so precious to me. Bayard's centennial presents a unique opportunity to share who he is, what he did and how he influences us today," said Carter.

A disciple of Mahatma Gandhi, Rustin was committed to non-violence, which Carter admires.

Since 1983, the African-American community has been trying to find a way to recognize Rustin's contributions in decennial commemorations of the 1963 march on Washington, explained Carter. They started by inviting an African-American LGBT speaker to the event and, eventually, by the 2003 celebration, they asked LGBT organizations Southerners On New Ground and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force to co-sponsor the event.

Carter also highlighted Rustin's other accomplishments, including his artistic talents.

"We want to see all of Bayard. He wasn't just a thinker, a strategist. He was a singer. He was a



Mandy Carter at the Rustin conference. Photo by Tracy Baim

writer. He contributed to his culture," said Carter.

Members of the UIC theater department (Jasmin Camarillo, Luigi Salerni, Daniel 'DK' Simmons and Maximus Thomas) read "Tonight We Remember," an original performance adapted from archival letters written by Rustin and from files from prison guards and doctors during the 1940s. It details Rustin's imprisonment in Ashland, Ky., sentenced to four years for refusing to serve in the military during World War II.

Rustin stirred up trouble in prison, organizing hunger strikes and other acts of civil disobedience to desegregate the prison, with one guard's account describing Rustin as an "extremely capable agitator."

Guards and fellow inmates discovered Rustin's homosexuality, and he was separated from the general population and forced to perform menial work. Doctors examined him and found him mentally ill, transferring him to a harsher prison. There he focused on his release, so he could rejoin the civil-rights fight on the outside.

"[Rustin] just inspires me and gives me hope for me and my generation today. Perhaps I can make a difference, too," said Jasmin Camarillo, one of the performers of "Tonight We Remember."

Rustin also loved music, drawing on traditional spirituals in his acts of resistance. Anthony P. McGlaun closed the evening by singing several of them, including "Swing Low Sweet Chariot"

and "Nobody Knows The Trouble I've Seen," accompanied by director and pianist Johari Jabir. The March 31 program featured a series of speeches and panel discussions.

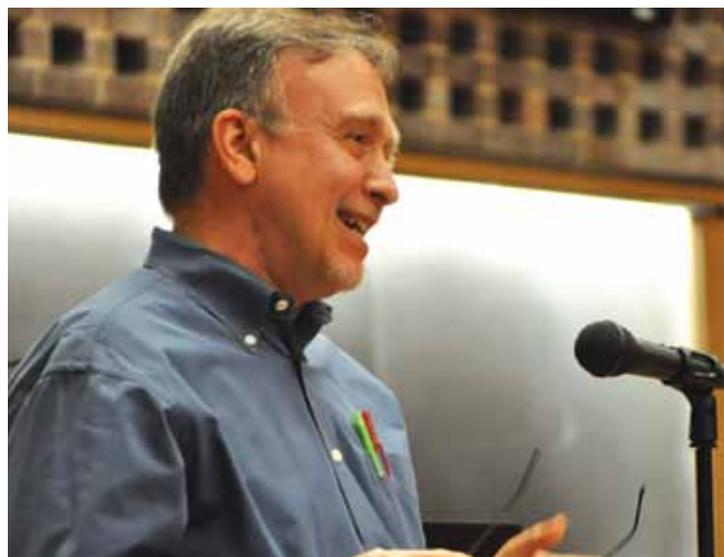
Rustin historian John D'Emilio, author of *Lost Prophet: The Life and Times of Bayard Rustin*, kicked off the day with a discussion of the complex legacy of Rustin, including his relationship with the peace movement, President Lyndon Johnson and the Vietnam War.

The next panel featured Johari Jabir, assistant professor of African-American Studies at UIC; Adam Green, associate professor of American history at the University of Chicago; and Barbara Ransby, UIC interim provost for planning and programs and author of *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*. They were joined by D'Emilio.

The afternoon session was on intersectional coalition building and planned speakers were Kim Hunt, executive director of Affinity Community Services; Asucena Lopez and Jasmine Thomas, Chicago Freedom School Fellows; Rev. Benjamin Reynolds; and Shari E. Runner, senior vice president for strategy and community development at the Chicago Urban League.

The conference concluded April 1 with a discussion of how to continue the Rustin year of commemorations and events. See www.rustin.org for more information.

—Also contributing: Tracy Baim



John D'Emilio at the Rustin conference. Photo by Tracy Baim



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CRIME from cover

“The lakefront in the summer is the lakefront in the summer,” Boehmer said.

Property crime rates in the 23rd District dropped steadily toward the end of 2011. Violent crime rates vacillated for the latter half of the year (40-60 reported crimes per month) and ended on a low note.

Windy City Times repeatedly requested 2011 beat-by-beat data for the 23rd District, but were

unable to procure such detailed information. As such, it is not possible to pinpoint exactly where the violent crimes occurred.

Despite fluctuations, 2011 closed on a downward slide.

While there were some good crime trends in 2011 in Chicago, unfortunately in the first quarter of 2012, the murder rate in the city has jumped 35 percent. There have been 114 murders as of March 29.

* A note on methodology: The Chicago Police Depart issued detailed monthly index crime reports from January 2004 to November 2011. These reports, available at www.chicagopolice.org, were used as the basis for most of Windy City Times' charts and graphics.

In mid-2011, former Newark Chief of Police Garry McCarthy was appointed police superintendent of Chicago. The veteran officer instituted in Chicago his hallmark CompStat program, which has been credited with lowering homicide rates in New York City.

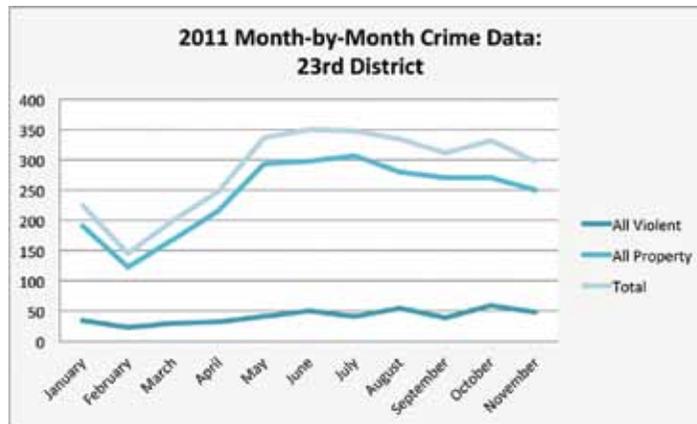
This system measures and tracks crime differently than Chicago had in previous years. As such, it is not possible to provide apples-to-apples comparisons of 2011 data and that found in earlier reports. The CPD News and Affairs Office provided Windy City Times with comparable 2010 and 2011 year-end data that we've used as the basis of our written analysis.

All data sources are noted in captions for the charts.

2011 Month-by-Month Crime Data: City of Chicago											
Crime	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
Murder	28	24	21	30	36	46	54	36	39	44	42
Criminal Sexual Assault	114	108	105	110	139	124	134	138	126	131	116
Robbery	1,096	748	949	1,009	1,244	1,185	1,277	1,327	1,274	1,425	1,228
Assault & Battery	855	697	1,028	1,153	1,236	1,310	1,476	1,235	1,077	1,184	909
Burglary	1,888	1,407	1,821	2,021	2,442	2,418	2,374	2,611	2,521	2,445	2,317
Theft	4,838	4,115	5,448	5,670	6,387	6,831	7,158	7,233	6,542	6,595	6,078
Motor Vehicle Theft	1,850	1,287	1,635	1,719	1,800	1,814	1,771	1,544	1,450	1,487	1,481
Arson	40	20	51	56	55	33	46	42	37	50	34
All Violent	2,093	1,577	2,103	2,302	2,655	2,665	2,941	2,736	2,516	2,784	2,295
All Property	8,616	6,829	8,955	9,466	10,684	11,096	11,349	11,430	10,550	10,577	9,910
Total	10,709	8,406	11,058	11,768	13,339	13,761	14,290	14,166	13,066	13,361	12,205

2011 Month-by-Month Crime Data: 23rd District											
Crime	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
Murder	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Criminal Sexual Assault	4	1	2	2	7	4	0	7	3	0	3
Robbery	21	10	19	17	20	30	20	27	22	38	25
Assault & Battery	9	11	10	14	15	17	21	20	15	22	21
Burglary	22	12	15	12	38	44	34	20	30	19	27
Theft	147	99	136	168	222	234	247	230	213	224	198
Motor Vehicle Theft	21	12	18	36	34	21	27	29	28	28	25
Arson	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
All Violent	35	22	31	33	42	51	41	56	40	60	49
All Property	191	123	169	216	294	299	308	279	271	272	250
Total	226	145	200	249	336	350	349	335	311	332	299

A month-by-month breakdown of crimes reported between January and November 2011. Source: The Chicago Police Department's 2011 Index Crime Summaries.

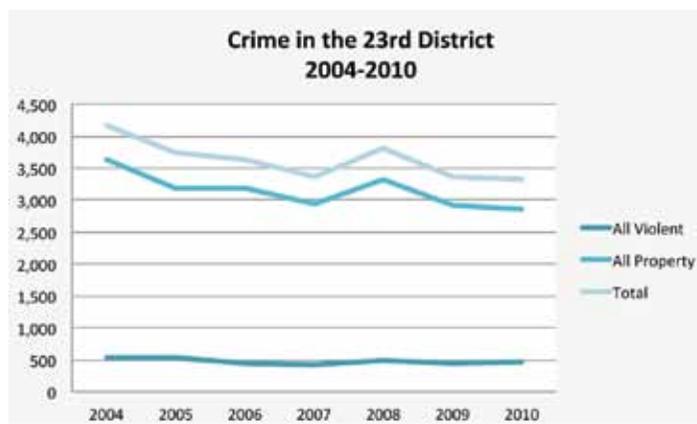
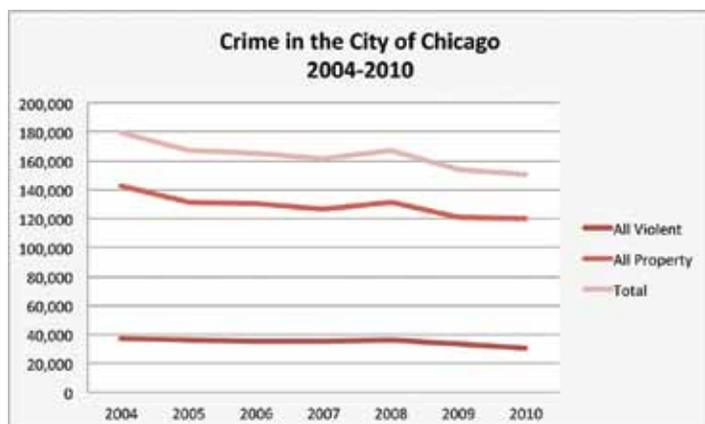


A visualization of month-by-month crime data from January to November 2011. Source: The Chicago Police Department's 2011 Index Crime Summaries.

2004-2010 Yearly Crime Data: City of Chicago							
Citywide	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Murder	448	447	467	443	510	458	436
Criminal Sexual Assault	1,757	1,618	1,521	1,593	1,569	1,443	1,359
Robbery	15,965	15,961	15,860	15,412	16,652	15,867	14,205
Assault & Battery	18,820	17,934	17,442	17,414	17,033	15,718	14,393
Burglary	24,542	25,298	24,114	24,719	26,036	26,456	26,140
Theft	94,651	83,235	83,433	82,418	86,017	78,209	74,561
Motor Vehicle Theft	22,788	22,491	21,824	18,567	18,973	15,472	19,016
Arson	772	683	716	705	637	610	516
All Violent	36,990	35,960	35,290	34,862	35,764	33,486	30,393
All Property	142,753	131,707	130,087	126,409	131,663	120,747	120,233
Total	179,743	167,667	165,377	161,271	167,427	154,233	150,626

2004-2010 Yearly Crime Data: 23rd District							
Crime	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Murder	4	2	3	11	2	1	5
Criminal Sexual Assault	33	31	35	21	31	43	35
Robbery	314	305	237	232	275	252	252
Assault & Battery	177	206	170	163	187	148	175
Burglary	505	499	437	381	440	330	284
Theft	2,758	2,376	2,442	2,308	2,610	2,368	2,320
Motor Vehicle Theft	365	312	294	252	267	223	254
Arson	7	12	11	6	2	2	1
All Violent	528	544	445	427	495	444	467
All Property	3,635	3,199	3,184	2,947	3,319	2,923	2,859
Total	4,163	3,743	3,629	3,374	3,814	3,367	3,326

A tally of crimes reported between 2004-2010; data reflects year-end totals. Source: The Chicago Police Department's 2011 Index Crime Summaries.

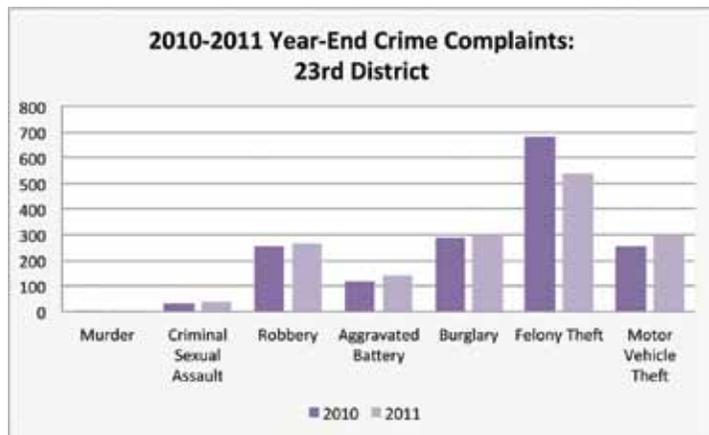


Crime trends from 2004 to 2010; data reflects year-end totals. Source: The Chicago Police Department's 2011 Index Crime Summaries.

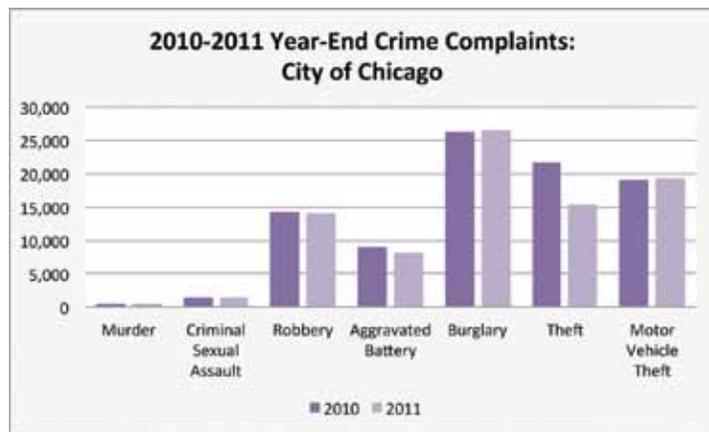
2010-2011 Year-End Crime Complaints			
The following data were compiled under the new measurement system.			
23rd District	2010	2011	Percent Change
Murder	5	4	-20.0%
Criminal Sexual Assault	33	39	18.2%
Robbery	252	268	6.3%
Aggravated Battery	118	138	16.9%
Burglary	287	300	4.5%
Felony Theft	683	538	-21.2%
Motor Vehicle Theft	255	302	18.4%
Total	1,633	1,589	-2.7%

All Chicago			
	2010	2011	Percent Change
Murder	436	433	-0.7%
Criminal Sexual Assault	1,429	1,464	2.4%
Robbery	14,270	13,997	-1.9%
Aggravated Battery	9,015	8,111	-10.0%
Burglary	26,383	26,456	0.3%
Theft	21,759	15,377	-29.3%
Motor Vehicle Theft	18,998	19,345	1.8%
Total	92,290	85,183	-7.7%

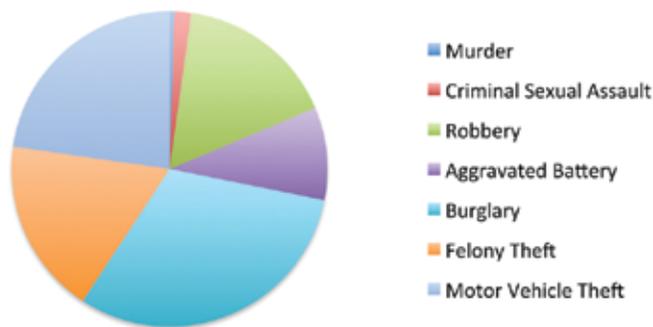
Year-End crime complaints as compiled by the Chicago Police Department's Office of News and Affairs. The CPD altered in mid-to late-2011 how it measures and tracks crime.



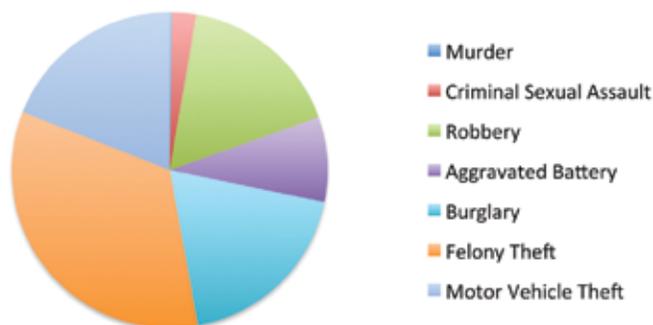
A comparison of 2010 and 2011 reported crimes, by category. Source: The Chicago Police Department's Office of News and Affairs.



2011 Year-End Crime Complaints: City of Chicago



2011 Year-End Crime Complaints: 23rd District



Types of crimes committed, by percentage. Source: The Chicago Police Department's Office of News and Affairs.

CDPH releases citywide LGBT plan

BY KATE SOSIN

According to the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH), the prevalence of smoking, lack of culturally competent medical care, hate violence against transgender people, HIV and obesity are among the most pressing health issues facing LGBT Chicagoans.

CDPH has released its citywide "LGBT Community Action Plan" in coordination with the mayor's office. City officials presented the document at a March 30 meeting with elected officials and service providers who helped draft the plan.

Published as part of the city's "Healthy Chicago" initiative, the document lays out health disparities among LGBT people along with 22 strategies for combating those disparities.

"We have come a long way," said 44th Ward Ald. Tom Tunney, an openly gay man and long-time AIDS advocate. "We still have a long way to go, but this is a step in the right direction."

Tunney said he believed that the plan could become a model in other parts of the country.

According to CDPH Commissioner Dr. Bechara Choucair, the city has identified obesity among lesbians of color, tobacco use, school bullying, cancer in lesbian and HIV among gay men to be posing some of the most serious health risks to the LGBT community.

The plan stresses the need for healthcare providers to collect sexual orientation data in their records before 2014 when the Affordable Care Act kicks in. City officials want to use that data in ongoing policy work around LGBT health.

The plan also suggests training for healthcare providers in LGBT health issues and working with the Chicago Commission on Human Relations to ensure that transgender people report hate crimes.

Mona Noriega, director of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations, said that a lack of reporting means that the city is unable to intervene and compile information used in preventing hate crimes.

"To me, it's a real priority that we identify violence in our community as a social issue that's a health issue," she said.

The plan seeks to combat bullying by encouraging school staff and faculty training, and it states a commitment to discouraging tobacco use, fighting obesity, educating landlords and employers about HIV, and offering LGBT-specific resources on pregnancy. Finally, it includes a plan to advocate for increased State funding for LGBT mental health.

Choucair said that CDPH has been aggressive about implementing the "Healthy Chicago" strategies promised in other areas and that LGBT health would keep pace. CDPH releases monthly reports on the progress of "Healthy Chicago," he said, and LGBT strategies would be included in those reports now. That report goes to Mayor Emanuel as well the City Council.

Service providers questioned Choucair on the vacancy of the post of director of CDPH's Office of LGBT Health, which has remained unfilled since June 2010, leaving some speculating that that office might close. Choucair said that CDPH is committed to filling the position in the near future. An initial search for the position did not produce a hire, he said, but efforts to fill the seat were being renewed.

Choucair stressed that the LGBT plan would primarily focus on policy work within CDPH, while the city would work with health providers on making those policies a reality through programs.

"This is a lot more than just announcing a set of strategies," he said. "Now the real work begins."

In a statement, Center on Halsted CEO Modesto "Tico" Valle said, "We commend Mayor Emanuel

for shining a spotlight on LGBT health care. Together we can build a healthier, stronger Chicago and serve as a model for other cities across the nation."

More information is available at www.cityof-chicago.org/city/en/depts/cdph.html.

HBHC and feds negotiate repayment settlement

Chicago-based Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC) has reached a settlement with the federal government to repay funds associated with five federally awarded grants, according to a press release.

The government concluded the funds were misused by the previous HBHC administration during the period between 2005 and 2010. The federal agencies to be repaid include the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

The repayment consists of one-time payments of \$53,924 to the CDC, and \$86,076 to HRSA that were made today. Over the next three years, three annual payments totaling \$575,000 are due to the NIH in accordance with the terms of the agreement. In all, \$715,000 will be repaid resulting from the negotiated settlement reached today.

HBHC's financial exposure at the beginning of the investigation exceeded \$3.3 million plus penalties and interest. However, the government agreed to a significantly reduced settlement.

Windy City Times will be following up on this and related HBHC stories.

Paul Varnell memorial April 15 at Leather Archives

A memorial event for Paul Varnell will take place Sunday, April 15, in the Etienne Auditorium of the Leather Archives & Museum, 6418 N. Greenview Ave.

The event will start at 2 p.m., with doors opening at 1:30 p.m.

Included in the afternoon lineup of confirmed speakers are Jack Rinella, a lecturer and author who will recount Varnell's mentorship and encouragement; conservative gay leader Tim Drake, who will speak on early conservative/libertarian political activities; Dr. David Ostrow, who will address his and Paul's early AIDS activism; and Milan Vydareny, who remembers Varnell as a "connector and early adopter."

The final portion of the afternoon will be reserved for a moderated open discussion and extemporaneous presentations by attendees.

The event organizers, Milan Vydareny and Greg Nigosian, were longtime friends of Varnell and have participated with him over the years in various projects and activities related to activism and the advancement of gay rights.

See <http://varnell.lionwood.com> for more information.

Corrections

In last week's issue, an article on the LGBT health should have stated that 440,000 U.S. residents die from smoking each year.

Also, a photo credited to the theatrical production F--in' A actually is with Bend in the Road.

Windy City Times regrets the errors.

Columbia's women and gender institute on the chopping block

BY KATE SOSIN

Those who struggle to recall the full name of Columbia College's Ellen Stone Belic Institute for the Study of Women and Gender in the Arts and Media have little trouble recognizing its impact on arts, gender studies and media in Chicago and beyond.

However, after just over six years, Columbia is considering axing the institute. The news has sent a shock wave through a community that regarded the institute as one its most ambitious undertakings and one of Columbia's most prized programs. The recommendation to cut the institute has largely evaded media attention while recommendations to cut the Chicago Jazz Ensemble and the Center for Black Music Research have been noted in recent media reports.

The process has widely been referred to as "prioritization," an extensive review of Columbia's programs and centers, through surveys and outside research.

"Prioritization" aims to ensure the vitality of the school in the long run, said Columbia President Dr. Warrick Carter, in a statement released to Windy City Times.

"At its core, it is an opportunity to ensure we are offering a curriculum and programs that remain on the cutting edge of arts and media education and best position our students for the future," Carter said.

While the "prioritization" has been billed as an exciting step for the college, most speculate that a lack of funds has fueled the massive programming cuts. The college, they say, is catching its breath after a booming expansion. The institute and other programs proposed for removal were founded during more fruitful times, but the poor economy has rendered the school's rapid growth unsustainable.

The result has been a process that is threatening to strip the college of some its most valued resources from the institute to Dr. Randall Albers, a veteran teacher in the fiction writing department that began Columbia's renowned Story Week festival.

The institute was opened in 2006 by Jane Saks, a longtime LGBT-rights advocate and 2009 Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame inductee. Saks has won numerous awards for her work both within and outside of the institute. She currently serves as the institute's executive director, and most credit her with its success. Saks declined to be interviewed for this story.

In its short life, the institute has provided fellowships to Pulitzer Prize winners Lynsey Addario and Lynn Nottage. It has supported the creation of Sweet Tea: Black Gay Men of the South, E. Patrick Johnson's award-winning book and theatre production based on personal interviews. A fellowship from the institute supported transgender filmmaker Jules Rosskam in creating his documentary "against a trans narrative." (Windy City Times publisher Tracy Baim was also awarded a fellowship in 2009.) In total, the institute has supported 35 fellows.

Those closest to the institute say that they understand the need for budgetary cuts, but they are largely baffled by the choice to kill the institute.

Diane Doayne, associate vice president of public relations for the college, declined to comment beyond Carter's released statement, which does not specifically address why the institute made the list for cuts.

Dorothy Allison, queer writer and author of the novel *Bastard Out of Carolina*, sits on the institute's advisory board. Allison said that she sees cuts happening everywhere. In 2008, she lost a



Jane Saks.

third of her teaching engagements as a result of funding cuts.

However, she called the proposed elimination of the institute "short-sighted." "The media center is enormously successful," she said. "There is nothing like it. That's the main thing. There isn't anything like it in the country."

Addario agrees. In 2008, the institute awarded her a fellowship for her project, "Congo: Women Portraits of War."

Up until then, Addario had worked for years on assignment. But she had her own ideas for projects, and she searched for years for funding to make them happen.

"I had never been given that opportunity before," she said.

The exhibit that resulted, a look at the impact of sexual violence on women in the Democratic Republic of Congo, toured the United States and was displayed at the United Nations. (Other photographers included Marcus Bleasdale, Ron Haviv and James Nachtwey.)

"That work, it basically couldn't have been possible without the institute," Addario said.

The difference, say institute supporters, is that no other program nurtures, insulates and empowers the vision of the artists it supports in quite the same way. Moreover, they argue, the prestige awarded to Columbia by its association with the institute, far exceeds its financial burden on the college.

"Most institutions would die for that kind of press and prestige," said Johnson, who is a Northwestern University professor in addition to being an institute fellow.

Johnson, too, said that "Sweet Tea" would not have happened were it not for Saks and the institute.

"I'm still numb by the thought of there not being an institute," he said. "It's unfathomable to me."

In fact, the college itself appears to agree. The office of the provost's recommendation to cut the program notes that "given the institute's extraordinary achievements and the lasting contributions it has made to the culture of Chicago and beyond, it is with regret that I recommend that the institute be closed." But it does not explain why the institute could be cut.

Many are quick to point out that the institute's impact extends beyond artistic circles and Chicago academia. Its programs regularly draw everyday Chicagoans, and its end would be a loss to Chicago's LGBT and feminist communities, they say.

No final decision will be made until June.

Still, a decision to cut Albers' position before

the "prioritization" was completed has caused uproar at the school, Albers said. The decision was later reversed for the time being, but the fact that it preceded the end of the June process led some to believe the recommendations were set in stone.

Despite protest from students, faculty and institute supporters, few speculate foul play in the recommendation to cut the institute. If anything, they say, the priorities of the "prioritization" are simply confused.

But good faith may not save Columbia from loss of support of some its most renowned supporters.

Evette Cardona, a well-known local LGBT activist and institute advisory board member, wrote Carter and announced her intention to withdraw financial support if the institute is cut.

"I recall my dismay at the college's repeated failure to leverage these prestigious awards and honors to cultivate student recruitment, financial support and national visibility," Cardona wrote.

Allison believes that the institute will survive regardless of Columbia's support. It is simply too large and well-known to evaporate in funding cuts. "I want to keep it in Chicago," Allison said. But a new home in a new city is also possible.

In her 2007 interview for ChicagoGayHistory.org (a project of WCT publisher Tracy Baim) Saks described, with apparent pride, the inception of the institute and the way it flourished.

"I think most people in their lives have jobs, and I have work," she said. "And I can't ever forget that."

Oak Park forum focuses on marriage and civil unions

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

More than 50 people attended a forum to discuss marriage equality and civil unions at the Oak Park Temple April 1.

Annika Rothbaum organized the event. Speakers included Oak Park Temple Rabbi Max Weiss; Equality Illinois CEO Bernard Cherkasov; Jaime Garcia and Daryl Rizzo (a couple who entered into a civil union last year) along with their daughter, Siena; Oak Park Village Trustee Colette Lueck; and state Sen. Don Harmon. (State Rep. Camille Lilly was also a member of the panel, but Harmon spoke on her behalf.)

Weiss provided a brief overview of homosexuality and marriage equality within Reform Judaism. He noted that the Women in Reform Judaism group passed a resolution calling for the decriminalization of homosexuality in 1965 and, in 1977, the entire Reform Jewish community embraced the idea and began to welcome LGBT people into its congregations.

"In the year 2000 we were the first group of clergy [Reform Judaism] in America to suggest that marriage equality should happen and we also began performing marriage ceremonies for same-sex couples," said Weiss, adding that a call to action is needed to move equality forward.

Cherkasov then talked about Equality Illinois' relationship within the Jewish community before shifting to the 648 rights and responsibilities that are afforded to people in civil unions in the state. He then explained the Equality Illinois and Lambda Legal Civil Union Tracker, which aims to ensure that same- and opposite-sex couples who are in civil unions are treated fairly under Illinois law. Through this tracker, Cherkasov said, they are learning that the concept of civil unions does not legally work, especially when couples travel to other states where their relationships are not recognized.

Cherkasov also asked attendees to sign Equality Illinois' petition for marriage equality called "I Do support marriage equality," and to also call their representatives and senators and ask them to support the federal Student Non-Discrimination Act (SNDA) that would prohibit discrimination and bullying in schools based on sexual orientation and gender identity nationwide. Current co-sponsors for SNDA from Illinois include Sen. Dick Durbin and Reps. Danny Davis, Luis Gutierrez, Jesse Jackson Jr., Mike Quigley, Bobby Rush and Jan Schakowsky.

Garcia and Rizzo spoke about their journey as a couple and the ways in which their civil union has legitimized their relationship to the wider world. They related that, before their civil union, Garcia needed an emergency appendectomy; when they got to the hospital, not only was Rizzo barred from



From left: State Sen. Don Harmon, state Rep. Camille Lilly, Oak Park Village Trustee Colette Lueck and Equality Illinois CEO Bernard Cherkasov. Photo by Carrie Maxwell

signing the surgery papers (they had to wait for Garcia's brother to arrive to authorize the surgery) but he was also denied the right to visit Garcia in the hospital. They also spoke of the importance of the word "marriage" and what that means to the wider world in terms of recognition and access to the same rights and responsibilities that opposite-sex married couples enjoy.

Lueck talked about the trouble she and her partner had when they wanted to adopt their son. (Lueck is the biological parent.) First, Lueck had to relinquish her rights as a parent to the state; then she and her partner had to prove to the state that they were fit parents to her biological son. Lueck said that this process was very unsettling to their then-4-year-old son, who couldn't understand what why this process was taking place. Lueck said that getting a civil union has helped them but "language matters and has meaning and in our culture the word marriage is incredibly meaningful."

Harmon updated the crowd on the status of the newly introduced marriage equality bill in Illinois. (It was referred to the rules committee, which means it is dead at the moment.) Harmon also talked about the general slowness of the legislative process and, as an example, used the Illinois Anti-Discrimination Bill SB3186, which protects the state's residents against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in housing, credit, employment and public accommodations. The bill was introduced, Harmon said, in 1975, adding that it took until 2005 to get it signed into law.

However, Harmon also noted that some things are moving faster in terms of LGBT legislation, and that acceptance of same-sex marriage is growing—especially among the younger generations.

During the Q&A, Lilly was asked if she supported marriage equality in Ill and she expressed her support.

See www.oakparktemple.com and www.eqil.org for more information.

Gingrich-Jones talks activism at NEIU

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Candace Gingrich-Jones spoke about her activist life and LGBTQ issues to a crowd of about 50 people at Northeastern Illinois University's (NEIU's) Presidential Lecture Series March 29.

Gingrich-Jones is the lesbian half-sister of former Speaker of the House and current GOP presidential candidate Newt Gingrich.

She currently serves as the associate director for the youth and campus outreach program at the Human Rights Campaign.

Sharon K. Hahs, president of the university, introduced Gingrich-Jones and thanked her for taking part in their presidential lecture series.

Gingrich-Jones thanked the university for the opportunity to meet with LGBTQ students at the reception and for providing gender-neutral bathrooms just outside the auditorium that evening.



Candace Gingrich-Jones at NEIU. Photo by Carrie Maxwell

Turning to her autobiography, *The Accidental Activist: A Personal and Political Journey*, Gingrich-Jones said that for most people there is no such thing as being an accidental activist. It takes something that happens in people's lives to spur them into activism, Gingrich-Jones explained and, for her, the 1994 Republican revolution was the catalyst.

Gingrich-Jones shared her coming-out story, telling the audience that she always felt different, even as a young girl. She said that, during puberty, she developed her first crush while attending Girl Scout camp. She remembered thinking that her feelings were not wrong, but it was the late 1970s, and very few people were out of the closet—with none of them in her community.

To stave off her feelings for other girls during high school, Gingrich-Jones said that she became very involved with many activities and clubs. Going to college changed everything, since it was the first time she met other people who were already out and open about their sexuality.

Seeing those people gave her the ability to fully accept who she was, Gingrich-Jones told the crowd, and after her mom discovered a lesbian newsletter in her bedroom she came out to her on the spot. It was 1987 and although her mom asked questions like, "What happened to you that turned you into a lesbian?" and "Where did Dad and I go wrong?," Gingrich-Jones was surprised that they were having a rational conversation about the issue.

Soon after the rest of the family found out—including her brother, GOP presidential candidate Newt Gingrich, who said to Gingrich-Jones, "It's your life and you have the right to live it

any way you want to."

It was only after her brother became Speaker of the House, in 1994, that she became aware of his anti-gay statements. During the media frenzy that followed, a reporter asked her if she was a lesbian; when she confirmed it, people assumed she was a militant activist, Gingrich-Jones related. She added that this assumption could not be further from the truth, since in the seven years prior to her brother becoming speaker she lived her life as an out lesbian and experienced no discrimination. When she was thrust into the national spotlight and learned more about LGBTQ discrimination, her view of the world changed.

In 1995, she attended the annual March conference of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) in Washington, D.C. and it was there that her activist life began. In a speech before the crowd Gingrich-Jones said, "I'm glad that you all didn't wait until your brother became speaker of the House before your voice was heard." Gingrich-Jones then embarked on a six-month, 60-city town-hall tour for HRC, telling the NEIU audience what moved her the most were the stories she heard from the people she met during that tour.

"Educating people with our coming out stories is a very powerful tool," Gingrich-Jones said. "Sixteen years later, living openly and honestly is still the most powerful way I can help people." Now, college students are fortunate to have many places where they can identify LGBTQ people which she didn't have in 1987, she added.

"If you haven't had your defining activist/re-activist moment, find one; those of you who are activists, don't stop.

"There are people in positions of power who are saying very negative things about the LGBTQ community and the most dangerous enemy we have is people's ignorance" said Gingrich-Jones. "The personal is political and we have to make the political personal."

Following her speech and a Q&A session with the audience, Gingrich-Jones signed copies of her autobiography.

MCC ministry finds new home

BY JAMIE ANNE ROYCE

Members of aChurch4Me?, a Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), began meeting at United Church of Rogers Park, April 1.

What originally started as a small Bible study at the Center on Halsted in 2007 blossomed into an MCC congregation hosting worship services for more than 70 members at National Pastime Theater in Lakeview.

The theater moved locations, so aChurch4Me? had to find a new venue, leasing Second Stage Theatre temporarily. The congregation has now entered into a space sharing agreement with United Church of Rogers Park, allowing them meet on Sundays on the third floor.

The new worship space is large enough for 150 people and is accessible through an elevator. It also has a stage, kitchen and parlor.

In the past, aChurch4Me? has only leased space for Sunday mornings, but United Church of Rogers Park has given aChurch4Me? access to the entire facility all week long, including office space.

"We'll have the opportunity to do more events and be more involved and have an address to do that out of in a true sense of space sharing," said Pastor Rachelle Brown of aChurch4Me?.

Gay men, who were kicked out of their own churches because of their sexuality, founded MCC in 1968. MCC prides itself on non-tradi-

tional, contemporary spirituality worship, and aChurch4Me? is grateful to have found a new home in the LGBT-affirming United Church of Rogers Park.

"It felt like just a really good fit," said Brown. "This is huge. It's really a big deal. I'm excited."

While aChurch4Me? will no longer be meeting in Lakeview, the congregation still plans to support the Lakeview Pantry, Lakeview Action Coalition and Night Ministry.

"The GLBT community doesn't just live in Lakeview. The GLBT community is far broader," said Brown. "With that in mind, we're reaching out to where people are living. It's not just one neighborhood like it was 50 or 20 years ago."

In an effort to reach out to Spanish-speaking LGBT community on the South Side, aChurch4Me? is hosting book studies, Bible studies and conversations in Spanish.

United Church of Rogers Park and aChurch4Me? will collaborate in several aspects of ministry, including children's chapel on Sundays. But the main Sunday morning worship services will still be independent.

"We're still who we are. We're still our kind of radical, out-there selves, and we've finally found

a space that understands what we're trying to do, understands who we're trying to be," said Brown.

Worship services for aChurch4Me? convene Sundays at 11 a.m. at 1545 W. Morse Ave.

Unitarian church welcomes new minister

The Rev. Adam Robersmith is to be installed as the new minister for the Second Unitarian Church, 656 W. Barry St., where many gay and lesbian groups have met over the years. The installation will occur Sunday, April 22, at 4 p.m. The installation and reception are open to the public.

Robersmith has been serving the congregation as consulting minister since January 2010. He was elected settled minister after a congregational vote last October.

"We believe that Adam Robersmith's credentials enable him to guide our growth in many directions," said August Staas, who serves as chairman of the church's board of trustees, in a news release.



From left: Mike Barnes and Bart Rarick. Photo from Barnes

PASSAGES

Bart Rarick

BY ROSS FORMAN

Bart Rarick, who had been HIV-positive for 22 years and lived in Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood, died March 29. He was 53.

Rarick's partner since 1999, Mike Barnes, posted the news late March 29 on Facebook. He wrote, "Bart died this evening. We were laying in bed and he suddenly stopped breathing. It was about 10:45 p.m. and he had had an awfully painful day. But he died peacefully and in his sleep."

Rarick was a flight attendant for American Airlines, but had been on a five-year leave of absence, the company limit. Rarick endured serious liver issues, caused by his HIV and cancer treatment over the past two decades, Barnes told Windy City Times earlier this year.

Rarick's weight had dropped from 170 to 125 pounds, and he even struggled at times getting out of bed or eating.

Barnes, 55, is a pharmacist at a Lakeview Walgreens, and has been a bowler since the mid-1980s in the local gay leagues. Barnes has lost two other longtime partners to HIV/AIDS. He was with his first longtime partner, Donald Hendricks, 1984-89. Hendricks was diagnosed with HIV in 1986 and died in 1989. Barnes was then with Sky Bixby 1989-97. Bixby learned he was HIV-positive in 1995 and died in 1997.

"Everyone always wonders why they're here in life. After Sky [died], I figured that must be my lot in life: I'm here to take care of HIV guys," Barnes said in January.

Barnes was profiled earlier this year in the Windy City Times; see www.windycitymediagroup.com/gay/lesbian/news/ARTICLE.php?AID=35695.

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COMPILED BY KATE SOSIN

Lucky Mosqueda

Identifies as
Genderqueer

Pronouns
Masculine and gender-neutral

Neighborhood
Originally from North Lawndale, currently resides in Albany Park

Life's work
"I'm a struggling artist. Whether it's acting, play/screenwriting, filmmaking, photography, sketching, making collages, poetry, or directing films and plays, I feel the arts should not explain what gender is. Art is like the elements flown together. When it comes to injustices and oppressions surrounding gender, sexuality, disability, ethnicity, I use art as a way to express my emotions towards these injustices."

Life's work II
"If I'm not making art, then I'm also a struggling organizer, since the arts and direct-actions actually help rile people to get up and make a difference."

When did you start questioning gender?
"When I was about five or seven years old, so, mostly growing up."

What is the best thing about being trans/gender-variant?
"That I can grow my hair long like the other metalheads and get away with it."

Do you have a coming out story?
"It wasn't until I went to Detroit for the US Social Forum in June, 2010. When I saw the riverfront facing Windsor, Ontario, I noticed

how beautiful the water flowed and how pinkish red the full moon was rising over, and I knew then they didn't have a gender identity and that I had it in me all along. I knew then, I didn't belong to those gender binaries like the water or moon did, and why the f**k should I? It wasn't until two years later (a few weeks ago) that I came out to my partner that I've been with since 2009. I was so scared to tell her I was genderqueer because I feared she would leave me. But, she was cool with it, and a weight lifted off my shoulders."

What issues outside of the queer community do you care about?

"Mostly on issues surrounding disability, being that I have a learning disability as well as suffering from depression/anxiety. It saddens me that mental disabilities such as mental illness are being ignored these days, especially in the city of Chicago where mental health clinics and vital social services that handle mental illness are becoming critically endangered."

What do you think are the most important issues facing the trans/gender-variant community?

"I think safe spaces, like public restrooms, as well as dealing with the public school and community college system here are/should be extremely important. I also think that the entire health community, not just mental health, should be held accountable in making their clinics and services affirming and friendly for the trans/gender-variant community."



To nominate a person for T in the life, email: [Kate Sosin sosin@windycitytimes.com](mailto:kate.sosin@windycitytimes.com)

Report: Illinois marriage equality boosts revenues

BY KATE SOSIN

If same-sex couples are allowed to marry in Illinois, the state will enjoy millions of dollars in revenue and other benefits, according to a recent report issued by the Williams Institute at the University of California Los Angeles School of Law.

According to the report, released March 28, opening up marriage to same-sex couples in the state will generate \$39 million to \$72 million over more than three years and improve the emotional health of LGBT people.

The statistics—compiled through 2010 census data, state agencies and other studies—support current efforts to make marriage equality a reality in Illinois.

Equality Illinois has said that it will use the report in lobbying efforts around marriage equality.

"This report affirms that there are no reasons in logic or law why thousands of Illinois couples and their children should be deprived of the same legal protections and social and community support that other families enjoy," said Bernard Cherkasov, CEO of Equality Illinois, in a statement.

In states that offer marriage equality, an average of 30 percent of same-sex couples married within the first year it was offered, compared with just 18 percent for civil unions and domestic partnerships.

Also, marriage equality may improve the emotional health of LGBT people in Illinois.

"Same-sex couples gain social support from their families and a greater level of commitment to each other when they can marry," the report states.

Randy Hannig, public policy director of Equality Illinois, pointed out that the report comes at a time when the state's budget is stretched and that information on the financial benefits of marriage equality for the state only strengthen the case for marriage equality.

According to the report, marriage equality will bring \$4.5-\$8 million in new sales and lodging tax revenues. That number is for Illinois resident weddings alone. The Williams Institute notes that same-sex couples prefer marriage over other forms of legal recognition and that same-sex couples often travel to neighboring states to marry, bringing additional revenue to those states and local businesses.

There are an estimated 23,049 same-sex couples in Illinois, 3,831 of whom are raising 7,662 children, the report says.

Illinois legislators introduced the Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act in February, but LGBT advocates have said that winning marriage in Illinois could take years.

More information is available at williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu.

Illinois General Assembly passes anti-bullying bill

BY KATE SOSIN

A bill that would strengthen current anti-bullying protections in Illinois has passed out the Illinois General Assembly, according to Shannon Sullivan, executive director of the LGBT youth organization Illinois Safe Schools Alliance.

Bill HB 5290, introduced by lesbian state Rep. Kelly Cassidy, is headed to the Illinois Senate.

The bill is not directly related to LGBT issues. Rather, it adds to the current code to create a model bullying prevention policies for schools for 2013. The current school code does contain LGBT anti-bullying protections.

"To get straight to the heart of bullying in our schools, it will take a comprehensive approach among parents and educators," Cassidy said in a statement. "By giving school district the tools to combat bullying and working with the community to offer youth programming and professional development for staff, we can help ensure a safe and healthy learning environment for children and schools."

The bill's advancement, however, did not come without setbacks said Sarah Schriber, a spokesperson for Prevent School Violence Illinois, a

coalition of local groups. (Scriber is also policy director at the alliance.)

One of the bill's two objectives was axed just before going to vote, Schriber said.

In its initial drafts, HB 5290 added protected classes to the current code. Those were appearance, homelessness, socioeconomic status, academic status, pregnancy and parenting status. However, just 24 hours before going to vote, those categories were stripped.

"I was disappointed that that was removed," Schriber said.

The current code is intended to protect all students, but certain marginalized groups, such as LGBT students, are named specifically to show those groups they are protected and encourage enforcement.

The measure, however, does contain policy intended to make sure schools are active in enforcing the policy. It contains procedures for

WCT seeks nominations for 30 Under 30

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

Nominees should be 30 years or under as of June 30, 2012, and should have made some substantial contributions to the LGBT community, whether in the fields of entertainment, politics, health, activism, academics, sports or other areas.

The deadline to nominate individuals is Friday, April 20.

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

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

Note: Following the policy instituted in 2005, individuals can only win once. Those have won the award since that year are ineligible for this year's awards.

Honorees will be notified in May and recognized at a free ceremony Thursday, June 28, at 5:30 p.m., at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St.

preventing, investigating and following-up on complaints.

Perhaps most significantly, it places an emphasis on "restorative" measures rather than "punitive" discipline. Rather than punishing students who bully, the amendment mandates education, emotional support, counseling and other community-based solutions intended to address root causes of bullying.

Punitive enforcement has largely failed, said Schriber. In addition, LGBT students and students of color are often disproportionately punished, two groups the bullying code seeks to protect.

"It doesn't teach students to behave better and it doesn't make our schools safer," Schriber said.

Windy City Times will update as details become available.



Tony Kushner at the AIDS Foundation of Chicago dinner. Photo by Kat Fitzgerald

Kushner featured at AFC dinner

Award-winning playwright Tony Kushner (Angels in America) was the keynote speaker at the AIDS Foundation of Chicago's (AFC's) annual spring dinner, "An Angel Among Us: An Evening with Pulitzer Prize-winning Playwright Tony Kushner."

The event took place March 27 at the Hilton Chicago, 720 S. Michigan Ave. Among other highlights, Lisa Henry-Reid and Gary Metzner received the Civic Leadership Award and the Lori Kaufman Volunteer of the Year Award, respectively.

On a related note, Kushner's Angels in America, Part 1: Millennium Approaches and Part 2: Perestroika will run through June 3 at the Court Theatre, 5535 S. Ellis Ave. Call 773-753-4472 or visit www.CourtTheatre.org.

Many more photos are at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.

GAY *in the*
LIFE
Joseph O'Brien
TEXT AND PHOTOS BY ANDREW DAVIS



Age
48

Neighborhood
The Galewood area of Chicago

Hometown
Chicago

Job title
Owner, Parkview Pet Supplies

Relationship status
Partnered with Vince, a chief financial officer for a plumbing company

Favorite local restaurant
Gaetano's in Forest Park

Favorite snack food
Cashews

Mantra
"They hate me because I'm beautiful."



Change is certainly a part of life—and Joseph O'Brien's world altered significantly in 1999 and 2000. The first was of a more personal nature, as he and partner Vince exchanged vows in O'Brien's father's home in November 1999.

The second big change involved Parkview Pet Supplies, located at 5358 N. Broadway, which O'Brien has owned since Jan. 1, 2000—but "it has operated since 1921 as a pet shop," he said. "It used to be on Clark Street. It got its name because, before Francis Parker [School] was built, you could see the park through that field.

"I moved up here eight years ago April 2."

Asked why he thinks his business has been successful, O'Brien said it's "the emphasis on the pets themselves. When I bought the shop, the thrust of the industry was going boutique. I was not necessarily going high-end, but I did more with collars, leashes, clothes, key chains, coffee mugs—[ways] to care for pets. I tried to make it more convenient to care for your pet. Now, there's an entire segment of the industry that does day care. I try to emphasize health and co-existence."

He said that he's always been interested in pets "and it started with a parakeet. We had a couple dogs growing up. Then, in my mid-20s, my good friend Ralph was breeding birds, so I helped him with his aviary."

O'Brien grew up in Chicago's Austin neighborhood, the youngest of five children. He said it was a "typical blue-collar family," as his father worked for Commonwealth Edison. Then, the family moved to the Portage Park area of the city, and O'Brien eventually attended the University of Illinois at Chicago after attending Catholic grammar and high schools.

With O'Brien being a lifelong Chicagoan, what's the biggest change he's witnessed? "It would have to be the physical appearance of the city," he said. "When you're about 10 years old, you start to notice your surroundings. The city looked terrible back then [in the early '70s]; it was dirty, and it looked like it was in serious decline. ... The city looks much more cared-for.

"There have also been changes in the West Side, where I now live. When I was growing up, it was burned-out and desolate. That's changed dramatically. The other thing was the decline in industry. I remember growing up in a neighborhood where one could smell things. It's more residential now."



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Steven Wakefield: Former Chicagoan speaks about AIDS @ 30

BY SARAH TOCE

Steven Wakefield has waged war on the destruction of HIV/AIDS since the beginning of the epidemic more than 30 years ago. In this interview, the former Howard Brown Health Center director shows us the very real and personal scars obtained on the quest toward a cure in his lifetime. The former Chicagoan now lives in Seattle, still working on fighting HIV/AIDS.

Windy City Times: How did you get your start in gay-rights activism?

Steven Wakefield: When I was eight years old, I used to go to Operation Breadbasket, which was the precursor to Operation Push, and we were following those rebel rousers, those Martin Luther Kings and Jesse Jacksons, and doing things. By the time I got to university, it was the Vietnam War era. I remember in 1969 there was a rally and I got really, really pissed, and I took the microphone, and I said, "You white people don't know how to rally ... how to give a riot. If you really believe what you're saying, you'd tear this university apart brick by brick." Then I went home, because there wasn't enough anger for me.

As I got through school, I channeled that into more constructive things. A group of friends and I started a not-for-profit so that we could actually create housing for mentally challenged adults to live on their own with supervision, which was a rebel rouser idea at the time, now you can't imagine that a housing authority wouldn't provide that. However, my movement into healthcare actually came because as a gay man I wanted to meet people some place other than in the bars; I knew everybody in the bars. I hung out enough in the bars, I should say. Still, I kept thinking, "I want to meet guys that have some level of philanthropy in their heart of something. They found more to life." I had tried to get involved in the MCC churches, and I didn't find exactly what I was looking for there, although, I did find my longest relationship there.

WCT: Well, there you go. Without looking, you found it.

SW: When we had our first date night together [in August], he said he had asked me out in May and that I had just stared at him like he'd lost his mind and kept going. I don't remember that, but he swears it's true. I went to Howard Brown Health Center [then Howard Brown Memorial Clinic] to volunteer so I could meet

guys (and not the customers coming through). At the time, it was a guerilla storefront operation, where people hung sheets on clotheslines as room dividers, and we were working with the CDC and the Health Department to provide STD testing and care for gay guys who could not admit to their physicians who they were and what they did. They still went to the family physician, they could not tell that family physician, because telling the family physician would be coming out to the entire family. There weren't a lot of gay practitioners at the time.

One of the docs who was also a volunteer at the time was Ken Mayer, who is now the medical director for Fenway in Boston. He was in med school in Chicago at the time ... or residency. While we were doing what Howard Brown did at the time, which was providing STD testing and care, people started doing research around the Hepatitis B vaccine. ... There was an [Hepatitis B] epidemic in our community, and we knew we needed a vaccine against it, so we helped the CDC with that research. That was sort of my first entry into research.

Then along came this thing called GRID [Gay-Related Immune Deficiency], and we were all part of the 4H Club—I don't know if you have read about that, but it was a pretty terrible thing. I was working in chemical manufacturing. I worked for Armour Dial Purex, at a time when more than half the country used Dial soap—the bar of soap that's their household product. I was their distribution manager for the eastern half of the country for manufacturing when I was on the board of directors at Howard Brown. I became the Tuesday night volunteer coordinator, the board of directors was expanding, and they wanted people on the board from the direct service component; everybody from Tuesday night, which was the biggest night because if you had sex Saturday night you were dripping by Tuesday night. I went on the board, and the next thing I knew, I was the chair of the board. I can't tell you how that happened. It is the history of what we Wakefields do.

WCT: Originally, you thought GRID was going to be this little thing that would eventually go away with a little time and money, right?

SW: I remember our summer meeting, which was just supposed to be a picnic, where they told us that we needed to raise \$2,000 to start this little project that wasn't going to take long and wouldn't take a lot of money. By then we

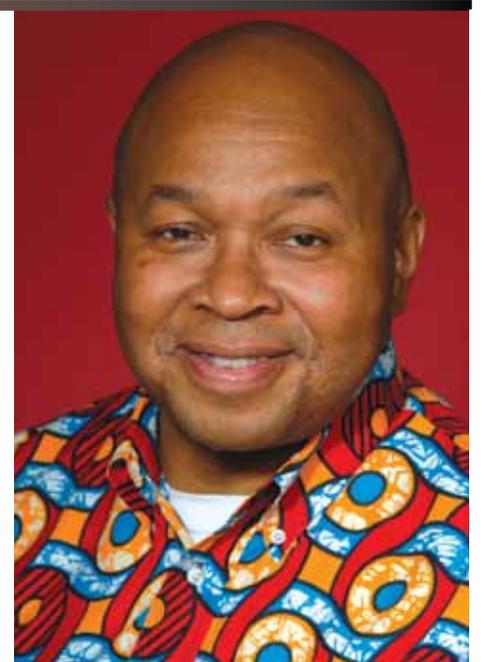
had the name "AIDS", and we were just going to call it the AIDS Project. It was just going to be a little project, and we didn't know where we were going to get the \$2,000, but we knew we had to do something.

Well, a couple of the docs who were with Howard Brown wrote a grant application to do research on a study called the Multi AIDS Cohort Study (MACS). The National Institute of Health (NIH) wanted to do a study on the natural history of AIDS; so it was the Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study. Out of all the applications, they funded five universities and one clinic. One community-based clinic. We got the grant, and it was a multimillion-dollar grant, and we didn't know what to do. We had never had anything like this, and we were going to have to actually now go out and create a research center with medical records and systems that we did not have and did not know how to get.

WCT: The first thing on the list was to find the appropriate space to construct the institution you had no idea you were going to be awarded. Tell us about that experience.

SW: The person who was the then executive director, Harley McMillen, and I went down to sign a lease on the new space that we were going to need to do this, and I asked for a copy of the lease. Well, since I ran warehouses for a living, I read the lease and said, "There's no way. He's charging us to build out a bathroom. He's gotta build out bathrooms for anybody." I tried to negotiate with the potential landlord—the community had agreed on that space—but I wouldn't sign the lease as the chair of the board. I ended up tearing up the \$10,000 check. I had never torn up a—I don't know if I've ever torn up a \$10,000 check since—in front of the guy's face, because he wouldn't negotiate.

We ended up in a different space, which was an old furniture warehouse, and we gave one of the most fabulous pre-construction parties. It was one of those parties that only gay men could give in my mind—with hard hats and the whole ball of wax. We ended up moving into the new Howard Brown home, which was less than a block from where my parents had lived when I was born. It was a phenomenal moment. In terms of the epidemic, there were things that we needed to have in place for the NIH that we subcontracted to Northwestern Hospital. Northwestern was the premier hospital in Chicago; it was the place where if the mayor got sick, that was where they rushed him. We, this little clinic,



Steve Wakefield in 2007. Photo by Hal Baim

were subcontracting with Northwestern Hospital. They were our subcontractor on this grant. That was when I left chemical manufacturing and went to work on getting us ready, as an employee of Howard Brown.

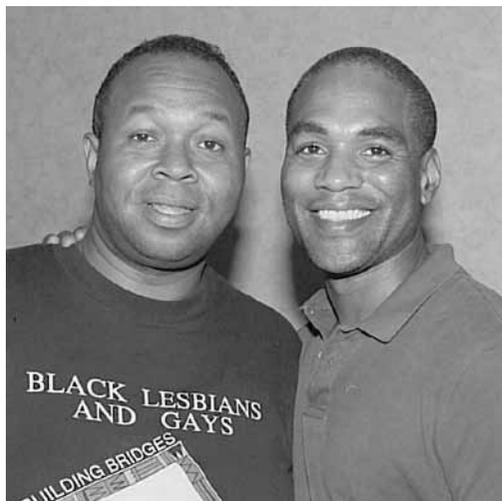
WCT: And all of this started because you were trying to meet someone with passion and compassion in his heart.

SW: Yeah, whoever he was—I got too busy and never met him.

WCT: Part of the study was figuring out how many sexual encounters one had. This was during the sexual revolution. How in the world did you calculate your partnerships?

SW: This is an important piece of the epidemic for me. In my very first interview for the study as a study participant, the person said, "So we're going to ask you some questions and we're going to figure out some things here. How many guys have you had sex with?" I said, "500." He said, "No, no, no, we have a way to help you figure that out." They took you back through chronological history and asked you when you first had sex, and they talked you through all the years that you had had sex. I was 34. He takes me through this whole thing like, "So when you were in college, in your freshman year of college, what kind of things did you do and how often did you have sex?" We talked through all of the years, and we got to 487 when he was done. I said, "I forgot 13 people. I told you 500!" That number was not unusual. It was somewhat of a surprise to some of the people who were doing the interviewing, but that was not unusual for a gay man to have had that many partners.

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Wakefield (left) and Phill Wilson, at a Chicago Black Lesbians and Gays event, 1995. Outlines/Windy City Times archives



Steve Wakefield (center) at the July 22, 1995 Human Rights Campaign 6th annual Chicago gala at Navy Pier. From left: Dr. Isaiah Crawford, Armando Smith, Wakefield, Renae Ogletree and Michael Pleasants. Photo by Tracy Baim



Wakefield (left) with Gay Chicago's Dan DiLeo (front) and Pat Kasaras of Christopher Street (center), and other friends, circa mid 1980s. Photo from the Gay Chicago archives

WAKEFIELD from page 14

WCT: Why is that?

SW: There was a level of comfort. You used to say, "Hey would you like to come over for a cup of coffee?" You would get in your front door; shut the door and say, "I don't have any coffee" We were able to enjoy who we were. That's all. I think, yes, you are right, I think the whole country was into a sexual revolution. That study really became the pivotal study to understand how people became infected. There were always these major universities and this one little community-based clinic.

WCT: You witnessed the start of the epidemic when, I imagine, many of your friends and loved ones passed on because of it. How difficult was that time for you?

SW: I had a lot of grief and a lot of loss at the beginning of the epidemic. My lover died. We became a community of caregivers; we took care of each other. We took care of our friends. I was at such a point of devastation that I had, what probably if I had been clinically diagnosed, would have been a nervous breakdown. I ended up leaving Howard Brown and taking some time to fit myself together.

There were 36 guys who would meet every week in a field house in Chicago to share information about HIV and they had incorporated as a not-for-profit called Test Positive Aware—the network wasn't founded yet. There were 36 guys who would Xerox HIV medical information that they got, meet in this field house to share and then go back and tell their doctors because they were trying to save their own lives.

WCT: So they all had HIV?

SW: They all had HIV, all 36 of them. They put a job announcement out and they wanted to hire a director. I applied and I was the final candidate and they made me an offer. It was \$3,000 less than I had said I would make, because I promised myself I would never make less than half of what I was making when I worked in industry. They went onto their next candidate and when they called to ask me why I didn't take the job, I said, "What do you mean?" Because I didn't know they had gone onto their next candidate. I thought they were going to meet and decide to hire me. Anyway, I went back and told them, "You need to hire me. I'm the person that can do this job. It's my job to raise the money, so you hire me and I'll raise the money."

Now in my second board meeting, I had them pass a resolution that we would pay salaries first before we paid rent or bills. The good news is, when I left the organization, there was the fundraising for the next 18 months. There was money in the bank for the next year's operating and the next 18 months fundraising. I left a stable organization. Nevertheless, that was five years later. When I got there, we moved into an old warehouse, because I had experience doing this now. We painted—when I was hired, it was one support group, once a week, but a bunch of really brilliant guys who had a vision for taking care of each other and taking care of the community around HIV. It was a painful job. Painful, painful, painful. That board of directors that hired me, six months later, half of them were dead.

It was a job riddled with grief and loss, and an expectation that you would just keep going. By then I had some new resources—I had some new resiliency, but at the end of five years, I was back at that place where I said, "I can't do this." I went to do something simple. I went to work with the Night Ministry, which did homeless and runaway youth. It seemed simple.

WCT: Well yeah, compared to what you were living.

SW: One of my friends called me on Friday afternoon and she said, "How was your first week at work?" I said, "It was great. Nobody died." It was one of those times that you just want to



Wakefield (left) at a 1992 ACT UP press conference at the State of Illinois Building, downtown Chicago. Cathy Christeller of the Chicago Women's AIDS Project is speaking at the microphone. Photo by Mike Carter, Outlines/Windy City Times archives

catch the words that have just come out of your mouth and say, "I can't believe I said that." It was real telling of the personal impact for me of the epidemic—that my idea of a great week was a week that nobody died.

I also promised myself that I would leave the Night Ministry if the Night Ministry's budget for HIV work ever got more than 20 percent. In January of 1999, the board passed a budget that had 20.46 percent HIV work, and at the end of the board meeting I said, "We need to make a plan for me to leave." They said, "But you brought us the budget!" and I said, "The treasurer brought you the budget. It's the right budget for the organization where it is today, and it's also the right time for me to leave." They didn't want to hear it, so later that spring I just said, "Here's my last day." It was easier for them to make a plan for my departure that way. It was a great five years.

WCT: Did it feel like a little bit of a break for you from doing the HIV work?

SW: It felt like a great break from the challenge of grief and loss, because there's something about reconnecting a runaway child; there's something about—the statistics about the number of young kids who are gay or lesbian, who aren't really running from something, they are running to a better situation. They know the situation that they are in is not safe for them, is not right for them; they weren't running away from home, they were running to something better. What you could do is connect them often to something better. You could find that aunt, that relative, that community person in their neighborhood, with whom you could help them get into stable housing, which was the key to a stable life. You could also get into longer-term housing.

There are many stories about how we didn't exactly always follow the HUD rules for how long you could provide housing. Because we were allegedly providing emergency housing, technically after so many days you are supposed to kick a kid out. In a Chicago winter, we would kick him out, and say, "If you happen to sleep in the sleeping bag next to the space heater in the basement, we won't tell anybody." My staff would always worry, and I would say, "If the police come, call, I'll come over and I'll be the one arrested." It was great work, and it's still great work, and the Night Ministry thrives. It was supported at that time by over 200 churches and synagogues across Chicago.

On the other side of it, when Richie Daley was elected [mayor], he needed to appoint people to various boards of directors. I was appointed to the board of health as the HIV guy. We agreed,

the gay and lesbian community leadership, we were looking for the right appointment, that he could make an appointment that was an openly gay person. Part of why I was the right appointment was I was Black, and so there were people who would fight an openly gay appointment who wouldn't fight a Vlack appointment to the board of health. So I got to be the Vlack guy and the gay guy all at once ... in a major city.

I was also on national committees for the NIH around HIV research, and really involved in the epidemic as both a vocation and an avocation over the years. One of the greatest opportunities for me was I was invited in the formative weeks and months, to join the board of directors of an organization called the AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition: (AVAC). It is no longer ... the work of AVAC has expanded, so we've kept the AVAC name, but it's AVAC Global HIV Prevention.

WCT: What are your thoughts about the AIDS Memorial Quilt?

SW: I remember the last time the quilt was on the mall in D.C. It was a sea of grief. You were not there to commemorate a person; you were there to feel the weight of this epidemic. Talk about, for me, visionaries, for Cleve [Jones] and the others to be able to put together that project. To this day, I can pop in that video and go to a place of healing because of what has happened with that [project].

WCT: Do you feel that we will ultimately find a cure for HIV/AIDS through extended (and sometimes) non-conventional methods of research and prevention?

SW: We have to continue to do research. We have to find that next generation of drug. We have to combine that with a vaccine, and who knows? Maybe a partially effective vaccine and a partially effective drug—because see the drugs depend on human beings to take them, and yes people will take them to protect themselves, but they're not going to take a pill every day. People have trouble taking vitamins every day. Diabetics who can measure how much their blood sugar is have trouble doing what they do every day. Everybody I know who believes in good dental care, you floss better the week before you go to the dentist. Without monitoring an adherence, people are not going to be able to do this. So maybe there's a pill out there people can take—now, coitally is the word we use in the field, but just before you have sex. Maybe there's a combination HIV-Viagra pill. Let's keep doing the research to find it now. Let's not just settle. Let's get what we know works now and let's implement it where it makes sense to implement it, but let's commit to the research to continue to find what we need to find.

Currently I work in the HIV vaccine trials network at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle. We are using stem cell research to help us move towards a cure. For me, it's exciting today to be at a place where there is both vaccine research and cure research going on simultaneously. Even if we find a cure, or when we find a cure for those who have already become infected, the ability to protect future generations from ever becoming infected with a vaccine as we do with polio, as we do with many other diseases, is still the way we're going to stop this epidemic.

WCT: So, tell me what works and what definitely does not work (regarding prevention and testing for a cure)—in your opinion.

SW: What we do is we don't just test a vaccine—we give a person condom access. If they need to learn how to use a condom, we'll teach them. We make sure they know how to get sexually transmitted diseases treated. Any new sexually transmitted infections they might have, we tell them that they are going to be in a study where some people are going to get a vaccine that we think might offer some protection—we have only had one vaccine out of the hundreds tested that offered partial protection—and some people are going to get a placebo. You have as much chance of getting the placebo as getting the vaccine. So protect yourself. Do not think that you got the vaccine; you have as much chance of getting the placebo. We know what the rates are in the 21 cities where we are doing the studies of HIV. We want to protect against HIV infection, but we test vaccines, and so right now, we have over 20 different studies going on.

The largest study in the world right now of an HIV vaccine is going on across America for a vaccine that we believe is safe and can provide protection. But what we know about it, is that we need to have men who don't have a predisposition for a certain cold virus and that we need to have men who are circumcised, because the jury is still out on the role of circumcision in gay men. Someone said the other day, and I just thought, "Oh, what a brilliant statement", that "If we wanted to do a true HIV intervention that we knew 20 years from now would drop the HIV rate in the US, we would mandate infant circumcision." Circumcision has historically been adapted as a way of reducing the number of sexually transmitted diseases, and we know that the HIV rates would be lower, but they are not significantly low enough to mandate circumcision among adult gay men. So, adult gay men need a vaccine.

One of the most effective interventions against HIV is a condom. No one has come up with a better condom. So imagine if someone were working on the technology for a spray-on condom that with a little bit of friction—so you would spray it on and then it's going to say, "Okay on this side it's 98.6." As soon as it knows it's 98.6 on the other side, it becomes a protective barrier. For \$2 and the use of a condom, you can protect somebody from HIV infection; you can protect 96 percent or more of the new infections.

At one time as a community, we made sure—when the health departments weren't distributing one condom because they weren't interested in the lives of gay men; condoms were about birth control—we went out as a community and we made condoms available to ourselves; we took care of each other. That's a big part of AIDS at 30: as a community, we have continued to figure out ways to take care of each other and ourselves.

What's unfortunate about our younger generation is many of them are dependent on a medically driven healthcare system to take care of them that's not building community ... no one's going to slap you or punch you in the face because you didn't use a condom.

ACLU takes on the tough cases, including HIV/AIDS

BY ERICA DEMAREST

A teacher fired from her post.

A staffer booted from the mayor's office.

Children segregated at school.

As AIDS hysteria swept the nation in the early 1980s, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Illinois stepped up to the plate with bold, decisive litigation that helped shape Illinois' response to a growing epidemic.

The longstanding nonprofit established civil-rights protections with landmark cases, and in 1984, helped draft the nation's first law to expressly protect the rights of HIV-positive individuals.

"We tend to do cases that establish the law," said Harvey Grossman, ACLU legal director. "And when we started in the mid-'80s, there was no body of law [around HIV/AIDS]. That was up for grabs."

In the early years, Grossman said, fear of transmission was the leading cause for discrimination. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) had not yet established protocols, and few people understood the deadly virus.

"It was a very difficult time for people who were trying to do anti-discrimination work," Grossman said, "because you have to work on the basis of medical opinion. What was dangerous? What wasn't dangerous, in terms of potential transmission? There were just lots of unknowns."

Grossman recounted one of the ACLU's first cases. In 1984, a young HIV-positive boy in the metro East St. Louis area was thrown out of public school buildings and segregated due to his status. The child was forced to complete his schoolwork alone in a trailer in the parking lot. "There were actually people in the medical

community who were prejudiced," Grossman said. "I don't know where their lack of scientific reliance came from, but they just threw science to the wind and were overcautious based on fear ... We would see doctors who were totally out to lunch."

To counter the doctors' erroneous testimonies in court, the ACLU enlisted its own court-appointed experts: prestigious doctors, heads of infectious disease departments at hospitals and universities, and medical school professors.



Harvey Grossman. Courtesy of the ACLU

"That became the vehicle we started to use in doing that work," Grossman said.

Another measure was the ACLU's AIDS Advisory Panel. It brought together science, law and policy experts with the goal of drafting protective legislation. Dr. Bernard Turnock, former head of the Illinois Dept. of Public Health, was a prominent member.

In 1984, the panel helped draft the Illinois AIDS Confidentiality Act, the first law in the U.S. to expressly protect the rights of HIV-positive individuals.

Grossman and Associate Legal Director Benjamin Wolf continued to work on AIDS-related leg-

islation throughout the 1980s. The duo focused on cases involving employment discrimination and medical privacy breaches, but soon became overwhelmed by the deluge of complaints.

By 1988, it became obvious that the ACLU needed at least one full-time HIV/AIDS attorney. Promising young lawyer John Hammell was brought into the fold, and the AIDS and Civil Liberties Project was born.

"One of John's strengths was connecting somewhat esoteric legal theories with the real human impact of protecting those civil rights," Executive Director Colleen Connell said.

With Harvard-educated Hammell at its helm, the fledgling project took on ambitious cases. In 1989, it boasted 11 major items on its docket. These ran the gamut from dental discrimination and criminal prosecution to school harassment and illegal dismissals of government employees.

One high-profile case involved the Chicago Police Department. New applicants were required to go through HIV testing as part of the application process. Those who tested positive were booted from the program.

Though the ACLU of Illinois won an impressive number of cases—changing several legal precedents in the process—the work was taxing.

"It was very painful for staff because our clients were dying," Grossman said. "They hadn't worked out the cocktails yet, and basically, you went to this stage of full-blown AIDS ... It was hard to see your clients suffer."

AIDS-related discrimination was particularly agonizing, Grossman said.

"It's different than gender and race discrimination," he said. "These acts of discrimination were overt. No one was hiding their discriminatory intent. They were doing these things to people openly, blatantly and contrary to both

science and law. That made it particularly painful to people."

By the early- to mid-1990s, the AIDS and Civil Liberties Project's workload decreased fairly dramatically. Several celebrities came out as being HIV-positive, and media discourse began to catch up to medicine.

"The public opinion really started to turn, and we saw somewhat of a diminution of the overt hostility," Grossman said. "As the law started to get established, we had to do fewer and fewer test cases. Our office is not a high-service office ... Once the law's established, we expect that other service agencies will start taking advantage of that law to do individual cases."

As the AIDS Legal Council and other local organizations took the reins, the ACLU slowly started accepting fewer AIDS cases each year.

Hammell, who was openly gay, worked on a mix of LGBT and AIDS cases until his death in 1995. Grossman continues to serve as the ACLU's legal director.

Today, the ACLU of Illinois continues to work on HIV/AIDS cases in a much smaller capacity with a focus on education, advocacy and impact litigation. Current efforts include pushing for comprehensive sex education, which could reduce HIV transmission rates, and striving to repeal a handful of discriminatory HIV/AIDS laws held over from the 1980s and 1990s.

To learn more about the ACLU of Illinois, visit www.aclu-il.org.

[Windy City Times featured John Hammell, a gay attorney for the ACLU in the 1990s, in last week's AIDS @ 30 section. The longer version of that feature is online at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/AIDS-Attorney-John-Hammell-He-fought-the-good-fight/36979.html>.]

AIDS @ 30: Activist Bob Hattoy

Robert Keith Hattoy was born on Nov. 1, 1950 in Providence, R.I., and was open about his homosexuality for as long as he could remember. He was the son of a mechanical engineer and a school registrar. Hattoy became politically active protesting the Vietnam War; he said he considered politics a form of lifesaving.

Hattoy bounced around different colleges in seven years but never earned a degree. After working at Disneyland he landed his first political job in the mid 1970s with the California Democratic Party, spending three years as an aide to Zev Yaroslavsky, a Los Angeles City Council member.



Bob Hattoy.

In 1981 Mr. Hattoy found a calling at the Sierra Club where he worked for a decade on environmental justice and as a regional director for the club for the states of California and Nevada. When President Ronald Reagan proposed opening the California shoreline to oil drilling, Hattoy worked on forming a coalition of people and organizations across the social and political spectrum to oppose the plan.

After working for the Sierra Club for a decade, he joined Bill Clinton's campaign for president and became his leading environmental advisor in 1992. He came to Washington with the Clinton team as a 41-year-old openly gay man

with AIDS. His very presence connected the new President to a population that had never been represented in the White House before.

Clinton asked Hattoy to deliver an AIDS speech at the 1992 Democratic National Convention. The speech was nationally televised and made him a forceful advocate for gays and lesbians in the Clinton White House. The speech at the convention came 11 years into the epidemic, though the White House under the Reagan and first Bush administrations had waited years to publicly acknowledge AIDS and mount a public health response.

At the Democratic National Convention of 1992 Hattoy said, "We are part of the American family (addressing then President George H.W. Bush) and Mr. President, your family has AIDS and we are dying and you are doing nothing about it." He went on to say, "I don't want to die, but I don't want to live in an America where the President sees me as the enemy. I can face dying because of a disease, but not because of politics."

According to a New York Times article from March 6, 2007 by Tim Weiner, Hattoy's words riveted a nationwide audience. In the article Michael Petrelis, a writer and activist, said "Bob Hattoy gave people with AIDS and gays in America hope with that speech."

In a San Francisco Chronicle article about Hattoy from March 6, 2007 by Wyatt Buchanan, a founding member of the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP), Eric Sawyer, called the speech "revolutionary" and said it reflected the independent streak that guided his work. Sawyer said, "Bob was one of the few insiders who was consistently vocal on behalf of people with AIDS, on the true situation of people with AIDS, what the real needs were and he wasn't afraid to criticize." In the New York Times article by Weiner, Richard Socarides, who was special assistant to Clinton in charge of gay and lesbian policies,

said "He was an agitator in the best sense of the word. Bob often meant trouble because Bob was never satisfied."

In a New York Times article from June 6, 1993 by Richard Berke, Hattoy said, "Yuppies, young kids, come up to me at the White House and say: 'It's so great what's happened to you, Bob. All that fame from your AIDS speech.' And I'll say, 'Well, thank you, but there's a down side.' And they'll say, 'What's that?' And I'll say, 'I have AIDS'. And believe me, I would trade with them. I would rather work in a bakery and not have AIDS than work in the White House with it."

In an article from The Los Angeles Times from Sept. 11, 1995, Faye Fiore said that Hattoy, as Associate Director of White House personnel, had the Administration's ear. He was in the loop and AIDS was his cause. From 1994 to 1999 Hattoy was White House liaison to the Interior Department. Clinton also named him to the Presidential Commission on HIV/AIDS. In 2002, he was appointed to the California Fish and Game Commission and in April 2007 he was appointed president.

According to his longtime friend and former partner Bob Pelham, Hattoy died March 4, 2007 from cardiac arrest brought on by a bone marrow infection while he was recovering from an AIDS-related illness. "We have lost a pioneer, a leader, and a friend," said former President Bill Clinton and Sen. Hillary Clinton of New York in a joint statement released to the press.

The Clintons went on to say, "Bob Hattoy devoted his life to the fight for civil rights and social justice for the gay community and people living with AIDS. We will always be grateful for his courageous and moving speech at the 1992 Democratic National Convention and afterward for his years of dedicated service in the administration. He gave hope to a community that feared their voice would never be heard at the highest levels of government."

AIDS @ 30: Playboy Playmate Rebecca Armstrong

Like many others, former Playboy Playmate Rebecca Armstrong thought that HIV could not affect her. When she became ill at age 22, she found out she was wrong.

In an interview with Jewell Cardwell in the Akron Beacon Journal from Nov. 29, 2009, she said, "Everyone needs to know that AIDS is not just a problem in the gay community. It only takes one time; one of having unprotected sex, to change your life forever."

After being the centerfold in Playboy in September 1986, Armstrong became a public figure with a \$100,000 annual income. Armstrong contracted the virus as a teenager during unprotected sex; she found in 1989 that she was positive for HIV. She started drinking and using drugs heavily because she thought she had limited time on this earth and she wanted to 'go out with a bang'. Her immune system was failing and she had bouts of pneumonia and meningitis as well as bladder, kidney and brain infections as a result of the disease.

After taking all of the pharmaceuticals she had in her possession with tequila, she drove her car into a brick wall and then to a parking lot where she called a friend who found her unconscious. At the hospital they pumped her stomach and after 36 hours in a coma, she awoke with a new purpose. In an article in People magazine from 1997, Armstrong said, "It took me hitting rock bottom to decide, 'Well, I've got to do something.'"

She started to fight her illness by being as healthy as she could and by taking aggressive drug therapy. She also started to campaign to



From left: Linda Coon, Project Director, Families and Children's AIDS Network; Renee Radosz, Corrections Case Manager, Austin Health Center - CBC Initiative; Ramon Gardenhire, Director of Government Relations at the AIDS Foundation of Chicago; Patricia Canessa, Executive Director, Salud Latina; Craig Johnson, Secretary, Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus. Photo by Erica Demarest

Advocates push against healthcare budget cuts

BY ERICA DEMAREST

HIV advocates urged Illinois lawmakers to resist healthcare budget cuts as the Illinois House Human Services Appropriations Committee gathered March 16 in downtown Chicago.

"In addition to saving lives, HIV services are also very cost-effective," said Ramon Gardenhire, director of government relations at the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC). "The anticipated cost of these proposed budget cuts—in terms of new infections and medical care—would be a \$6.9 million increase in 2013 alone. The projected long-term cost would be \$40 million."

On Feb. 22, Gov. Pat Quinn proposed a lean \$33.9 billion budget that would include massive Medicaid cuts, a \$4 million reduction in HIV programs, layoffs, and several state-run facility closures. The AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) would remain untouched.

Ramon and five other local activists testified against the proposed cuts recently in the Michael A. Bilandic Building, 160 N. LaSalle St. About 40 people gathered for the 3-hour meeting, which focused on line-item cuts.

HIV research and community-based services were tops for reductions, while certain medication programs were left unscathed.

"The entire catalogue of HIV services works in tandem together to make sure that no new infections occur," Gardenhire said. "If someone has to worry about housing, mental health services, and dental services, they're much less likely to be medically adherent, which means there's a possibility for increased transmission."

Committee Chair Rep. Sara Feigenholtz (D-12), who presided over the meeting, expressed concern about testing and education cutbacks.

"This is the first time we've seen such a significant reduction on the prevention side," Feigenholtz said. "[Since focusing on prevention in the state], we've seen breathtaking reductions. My fear is that the number will change and the transmission rates will grow."

Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus (CBGMC) Secretary Craig Johnson, who works as a community

health promoter at Rush Hospital, highlighted how cuts could affect minority communities.

"We're often a constituency that you do not see heavily in the room, but we know that we're disproportionately affected in the state of Illinois," Johnson said. "When we see other demographics' disparities leveling off, we're still seeing increases in the African-American community, especially among Black gay and bisexual men."

Johnson argued that fewer HIV-negative people would get tested as a result of the proposed cuts, and that fewer HIV-positive people would have access to life-saving care.

Renee Radosz, a corrections case manager at the Austin Health Center, shared a personal story to illustrate how destructive cuts to community organizations can be.

After working for some time with released inmates, many of whom were HIV-positive, Radosz lost her job to budget cuts. Though the health center was later able to rehire Radosz, many of her clients left the program and relapsed during her time away.

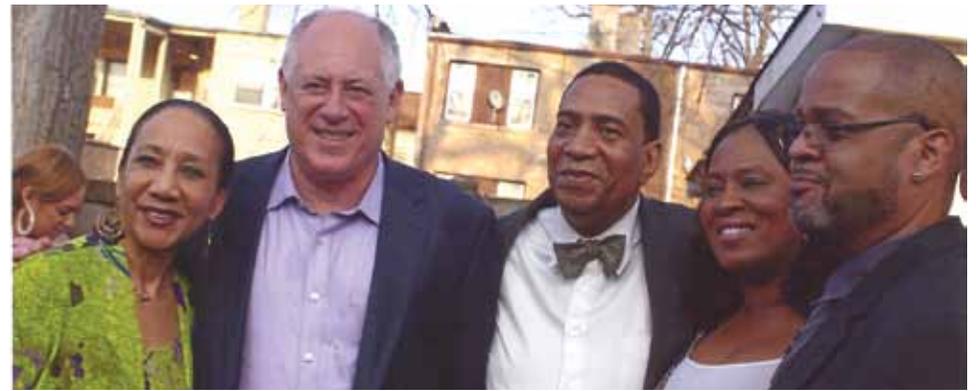
Had Radosz been able to work with the former inmates consistently, she argued, most or all of her clients would've remained on track.

"This is going to cost the state millions if these individuals go back [to jail]," Radosz said. Feigenholtz promised to take the testimonies into consideration before making any final budget decisions.

"This committee truly appreciates the gravity of this cut and how it affects people in the community," she said. "We're hoping that perhaps there's a way we can work around it somehow. It's early in the game—probably about the second inning. We could go the extra innings."

Republican spokeswoman Rep. Rosemary Muligan (R-65) and Rep. Robyn Gabel (D-18) joined Feigenholtz on the committee. Salud Latina Executive Director Patricia Canessa, Families and Children's AIDS Network Project Director Linda Coon, and HIV Housing Assistance consumer Vincent Moorman also offered testimonies.

Red Ribbon event held



Elected officials and activists joined together for an event hosted by Tumia Romero for the Illinois "Quality of life, Red Ribbon Cash" lottery.

Pictured: The Chief Senate bill sponsor of Illinois's "Quality of life, Red Ribbon Cash" lottery Senator Jackie Collins; Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn, a supporter of "Quality of life, Red Ribbon Cash" legislation; "Red Ribbon Cash" legislative co-organizing supporter and community activist Michael O'Connor; host Tumia Romero, Congressional staffer for U.S. Rep. Danny K. Davis; and Ben Montgomery "Quality of life Red Ribbon Cash" legislative co-organizing supporter and community activist, also retired congressional staffer for Congressman Danny K. Davis.

Red Ribbon Cash lottery has \$1.4 million for HIV/AIDS prevention and care. This year the lottery will fund 14 community-based organizations engaged in HIV/AIDS prevention and care.

HUD gives \$33 million to HIV/AIDS housing

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development announced March 29 that more than 1,200 extremely low-income persons living with HIV/AIDS will continue to receive permanent housing as a result of nearly \$33 million in grants HUD is awarding.

Annually, these grants will provide permanent supportive housing for over 1,200 households so they can manage their health and access needed supportive services such as case management and employment training.

In Chicago, the grants went to: Chicago Department of Public Health (\$1,487,815), AIDS Foundation of Chicago (\$1,476,160), and Chicago House (\$1,285,370).

The anti-gay Salvation Army (in Los Angeles) also received some government funds.

LOGO airs 'Positive Youth'

LOGO TV's documentary Positive Youth shines a light on the new reality of living HIV+. The film follows four dynamic youth, ages 18 to 27 who are either infected or affected by HIV.

Proving that the next generation is not back-

ing down, the subjects offer an uncensored look into the challenges of dating, living and loving with HIV.

"I felt there was a huge disconnect in the public with the advancements in HIV medicine and the affliction by the general population," said the film's director, Charlie David. "We made this documentary to educate those who know little of HIV, to shed light on the rise of HIV infection among today's youth and to give inspiration to people living with HIV that they are not alone, nor should be seen as a danger to society."

Each of the four subjects feature a dynamic perspective on the reality of living positive today: a straight 18-year-old First Nations woman living in an impoverished rural town, a gay 25-year-old white urbanite, a 23-year-old African American YouTube figure and a 27-year-old club kid jet-setter.

Medical and psychological experts also weigh in to provide up-to-date facts and a historical context to the reality of living positively.

Positive Youth will air internationally on Saturday, May 19, 2012 at 8 p.m. EST on TV networks LOGO TV in the United States and OUTtv in Canada. The film will also begin premiering in theaters across North and South America, Europe, Australia and Asia, beginning March 30, 2012.

ARMSTRONG from page 16

warn teenagers about the risks of HIV and how they are also vulnerable. She started investing a lot of time in herself and her own health. She started taking the medications that were prescribed for her illness every day. She stopped living a wild lifestyle; she quit drinking, smoking and doing drugs. She wanted to be as healthy as she could be during her remaining years.

Armstrong is working now as a competitive bodybuilder and a fitness model while continuing to try to save the lives of teenagers across the country. She has spoken at high school and colleges around the country. Her mission is to inform girls that their belief that a disease like HIV cannot affect them is false and that they are indeed at risk and should take precaution.

Armstrong is still alive and living a healthy lifestyle. In the interview with People magazine, she said, "Sure, there are things I wish I hadn't done, but why waste time saying, 'Oh, God, if only I had done it this way?' It's better for me to just make my future better than my past."

See <http://rebekkaarmstrong.com>.



Rebekka Armstrong from her bodybuilding website.

VIEWPOINTS

WINDY CITY TIMES

VOL. 27, No. 26, April 4, 2012

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PUBLISHER & EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Tracy Baim

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER Terri Klinsky
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 ART DIRECTOR Kirk Williamson
 SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGERS: Terri Klinsky, Amy Matheny, Kirk Williamson, Dave Ouano, Kirk Smid
 PROMOTIONAL SUPPORT Cynthia Holmes
 NIGHTSPOTS MANAGING EDITOR Kirk Williamson
 NATIONAL SALES Rivendell Media, 212-242-6863
 SENIOR WRITERS Kate Sosin, Bob Roehr, Rex Wockner, Marie J. Kuda, David Byrne, Tony Per-egrin, Lisa Keen, Yasmin Nair, Erica Demarest
 THEATER EDITOR Scott C. Morgan
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 ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT WRITERS Mary Shen Barnidge, Steve Warren, Lawrence Ferber, Mel Ferrand, Jerry Nunn, Jonathan Abaranel
 COLUMNISTS/WRITERS: Yvonne Zipter, Jorjet Harper, Lee Lynch, Alex Lubischer, Charles Dewey, Carrie Maxwell, Billy Masters, Tyler Gillespie, Sarah Toce, Dana Rudolph, Sally Parsons, Emmanuel Garcia, Jamie Anne Royce, Joe Franco
 SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHERS Kat Fitzgerald, Mel Ferrand, Hal Baim, Steve Starr, Emmanuel Garcia, Dave Ouano, Tim Carroll

CIRCULATION

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR Jean Albright
 DISTRIBUTION: Ashina, Allan, Dan, John, Renee, Sue and Victor
 WEB HOSTING: LoveYourWebsite.com (lead programmer: Martie Marro)

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(773) 871-7610 FAX (773) 871-7609
 e-mail: editor@windycitymediagroup.com or Andrew@windycitymediagroup.com

www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com
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 5315 N. Clark St. #192, Chicago, Illinois 60640
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 OUT! Resource Guide ONLINE
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"Windy City Media Group generated enormous interest among their readers in this year's LGBT Consumer Index Survey. Out of approximately 100 print and online media partners who participated in the survey, Windy City was the best performing regional media in the U.S. Only survey partners with a nationwide footprint were able to generate a greater number of responses." —David Marshall, Research Director, Community Marketing, Inc.

 Community Marketing, Inc.

MARK ZUBRO

A walk to the store

In interviews with reporters and on panels at mystery conventions, I am occasionally asked if I experienced any discrimination connected with my being an openly gay teacher while having 23 gay themed mysteries published. Mostly, things were good. Only a couple letters to the superintendent who was very supportive, and lots of positive feedback from my colleagues.

There was one essay from a kid, an eighth grader who wrote, in part, the following: "I know he's gay because I know what his books are about. They're about gay people. I think my dad is right about what should happen to gay people: a bullet hole in the head." This student was in my class for a full year. I didn't read the essay with this comment in it until after the school year was over. I found this more sad than anything else.

So, except for these few blips, I always presumed the overall reaction to my being an openly gay teacher and gay author was reasonably benign.

Then the following occurred in the past few weeks.

I walk to the convenience store down the street every day to get my newspapers and so I can claim I'm getting exercise every day. Yes, even in winter, I just bundle up and then bundle up some more and hope I don't slip on the ice. I tripped and fell once this year as I got distracted by a beautiful dog that was being taken into the animal grooming place two doors down from the convenience store. Just a klutz, no medical issues.

Once in a blue moon, I run into former students. At least they introduce themselves as such, since some of them are now in their twenties, thirties, forties or even early fifties.

Two weeks ago on a Saturday a woman in her thirties who was chatting with one of the clerks at the store turned to me and asked the usual, "Aren't you?" I said the usual: "I'm sorry. I don't remember your name. Please tell me."

I wouldn't have recognized her in a thousand years. She told me her name, and she has a husband and kids, and lives in town. So, we chatted less than five minutes, and I walked back home.

That next day, Sunday, she's there again. She introduces me to the clerks at the store adding that she always liked me as a teacher and said I was always good to her and her friends. That was good. But the conversation quickly lagged, like one of those moments when you kind of don't want to be talking to this person, or at least can't think of anything to say, and are starting to feel uncomfortable. I finished the conversation and walked home.

The next Saturday, she was there again. She'd been chatting with the clerk again, but as I turned to go, she followed me out of the store. The weather was nice that day as it has been.

Over the few days and brief conversations we'd talked about other students who were in the same year with her. I usually remember the kids from a particular year, if at all, as most teachers do, by the most rotten kids in the class. Since she was in her thirties the people and events we were talking about happened years and years ago.

The most rotten kid that year was Biff.

The woman—I've forgotten her name now, and since she was married her name wasn't the same as when she was a kid—said that her husband had gone to a school in the next district over from mine. Her husband had been best friends with Biff and his cronies.

Then she apologized to me. She told me Biff, but not with her husband (maybe I believed that), came to my parking lot and flipped my car. She said she was so sorry for that, and she always liked me as a teacher.

I told her that no one had ever flipped my car, if she meant as in turned it over on its roof.

She said she'd always wondered if what they'd bragged about had been true. She then listed the other things they'd done.

These were all too true.

One time, my car had been picked up and moved about three feet from the perpendicular. I drove a high-mileage, small compact car so it was possible. Two other times, the windshield was smashed. Nails in tires. A broken window in the apartment. Sand in the gas tank—I got a locking gas cap in all subsequent cars. The list went on.

At the time, I'd called the police for a few of the incidents, but there was nothing to be done. I had no clue as to the identity of the perpetrators.

It didn't all happen at once. In fact, they happened over about a four-year span.

renewing your membership, or supporting our work by donating to Gerber/Hart, please visit www.gerberhart.org.

Sincerely,
 Karen Sendziak and members
 of the Gerber/Hart Library
 and Archives
 board of directors

WCT reporter Kate Sosin responds: It is true that the former version of the organization's bylaws include an amendment that allows board members to alter its bylaws.

This fact is clearly noted in our coverage:

"The 2000 bylaws stated: 'Each member shall be entitled to vote at the annual meeting in the election of the Board of Directors and at any meeting of the membership. Members shall also be eligible to vote to amend the bylaws of the corporation.'

"That document goes on to state that the board of directors may change the bylaws 'where

Stupid me—all the little things I dismissed or didn't pay attention to. I asked once at the place where I went to get replacement tires, "Wasn't it odd that I was getting nails in my tires so often? Couldn't someone be sabotaging them?" The clerk at the time said no, adding they must be nails from construction sites. Much as I might fantasize about studying construction workers, I'd never so much as gotten close to a construction site, and certainly never driven through one.

The woman reiterated that they used to brag about what they'd done.

This all happened after the books had come out.

Teenage homophobia: A form of intimidation and bullying.

I never put it all together. The incidents all happened too far apart for me to connect them.

I think on some of those interviews and panels I may have said something like, "Oh, I was pretty lucky. There wasn't much of a problem with homophobia, only a few letters from parents," and then I'd tell the story about the letter. It turns out there was constant homophobia of a violent and dangerous kind, and I missed it.

The woman at the store apologized several times. She repeated that her husband wasn't involved, and named the names of kids I'd long forgotten who'd helped Biff.

So, yes, there was the bullying of a teacher, and I was too naive or stupid or arrogant to see it. What a fool.

She was so so nice and so apologetic.

At least now I know more of the reality. An introduction might be in order—real world, this is Mark; Mark, this is the real world. Try to get along.

I ask myself how I couldn't have put it together. The basic fact is, I didn't.

I should have been frightened then. It kind of scares me now. I also find it disheartening and depressing.

All of this also makes me angry. I'm a mystery writer after all, and I'm always looking for a few more corpses for my plots. I think I've got plenty, probably enough for several books.

Openly gay mystery writer Mark Zubro lives in the southwest suburbs of Chicago. He has written and published 23 mystery novels and five short stories, all set in Chicago with gay main characters. His most recent book, out last November, is Black and Blue and Pretty Dead, Too. His next book, tentatively titled Another Dead Republican, is slated to be finished within weeks and be out later this year.

LETTERS

Long arm of the (by)law

Dear Windy City Times:

In your online article dated Friday, March 23, in your reference to previous Gerber/Hart bylaws, you omitted Article XV, "Amendments," paragraph two. This paragraph reads: "The Board of Directors shall have the power to make, alter, amend or repeal the bylaws of this Corporation by a two-thirds vote of the entire Board at any regular or special meeting thereof..." We are puzzled as to why you did not include this information in the article.

Many charities throughout the United States are membership organizations without giving their members the right to vote for the board of directors. The American Cancer Society is one of them. This is a very common structure for charities, according to our attorney Paula Goedert.

Gerber/Hart Library and Archives values and respects its members, donors and supporters. If anyone is interested in becoming a member or

notice of such proposed action has been announced in the notice of such meeting."

The article states that members report that no such meetings were announced. Windy City Times consulted with an attorney on these two clauses in particular. He confirmed that the Illinois Not For Profit Corporation Act requires that members who are eligible to vote on bylaws be allowed to do so, regardless of bylaws amendments. This is, in part, due to the fact that non-profit bylaws must remain consistent with Illinois laws.

It is possible still that Gerber/Hart's bylaws were changed legally. Windy City Times asked Sendziak to clarify how the bylaws were legally changed without member input.

She wrote: "We [the board of directors] spent time reviewing your additional questions and we believe that the responses provided to you on Tuesday, March 20, sufficiently answer all of your inquiries."

GOINGS-ON



WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



Photo by Carol Rosegg

NULL AND 'FREUD'

Martin Rayner stars as Sigmund Freud and Mark H. Dold is C.S. Lewis in the Midwest premiere of Freud's Last Session. See page 24.

DISH

Ombra's on.
Page 32.

Photo of mushroom panini
by Shira Kollins



THEATER

'Sea' change.
Page 24.

Photo from Alli Urbanik



TELEVISION

'Happily' ever after.
Page 20.

PR photo of Tichina Arnold



SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Silk Road rolling along multiple pathways

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

In September 2011, the Chicago theater company known as Silk Road Theatre Project changed its name to Silk Road Rising. The name switch was made in response to the organization producing online dramatic content in addition to its founding mission to produce theatrical works focusing on peoples from and of nations stretching from Japan to Italy that made up the ancient Silk Road.

The timing to coincide with the 10-year anniversary of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, had a parallel, since out artistic and life partners Malik Gillani and Jamil Khoury co-founded Silk Road Theatre Project in 2002 as a response to counter a wave of anti-Arab and anti-Muslim sentiment that they saw growing in America.

"From the inception of the company, we started hearing from people not living in Chicago and often overseas, particularly Muslim women living in Europe, who somehow stumbled upon our website and would be very taken with the mission and the message of our work," said Khoury. "They would contact us and ask if there was some way they could participate, and of course, short of flying to Chicago and buying a ticket, there really wasn't."

Although Silk Road grew from a small itinerant Chicago troupe to a highly esteemed theater company ensconced in the basement of the historic Chicago Temple in the Loop, Gillani and Khoury realized that their often-acclaimed work

and the organization's message were reaching limited audiences. This led to Silk Road's drive to produce its own original content online to capture audiences on a global scale.

"In trying to devise a way to have a reach beyond Chicago, obviously we kept thinking about the Internet because it's the most democratic, egalitarian and accessible medium out there," Khoury said. "Even locally there are people who are interested in the spirit of our work, but really don't care much for live theater but who also spend a lot of time online."

Rather than streaming full-length plays (which would have been a nightmare negotiating various rights issues and with union contracts), Silk Road started creating short-form content with narrative stories or in documentary styles. Khoury created a semi-autobiographical short film called both/and that examines what it means to juggle multiple identities of Arab, American and gay. Silk Road also produced a documentary called Not Quite White that explored immigration and Arab and Slavic notions of what constitutes whiteness in America.

However, perhaps the most ambitious online project is Khoury's Mosque Alert, which was created in response to not only the recent media frenzy surrounding the Muslim community center planned to be built near Ground Zero in New York, but also to the resistance of multiple communities across America to the building of new mosques.

Mosque Alert features characters that are both



From left: Malik Gillani and Jamil Khoury of Silk Road Rising. Photo courtesy of Silk Road Rising

for and against the building of a new, more liberal-leaning mosque in Naperville. Viewers are actively sought to provide comments on the video shorts, and Khoury said he may or may not use their responses in shaping possible future plans for a stage adaptation of Mosque Alert.

Like some of the previous stage plays Silk Road has produced like Caravaggio and Precious Stones, there are gay characters in the mix in these online works. And although Silk Road is not actively seeking Muslim audiences for the online content, they are being accessed in Arab countries.

"Five of the 10 largest countries that are most accessing the works are from the Middle East, which is fascinating to me because in many parts of this world, you cannot be openly gay," said Gillani. "The fact that our work is being accessed in those countries tells me that we're serving a Muslim population that really wants to have access to these topics and these conversations."

With the company name change and the push

to produce online content, both Gillani and Khoury stressed that Silk Road Rising has not turned its back on producing live theater (although it did not produce a play this past fall or winter).

Re-Spiced: A Silk Road Cabaret is currently on Silk Road's boards and it's something of a sequel to its previous revue Silk Road Cabaret: Broadway Sings the Silk Road. However, rather than draw its inspiration solely from the Great White Way, Khoury and out director Steve Scott have Re-Spiced featuring other music genres like country, rap, rock and folk to examine Asian and Middle Eastern images as conjured up in U.S. and British songs.

"[Re-Spiced is] going deeper with this idea of how representation of Silk Road peoples either in literature and music shaped perception in the West, particularly in the U.S. and the U.K. for better or for worse—particularly worse because

Turn to page 26



Patient model. Pill shown is not actual size.

INDICATION

COMPLERA® (emtricitabine 200 mg/rilpivirine 25 mg/tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300 mg) is a prescription HIV medicine that contains 3 medicines, EMTRIVA® (emtricitabine), EDURANT™ (rilpivirine), and VIREAD® (tenofovir disoproxil fumarate) combined in one pill. COMPLERA is used as a complete single-tablet regimen to treat HIV-1 infection in adults (age 18 and older) who have never taken HIV medicines before.

COMPLERA does not cure HIV and has not been shown to prevent passing HIV to others. It is important to always practice safer sex, use latex or polyurethane condoms to lower the chance of sexual contact with any body fluids, and to never re-use or share needles. **Do not stop taking COMPLERA unless directed by your healthcare provider. See your healthcare provider regularly.**

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

Contact your healthcare provider right away if you get the following side effects or conditions while taking COMPLERA:

- Nausea, vomiting, unusual muscle pain, and/or weakness. These may be signs of a buildup of acid in the blood (lactic acidosis), which is a serious medical condition
- Light-colored stools, dark-colored urine, and/or if your skin or the whites of your eyes turn yellow. These may be signs of serious liver problems (hepatotoxicity), with liver enlargement (hepatomegaly), and fat in the liver (steatosis)
- If you have HIV-1 and hepatitis B virus (HBV), your liver disease may suddenly get worse if you stop taking COMPLERA. Do not stop taking COMPLERA without first talking to your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider will monitor your condition

COMPLERA may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how COMPLERA works, and may cause serious side effects.

Do not take COMPLERA if you are taking the following medicines:

- other HIV medicines (COMPLERA provides a complete treatment for HIV infection.)
- the anti-seizure medicines carbamazepine (Carbatrol®, Equetro®, Tegretol®, Tegretol-XR®, Teril®, Epitol®), oxcarbazepine (Trileptal®), phenobarbital (Luminal®), phenytoin (Dilantin®, Dilantin-125®, Phenytek®)
- the anti-tuberculosis medicines rifabutin (Mycobutin), rifampin (Rifater®, Rifamate®, Rimactane®, Rifadin®) and rifapentine (Priftin®)
- a proton pump inhibitor medicine for certain stomach or intestinal problems, including esomeprazole (Nexium®, Vimovo®), lansoprazole (Prevacid®), omeprazole (Prilosec®), pantoprazole sodium (Protonix®), rabeprazole (Aciphex®)
- more than 1 dose of the steroid medicine dexamethasone or dexamethasone sodium phosphate
- St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*)
- other medicines that contain tenofovir (VIREAD®, TRUVADA®, ATRIPLA®)
- other medicines that contain emtricitabine or lamivudine (EMTRIVA®, Combivir®, Epivir® or Epivir-HBV®, Epzicom®, Trizivir®)
- rilpivirine (Edurant™)
- adefovir (HEPSERA®)

In addition, also tell your healthcare provider if you take:

- an antacid medicine that contains aluminum, magnesium hydroxide, or calcium carbonate. Take antacids at least 2 hours before or at least 4 hours after you take COMPLERA
- a histamine-2 blocker medicine, including famotidine (Pepcid®), cimetidine (Tagamet®), nizatidine (Axid®), or ranitidine hydrochloride (Zantac®). Take these medicines at least 12 hours before or at least 4 hours after you take COMPLERA
- the antibiotic medicines clarithromycin (Biaxin®), erythromycin (E-Mycin®, Eryc®, Ery-Tab®, PCE®, Pediazole®, Ilosone®), and troleandomycin (TAO®)
- an antifungal medicine by mouth, including fluconazole (Diflucan®), itraconazole (Sporanox®), ketoconazole (Nizoral®), posaconazole (Noxafil®), voriconazole (Vfend®)
- methadone (Dolophine®)

This list of medicines is not complete. Discuss with your healthcare provider all prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, or herbal supplements you are taking or plan to take.

COMPLERA is a prescription medicine used as a complete single-tablet regimen to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV medicines before. COMPLERA does not cure HIV or AIDS or help prevent passing HIV to others.

New COMPLERA

A complete HIV treatment in only 1 pill a day.

Ask your healthcare provider if it's the **one** for you.

Before taking COMPLERA, tell your healthcare provider if you:

- have **liver problems**, including **hepatitis B or C** virus infection
- have **kidney problems**
- have ever had a **mental health problem**
- have **bone problems**
- are **pregnant or plan to become pregnant**. It is not known if COMPLERA can harm your unborn child
- are breastfeeding; **women with HIV should not breast-feed** because they can pass HIV through their milk to the baby

Contact your healthcare provider right away if you experience any of the following serious or common side effects:

Serious side effects associated with COMPLERA:

- **New or worse kidney problems** can happen in some people who take COMPLERA. If you have had kidney problems in the past or take other medicines that can cause kidney problems, your healthcare provider may need to do blood tests to check your kidneys during your treatment with COMPLERA
- **Depression or mood changes** can happen in some people who take COMPLERA. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms: feeling sad or hopeless, feeling anxious or restless, or if you have thoughts of hurting yourself (suicide) or have tried to hurt yourself
- **Bone problems** can happen in some people who take COMPLERA. Bone problems include bone pain, softening or thinning (which may lead to fractures). Your healthcare provider may need to do additional tests to check your bones
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV medicine. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), breast, and around the main part of your body (trunk). Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The cause and long-term health effect of these conditions are not known
- **Changes in your immune system (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome)** can happen when you start taking HIV medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider if you start having new symptoms after starting your HIV medicine

Common side effects associated with COMPLERA:

- trouble sleeping (insomnia), abnormal dreams, headache, dizziness, diarrhea, nausea, rash, tiredness, and depression

Other side effects associated with COMPLERA:

- vomiting, stomach pain or discomfort, skin discoloration (small spots or freckles), and pain

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away. These are not all the possible side effects of COMPLERA. For more information, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist. Call your healthcare provider for medical advice about side effects.

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

Take COMPLERA exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to take it

- **Always take COMPLERA with a meal.** Taking COMPLERA with a meal is important to help get the right amount of medicine in your body. A protein drink does not replace a meal
- **Stay under the care of your healthcare provider during treatment with COMPLERA and see your healthcare provider regularly**

Please see Patient Information for COMPLERA on the following pages.



COMPLERA[®]
emtricitabine 200mg/rilpivirine 25mg/
tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300mg tablets

Learn more at www.COMPLERA.com

FDA-Approved Patient Labeling

Patient Information

COMPLERA® (kom-PLUH-rah)

(emtricitabine, rilpivirine and tenofovir disoproxil fumarate) Tablets

Important: Ask your doctor or pharmacist about medicines that should not be taken with COMPLERA. For more information, see the section “What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking COMPLERA?”

Read this Patient Information before you start taking COMPLERA and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This information does not take the place of talking to your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment.

What is the most important information I should know about COMPLERA?

COMPLERA can cause serious side effects, including:

1. Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis). Lactic acidosis can happen in some people who take COMPLERA or similar (nucleoside analogs) medicines. **Lactic acidosis** is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death.

Lactic acidosis can be hard to identify early, because the symptoms could seem like symptoms of other health problems. **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms which could be signs of lactic acidosis:**

- feeling very weak or tired
- have unusual (not normal) muscle pain
- have trouble breathing
- have stomach pain with
 - nausea (feel sick to your stomach)
 - vomiting
- feel cold, especially in your arms and legs
- feel dizzy or lightheaded
- have a fast or irregular heartbeat

2. Severe liver problems. Severe liver problems can happen in people who take COMPLERA or similar medicines. In some cases these liver problems can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis) when you take COMPLERA.

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms of liver problems:

- your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice).
- dark “tea-colored” urine
- light-colored bowel movements (stools)
- loss of appetite for several days or longer
- nausea
- stomach pain

You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking COMPLERA or a similar medicine containing nucleoside analogs for a long time.

3. Worsening of Hepatitis B infection. If you also have hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection and you stop taking COMPLERA, your HBV infection may become worse (flare-up). A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before. COMPLERA is not approved for the treatment of HBV, so you must discuss your HBV therapy with your healthcare provider.

- Do not let your COMPLERA run out. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your COMPLERA is all gone.
- Do not stop taking COMPLERA without first talking to your healthcare provider.
- If you stop taking COMPLERA, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do regular blood tests to check your HBV infection. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or unusual symptoms you may have after you stop taking COMPLERA.

What is COMPLERA?

COMPLERA is a prescription HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) medicine that:

- is used to treat HIV-1 in adults who have **never** taken HIV medicines before. HIV is the virus that causes AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome).
- contains 3 medicines, (rilpivirine, emtricitabine, tenofovir disoproxil fumarate) combined in one tablet. EMTRIVA and VIREAD are HIV-1 (human immunodeficiency virus) nucleoside analog reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs) and EDURANT is an HIV-1 non-nucleoside analog reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NNRTI).

It is not known if COMPLERA is safe and effective in children under the age of 18 years.

COMPLERA may help:

- Reduce the amount of HIV in your blood. This is called your “viral load”.
- Increase the number of white blood cells called CD4+ (T) cells that help fight off other infections.

Reducing the amount of HIV and increasing the CD4+ (T) cell count may improve your immune system. This may reduce your risk of death or infections that can happen when your immune system is weak (opportunistic infections).

COMPLERA does not cure HIV infections or AIDS.

- Always practice safer sex.
- Use latex or polyurethane condoms to lower the chance of sexual contact with any body fluids such as semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.
- Never re-use or share needles.

Ask your healthcare provider if you have any questions about how to prevent passing HIV to other people.

Who should not take COMPLERA?

- Do not take COMPLERA if your HIV infection has been previously treated with HIV medicines.
- **Do not take COMPLERA if you are taking certain other medicines.** For more information about medicines that must not be taken with COMPLERA, see “What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking COMPLERA?”

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking COMPLERA?

Before you take COMPLERA, tell your healthcare provider if you:

- have liver problems, including hepatitis B or C virus infection
- have kidney problems
- have ever had a mental health problem
- have bone problems
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if COMPLERA can harm your unborn child
- **Pregnancy Registry.** There is a pregnancy registry for women who take antiviral medicines during pregnancy. Its purpose is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Talk to your healthcare provider about how you can take part in this registry.
- are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that mothers with HIV not breastfeed because they can pass the HIV through their milk to the baby. It is not known if COMPLERA can pass through your breast milk and harm your baby. Talk to your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

COMPLERA may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how COMPLERA works, and may cause serious side effects. If you take certain medicines with COMPLERA, the amount of COMPLERA in your body may be too low and it may not work to help control your HIV infection. The HIV virus in your body may become resistant to COMPLERA or other HIV medicines that are like it.

Do not take COMPLERA if you also take these medicines:

- COMPLERA provides a complete treatment for HIV infection. Do not take other HIV medicines with COMPLERA.
- the anti-seizure medicines carbamazepine (CARBATROL®, EQUETRO®, TEGRETOL®, TEGRETOL-XR®, TERIL®, EPITOL®), oxcarbazepine (TRILEPTAL®), phenobarbital (LUMINAL®), phenytoin (DILANTIN®, DILANTIN-125®, PHENYTEK®)
- the anti-tuberculosis medicines rifabutin (MYCOBUTIN®), rifampin (RIFATER®, RIFAMATE®, RIMACTANE®, RIFADIN®) and rifapentine (PRIFTIN®)
- a proton pump inhibitor medicine for certain stomach or intestinal problems, including esomeprazole (NEXIUM®, VIMOVO®), lansoprazole (PREVACID®), omeprazole (PRILOSEC®), pantoprazole sodium (PROTONIX®), rabeprazole (ACIPHEX®)
- more than 1 dose of the steroid medicine dexamethasone or dexamethasone sodium phosphate
- St. John’s wort (*Hypericum perforatum*)

If you are taking COMPLERA, you should not take:

- other medicines that contain tenofovir (VIREAD®, TRUVADA®, ATRIPLA®)
- other medicines that contain emtricitabine or lamivudine (EMTRIVA®, COMBIVIR®, EPIVIR® or EPIVIR-HBV®, EPZICOM®, TRIZIVIR®)
- rilpivirine (EDURANT™)
- adefovir (HEPSERA®)

Also tell your healthcare provider if you take:

- an antacid medicine that contains aluminum, magnesium hydroxide, or calcium carbonate. Take antacids at least 2 hours before or at least 4 hours after you take COMPLERA.
- a histamine-2 blocker medicine, including famotidine (PEPCID®), cimetidine (TAGAMET®), nizatidine (AXID®), or ranitidine hydrochloride (ZANTAC®). Take these medicines at least 12 hours before or at least 4 hours after you take COMPLERA.
- the antibiotic medicines clarithromycin (BIAXIN®), erythromycin (E-MYCIN®, ERYC®, ERY-TAB®, PCE®, PEDIAZOLE®, ILOSONE®), and troleandomycin (TAO®)
- an antifungal medicine by mouth, including fluconazole (DIFLUCAN®), itraconazole (SPORANOX®), ketoconazole (NIZORAL®), posaconazole (NOXAFIL®), voriconazole (VFEND®)
- methadone (DOLOPHINE®)

Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist if you are not sure if your medicine is one that is listed above.

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine. Your healthcare provider and your pharmacist can tell you if you can take these medicines with COMPLERA. Do not start any new medicines while you are taking COMPLERA without first talking with your healthcare provider or pharmacist. You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for a list of medicines that can interact with COMPLERA.

How should I take COMPLERA?

- **Stay under the care of your healthcare provider during treatment with COMPLERA.**
- **Take COMPLERA exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to take it.**
- **Always take COMPLERA with a meal.** Taking COMPLERA with a meal is important to help get the right amount of medicine in your body. A protein drink does not replace a meal.
- Do not change your dose or stop taking COMPLERA without first talking with your healthcare provider. See your healthcare provider regularly while taking COMPLERA.
- If you miss a dose of COMPLERA within 12 hours of the time you usually take it, take your dose of COMPLERA with a meal as soon as possible. Then, take your next dose of COMPLERA at the regularly scheduled time. If you miss a dose of COMPLERA by more than 12 hours of the time you usually take it, wait and then take the next dose of COMPLERA at the regularly scheduled time.
- Do not take more than your prescribed dose to make up for a missed dose.
- When your COMPLERA supply starts to run low, get more from your healthcare provider or pharmacy. It is very important not to run out of COMPLERA. The amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time.
- If you take too much COMPLERA, contact your local poison control center or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away.

What are the possible side effects of COMPLERA?**COMPLERA may cause the following serious side effects, including:**

- **See “What is the most important information I should know about COMPLERA?”**
- **New or worse kidney problems** can happen in some people who take COMPLERA. If you have had kidney problems in the past or take other medicines that can cause kidney problems, your healthcare provider may need to do blood tests to check your kidneys during your treatment with COMPLERA.
- **Depression or mood changes. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms:**
 - feeling sad or hopeless
 - feeling anxious or restless
 - have thoughts of hurting yourself (suicide) or have tried to hurt yourself
- **Bone problems** can happen in some people who take COMPLERA. Bone problems include bone pain, softening or thinning (which may lead to fractures). Your healthcare provider may need to do additional tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV medicine. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck (“buffalo hump”), breast, and around the main part of your body (trunk). Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The cause and long term health effect of these conditions are not known.
- **Changes in your immune system (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome)** can happen when you start taking HIV medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider if you start having new symptoms after starting your HIV medicine.

The most common side effects of COMPLERA include:

- trouble sleeping (insomnia)
- abnormal dreams
- headache
- dizziness
- diarrhea
- nausea
- rash
- tiredness
- depression

Additional common side effects include:

- vomiting
- stomach pain or discomfort
- skin discoloration (small spots or freckles)
- pain

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

These are not all the possible side effects of COMPLERA. For more information, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088 (1-800-332-1088).

How do I store COMPLERA?

- Store COMPLERA at room temperature 77 °F (25 °C).
- Keep COMPLERA in its original container and keep the container tightly closed.
- Do not use COMPLERA if the seal over the bottle opening is broken or missing.

Keep COMPLERA and all other medicines out of reach of children.**General information about COMPLERA:**

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Patient Information leaflet. Do not use COMPLERA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give COMPLERA to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them.

This leaflet summarizes the most important information about COMPLERA. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about COMPLERA that is written for health professionals. For more information, call (1-800-445-3235) or go to www.COMPLERA.com.

What are the ingredients of COMPLERA?

Active ingredients: emtricitabine, rilpivirine hydrochloride, and tenofovir disoproxil fumarate

Inactive ingredients: pregelatinized starch, lactose monohydrate, microcrystalline cellulose, croscarmellose sodium, magnesium stearate, povidone, polysorbate 20. The tablet film coating contains polyethylene glycol, hypromellose, lactose monohydrate, triacetin, titanium dioxide, iron oxide red, FD&C Blue #2 aluminum lake, FD&C Yellow #6 aluminum lake.

This Patient Information has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Manufactured and distributed by:

Gilead Sciences, Inc.
Foster City, CA 94404

Issued: August 2011

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A Moon for the Misbegotten. Photograph courtesy of Jackie Jasperson

THEATER REVIEW

A Moon for the Misbegotten

Playwright: Eugene O'Neill
At: Seanachai Theatre Company at the Irish-American Heritage Center, 4626 N. Knox Ave.
Tickets: 866-811-4111;
www.seanachai.org; \$24-\$28
Runs through: April 29

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

There's the balcony courtship in *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Cyrano de Bergerac*, but Western theater's most difficult love scene is the one taking up nearly the entire second half of this final chapter in Eugene O'Neill's saga of the doomed Tyrone family. Not only are its lovers deliberately deceiving one another from the beginning (and themselves, too, albeit less deliberately)—their risk is not concerned simply with matters of the heart, you see, but with those of money, property and filial loyalty. Add in the various stages of intoxication associated with seasoned alcoholics versus novice tipplers, and that's a heavy load of subtext for two solitary actors to convey at full intensity for an hour or more.

O'Neill being U.S. theater's foremost playwright, all worthy theater companies must, sooner or later, grapple with the challenges of his richly-textured dramas. Less ambitious troupes tend toward his communal narratives (e.g. *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, or *The*

Hairy Ape), rather than rely on the stamina of a single powerhouse duo. The Seanachai ensemble has never flinched in its exploration of the Irish experience, however, and here are three reasons for its emerging victorious once again:

1) The production is performed in a small room, reducing the physical distance between actor and actor, as well as actor and audience, to an intimacy maximizing the emotional impact. The restricted movement mandated by the likewise small stage also abbreviates the running time to a comfortable two and a half hours with one intermission.

2) Director Kevin Theis rejects conventional typecasting, selecting the sturdy Steve Pickering for the role of the dissipated Jamie Tyrone, and the statuesque Carolyn Klein to be the defiant Josie Hogan. Together, they navigate O'Neill's flowery prose and stilted period-slang ("You're the goods, kid!") to forge a cliché-free portrait of lost souls whose proud veneer of courage renders their vulnerability the more moving for its silence.

3) The tightly integrated technical team has created, in microcosm, a museum-grade example of early 20th-century scenic naturalism, ranging from a nowadays rarely-seen painted drop to Julian Pike's achingly subtle Connecticut sunrise. (Watch Klein sharpen an ax with a hand-held whetstone for a lesson in rural life before the invention of electrical tools.)



SPOTLIGHT



Get ready to hear from a plethora of women performers exploring issues of sexuality, freedom and other topics in the ever-changing cabaret revue **Beast Women**, back again for a special spring series. Each show promises a variety of genres including music, poetry, dance, performance art, spoken word and burlesque. *Beast Women* plays Saturday evenings at 10:30 p.m. until Saturday, May 12, with a special performance of *Beast Women: Rising* at 7 p.m. Sunday, April 22. Performances are at the Greenhouse Theater Center, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave. Tickets are \$15; call 773-404-7336 or visit www.greenhousetheater.org. Photo courtesy of *Beast Women*

THEATER REVIEW

Freud's Last Session

Playwright: Mark St. Germain
At: Mercury Theater, 3745 N. Southport Ave.
Tickets: 773-325-1700
www.mercurytheaterchicago.com;
\$45-55 (\$22 w/ student ID)
Runs through: June 3

BY STEVEN CHAITMAN

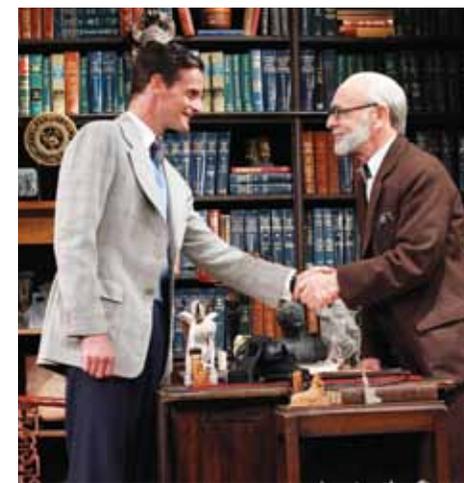
If your answer to the age-old party conversation starter "Which three historical figures would you invite to dinner?" includes Sigmund Freud and C.S. Lewis, then you're in luck—if not a bit theologically bewildered.

Freud's Last Session, an off-Broadway smash set to open on a global scale throughout the next year, makes its Midwest debut at the Mercury Theater, original cast in tow, and by cast that of course means all two of them. Martin Rayner plays an ailing octogenarian Freud and Glenview native Mark H. Dold assumes the part of Lewis prior to writing his most famous works, like *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

Mark St. Germain's play runs with an idea proposed in a book by Dr. Armand M. Nicholi, Jr., who ponders the possibility of whether Freud and Lewis met after Freud immigrated to England and not long before he took his life during his long battle with oral cancer. The very prospect is enough to incite a curious itch in the mind of any intellectual, not unlike the way rock-'n-roll nostalgists have kept the seats of the Apollo Theater full throughout the run of *Million Dollar Quartet*.

As one would imagine, wits and philosophies clash in this historical imagining, which serves up the existence of God as its main course, with Freud the devout atheist and Lewis the self-converted Christian. Each makes powerful arguments only to have the other convincingly turn it on its head. In the end, the two characters on stage are not the only ones forced to confront their own views and beliefs.

Having performed this play for nearly two years and more than 700 performances, actors Mark H. Dold and Martin Rayner have an im-



From left: Mark H. Dold and Martin Rayner in *Freud's Last Session*. Photo by Carol Rosegg

pressive rapport. They offer complete character portraits, depictions that not only capture these great men as minds and learned theorizers, but also as human beings who are by no means impervious to having their own thoughts and ideas used against them, and in psychoanalytic ways no less.

Dold gives Lewis a very human nervousness one would think inherent in meeting (let alone going toe-to-toe with) a venerated genius, while Rayner implodes the Freud stereotype by presenting a Freud we can relate to, one with a sense of humor; this is in addition to embodying the sense of self-assuredness and pride for which the scientist is known.

With two full-bodied characters, the play unfolds as more than a game of wits or an exhibition for theological debate. The background of England entering World War II also adds some crucial context that anchors down what could have snowballed into an overly abstract match of ideological ping-pong. It certainly meets the requirement of an intellectual's giddy fantasy, but its true success is showcasing these men's hearts as well as their minds, even despite the story's obvious limitations in terms of conflict.

Intimate, witty and thought-provoking, *Freud's Last Session* should have Chicagoans lining up for a turn on the proverbial couch, perhaps even beyond the June 3 closing.

THEATER REVIEW

The Sea

Playwright: Edward Bond
At: Theatre Mir at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave.
Tickets: 773-975-8150;
www.theaterwit.org; \$25
Runs through: April 15

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Rarely have Americans experienced the omnipresent foreboding that pervades villages on the southeastern coast of England, where church choirs sing "Eternal Father, Strong To Save" (aka "The Seafarer's Hymn"), drama clubs re-enact Orpheus ferrying the Styx, and the daily test-fire of cannons remind the denizens of their island kingdom's vulnerability to attack by foreign powers or cruel nature herself. Add the potential threat posed by an arms race between the British and German navies, and it's no wonder that eccentric behaviors sometimes emerge.

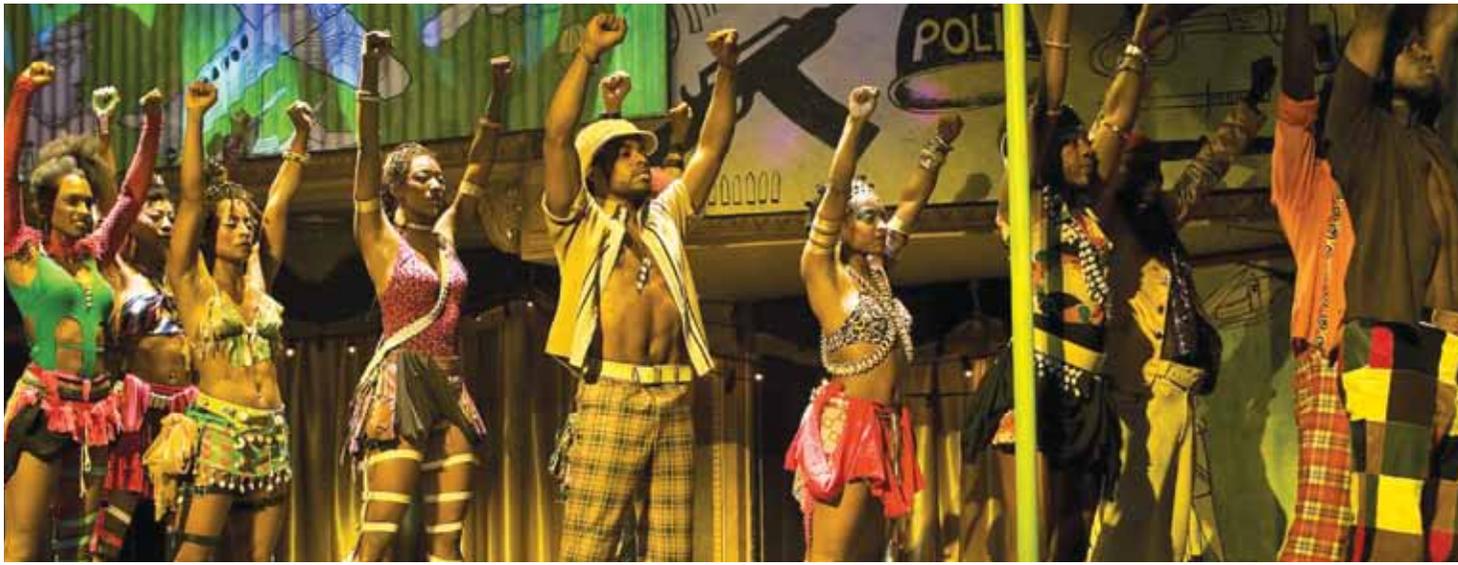
In the unnamed seaside town depicted by Edward Bond, this malaise finds expression in the local draper's conviction that creatures from outer space are infecting the countryside (before you scoff, recall the panic induced in our own country once by a radio play proposing a similar invasion). Thus, when a shipwrecked stranger washes up on the shore during a storm, volunteer coast-guard sentry Hatch suspects an extraterrestrial plot and refuses the distraught mariner's plea for as-

sistance in rescuing his missing companion. Fortunately, the dowager Mrs. Rafi extends hospitality to the castaway, seeing in him a confederate to her own schemes.

Hindsight vision tells us that World War I will break out a few years hence, with heavy damages forever altering society as it existed during the reign of Edward VII. How its citizens respond to their imminent extinction is the focus of Bond's allegory: Mrs. Rafi stubbornly adheres to protocol, while secretly plotting her daughter's escape. Hatch succumbs to paranoia and despair. Old Captain Evens accepts universal upheaval as an inevitable part of evolution. In the end, the young survivor and the drowning victim's fiancée depart to ensure the continuation of their species in more propitious surroundings.

Theatre Mir's non-representational aesthetic is evidenced in Magritte-like motifs: characters are ensconced in pews before filing onstage in drill-formation. Thomas Dixon's soundscape begins by locating us in a hurricane so realistic that we can almost feel the salt spray, only to send us home two hours later with a merry march played on the kazoo. A funeral is reduced to slapstick chaos, with mourners hurling the deceased's ashes at one another in playground-sandbox fury.

Director Jonathan Berry anchors Bond's slippery tonal ambience with exemplary tag-team turns from Rachel Slavick and Patrice Egleston as the formidable Mrs. Rafi and her meek sidekick, flanked by Patrick Blashill's genially phlegmatic sea-dog/philosopher.



Fela! Photo by Monique Carboni

THEATER REVIEW

Fela!

Playwright: Jim Lewis and Bill T. Jones

At: Oriental Theatre,

24 W. Randolph St.

Tickets: 800-775-2000

www.BroadwayInChicago.com; \$25-\$90

Runs through: April 15

BY JERRY NUNN

The true story of Nigerian music innovator Fela Kuti is brought to life onstage with an explosion of color, dance and music, thanks to big-name producers Shawn "Jay-Z" Carter as well as Will and Jada Pinkett Smith, among many others. However, in the show fans learn that Kuti did not use famous people like Bob Marley but danced to the beat of his own drum.

Kuti was a pioneer and creator of Afrobeat music, a blend of jazz, funk and chanted vocals. It was originated in a club called Afro-Shrine,

where the band resided for five years; this is the setting of the show. Director Bill T. Jones keeps the storyline from being a by-the-numbers biography, the moving things along in concert form. The story is told with Tony Award nominated Sahr Ngaujah filling Kuti's shoes.

In many ways, this is a one-man show with dancers, singers and a band onstage supporting him. Ngaujah has a charisma and charm that works well with an audience that he has rising out of their seats and chanting "Yeah, yeah."

The lights—complete with a disco ball—keep the mood light for the first act, and the production truly flies by. Subtitles projected on the back wall help with some of the lyrics that can be difficult to follow.

The audience is transported to Africa by watching this production with true style, and one doesn't need to know the background to have a good time. Audience members rose from their seats to attempt to move to the tune of a time clock; a pelvic thrust from 6 to 12 was

easier said than done.

Melanie Marshall—as Kuti's mother, Funmi-layo—hits notes that almost shatter glass and Paulette Ivory, as Sandra, keeps Kuti on his amorous toes. Neither stopped him from marrying 27 wives, represented by nine women onstage. (Incidentally, they all married in one day.) The real-life Sandra appeared for opening night in Chicago.

This touring show feels like a concert that follows a loose plot and history. Ngaujah plays saxophone while flashing a sweaty six-pack. (Fact: He runs for miles before the show to get into character.) This multitalented showman captures the spirit of Kuti.

As in real life, the show and Kuti become more political. The second act is heavier, with some graphic quotes and torture. Symbolically, the attack on his commune—where women were raped and his mother was thrown from a window—was difficult to watch, even artistically.

We can all relate to the message "with music

as our weapon we will be here tomorrow," as the actor says towards the end of the show. In Nigeria, same-sex activity is still punishable by stoning and incarceration in some states. Before he passed away from AIDS in 1997, Kuti fought for a better country, and this is a show he would be proud of—with good reason.

CRITICS' PICKS

Beyond the Horizon, Eclipse Theatre Company at Athenaeum Theatre, through April 22. Love does not conquer all in this early Pulitzer Prize-winning drama by Eugene O'Neill, but it is still worth seeing thanks to some strong supporting performances from the cast. SCM

Enron, Timeline Theatre at Baird Hall, through April 15. This true-life saga of corporate crime is recounted by Lucy Prebble as a grotesque fantasy-fable with Bret Tuomi playing an antihero as flawed as any found in Shakespeare. MSB

Sky's the Limit (Weather Permitting), The Second City e.t.c., in an open run. If the current cast is as funny as the original one in this long-running sketch comedy revue, then be prepared for plenty of hearty laughs from this clever show that finds plenty of humor from pessimism and the complications of modern technology. SCM

A Midsummer Night's Dream, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, through April 8. Gary Griffin works his wizardry on the classroom classic with oodles of sensory dazzle, but it's Elizabeth Ledo's ambisexual Puck who steals the show. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

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FOLLOW US ON

Kiven James Boyd Photo by Andrew Eccles

Talking with the man behind Miss Richfield 1981

BY JON PUTNAM

Attendees will be tempted by a variety of irresistible packages April 14 at the Boystown nightclub Sidetrack, when the Chicago Gay Men's Chorus unveils its Fourth Annual Big Package Auction.

Some of the city's hottest male underwear models will strut their stuff while guests bid on luxurious prize packages that include: a six-night South African photo safari; a seven-day Caribbean or Mexican cruise on Holland America Cruiselines; and a two-night getaway to New York City, complete with Broadway tickets and TV tapings.

As a special treat, this year's auction will be hosted by none other than Miss Richfield 1981, a fixture on Atlantis Cruise Lines and spokesperson for Orbitz. WCT caught up with Miss Richfield 1981's alter ego, Russ King:

Windy City Times: Do you find that you're continually fine-tuning the character of Miss Richfield?

Russ King: Surprisingly, the essence of the character is consistent with its creation back in 1996 at a traditional drag act in a bar. Even there, Miss R was always clean with no foul language, which is what made the character appealing and different. As I began to do cabaret work in 1997 and onward, Miss R has continued

to become more specific, but always true to her Midwestern, family roots.

WCT: I was surprised to read that you never had an interest in drag before creating the character.

RK: No. I was a journalist for six years out of college, then the communications director of the Minnesota AIDS Project for five years. I quit that job in 1998 to pursue a performance career—partially funded by freelance writing—until 2003, when I was able to make Miss Richfield a full-time occupation.

WCT: Do Russ King and Miss Richfield have much in common?

RK: Not on the surface. But I think any artistic creation is always a reflection of the artist on some level. So I think we're probably similar in a desire to entertain in a positive manner without straying into the distasteful and vulgar direction that much of comedy has gone.

WCT: Your hometown really is Richfield, Minn. Do you still have relatives and friends there? What kind of reaction have you gotten from them?

RK: No relatives live in Richfield today, but it's a first-ring suburb of Minneapolis, so most of us live close by. Overall the response of Miss R to the locals is positive. There's always those in life who take themselves way too seriously and just don't get the fact that the joke is really on Miss



Miss Richfield 1981. PR photo

R, not Richfield!

WCT: An interesting thing about Miss Richfield's appeal is how her audience goes way beyond just gay men. Could this mean that as a country we're growing more accepting of differences?

RK: The gay audience has always been such a wonderful base for Miss R's work, but you're right; the straight world also enjoys the shows. Part of that is gay folk inviting their family and friends when I'm in their city! I appreciate that! But I also find women connect with the character in a really special way—seeing the character as a throwback to what their lives were or might have been about 25 years ago!

WCT: Is Miss Richfield rooting for any of the presidential candidates?

RK: Miss R hasn't backed a presidential candidate because I don't think she'd know who was running. Although I think she'd find a Mormon tempting, as multiple wives would increase her chances of finally landing a man.

WCT: Does Miss Richfield share your love of two-stepping? Will you have time to visit our local country-western bar, Charlie's?

RK: As a matter of fact, Miss R usually leads a

country-western dance on every Atlantis Events cruise. It's such a great activity, and so social. You can't two-step and not smile. It's just the best. I have to fly in and out this time to Chicago, but I adore Charlie's and I shall return.

WCT: Will we be seeing Miss Richfield in any more TV commercials for Orbitz?

RK: I just taped another commercial yesterday in Atlanta. What a crazy and fun experience to be part of that. I usually use a cameraman and me to produce my videos, but with a full-commercial crew, there must have been at least 25 people on the shoot. We shot in a studio for four hours and then went on location to a really lovely hotel in Atlanta, a boarded-up building on the street and ended the day in a soup kitchen! It's exhausting, but amazingly fun! I think it'll air later this summer on Logo, and you can always find the ads online as well.

WCT: How about Russ King's future in comedy?

RK: I write a new show for Miss R every year and that keeps me busy! This year's show is "2012: We'll All Be Dead By Christmas." It's a celebratory look at the coming Armageddon. And I'm working on a YouTube presence scheduled for May. I'm wanting to do a two-minute "Ask Miss R" show that will be weekly. So start thinking of questions—and thanks a million for chatting. Chicago is one of my favorite places on earth.

The Big Package Auction will take place Saturday, April 14, 5-8 p.m., at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St. Ticket information and more details are available at www.cgmc.org, the Chicago Gay Men's Chorus' website.

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Lesbian part of SNL ensemble

Comedian Kate McKinnon could be the first lesbian cast member on NBC's Saturday Night Live, according to Advocate.com.

McKinnon was part of the ensemble on Logo's Big Gay Sketch Show and was also in the web series Vag Magazine. McKinnon will reportedly debut on the April 7 show that Modern Family's Sofia Vergara is hosting.

In 2010, she was nominated for the Emerging Comic Award by the ECNYs, which celebrate the comedic performing arts in New York, the Huffington Post reported.

Speaking of the show, veteran cast member Kristen Wiig (Bridesmaids) is expected to make a decision about her future at "SNL later this year.

SILK ROAD from page 19

the imagery was often at the service of a colonial or a war project," Khoury said.

Khoury is particularly curious about the potential audience reaction to Toby Keith's "Courtesy of the Red, White and Blue," which promises U.S. revenge and vengeance after the attacks of Sept. 11.

"The lyrics to that song are hard for me to listen to," Khoury said. "But then you have an ensemble of eight American actors of color singing this song and it's powerful to watch because there's something so incredibly ironic and subversive going on and it changes the meaning of the song."

So whether they're producing live theater or online content, Khoury and Gillani hope audiences will go along with all of their expanded endeavors for Silk Road Rising and that they'll get over the organization's name change.

"Most people refer to us as Silk Road, and we were rarely called Silk Road Theatre Project except in official context in the past," Khoury said about the company's branding.

"So Silk Road Theatre Project or Silk Road Rising, either way I think in the minds of the Chicago theater community we are Silk Road whatever word or words follow that."

Silk Road Rising's Re-Spiced: A Silk Road Cabaret runs now in previews through, Friday, April 6, with an official opening Saturday, April 7. Regular performances continue 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays and Thursdays, 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, through Sunday, May 6 at the Chicago Temple Building's Pierce Hall, 77 W. Washington St. (There will be no Chicago shows Friday and Saturday, April 27 and 28, since the show will be performed at Governors State University in University Park on the latter date.) Tickets are \$20 for previews and \$30 during the regular run; call 312-857-1234, ext. 201, or visit www.silkroadrising.org.

Also, Khoury's video play of Mosque Alert, his semi-autobiographical video both/and, and the documentary Not Quite White can all be viewed online at www.silkroadrising.org.

KNIGHT AT THE MOVIES

BY
RICHARD
KNIGHT, JR.

Conversation Piece; Madonna: Truth or Dare; Shame; film note

The DVD/Blu-ray releases this week and next of Visconti's *Conversation Piece*, Alek Keshishian's *Madonna: Truth or Dare* concert film and director Steve McQueen's *Shame* offer prime examples of objectification, the movies' most primal appeal.

Subject matter and genre aside, the enduring allure of each of these movies begins and ends with its stars. And what a line-up of beauties to dream and fantasize about—Silvana Mangano, Helmut Berger, Madonna, Michael Fassbender and Carey Mulligan—reason enough to revisit this trio of films. Stunning looks aside, each film has additional compensations as well.

By 1974, when renowned Italian director Luchino Visconti began work on *Conversation Piece*, his penultimate film, his energy and creativity were quickly ebbing. Further burdened with a debilitating stroke, the director was still determined to continue working. According to the essay by Mark Reynolds in the lavishly illustrated booklet included in the restored Blu-ray release of the film, the answer for Visconti was a project much smaller in scale than one of his famed epics like *The Damned* or *The Leopard*.

The interior, apartment set storyline of *Conversation Piece*—in which a family of jet setters interrupt and shake up the hermetic lifestyle of Burt Lancaster as a stodgy, bookish art collector and historian—fit the bill perfectly. Visconti's scenario also supplied his real-life lover, Helmut Berger, with another juicy part—that of the petulant, swaggering kept boy/man of Mangano as well as the sexual paramour of both her son and daughter and the object of fascination for the professor.

The movie suggests that the professor is the surrogate father to Berger's sybaritic character, Konrad but the more potent scenario is closer to what Visconti and the eerily gorgeous Berger shared in real life. No matter how you view the relationship between the two, the film has aged a lot better than the bad reviews and scant audiences that greeted *Conversation Piece* upon its release would have imagined. Flawed and misshapen as the movie remains (the set-up is downright laughable and the acting is of the scenery-chewing variety in too many sections), it's also clearly the work of a master of the camera—albeit one in his autumn years.

Madonna: Truth or Dare, released in 1991, has also held up and remains a compelling record of the apogee of the Material Girl's music career. (*Dick Tracy*, released as *Truth or Dare* was being made, is the apex of her feature-film career.) This chronicle of the singer's *Blond Ambition* tour—mixing black-and-white, behind-the-scenes footage offsetting Technicolor-lensed highlights of the expertly contrived stage show—offers a lively portrait of the multifaceted entertainer. She's alternately the hard-as-nails, determined,



Michael Fassbender in *Shame*.

remarkably astute show-business professional; the bratty, narcissistic, demanding diva; and the vulnerable loner who seems only to connect to her past when it services her present—and the movie, for the most part, is enormously entertaining.

In its nearly complete manipulation of the audience (Madonna, no surprise, produced and paid for the film), *Truth or Dare* is a complete sham. (The surest sign of this comes early in the "documentary," when Madonna's one refusal to allow the camera to film her is when she's about to take a business meeting.) In presenting an "honest," unvarnished portrait of herself, Madonna gives her one great performance in a movie. Musing at length in front of the camera, alone in various lavish hotel suites or kibitzing with famous celebrity pals as the tour moves from Japan to America to Europe, the singer-cum-actress is a bawdy, quick-witted, diminutive dynamo who imagines herself as the misplaced mother of her gathered back-up singers, band of gay dancers (with the exception of one tiresome homophobe who is given way too much screen time) and personal attendants (which, at the time, included her gay brother, Christopher, with whom she is now famously estranged).

The movie captures Madonna at the peak of her manufactured beauty and the film crackles with the combined force of that beauty and her hardened but very enticing personality. The film captures her at the moment she was about to reinvent herself again, morphing from the queer community's go-to hit machine into the world's push-the-envelope sex goddess to the refined British Lady, settled down into motherhood and domestic bliss (temporarily, as it turned out). Twenty years later, she's back working the dance floor from whence she came but as *Truth or Dare* clearly points out, the triumphs of the past, even the manufactured ones, can never really be recaptured.

Finally, there is *Shame*, director Steve McQueen's 2011 treatise on the dangers of sexual addiction in which the audience is alternately turned on by the brooding, handsome Michael Fassbender and his full-frontal nudity, and caught up in the sick-to-the-soul weariness of his character. I'm a huge fan of Fassbender's risk-taking performance and the film itself (which includes a devastatingly good turn by Carey Mulligan as Fassbender's messed-up sister), although the movie's subconscious moralizing about Fassbender's character straying into the "shocking" world of gay sex is something to be decried and called out. However, when it comes to objectification at the movies, thanks to Fassbender's na-

ked bravado, *Shame* certainly set a new standard in mainstream cinema (in queer cinema, it must be pointed out, not so much).

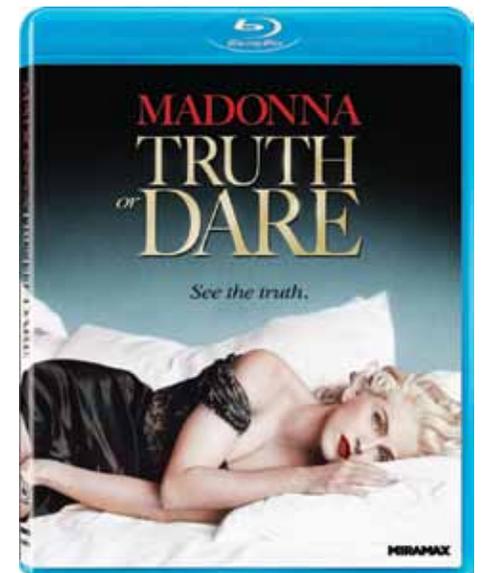
Film note:

—Reports are not good on the darkening effect that transferring *Titanic* to 3D has had on James Cameron's 1997 epic, but this version hasn't been screened for the majority of film critics so I can't report on the rumors' veracity. As regular readers of this column know, however, I'm generally not a fan of the 3D process, which I consider nothing more than an attempt by the studios to revive what was a gimmick the first time around in the '50s and which I contend will

inevitably wind up a two-time faddish loser. But sentimental softie that I am, the chance to see Cameron's epic mash-up of the fictional, doomed romance—with his epic, jaw-dropping, thrillingly detailed recreation of the tragic liner's maiden and final voyage—might be just enough to lure me back into theatres.

Certainly, there are worse ways to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the tragedy and if it will make my husband happy to take the voyage again; swoon over the beauty of Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet (not to mention Billy Zane as her villainous fiancée); revel in the sass of Kathy Bates as the unsinkable *Molly Brown* and the late, great Gloria Stuart as the spell-binding storyteller who sets the plot in motion; and shed a few tears at the powerful fade-out as Celine Dion belts out the trillion-selling ballad over the end credits, who am I to deny him?

Check out my archived reviews at www.windycitymediagroup.com or www.knightat-themovies.com. Readers can leave feedback at the latter website.



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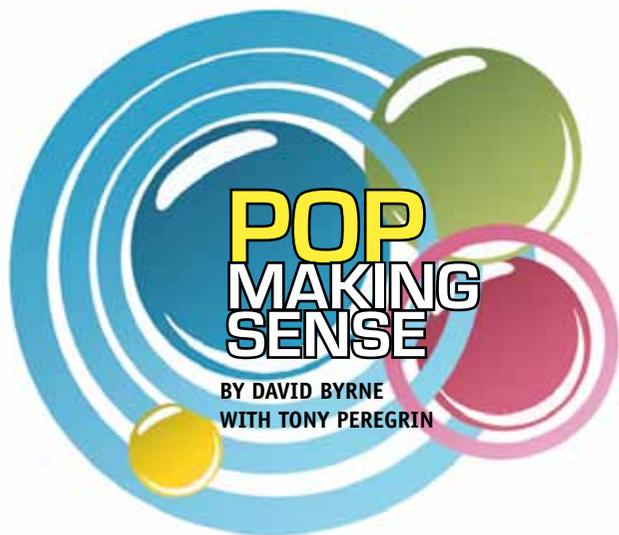
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time, she seems to be targeting Lady Gaga on "Gimme All Your Luvin" and "Some Girls."

Does MDNA have the same charm and hooks as 2005's *Confessions* on a Dancefloor? No—nor will I give it more rotations than Kylie Minogue's *Aphrodite* or Robyn's *Body Talk*. But MDNA certainly gets out the bad taste that 2008's dreadful *Hard Candy* left in my mouth. It also guarantees I will not be craving confections from any of the millennial pop tarts anytime soon.



Cowboy Junkies. PR photo

On her latest, MDNA, **Madonna** secures her position as the reigning queen of clubland, references her earlier material and tries to keep the younger generation in check. With 41 number-one hits on the dance charts, the icon surely will have more to follow from MDNA.

The set aptly could be called 53 Going on 23; just check out the fresh "Turn up the Radio" or the catchy "Some Girls." The edgy "Gang Bang" is too hot for the clean version of the album, as Madonna revisits the sleaze-style vocal delivery of "Erotica" over a pulsating heartbeat. MDNA not only slows down, but steers off course with the Golden Globe-winning track "Masterpiece."

Nicki Minaj and M.I.A.'s cameo on "Gimme All Your Luvin" is just another case of much younger, trendier guests being recruited to help expand the audience, as witnessed on the misfire *Hard Candy*. Minaj can spit out a fast rhyme, but not necessarily a good one as she also appears on the weak "I Don't Give A." This track jokingly reminds us "There's only one queen and that's Madonna, bitch."

Madonna is only as creative as the person who is in the room with her, hence her impressive guest list of co-writers or co-producers. The producers here include the dance luminaries Benny Benassi, William Orbit and Martin Solveig. Here, the Michigan-born megastar is following trends once again instead of defining them. Orbit has worked on many of her hits, like "Justify My Love" and "Ray of Light." Here, the single-worthy "I'm a Sinner" is the not-so-distant cousin to the pair's previous collaboration, "Beautiful Stranger."

"Girl Gone Wild" brings us back to the days of Madonna-mania as it cites Cyndi Lauper's "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun." But this opener also nods to Madonna's overlooked 1993 single "Bad Girl." "Superstar" features daughter Lola Leon on back-up vocals. Here, Madonna rattles off a list of Hollywood's elite and cleverly gives herself props on the bridge by singing, "You're Travolta/Getting into your groove."

Madonna claims her turf, as she has done for the last 20 years to multiple newcomers. This

Madonna's tour comes to The United Center, 1901 W. Madison, on Wed., Sept. 19, and Thursday, Sept. 20.

When I heard that **Joan Osborne** was working on a blues album, I rejoiced with the idea of such an overdue project for the talented artist. Bring It on Home finds the Lilith Fair veteran tackling blues and R&B classics like Ray Charles' "I Don't Need No Doctor" and Al Green's "Rhymes."

I never thought Osborne would deliver such a sexually charged number as the title track. Just the way she cries out "baby" can melt vinyl. "Shake Your Hips" has Osborne flirtatiously going back and forth with a harmonica over a tremendous rhythm that builds up to an undeniable climax. The bisexual blonde has bright moments like her funky version of the Ike & Tina Turner gem "Game of Love" and "Shoorah! Shoorah!," which features blues legend Allen Toussaint on piano. Osborne provides a great insight to the 12-song collection in the liner notes, reflecting how the standout "Broken Wings" was recorded in one take. Osborne keeps 2012's trend of must-have blues albums by female artists going with *Bring It on Home*.

Wilderness marks the fourth set in the Nomad series by **The Cowboy Junkies**. The set shines brilliantly with Margo Timmins intimately singing over a strumming guitar on "Angels in the Wilderness" and "I Let Him In." Wilderness opens with the gorgeous "Unanswered Letter," which could have been from the vaults of the 10,000 Maniacs. The Canadian quartet shows its sense of humor on "Fuck, I Hate the Cold." "Idle Tales" has the act at its best with its familiar melancholy coffee house feel.

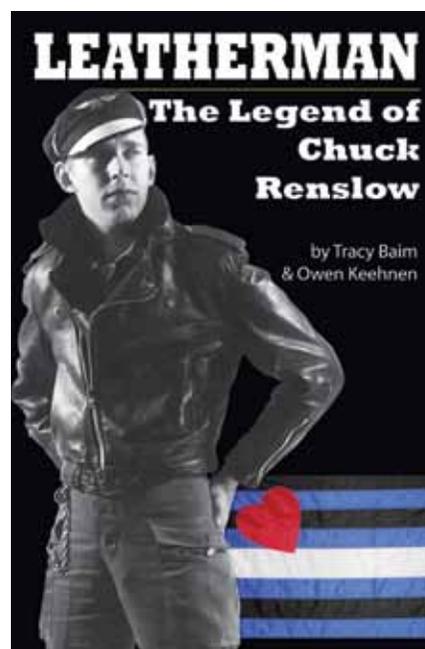
During its live shows, Timmins shares enjoyable stories on the material and band. Cowboy Junkies returns to the Chicago area with a concert on Saturday, April 14, at Space, 1245 Chicago Ave., Evanston, and two performances on Friday, April 27, at Old Town School of Folk Music, 4544 N. Lincoln Ave.

On How about I Be Me (And You Be You)?,

Sinead O'Connor offers a mature outlook on relationships. "Old Lady" bears witness to love's depth at a wiser stage in life and she finds hope on "The Wolf Is Getting Married." O'Connor continues to embrace her universal mother persona with "4th and Vine." On "Reason with Me" she confesses, "I really want to mend my ways." "V.I.P." is a vocal-focused editorial about today's misconstrued value of celebrities. Although this set is very age-appropriate, the Irish siren still acts feisty with the fitting cover of out singer-

songwriter John Grant's "Queen of Denmark." Here, she sings, "I casually mention that I pissed in your coffee ... why don't you bore the shit out of somebody else." O'Connor skillfully ties her experiences into her art throughout this collection, although some outlets would rather dwell on her appearance, love life or tweets.

O'Connor is scheduled to take to the stage at Park West, 322 W. Armitage Ave., on Sunday, May 13.



'Leatherman' book up for National Leather Assoc. writing award

National Leather Association-International, a leading organization for activists in the pansexual S&M/leather/fetish community, announced finalists for its annual writing awards for works published in 2011.

Named after activists and writers Geoff Mains, John Preston, Pauline Reage, Cynthia Slater and the onetime lesbian-feminist BDSM organization Samois, the awards are given annually to recognize excellence in writing and publishing about leather, S&M, bondage and fetishes.

A biography of Chicago leather legend Chuck Renslow is among the finalists for an award. Among the nominations are:

—**The Geoff Mains Non-fiction Book Award:** Tracy Balm and Owen Keehnen, *Leatherman: The Legend of Chuck Renslow* (Prairie Avenue Productions); Gayle Rubin, *Deviations: A Gayle Rubin Reader* (Duke University Press); and Jim Stewart, *Folsom Street Blues: A Memoir of 1970s SoMa and Leatherfolk in Gay San Francisco* (Palm Drive)

—**The Cynthia Slater Non-fiction Article Award:** Jack Fritscher, "Leather's Burning Man: The History of the Folsom Street Fair" (Bay Area Reporter); and Mollena Williams, "Tables Briefly Turned" (from her blog at www.mollena.com)

—**The Geoff Mains Non-fiction Book Award:** Rachel Kramer Bussel, *Surrender: Erotic Tales of Female Pleasure and Submission* (Cleis); Rachel Kramer Bussel, *Best Bondage Erotic 2012* (Cleis); and Alison Tyler, *Slave to Love* (Cleis)

The winners will be announced at the National Leather Association's annual general meeting, which will be held during Tribal Fire (May 4-6) in Oklahoma City, Okla. See www.tribalfireokc.com and www.nla-i.com.

Queer occult films

"The Homocult Show"—featuring short experimental queer films about the magic and

the occult—will take place April 6-8 at the S&S Project, 3145 S. Morgan St.

Among the artists whose works will be shown are Christos Andres, Sofia Moreno, Daniel McKernan and Erika Keck, among others. McKernan is curating the festival.

See www.facebook.com/bridgeportart.

Ross DVD out in May

Shout! Factory will release the legendary New York concert special "Diana Ross—Live In Central Park" on DVD May 15.

Originally broadcast in 1983, the concert has never before been made available for home entertainment. "Diana Ross—Live In Central Park" will contain the entire concert special as it was broadcast, and the bonus features include the complete rain-shortened concert and a new commentary by director Steve Binder (The T.A.M.I. Show, Elvis: The '68 Comeback Special).

Additionally, American Public Television has made a broadcast version of the main program available to its premium service client stations.

Among the songs she performs are "Endless Love," "Reach Out and Touch (Somebody's Hand)" and "Ain't No Mountain High Enough," along with many others.

'Technicolor Dreamcoat' sing-a-long movie April 4

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, starring Donny Osmond, is coming to local movie theaters Wed., April 4, at 7 p.m. (all time zones). This exclusive sing-along version with subtitles also features an introduction and question-and-answer session with Osmond live from Salt Lake City, plus an animated opening sequence which features an 80-piece orchestra.

The event will be broadcast to nearly 550 select movie theaters across the country. Among the local theaters involved are AMC River East 21, 322 E. Illinois St.; Showplace Webster Place 11, 1471 W. Webster Ave.; Roosevelt Collections, 150 W. Roosevelt Rd.; and Evanston 18, 1715 Maple Ave., Evanston.

Tickets for Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat are available at participating theater box offices and online at www.FathomEvents.com.



Joan Collins in Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.

Tichina Arnold: 'Happily Divorced' actress on the show and meeting Whitney

BY ANDREW DAVIS

During the '90s, people tuned in every week to see comedian Martin Lawrence and other actors in the sitcom *Martin*. On that show, Tichina Arnold was Pam, Lawrence's foil who could match him insult for insult.

Since then, Arnold has kept herself very visible, playing roles such as the mother in the TV series *Everybody Hates Chris*, which was based on the life of comedian Chris Rock. She now co-stars with Fran Drescher, Rita Moreno and others on the TV Land sitcom *Happily Divorced*, in which Drescher's character lives with her gay ex-husband (a scenario based on Drescher's actual life).

Arnold talked with *Windy City Times* recently about the show, Whitney Houston and politics.

Windy City Times: I saw you on the Wendy Williams Show recently.

Tichina Arnold: Yeah—that was really fun.

WCT: I'm curious, because I interviewed [Williams] once: How do you find her?

Arnold: With Wendy, I had a problem with her once because, you know, she trashed a lot of

his Facebook page from people thanking him for coming out and for the show.

WCT: You mentioned how they basically turned potential tragedy into triumph, so to speak. Isn't that a sign of the times, in a way—that you can take your own personal drama and make a show out of it?

Arnold: Of course. I was just on [the BET show] *106 & Park* talking about music and stuff—and, by the way, I don't watch a lot of videos, as I'm really into politics (I'm watching MSNBC right now)—and I said that music makes the world go round; I was raised in it. Through music, you can

touch so many hearts.

Then [the host] Terrence asked me about reality shows, and I'm like, "Back in the day, there were talk shows and before that, there were soap operas." Everything comes full circle; we're now in that reality-show stage. I think show business is a wonderful outlet to tell stories, and I think some celebrities take for granted that we have an amazing platform to teach and to get positivity out there. That's what has taught me as a mother; I can't just take any role.

WCT: You mentioned reality shows. It seems like the very definition of "celebrity" has changed over the years.

Arnold: Yeah. Our jobs have become less because of reality shows. That's why I'm happy to be on TV Land Network. TV Land gets it—they've put out some good shows, like *Hot in Cleveland*. I'm not [slamming] reality shows but there's something to be said for variety. After all, we have 80,000 channels. [Laughs] When I watch TV, I want something that takes me away.

WCT: How is the second season of *Happily Divorced* different from the first?

Arnold: I don't think it's that different, but there are different situations. Fran is still telling a lot of stories that happened to her and Peter—their struggles and triumphs. That's actually another subject, altogether. You have this

bad economy, and you have a lot of people who are divorced but who are forced to live together; they have to co-exist.

WCT: You also work with Rita Moreno...

Arnold: Oh, my God—she is a hoot. [Both laugh.] I love her so much. She's so amazing. She's so old-school, but she's so new-school. She's everything rolled up in one. She has a foul mouth; we curse like sailors—and she says whatever's on her mind. She's like, "I'm 80 years old. I say whatever the hell I want to say."

WCT: You've talked about music and I know you're a singer, so I have to ask: Where were you when you found out Whitney Houston had died?

Arnold: That's when you know somebody impacted your life—you know where you were when that person passed. I was traveling; I had just gotten to New York. I was heartbroken. I was just staring at the TV; I couldn't leave. It took me two days to get it together.

I had the privilege and honor of meeting and dining with Whitney. She gave me such an inspirational talk. No one has ever inspired me like that, except for Wanda Sykes. I was introduced to Whitney by [gospel singer] BeBe Winans, a

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Tichina Arnold. PR photo

people when she had her radio show. But I've been on her show twice, and she's been very pleasant. Eventually, you have to let bygones be bygones, and move on.

WCT: Let's talk about *Happily Divorced*. For our readers who may not know, could you describe the [premise] of the show?

Arnold: Yes. The show is based on Fran Drescher's life. She married her childhood sweetheart, who's an actor as well [Peter Marc Jacobson], and years later he told her he's gay. She was obviously devastated; they were friends and with each other for so long. To this day, though, they're still joined at the hip; they're very good friends and both executive producers of the show. It's wonderful that they were able to take something that could've been so negative and destructive, and make it work.

I'm even more happy that this show has gotten viewers we didn't expect to get. We have a lot of young people who are gay themselves and are afraid to come out who watch our show. Peter just told me that he gets a lot of hits on

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BOOKS

Simon Doonan: Chewing the 'Fat' about bears, food and gay cities

BY ANDREW DAVIS

In *Gay Men Don't Get Fat*, writer/creative director Simon Doonan (the husband of home-furnishings designer Jonathan Adler) offers his own perspective on everything from fashion to food while relating real-life experiences. The British author talked with *Windy City Times* recently about the book.

Windy City Times: Where did you get the inspiration to write this?

Simon Doonan: I thought it was time to take my nuggets and nuances of gay wisdom, and put them in one book, delivering it to the public with great velocity.

WCT: I was caught off guard, initially. One reason is because when I saw the title—and me being an editor—I took it literally, and thought the book was going to be exclusively about food. [Doonan laughs.] However, you cover a lot more ground.

SD: Yes, absolutely; I'm not that interested in food, quite honestly. The title is a parody of [Mireille Guiliano's best-selling book] *French Women Don't Get Fat* and [Bruce Feirstein's] *Real Men Don't Eat Quiche*. So it's kind of a mash-up of those self-help books, except I'm not very helpful. I'm more of a humor writer. I'm into inspiring people into being uninhibited and crazy.

Wacky Chicks is all about eccentric women, eccentric glamour; it's about dressing without being self-critical or masochistic—being unconventional.

WCT: There are many interesting nuggets in this book, such as towns and cities having sexual orientations. Living in Chicago—and knowing you've been here, because Jonathan has a store here—what do you think of this city?

SD: I've been to Chicago many, many times; I've been going there since the 1980s. I feel very at-home there. Sometimes I think of Chicago as being very hetero; then I meet a whole bunch of gays and I think, "Maybe the Windy City can blow your beehive off," and it seems more homosexual. It's a city with a long history of style and glamour, with those glamorous apartments all facing the lake—it's very gay and fabulous.

WCT: Now what's the most hetero city you've been to?

SD: It's probably Detroit, because it's all based on making cars, which is fundamentally very heterosexual.



Simon Doonan.

WCT: Elsewhere in the book, you mention that you feel a solidarity with larger women.

SD: I've always expressed a strong solidarity with plus-size chicks because I am undersized for a guy, so I understand that frustration of shopping and feeling like an outsider. Everybody seems to find great things, but I can't.

WCT: My favorite chapter was probably "Operation Goldilocks." [Doonan laughs.] What was the most surprising thing you learned about bears?

SD: I think the most surprising thing was how many there are. According to an article I read in the *Harvard Gay & Lesbian Review*, there are 1.7 million bear-identified gay men in America. It's a subculture, but a really big one. But if you think about it, it's a very inclusive movement with a lot of camaraderie; it's non-judgmental with a sense of community, so it's attracted a lot of people.

Also, if you're a bear, your gayness becomes invisible; it's a great camouflage. When I walk down the street, anybody can see I'm gay. When they see a bear walking down the street, they're just thinking, "Oh, here's some big, burly dude on his way to Home Depot to buy some screws." [Interviewer laughs.]

WCT: And you consider yourself to be a chinchilla?

SD: Well, I went through all the categories, like "otter" and "polar bear" and "polar bear," and I was thinking, "What am I?" I then thought, "Well, I'm small and I have a lot of gray hair, so maybe I'm a chinchilla. Woo!"

WCT: By the way, I'm pretty sure you're the only person I've ever talked with who's referred to himself as a "dingleberry whis-perer."

SD: [Laughs] There's a whole chapter about being prissy and why that's a good thing, and I referred to my ability to our little doggy. We always take him into the ocean and wash off his dingleberries. It takes a real man to do that.

WCT: Well, I give you credit. I also have to give you credit for listing *Paris Is Burning*—one of my favorite films—as one of your top 13 movies.

SD: Yes; I think it's a great documentary that should be mandatory viewing. It's very touching, and it's an important historical document. In a way, it's about everything: class, race and other aspects of culture.

WCT: Although you don't talk much about food, you do feel that it—like town and cities—can have sexual orientation.

SD: Oh, yeah—well, I'm all about sweeping generalizations. When I started looking at food as being either gay or straight, it all made sense to me. It's like life; you need a balance of gay and straight. So with that steak, you need a fluffy mesclun salad instead of mashed potatoes.

WCT: I thought about that as I was eating a skirt steak salad recently.

SD: There you go! That sounds like the gayest steak you can get—don't be ashamed. [Interviewer laughs.]

WCT: Since you rely on sweeping generalizations, do you think some people, in our PC society, may be offended by those?

SD: I have no interest in offending people. My writing style has developed since I started writing in the '90s; it's broad, and it's humor writing, so you can't take anything too literally—any more than you could watching a stand-up comic.

I always tell people that I've made a career out of being "unoffendable." When you're unoffendable, you're in a very strong place, and that comes from always looking at the source of something. It didn't take me long to get there; I've always kept my eyes on the prize.

When I came to America, I was told, "We don't give green cards to gay people." At that point, I had a choice: Either I could say, "That's very offensive" or think, "How am I going to get a green card?" I knew what I wanted. My goal has always been to build a great life, and not make it contingent upon other people's approval.

When gay marriage is finally given the thumbs-up [nationally], I won't say, "Thank you." It should have happened years ago, but that doesn't affect me, really. People have to get their shit together and move forward with life without having people give you all the check marks.

TICHINA from page 29

good friend of mine. When I met Whitney, I was just awestruck. She was just a homegirl. I was, like, "Oh my God. She's normal." She would say, "Girl, come on. Pass the bread."

I would always sneak into Clive Davis' [pre-Grammy] party because the security would know me from Martin. I was standing there one year and I see this big crowd of people and I'm like, "Oh my God. That's Whitney Houston!" So we're watching them and Bobby [Brown] sees me and he waves hello. Whitney then saw me, said "Tichina," and then walked over to me and talked to me for over seven years about how much she appreciated my work. I'm not even supposed to be in this party! I was in shock. That was my last memory of Whitney. The world lost a great one—and I don't want to bury my mother [like Cissy Houston did]. I felt the same way as I did when Aaliyah died.

WCT: I do want to switch gears. How often do you get called Pam?

Arnold: Oh, every day of my life. [Both laugh.] It doesn't upset me at all; it means it did my job right.

WCT: Speaking of Martin, do you have a favorite insult?

Arnold: I liked when he didn't expect to [joke]; he would crack up. We had laugh competitions on the show—whoever would be the first to crack up would lose. Tommy would always be the first to go. Me and Tisha would hold out the longest.

WCT: And then there was *Everybody Hate Chris...*

Arnold: I wish we could've gone on a little longer. We had two years left on that show.

WCT: How many times would you get a script and be reminded of your childhood?

Concert duo offers 'All in the Musical Family'

Chicago concert artists Beckie Menzie and Tom Michael are presenting their new musical offering, "All in the Musical Family," at Davenport's, 1383 N. Milwaukee Ave., every Saturday in April at 8 p.m.

Menzie and Michael's new show celebrates many of the most popular and timeless musical families, including The Carpenters, The Andrew Sisters, The Jacksons, The Judds, Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme, The Bee Gees, John and Bonnie Raitt, and others.

For reservations, call 773-278-1830 or visit www.DavenportsPianoBar.com; also visit www.BeckieMenzie.net and www.TomMichael.net.

Percussionist Coley at Center on Halsted April 17

Percussion soloist and collaborator Matthew Coley will perform as part of the Center on Halsted's SingOUT series Tuesday, April 17, 7-9 p.m. at 3656 N. Halsted St.

Coley will perform with three other well-known percussionists from the Midwest: Cory Hills (Lawrence, Kan.), Renee Keller (Chicago) and Bridget Leahy (Bloomington, Ind.).

Tickets are \$10 in advance (email MRoss@centeronhalsted.org or call 773-472-6469, ext. 452) and \$12 at the door. All proceeds from this concert will benefit the Center on Halsted.

Visit www.hearmatthewcoley.com for more information.

Arnold: Every day. When I read that script for the first time—we had a table read—Terry Crews [who played the father] and I knew we'd have a successful show. They did a really good job of structuring the show, but if they didn't care for something in the script they'd change it on the spot. I had to learn pages of dialogue 10 minutes before we shot; it kept me on my toes.

WCT: And that Terry Crews—he works out.

Arnold: OK? He loves his body, honey. If he gets a chance to be naked, he will.

WCT: I saw him like that in the movie *Gamer*.

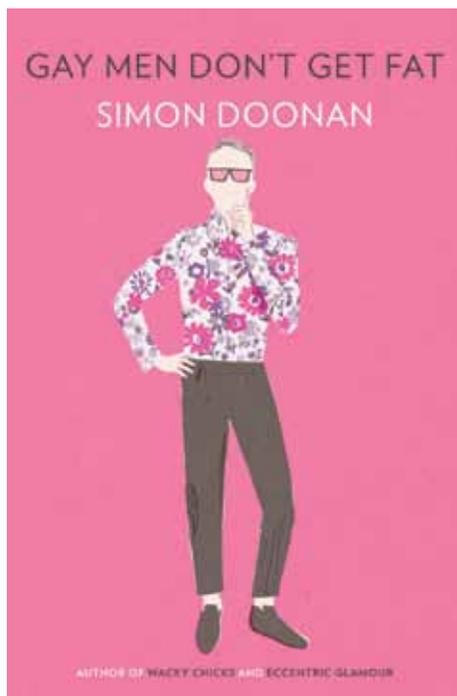
Arnold: If you worked out as much as he did, you'd show your body, too. He loves working out. Somebody's gotta do it, but I sure don't. [Laughs] I just maintain; I don't eat pasta and bread, and I don't like chocolate.

WCT: Wow. My last question is this: Since you follow politics closely, what do you make of this whole presidential race?

Arnold: I think the GOP presidential race and the candidates are all fools, to put it simply. It's unfortunate that they are starting racial discourse, and saying things that are detrimental to the country. It's disrespectful to the president. I just hope the average person can rise above it and vote with their heart. They're taking away women's rights, voting rights—they're trying to go back to where we used to be. People have fought and died for us to get where we are.

I'm impassioned about politics. I like to learn. It's a serious business, and there are things happening in the political arena that are just disgusting to me.

Happily Divorced airs on TV Land Wednesdays at 9:30 CT. See www.tvland.com.



Gay NBA exec Rick Welts: On coming out, resulting support

BY ROSS FORMAN



Rick Welts. Photo courtesy of the Golden State Warriors

On a snowy night last January, Rick Welts had dinner in New York City's Upper East Side with longtime friend and public-relations veteran Dan Klores.

Then 57 and the president/CEO of the NBA's Phoenix Suns, Welts revealed to Klores that he had been thinking about coming out publicly as gay.

"I didn't know how big, how [much of an] impact story might have, how important of a story this might be," Welts said.

In fact, Welts admitted he didn't even know if it was newsworthy at all.

Klores assured him that, yes, it was definitely newsworthy—and he offered to help with his coming-out. Klores connected Welts with Pulitzer Prize-winning author Dan Berry of the New York Times. "That was a holy cow moment for me," Welts told Windy City Times, "because I didn't know [how big of a story it would be;] I was just too close."

Berry eventually spent three days with Welts in Phoenix, "and I had never been interviewed by anyone quite the way Dan did," Welts said.

Berry had an attention to meticulous detail that was nothing short of extraordinary, Welts said. He asked Welts about past meetings that he was in, and Berry wanted to know specifics about the room where the meeting was held, what was hanging on the walls, what people were wearing, and more, not just what was discussed.

"What I purposely didn't spend a lot of time thinking about was, what would happen after [the story came out.] That would have made me crazy," Welts said.

Then, last May 15, Welts was flying from San Francisco to New York—because Berry's story was scheduled to run on the front page of the

paper the next morning. However, while some 35,000 feet in the air, the story was being posted on the paper's website.

Welts' life was changing, literally, right below him.

"I had no idea what was going to happen [when the story was released]. It was very surreal," he said.

Before meeting with Berry, Welts came out privately with several key colleagues and friends within the NBA, including Commissioner David Stern; the Suns' top player, perennial All-Star Steve Nash; and Basketball Hall of Famer and longtime friend Bill Russell.

All stood behind Welts—personally and professionally.

Welts also, as he was set to leave San Francisco on that Sunday, emailed about 100 in his inner circle, including family, friends and business associates. He wanted each to know personally that the story was breaking.

"What I never could have anticipated [once the story was published] was the reaction I received from the general public," said Welts, who has received thousands of emails and more than 100 handwritten letters, plus countless voice-mail messages.

The rich and famous—such as Charles Barkley—reached out and supported Welts. Unknown people from obscure parts of the world also supported him.

Welts is the highest-ranking executive in men's professional sports to acknowledge publicly that he is gay.

The response to Welts' coming-out, about eight months later, has been 100-percent positive and supportive, he said.

"I do think last year was kind of a watershed [year], in terms of the discussion [particularly about gays in sports]," said Welts, whose com-

ing-out, interestingly, coincided with that of CNN anchor Don Lemon.

Welts' revelation also led to the coming out of ESPN Radio announcer Jared Max in New York.

Also last spring, the NBA initiated a relationship with GLSEN to broadcast public-service announcements (PSAs) during the NBA playoffs. In fact, when Welts returned to Phoenix from New York, two Phoenix Suns players—Grant Hill and Jared Dudley—were filming the PSA.

Despite the PSAs, Kobe Bryant was caught uttering an anti-gay comment during a broadcast last spring, and Chicago Bulls superstar Joakim Noah also spat anti-gay venom during a game in 2011.

"It was an amazing series of events" in a short period of time, Welts said, "and I do think it raised the quality of the dialogue pretty significantly over that period."

Four months after the New York Times story, Welts resigned from the Suns, telling team officials he was determined to mesh his personal and professional lives. He moved to the Bay Area to be closer to his partner, Todd Gage, but Welts' retirement was short-lived. He was soon hired by the Golden State Warriors as the team's president and COO.

Welts, with about 40 years of experience in the league, is back in the game—energized and excited to bring a winning team back to Northern California.

"I think the interview I had for this job was fascinating to me as a gay man because it was the first time in my life, in a professional environment, that I ever sat down with a potential employer who completely knew my story beforehand," Welts said.

Welts was two hours into the interview with the two primary owners of the Warriors before one casually—almost matter-of-factly—asked about that New York Times story and its affect, particularly with the team owners in Phoenix.

Welts' coming-out was a non-issue with Phoenix—and his orientation is a non-issue with Golden State.

"Perhaps there's a lessening of the real or perceived barriers of what there is between sexual orientation and sports," said Welts, who, in mid-January, said he finally is close to catching up with the correspondences he's received since last May when he came out.

He printed out every email, a stack that's now about a foot high, perhaps more. He's saving each, though isn't exactly sure what for.

"If there was, or is, the ability to affect the life of somebody who had lived the [kind of] life that I had lived, [and] was struggling to know whether they could pursue what they really felt was their passion in life because of who they were, and this could change their opinion or give them hope that they really could be successful and happy, then whatever else would come my way would be worth it," Welts said.

He was expecting at least 10 percent of all post-coming-out correspondences to be negative, anti-gay, perhaps even hate mail or death threats.

But not one has come, which he said is, "completely shocking."

"I was prepared for something different, and that's been the best part of the experience," Welts said. "Now it's a case of, what do I do with that?"

Welts said he left the Suns with the intentions of not working for a while, perhaps writing a book or expanding his work as a public speaker. Until the Warriors came calling. Now the book is on hold, though he definitely plans to write one, eventually.

The Suns' owner actually called the Warriors to suggest/recommend they contact Welts.

Welts, now 58, spent nine years with the Suns, serving as the president and CEO for the last two seasons.

Before joining the Suns, Welts had a successful 17-year (1982-1999) career at the NBA league office in New York, where he ascended through the ranks to eventually become the league's third-in-command as the executive vice president, chief marketing officer and president of NBA Properties.

Welts began his career in the NBA in 1969, at age 16, as a ballboy with the Seattle SuperSonics. He spent 10 years with his hometown SuperSonics serving a number of roles, including director of public relations during back-to-back appearances in the NBA Finals (1978 and 1979) and the team's lone NBA championship in 1979.

His lifelong friendship with NBA icon Russell was rooted in their Seattle days.

Welts was photographed in 2011 for the popular NOH8 Campaign and was given the U.S. Tennis Association's ICON Award.

Welts truly is a legend under the rainbow.

However, he admitted to Windy City Times, he's still trying to figure out what he can do to best impact the LGBT community: "I feel I have an obligation to continue to be part of the discussion because of the platform I've been given [in my job]. However, I don't know yet how to have the greatest voice."

Welts said he has seen "a lot of progress" in the gay community. After all, he had an uncle, Dr. Bob Welts, who also was gay, though Welts didn't find out that his uncle was gay until he was in his late-20s. The two were very close, Welts said. "Hearing his stories ... clearly, I feel very blessed to be living when I am as opposed to any other time in this country's history."

Welts' coming-out also impacted his 13-year-old niece, Lexie Schulte, of Indianapolis, who he said was his favorite call that he made last May when he came out publicly.

She claimed her "coolness factor" at school had gone up about tenfold when people found out that Welts was her uncle.

"I thought back to when I was 13, and I don't think that news would have been dealt with the same way [by] my peers," Welts said. "That was the best call of the day for me."

See sidebar on page 38

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WEEKLY DINING GUIDE IN **WINDY CITY TIMES**



BY MEGHAN STREIT

Ombra

A small corner of Andersonville's Acre has been transformed into a bustling new spot for Italian small plates. You might miss Ombra if you were strolling down Clark Street because the exterior remains the same muted gray color as Acre. The inside, however, has undergone a serious makeover.

The tiny and inviting space is made even cozier with polished wooden beams, walls covered in yellowed Italian newspaper and long booths where you might end up dining with strangers who could turn into new friends. You'll immediately be drawn to Ombra's handsome bar, which is stocked not with alcohol but with Italian delicacies like smoked trout, roasted Portobello mushrooms and calamari with Meyer lemon vinaigrette. Those bites, along with about 25 other Italian appetizers called cicchetti (pronounced chi-KET-ee), are all displayed in a case for diners to pick and choose the ones they want to try. It's kind of like a less-sugary candy store for adults—with wine!

Ombra, my knowledgeable server told me, refers to the first glass of wine, meant to be enjoyed with a couple of rounds of cicchetti, a casual tapas-style of dining popular in Venice. So, peruse the cicchetti bar on your way to your table to get an idea of what you'd like to sample, and then get down to the business of selecting



Above: Ombra's sweet potato and prosciutto bruschetta. Lower right: Fried smelt. Photos by Meghan Streit

a glass of wine. Ombra has a robust wine list of mostly Italian reds and whites, available for \$8 to \$10 a glass. I chose the Barbera D'asti Moliss, a fruity but not sweet red from the Piedmont region of Italy, and it paired nicely with all of my cicchetti choices.

Ombra's cicchetti list is so long, deciding what to order can be a little overwhelming. There's a "chef's value" option for \$15, which gets you a sample platter of five items. I went that route and my entire group was pleased with all of the selections that quickly appeared on our table. Our first cicchetti platter had a cold salad with farro (an Italian grain similar to couscous) and asparagus, potato salad with rosemary and sundried tomatoes, some smoked trout, a slice of asparagus frittata and buffalo mozzarella drizzled with basil pesto. The cicchetti platter won't fill you, but it will whet your appetite and give you something to nibble on while you sip your wine and peruse the rest of the menu.

You'll find plenty of more substantial offerings, including paninis, bruschetta, tramezzini, cold white-bread sandwiches that are similar to

English tea sandwiches, and a few hot entrée-like small plates. All of the dishes are meant for sharing, and Ombra is designed for lingering and savoring: Have a few bites, savor the flavors, drink some wine, talk for a bit, try something you've never eaten before, drink some more wine, chat while you nibble on some cheese, order another round of small plates, drink some more wine. Repeat until you're pleasantly full and completely relaxed (and possibly a little tipsy).

I enjoyed nearly everything I ate at Ombra, but there were definitely a few dishes that stood out. (Hint: Order these.) The simple formaggi was my favorite of the panini choices. It's gooey Parmigiano, Asiago, Fontina and roasted garlic melted between two crisp slices of olive oil-soaked bread—what's not to love? The other panini options sound more interesting on the menu—there's one with mushrooms, Fontina and truffled aioli and another with lamb sausage, goat cheese and spicy sun-dried pesto. Both were delicious, but the formaggi was the one that really hit the spot.

I would not advise leaving Ombra without trying a platter of cured meats and Italian cheeses. You can select as many or as few as you'd like for \$5 to \$8 each. The platters come with crostinis, as well as spicy mustard and sweet jam so you can build your own perfect bite. My picks for the

perfect platter: prosciutto, sopressa (Italian salami), Taleggio (Italy's version of Brie), pecorino and Robiola, a pungent soft white cheese.

The beef shortribs were a favorite among my group of dining companions. The juicy meat is served atop a flavorful polenta cake with a side of wilted greens. However, my top pick from among the heartier items was the polenta "lasagna." Marinated mushrooms are stuffed between thin slabs of polenta and the savory stack is topped with a thick layer of cheese baked so perfectly golden brown that it almost forms a bread crust.

Since you're lingering, as you surely will be at Ombra, go ahead and order a few sweet treats to round out your leisurely Italian feast. Tiramisu is always a reliable option, and Ombra's version is quite good. But, if you only want to spend your dessert calories on one item, opt for the far more memorable Nutella panino. Obviously, Nutella is delicious when eaten directly from the jar with a spoon. So, when you fry it with bananas on crisp Italian bread, the result is, in a word, spectacular.

Ombra is located at 5310 N. Clark St.; call 773-506-8600 or visit www.barombra.com.

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There was also a silent auction, with sponsors including Hell in a Handbag, The SoFo Tap, Lifeline Theatre, Cheetah Gym and the Chicago History Museum, among many others.

Photos by Kat Fitzgerald (MysticImagesPhotography.com), with many more at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com



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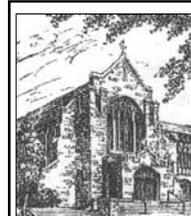
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STUDIOS FOR RENT

6100 NORTH NEAR LAKE. Huge studio, many windows, tile floor, modern kitchen, maple cabinets, lunch counter, large closets, newer appliances, all utilities. Transportation, shopping close. **\$650. 773-837-2981 or 773-706-2054. (4/4/12-2)**

ONE BEDROOMS FOR RENT

6100 NORTH NEAR LAKE - CHARMING VINTAGE 1 Bdrm, modern kitchen, formal dining room, maple cabinets, wood floors, newer appliances, heat/cooking gas, decorative fireplace, laundry, pedestal sink bath. Transportation, shopping close. **\$835. 773-837-2981 or 773-706-2054. (4/4/12-2)**

6100 NORTH NEAR LAKE - PICTURESQUE VINTAGE. Huge (approx. 900sq ft), well maintained 1 Bdrm, modern kitchen, maple cabinets, newer appliances, formal dining room, ceiling fans, oak floors, walk-in closet, sun room, large rear porch, heated laundry, pedestal sink bath. Transportation, shopping close. **\$935. 773-706-2054. (4/4/12-2)**

6100 NORTH NEAR LAKE - CHARMING VINTAGE. Well-maintained 1 Bdrm. Modern kitchen, maple cabinets, newer appliances, attached dining area, ceiling fans, wood floors, heated, laundry, pedestal sink bath. Transportation, shopping close. **\$830. 773-837-2981 or 773-706-2054. (4/4/12-2)**

TWO BEDROOMS FOR RENT

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EDGEWATER COMMUTER ADVANTAGE you'd be happy to come home to. Walk to beach, bus, redline and shops. Joyously sunny and secure first floor. Big bedrooms with walkin closets. Large kitchen with diningroom. \$1300 with heat plus laundry, patio and yard, new sink and intercom. **IT'S YOUR MOVE...773-706-6065. (4/4/12-2)**

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April 5: Maundy Thur. 7:30 PM
 April 6: Good Fri. 7:30 PM
 April 7: The Great Vigil 8:00 PM
 April 8: Easter Sunday
 8 AM and 10:30 AM

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NYC hotel serves LGBTA tourists

New York City has its first hotel that's strictly for the LGBTA community.

THE OUT NYC is New York City's first "straight-friendly" urban resort, according to a release. The complex is located at 510 W. 42nd St. in Hell's Kitchen.

Steps away from Times Square and Chelsea, the complex comprises a 105-room boutique hotel; the 14,000-square-foot XL Nightclub; Cabaret & Lounge by John Blair, Betto Sutter and FV Events; KTCHN, a restaurant opening in May; three courtyards; a business/conference center; function space; and a wellness center.

Rooms start at \$250 a night. Choices include superior, deluxe, deluxe double, executive and one-bedroom suites. There are also eight-sleep shares at \$99; these are European hostel-style rooms with four full-sized beds, personal TVs, a bathroom, shower, cubbies and privacy curtains.

All rooms feature wireless high-speed Internet, a 40-inch flat-screen IPTV, mp3 docking stations, a workspace and a mini-bar.

The hotel has spaces to host weddings, catered events or conferences. The wellness cen-

ter occupies 5,000 square feet, and has a gym, treatment room, sauna and steam room.

This is an idea whose time has come. What makes THE OUT NYC a desirable hotel is the comfort level and tailored amenities for both the gay and straight communities," said Parkview Developers Managing Partner Ian Reisner in a statement. "THE OUT NYC will become a 'can't-miss' for gay tourists as well as the epicenter of gay life for LGBT New Yorkers. With New York's recent legislation, we look forward not only to hosting countless gay couples, but marrying them as well."

In late 2010, Lords South Beach opened in Miami, and was touted as the first gay hotel brand in the country. Founder Brian Gorman told Windy City Times he chose that city because "Miami has always been, to me, one of the sexiest, most fun, liberal beach environments I've ever been to."

Architect Paul Dominguez designed THE OUT NYC.

See www.theoutnyc.com.

LGBT seniors and reverse mortgages

BY ANDREW DAVIS

An increasing number of elder LGBT individuals are investing in reverse mortgages.

Steve DiMarco—president of Baird & Warner Financial Services and a member of the firm's executive committee—said that the mortgages are "federally insured offerings through HUD [Department of Housing and Urban Development]."

"With reverse mortgages, you can't be denied for one of these loans, provided that you're at least 62 years of age. There's a chart based on your age, and the lender will determine at what loan devalue they can finance your home."

"With me, I make a mortgage payment every month. Each payment has two components; one's for interest and the other's for principal reduction. With a reverse mortgage, a mortgage amount is agreed upon and interest accrues against that loan balance, but it's not paid on a monthly basis—and is not really paid at all—until the property is disposed of. 'Disposed of,' in the case of a senior, means that the individual dies and the asset is disposed of in the manner that person dictated. It's at that point that the loan is repaid to the federal government or the HUD program."

DiMarco stressed that while the person lives basically payment-free, "there is no free lunch. It's accruing against the principal balance so, in essence, the loan amount is growing. This is a great vehicle for those on a fixed income."

DiMarco illustrated reverse mortgages with an example: "You're 62 or older. You're free and clear. An appraiser says your house is worth about \$400,000. The scale, in that case, would probably bring you up to a 65-percent loan devalue. So 65 percent of \$400,000 is [\$260,000]. You can choose to put that in your bank account, or they'll give you a checkbook. You can draw on that, and the principal balance will grow accordingly."

"If your heirs were to sell your property after your passing, and sold it for \$400,000—with you owing [\$260,000]—they'd keep [the difference]."

"However, let's say the house sells for \$200,000. The heirs are not on the hook for the amount above and beyond what you sold the house for—which is a pretty damn cool feature."

Editor's note: Websites on reverse mortgages are www.GayAndLesbianReverseMortgage.com, www.ReverseMortgageDaily.com and www.ReverseMortgageAdviser.com/illinois.html.

Steve can be reached at steve.dimarco@keymortgageservices.com.



THE OUT NYC hotel. Press photo



Kat Fitzgerald Photographer



www.mysticimagesphotography.com

calendar

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WINDY CITY
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nightspots

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Wed., April 4

Spring is in the Air Drink creations by Master Barman and Mixologist Carlos Cuarta, experience the delightful cooking talent of Chef Ashley Simone of Foodgasm and get free ring cleaning and a chance to update your older fashion jewelry to a more exciting look. 4pm-6:30pm, Tucker, Inc. 5 S. Wabash Ave., Ste 507

ASAP Kick-off Event Jerry Azumah and the ASAP Foundation Hosts Kickoff Event for the Fourth Annual Signature Fundraiser at Swank Hotspot, Studio Paris; 6pm-9pm, Studio Paris, 59 W. Hubbard, Chicago, IL

Gay Liberation Network meeting Join with Chicago's LGBT direct action group at their monthly organizing meeting—new members welcome! 7pm-9pm, 773-209-1187, Berger Park Cultural Center, 6205 N. Sheridan Rd., www.gayliberation.net

Curtains Up! Showtune Video Night A night of your favorite showtune videos in Andersonville! All of the classics from stage and screen and a lot of new ones thrown in for your singing, laughing and watching enjoyment! 9pm, The Call (Chicago), 1547 W Bryn Mawr Ave.

Windy City Gay Idol Windy City Gay Idol, now in its 10th year, kicks off the 2012 search for the best amateur GLBT singers in the Chicago area. Singers sign up at 8pm. Learn more online. 9pm, The Glenwood, 6962 N Glenwood Ave., www.windy-citymediagroup.com/lgbt/windy-city-gay-idol-kicks-off-10th-year-/36745.html

Bloom-n-Boom Subject to Change will host Bloom-n-Boom at The Burlington, to celebrate the early blooming springtime, and the ongoing blooming of trans folks with the Chicago Women's Health Center's

IDOL PATH Wed., April 4

Windy City Gay Idol will kick off this year's competition at The Glenwood, 6962 N. Glenwood Ave.

Photo by Constance Ruholl



Trans Greater Access Project (TGAP), which promotes trans affirming healthcare. The program provides hormone therapy, trans sensitive gynecological exams and counseling, among other services. 9pm, The Burlington 3425 W. Fullerton Ave., www.facebook.com/events/352764204775036/

Thursday, April 5

Mary Weismantel, PhD The Women's Center is recognizing the accomplishments of notable Northwestern University women for their work on behalf of women. Director of the Gender Studies Program and a Professor of Anthropology, Gender Studies, and Latin American and Caribbean Studies. 12pm-1pm, 847-491-7360, Evanston Campus Women's Center, 2000 Sheridan Rd., Evanston, www.northwestern.edu/womenscenter/

American Veterans for Equal Rights (GLBT veterans) Monthly meeting first Thursday of each month. 7pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., www.averchicago.org

AfterWork Karaoke Thursday AfterWork Karaoke every Thursday in Andersonville at The Call on Bryn Mawr. Singing starts at 7pm. Always a secret song for \$25 bar tab! Hosted By Karaoke by Creagh. Beer bucket specials all day - but order by 10p and get a basket of fries from our friends at Burger Philosophy. Weekly themes. So who are you gonna sing? 7pm-11:30pm, 773-334-2525, The Call (Chicago), 1547 W Bryn Mawr Ave.

Seven Years of Attacks Nightspots Magazine presents an evening of live readings from humor/lifestyle columnist Homer Marrs, celebrating 7 years of his column Marrs Attacks. Also reading are fellow Nightspots columnist A.K. Miller and editor/columnist Kirk Williamson. Tickets \$5, to benefit the Windy City Foundation. 8pm-10pm, Mary's Attic, 5400 N Clark St., www.hamburgermarys.com/chicago

Drag Idol Hydrate Nightclub presents season two of Drag Idol! A winner is chosen every week to take home a cash prize of \$100 and secure a spot to compete in the Drag Idol Finals to win a prize package worth over \$10,000! 9pm, Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted St., www.hydratechicago.com/home/

Friday, April 6

Goodbye To Granville Book Sale Check site for details. 12pm-4pm, 773-381-8030, Gerber/Hart Library, 1137 W Granville Ave., www.gerberhart.org

Homocult Show: Queer Film Screening/Exhibition Experimental queer films focused on magic and the occult. Themes of mysticism and ritual, sacred and profane will be richly portrayed on screen with a companion show of multidisciplinary work by select Chicago artists to complete the exhibition. 7pm, S&S Project, 3145 S. Morgan St., mysproject.blogspot.com/2011/12/scented-illusions.html

Club Kylie Celebrate Kylie Minogue at the original Kylie party. DJ Riley York plays rare videos, remixes and live performances of the Aussie Diva. 9pm, The Call (Chicago), 1547 W Bryn Mawr Ave.

Saturday, April 7

This Will Have Been: Art, Love, & Politics in the 1980s The years shaped by two phenomena that frame the 1980s: feminism and the AIDS crisis. Within these larger outlines, the exhibition finds desire - rather than cynicism or irony - to be the real tenor of the decade. Through June 3, 2012. 12pm, Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 East Chicago Ave., www.mcachicago.org/media

Homocult Show: Queer Film Screening/Exhibition Experimental Queer films fo-

cused on magic and the occult. Themes of mysticism and ritual, sacred and profane will be richly portrayed on screen with a companion show of multidisciplinary work by select Chicago artists to complete the exhibition. 7pm, S&S Project, 3145 S. Morgan St., mysproject.blogspot.com/2011/12/scented-illusions.html

A Billie Holiday B-Day Tribute w/ Jazz Vocalist Jesse Charbonier in Concert Celebrate the birthday of the legendary Miss Billie Holiday with acclaimed jazz vocalist Jesse Charbonier. Join him and his illustrious band, Adrian Joel Ruiz on piano, Michael Lough on bass and Nils Higdon on drums. Two shows: 8 & 11 pm. No cover, 2-drink minimum. To make your reservation call 773-327-5969 or visit www.3160Chicago.com. 8pm-11:15pm, 3160, 3160 N. Clark St., www.3160chicago.com

9 to 12 No Tap Bowling League Longest running GLBT Bowling League in suburban Chicago 191 South River Road (just north of Rand Road) in Des Plaines; 9pm, 630-567-7196, River Rand Bowl, Des Plaines

CAKE Chicago, Queer Arts Showcase Show Theme: Classic Rock, \$5. cover. 9 pm, Megan "Bird" Sieberg blend the sounds of Australian Folk with the sincere music and rhythm of the midwest. 9:45pm, Crumbs Off the Table is the groove-based rock/soul heart child of Andrea Bunch. 10:30pm, Dead End Days is currently Mike Petrucelli and Stephanie Levi. 9pm, Red Line Tap, 7700 N Glenwood Ave., www.facebook.com/cakechicago

Bear Night w/Great Lakes Bears Chicago's biggest bear party with midnight pizza pan and guest DJ Jim Lewis. 10pm, Touche, 6412 N Clark St., www.touchechicago.com

Sunday, April 8

Easter service at Urban Village Church Spiritual worship is about coming together as community to make space for God to move in us. It's a place to receive God's grace and love and to give of ourselves, as well. Invite a friend and join LGBT welcoming Urban Village Church for Easter. 10:15am-11:30am, Urban Village Church, Spertus Institute, 610 S. Michigan, Chicago, www.urbanvillagechurch.org

Urban Village Church: Andersonville Easter service Andersonville is a neighborhood full of passion, art, diversity, and eclectic energy, all which makes Urban Village Church thrilled to be joining the community! Spiritual worship is about coming together as community to make space for God to move in us. Invite a friend and join LGBT welcoming Urban Village Andersonville Church for Easter. 10:30am-11:45am, 1602 W. Ainslie), www.newchicagochurch.com

Brunch at Fleming's Prime Steakhouse and Wine Bar Fleming's Prime Steakhouse and Wine Bar will serve brunch and feature three delicious courses for only \$34.95 and \$12.95 for children's brunch excluding tax and gratuity. Call or make reservations online at www.flemingssteakhouse.com; 11:30am-3pm, 312-329-9463, Fleming's Prime Steakhouse and Wine Bar 25 E. Ohio St.

Dignity Chicago Progressive, inclusive and welcoming Catholic Community. Mass each Sunday evening. dignitychicago@gmail.com; 5pm, 3338 N. Broadway, Chicago, www.dignity-chicago.org

Urban Village Church: Wicker Park evening service Wicker Park is a neighborhood full of passion, art, diversity and eclectic energy. 5:30pm-7pm, 1502 N. Hoyne, www.newchicagochurch.com

Monday, April 9

Live Band Karaoke with Amy Armstrong Every Monday night at 10PM in the Front Bar, hosted by the one and only Amy Armstrong; 10pm, Roscoe's, 3356 N Halsted St, Chicago, www.roscoes.com

Drag Race with Frida Lay Chicago's only



TAX BREAK

Tuesday, April 10

State Rep. Kelly Cassidy will lead a tax-return seminar for gay and lesbian couples at the Center on Halsted.

Official headshot

amateur drag contest, hosted by Frida Lay! A hit at Roscoe's since its premier in 2000. 10pm, Roscoe's, 3356 N Halsted St., www.roscoes.com

Tuesday, April 10

State Rep. Kelly Cassidy Hosting Tax Return Seminar for Same-Sex Couples Free event for couples who have entered a Civil Union and are filing a joint Illinois tax return. RSVP by phone. 7pm-8:30pm, 773-784-2002, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/cassidy-hosting-tax-return-seminar-for-same-sex-couples-/37021.html

The Improv Play Infusion Theatre Company, in association with DCA Theater, presents the world premiere of Randall Colburn's The Improv Play, directed by the Company's Artistic Director Mitch Golob, April 10 - May 20 at the DCA Storefront Theater, 66 E. Randolph St. 7:30pm-11pm, www.dcaheater.org

Wed., April 11

Dorothy Roberts, JD Dorothy Roberts is a Professor of Law, African American Studies, and Sociology, and is a Faculty Fellow with the Institute for Policy Research. 12pm-1pm, Evanston Campus Women's Center, Harris Hall 108, 2000 Sheridan Rd., Evanston, www.northwestern.edu/womenscenter/

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater Experience the power of Ailey and see for yourself why this extraordinary company is hailed as America's cultural ambassador to the world. Through April 15. 7:30pm, Auditorium Theatre, 50 E. Congress Pkwy., www.auditoriumtheatre.org

Saturday, April 14

Angels in America, Part 1: Millennium Approaches and Part 2: Perestroika A portion of the opening night proceeds will benefit the AIDS Foundation of Chicago. 3pm Part 1: Millennium, 6pm Diner (Included in Ticket Price), 8pm Part 2: Perestroika Tickets \$150 each. 3pm, 312-334-0935, Court Theatre, 5535 S. Ellis Ave., www.afchicago.org

Sister Spit Next Generation—Chicago Host Michelle Tea (Best Music Writing 2010, Chelsea Whistle, Valencia, Rent Girl), author Dorothy Allison (Bastard Out of Carolina, Two or Three Things I know for Sure, Cavedweller), nationally ranking slam poet and Mr Transman 2010 Kit Yan and others; 7:30pm-9:30pm, 415-341-2859, CIMMFEST, Wicker Park Art Center, 2215 W. North Ave., www.radarproductions.org/tour

Matt Alber LIVE In Concert See out singer-songwriter Matt Alber, celebrating the 6th anniversary of The Flesh Hungry Dog Show. Doors open at 9 pm, show starts at 10. Tickets at www.fleshhungrydog.com. 9pm, Jackhammer, 6406 N Clark St.



AILEY NEWS

Wed.-Sunday, April 11-15

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater will perform at the Auditorium Theatre, 50 E. Congress Pkwy.

Photo by Eduardo Patino

Get
calendar
online



WindyCityMediaGroup.com
ChicagoPride.com

BILLY MASTERS

"All I have to say is it's true: I have a man-crush on Adam. It blows me away people can pick up on that just by watching us on television. I want to kiss him. I want to kiss him so bad. I don't care if it's mutual or not."—Blake Shelton admits his lustful desires for fellow The Voice judge, Adam Levine.

I'm not a Roman Catholic, but believe me when I tell you I have nothing against this current pope. I really don't. He orders custom-made red sandals from Provincetown. Fine. He's rumored to have been a Nazi. I saw The DaVinci Code; nothing surprises me—or so I thought. Then I saw Pope Benedict XVI driving in the Popemobile to preside over a mass in Mexico while wearing a sombrero on his head! This



Gareth Thomas (left) says that Mickey Rourke is still on board.

was actually the second sombrero of his trip. He was presented with the first sombrero by a mariachi band the night before. Are you telling me this sandal-wearing Nazi Pope is doing shots with a mariachi band and then is riding down the streets of Guadalajara wearing a sombrero like he's on spring break? It's like Popes Gone Wild—show your tits and he'll toss you a string of rosary beads! Next thing you know, he'll be inaugurating a wet vestments contest at St. Peter's! I'm sure more than one cardinal is thinking, "That could really liven up midnight mass on Easter!"

Gareth Thomas has refuted reports that Mickey Rourke will not be playing the openly gay rugby great in a biopic: "Any notion that Mickey is giving up on the role are way off the mark. I teamed up with Mickey because in my opinion there's nobody better to take on such a challenging role and nothing has changed there. He's so motivated by the role it's blown me away." Addressing other rumors about the film, Thomas said, "We'd love Tom Hardy to be involved, but he will not be playing me." No one's ruling out playing WITH him, however.

I had no idea Barbara Walters was being sued ... and in a Massachusetts court! In her autobiography, *Audition*, Walters discusses daughter Jackie's problems while attending the Wykeham Rise School, a boarding school in Connecticut. Here's the passage in question: "Jackie had a new friend named Nancy, whom the school kicked out midterm for bad behavior. She and Jackie had been found in the nearby town, high on God-knows-what." According to Nancy Shay, the drug use was "pure fiction" and that she, in fact, was having a lesbian romance with Walters' daughter! She's accused Babs of having her expelled from the school to thwart the Sapphic romance, and says Walters' forced her to stay silent about the affair, saying, "You'll ruin your name. Never mind, you'll ruin my name and my daughter's name." Horrors! The presiding judge stated that since Nancy's last name wasn't printed in the book, very few people would know it was her and there was no defamation. Ironically,

because of the suit, we now know even more than Walters wrote. Maybe Jackie can file her own defamation suit against Nancy!

You might think you're immune to this type of disclosure because your mom isn't Barbara Walters. Think again. Gay porn star Samuel Colt recently said how shocked he was when his mom called to ask if he was a gay male porn star. How'd she find out? Here's his story: "She had had a date with a guy and he had stood her up. She wanted to entertain herself so she went to the adult bookstore to buy a dildo....." Right there, blood would be coming out of my ears and I'd be screaming, "La-la-la-la." But, Samuel continued to listen to his mother's tawdry tale. "She decided to browse the gay magazines because she said that's where the hottest guys

always were. And there I was, on the cover of the magazine." This story could only get worse if she bought the magazine—"to entertain herself!"

Our "Ask Billy" question comes from Travis in Denver: "Was that Harry Hamlin who picked up little Ian on 'Shameless' last week? Damn, he still looks mighty hot. Will we be seeing more of him?"

That was, indeed. Although I'm not sure he knows Ian's name—"I'm gonna call you Ginger" seemed to stick. It's safe to say that Harry Hamlin's still got it. He looks positively scrumptious for 60. Strike that—he looks good for 50! This may be the first viewing of Harry's assets since 1994's "Save Me" (which I think was one of those Cinemax flicks). A couple of years ago, Hamlin was asked if he'd consider doing a sequel to *Making Love*. He said, "If they want to do something about a gay octogenarian, I may be up for it in a couple of years." How prophetic that his *Shameless* character could fulfill that goal. And, yes, he will be returning next season—but in a surprising way that I can't disclose. By the way, Cameron Monaghan plays the aforementioned Ian and let me share a cute story: The director waited until his 18th birthday to avoid any controversy when filming the nude scene and an earlier sex scene. Of course, there's nothing controversial about me posting it on *BillyMasters.com*.

When I'm not being controversial, it's definitely time to end yet another column. I still can't get over my first story. I wouldn't be surprised if those photos of the Pope in a sombrero will resurface at some competency hearing at the Vatican. If that happens, you know I'll cover it on *www.BillyMasters.com*, the truly diverse website. If you've got a question for me, drop a note to *Billy@BillyMasters.com* and I promise to get back to you before Samuel Colt's mom decides to make a film of her own! Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

Build Your Easter Bonnet

Saturday, April 7 • 3-6pm



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'Strike Out Hunger' rolls on in Des Plaines

BY ROSS FORMAN

The 15th annual Strike Out Hunger bowling fundraiser, held March 31 at River Rand Bowl in north suburban Des Plaines was a success.

About 130 bowlers participated, spread out over 23 of the facilities' 24 lanes. About \$7,000 was raised for Vital Bridges Center on Chronic Care—and more than \$100,000 has been raised over the years.

"I'm proud that it is a good contribution," said John Paquet, who was the president of the 9 To 12 League for 12 years. "The fact that we've been able to raise \$100,000, I'm very proud of that. Tonight is all about fund-raising and having a good time—and I really think everyone is having fun."

Teams of six bowled three casual games each, with every game carrying a carefree approach.

"I really enjoy this event," said Jack Marunde,



9 to 12 President Jack Marunde. Photo from John Paquet



Jim Stubblefield at Strike Out Hunger. Photo from John Paquet

43, who lives in Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood and is now the 9 To 12 League president. "I've been attending this event for the past three or four years, and it really is a blast; I have fun every year and think everyone does."

The event is the brainchild of former league bowler John Kautz, who suggested a fundraiser to aid the former HIVCO (HIV Coalition) facility in Elk Grove Village. "The first [fundraiser] was relatively modest; we filled about half of the lanes. Now it's basically a sellout, and has been for years.

"I had no idea, at the first event, that this

would take off, but I'm very happy with the success of it. I'm happy we've been able to grow and sustain the event. I'm grateful for the support from the community."

Debbie Hinde, the chief health care strategist for Vital Bridges, said the event has a "huge impact."

"I think it's wonderful that groups of people in the community do something to help," she added. "The [9 To 12] league has been committed to raising funds, and just being supportive."

'Bike the Drive' May 27

The 2012 Bike the Drive—when people can cycle the length of Lake Shore Drive and auto traffic is closed off—will take place Sunday, May 27.

The event begins at 5:30 a.m., and organizers recommend starting no later than 7:30 a.m.

The route begins at Columbus Drive and Jackson Drive; the round-trip distance is 30 miles, with the northern turnaround point at Bryn Mar Avenue and the southern turnaround at 57th Street. There will be rest stops along the way.

See www.BikeTheDrive.org.

Disability awareness run/walk April 29

The "Celebrate Differences" Disability Awareness 5K Run/Walk will take place Sunday, April 29, at 61 Franklin St., Oswego.

The run start time is 9 a.m.; registration is 7:30-8:30 a.m.

All participants will receive a reusable drawing gear bag and a high-performance tech shirt. Pre-register at www.ItsRaceTime.com.

Welts on Kobe, gay players and more

BY ROSS FORMAN

This could be The Year.

Rick Welts said he would not be surprised in an athlete playing in one of the big four male professional team sports (baseball, basketball, football and hockey) came out as gay—while still active, and his choice to do so.

"I don't think it's that far away [from happening,] whether it's one year, or three years, or five years, I don't know. ... I do, I really do [think it will happen soon, though,]" Welts said.

In talking with players, including perennial All-Star Steve Nash of the Phoenix Suns, Welts said he has not heard any objections to an openly gay player. In fact, he said that Nash comments when Welts said he is gay included, "I can't even believe we're talking about this in 2011. How can this possibly even be an issue?"

Here are Welts' comments about various other subjects:

—Anti-gay comments in 2011 from Kobe Bryant and Joakim Noah: "I cut them some slack; I really do, right or wrong. Both [comments] were [made] at the height of frustration. I think both of them now really regret what they said. During the heat of the moment, each [thought], 'What is the most hurtful thing I could say to this person who is causing me frustration?' And the most hurtful thing they could think to say was, [basically] 'You're a homosexual.' That was the ultimate insult."

—An openly gay player in the NBA: "I think the vast majority of the athletes [in the NBA] could care less about someone's sexual orientation; they just want to know if [the player] can help the team."

—It Gets Better videos: "They can be very

impactful." Welts said he is open to helping the Warriors produce such a video, as other pro teams have done, such as the San Francisco Giants, Chicago Cubs, Boston Red Sox and others.

—Being openly gay in Northern California: "It is very easy, just as it was for me in Phoenix, New York [City], Seattle and Los Angeles. People are very welcoming here."

—Dating: Welts has been dating Todd Gage. Gage, a father of two, splits time between the San Francisco-Oakland area and Sacramento, Welts said. "He is great, wonderful. It's great to be able to include him in the work part of my life," Welts said.

Gage joined Welts in December at the Warriors' annual holiday party, attended by players and key staff. "That was a great experience that I haven't had before—choosing to include someone like that in my professional life," Welts said. Welts courted Gage, a flight attendant for Southwest Airlines, after spotting him on a flight. Welts introduced himself because "he was someone who I wanted to meet."

—Participating in the 2014 Gay Games in Cleveland or the annual Coady Roundball Classic in Chicago, the oldest and longest-running gay basketball tournament, held every April: "I'd have to get back on the court and get in better shape," before participating, he said, laughing. "I think I have more to offer sports from the administrative side of things as opposed to playing." However, he would attend a gay sporting event. "I'd have to make sure my game was up to my own standards," he added with a smile.

—Chicago: "It's the one city that I've wanted to live in that I've never had the opportunity to live in, because I really love Chicago." Welts has been to Boystown multiple times, including its gay bars, although he didn't remember which ones.

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LANDLORD'S OBLIGATION TO RETURN SECURITY DEPOSITS

Q. I am planning to move out of my apartment during the spring. I expect to have a problem with my landlord in getting my security deposit refunded when I move. What is my landlord's responsibility under the law to return my security deposit?

A. Chicago's "Residential Tenant and Landlord Ordinance" applies to all residential, rental real estate located within the City of Chicago. The law establishes responsibilities for landlords not only in leasing apartments but in handling their tenant's security deposits (the law does not apply, however, to owners of buildings of six units or less AND owner occupied).

The landlord must pay interest to his tenants. And the landlord is obligated, within 30 days of the end of each 12-month rental period, to pay any interest due to the tenant by cash or a credit against the rent.

When a landlord receives a security deposit from a new or existing tenant he is obligated to give a receipt to the tenant showing the date received, the amount of the deposit and the name of the person receiving it.

The security deposit cannot be used for the last month's rent although it is a very common practice. Under the law the tenant must pay the last month's rent even though they plan to move at the end of the last month. When the apartment is vacated the landlord has 45 days within which to return the security deposit to the tenant plus any interest.

Your landlord may deduct from the security deposit any unpaid rent and a reasonable amount necessary to repair any damage to the property. If the apartment is damaged and your landlord wants to deduct money from the security deposit to pay for the repairs the landlord must within 30 days after the tenant vacates the apartment deliver or mail to the tenant an itemized statement of the damages caused to the premises and the estimated or actual cost of repairing each item. If the items have been repaired the landlord must attach copies of the paid receipts for the repairs or replacements.

If the landlord or the landlord's agent (management company) fails to comply with the city ordinance or refuses to return the security deposit the tenant can take the landlord to court and recover an amount equal to two times the security deposit plus interest with court costs and reasonable attorney's fees.

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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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