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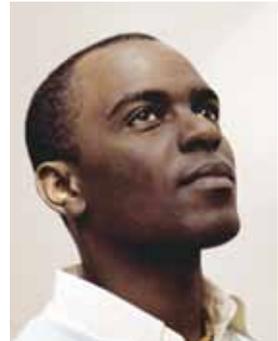
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# WINDY CITY TIMES

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

APRIL 18, 2012  
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GAY UGANDAN  
ACTIVIST FRANK  
MUGISHA  
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## Gay-rights movement revs up at Notre Dame

BY CHUCK COLBERT

It needs to get better.

That's the message of a two-and-a-half minute video calling for approval of a gay-straight alliance (GSA) and the adoption of a non-discrimination policy that is inclusive of sexual orientation at one of the nation's most visible Catholic universities, a school with a large base of alumni, including gay ones, in Chicago.

The video hammers away, gently, at the need for change on the South Bend, Ind., campus, where for more than a decade efforts at securing legal protections for LGBTQ students, faculty and staff have fallen short.

And with the reach of social media and a reinvigorated push—now organized under the banner of the 4 to 5 movement—student and leaders and gay alumni have

hopes that school administrators will at least approve the GSA by the end of the school year, while readily acknowledging that adding a non-discrimination clause may take longer.

"The 4 to 5 movement is the largest coalition for LGBT rights at Notre Dame in history," said alumnus Liam Dacey, past chair of Gay & Lesbian Alumni of Notre Dame and St. Mary's College (GALA-ND/SMC).

"It has brought together students, faculty, staff and alumni, and the community in a unified way to tell the administration that they are not doing nearly enough to serve LGBT people," he added.

Indeed, social media has raised the profile of the 4 to 5 movement well beyond South Bend. Loyola University of Chicago's student government, for example, passed a resolution of "solidarity" with Notre Dame's LGBTQ com-

munity in its efforts.

Students at the Catholic University of America, based in Washington, D.C., have produced a similar video and formed a coalition with Notre Dame advocates of non-discrimination and an officially approved GSA for their school.

At both institutions, students have submitted applications seeking official status for GSAs. A decision is expected at Notre Dame no later than May 1.

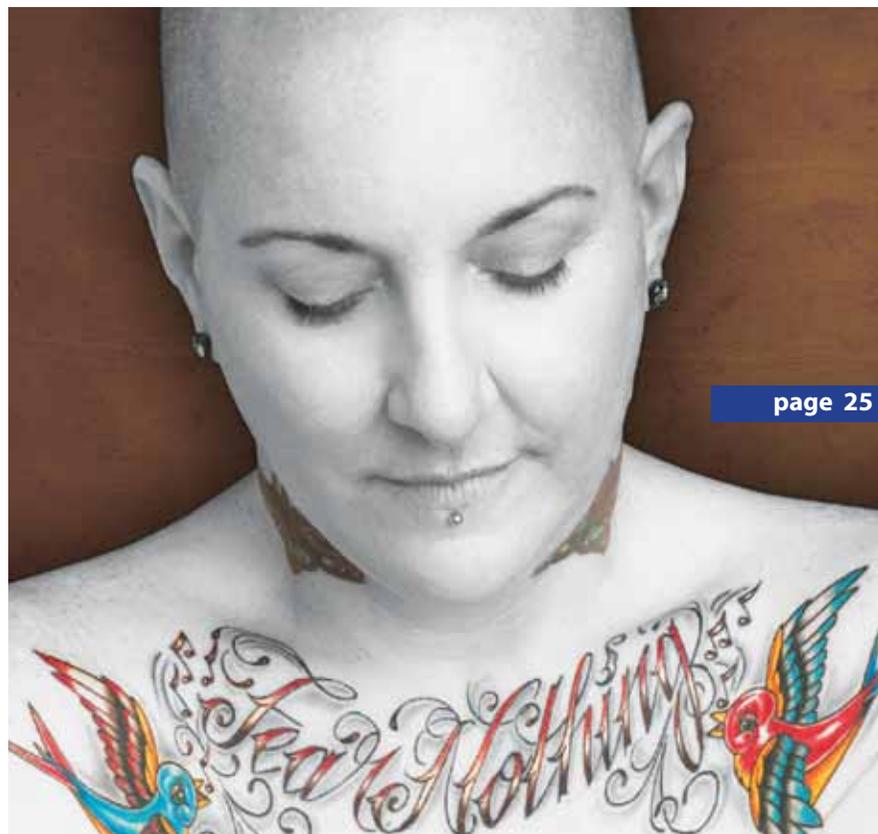
Meanwhile, the push is on as LGBTQ Fighting Irish and allies persist in a direct appeal for full respect and equality.

At the same time, any number of other Catholic colleges and universities offer legal protections on the basis

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PATRICK WANG  
OF 'IN THE  
FAMILY'  
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## One 'Voice'

Beverly McClellan, one of the lesbian contestants last season on NBC's *The Voice*, talked with *Windy City Times*. She'll be coming to town this weekend to perform at the Red Dress Gala. See page 25. PR photo

## Lesbian bar owner plans reunion

BY JAMIE ANNE ROYCE

Augie's & C.K.'s, a popular lesbian bar in the 1970s and '80s, will host a reunion May 12, 2012.

Founded as two separate bars, Augie's and C.K.'s merged, making its home at 3726 N. Broadway, where the bar Charlie's is now located. C.K.'s first opened at 1425 W. Diversey Ave. around August 1972, but moved to 2417 N. Milwaukee Ave. by January 1979. Augie's also opened in 1972 at 3729 N. Halsted St.

"I just decided to open up the bar because there were no girls' bars," said Augie. "I had just come back from a trip to Puerto Rico, and they had a beautiful girls' bar. And that inspired me."

The bar quickly became a community for the regulars. They formed sports leagues, participated in the annual Pride Parade, and hosted picnics.

"The bar meant everything. We had such a strong group of friends," said Victoria "Pickles" Martinez, who bartended at C.K.'s and Augie's & C.K.'s. "Especially working there, everyone that I met, the resources I got, all the involvement in the different sports and the camaraderie with the women meant so much to me."

Martinez started working the door and the coat check at C.K.'s because C.K. wouldn't let her tend bar until she had experience. After working in a few other nightspots, she began working behind the bar. When Augie's & C.K.'s closed in 1994, she continued to tend bar in gay nightspots until January 2011.

"One time, I remember after we closed the bar, we played hide-and-go-seek in there. It was just a lot of fun back in those days," said Martinez. "You can ask anybody that used to go in that bar. Everyone would just be at Augie's & C.K.'s."

And while working there was enjoyable for Martinez, there was still a lot of

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**WINDY CITY TIMES**

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Photos on cover (left, from top): Photo of Modesto "Tico" Valle by Kate Lynch; Frank Mugisha photo from Mugisha; Patrick Wang PR photo; Kelly Lynch photo courtesy of Starz

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**HOLDING OUT FOR A HERO**  
See photos from this year's C2E2 comic expo.

Photo by Andrew Davis



Zobha apparel is one of the items in Five Worth Finding.

PR photo



Lambda Legal's Hayley Gorenberg talks about the upcoming Day of Silence.

Photo from Lambda Legal

**DEBT AND TAXES**

Phil Sitar looks at how the failure to resolve the debt-ceiling crisis plays to this year's election.

**HOOP DREAMS**

Read WCT's preview of the 22nd Annual Coady Roundball Classic.

**THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT**

Read entertainment news about General Hospital, Sean Hayes and Jean Paul Gaultier. Also, read about Belle Brigade's recent show at Lincoln Hall.

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## NOTRE DAME from cover

of sexual orientation and/or allow self-governing student groups, including Boston College, Georgetown University, DePaul University and Santa Clara University, among others.

Georgetown and DePaul also have LGBTQ resource centers. Last fall Georgetown's center received a \$1 million gift to fund an LGBTQ life initiative.

And yet, back in South Bend, "15 times, Notre Dame has denied official club status to a gay-straight alliance," says one undergraduate who appears on a "It Needs to Get Better" video posted on YouTube; so far, the video has gotten more than 20,000 hits.

"A GSA would lead to a long and overdue welcoming environment that students have struggled for year after year," he adds.

"Notre Dame remains the only top-20 university without a gay-straight alliance and without a nondiscrimination clause," another student says on camera.

"Notre Dame is always at the top of LGBT unfriendly colleges list," says Joanna Whitfield of Palatine, Ill., a senior majoring in mechanical engineering.

"Notre Dame's Catholic identity doesn't preclude it from these changes," explains yet another student, adding, "Many other Catholic colleges, including our sister school, St. Mary's [College] recognize a GSA and include sexual orientation in their non-discrimination clauses."

"So, listen up Father Jenkins," says Alex Coccia of Columbus, Ohio, a sophomore majoring in Africana and peace studies.

The Rev. John J. Jenkins, C.S.C., is university president.

"Listen up, board of trustees, student body, faculty and staff, alumni," others add. "It needs to get better."

Coccia and Whitfield—both of whom identify as straight allies—are leaders of the 4 to 5 Movement, which they said recently during recent telephone interviews resulted from membership in the Progressive Student Alliance (PSA), an officially sanctioned student group advocating progressive principles, politics, and activism at Notre Dame.

Coccia serves as co-president of PSA, with Whitfield as vice president.

Last year, Brian Sims—a former college football team captain who is openly gay—gave them the idea of 4 to 5 when progressive students hosted him as a speaker on campus, Whitfield explained.

Sims, a Philadelphia Democrat, is a candidate for the Pennsylvania House of Representatives.

In his talk, Sims pointed to overwhelming majority support for gay rights among young people.

"Statistics supported by the Pew Forum from a national youth survey found that among 18-to-30 year-olds with a college education, four out of five support the general package of gay civil rights," explained Coccia.

"When they are polled," however, he continued, "only one-third think their peers agree."

"So an 80-percent majority thinks it's a 30-percent minority," Coccia said.

"That's the same dynamic at Notre Dame," he said, explaining, "Those allies who are the majority are either overwhelmed by the voices of opposition or structures in place make it seem as though they are not the majority."

For Coccia and Whitfield, the in-the-minority mentality is simply unacceptable.

"It keeps allies from getting involved. It hinders people from coming out. It hinders people from speaking what they believe," he said.

Worse yet, "it breeds a culture of silence," said Coccia.

The legacy undergraduates have generational ties to Notre Dame. Whitfield's grandfather is an alumnus from the 1950s and Coccia's father graduated in the 1970s.

"I've gone to Catholic schools my whole life," said Coccia, who considers Notre Dame to be a "family" and "community."

It's "hypocritical," he went on to say, "that a



Alex Coccia and Joanna Whitfield. Photo courtesy of Coccia

university that stresses Christian values and loving your neighbor would not protect people on a legal basis because of their sexual orientation. It is insincere to say that someone is loved and welcomed as part of the community, but that that person will not be legally protected."

Mary Rose D'Angelo, an associate professor of New Testament theology at Notre Dame, agrees that there is room for legal-protection measures and an officially approved GSA. In a recent letter to the editor of the student newspaper, she wrote, "Catholic teaching does not preclude measures like the GSA and the non-discrimination clause; indeed, it would seem to require them."

According to its mission statement, the GSA would, if approved, "serve as a peer-to-peer interaction-based student club/gay-straight alliance, where GLBTQ students and allies can work together to 'create a sense of human solidarity and concern for the common good' as outlined in Notre Dame's mission statement."

The GSA would not be an advocacy organization.

Additionally, "A GSA would provide social support for GLBTQ students without isolating them, as well as a significant complement to classroom learning, and would be a venue for student-led effort to assure that GLBTQ students are, in the words of the Catechism [of the Catholic Church] 'accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity,'" D'Angelo explained.

"Equally important is the Catechism's stipulation that 'Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided,'" she added.

"Endorsing the capacity of gay and straight students (and associated faculty) to organize around sexual identity and adding sexual orientation to the non-discrimination are two essential steps toward fulfilling the moral mandate the Catechism articulates," D'Angelo's letter concluded.

Among those who disagree is Jenkins, the current president, and his predecessor, the Rev. Edward T. Malloy, C.S.C., who have relied on Catholic Church doctrine and legal concerns as bases for a non-inclusive policy.

"Our rationale for not adding sexual orientation to the non-discrimination policy clause has for the last 12 years been our unwillingness to leave to civil courts the interpretation of university decisions that are made the basis of Church teaching on sexual orientation and conduct," wrote Jenkins in April 2011 to GALA-ND/SMC's Dacey.

Two years earlier, Malloy wrote, "Within society at large, the phrase 'sexual orientation' sometimes becomes a term that does not admit of distinction between sexual orientation and the manner in which people live out their sexual orientation—a distinction that is critical to us as a Catholic institution."

The two presidents may have a point, says Marc. R. Poirier, a professor at the Seton Hall University School of Law.

"There is a paragraph in *Christian Legal Society [CLS] v. Martinez* that would worry me very much if I were a religious group seeking to draw a distinction between status and conduct and maintain it in the face of an anti-discrimination principle that included sexual orientation," he said.

"It appears to me that is what the president of Notre Dame is referring to," said Poirier.

*CLS v. Martinez* is a 2010 United States Supreme Court case (decided 5-4), penned by Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. In a win for LGBT rights, the high court ruled that religious beliefs may not always trump non-discrimination policies.

The case involved the Christian Legal Society at Hastings Law School, a public institution, where the group sought to exclude gay people from membership and from holding office. Hastings had a non-discrimination policy and refused to recognize the CLS group unless it admitted gays.

"The court rejected the CLS's argument that the group could exclude homosexuals on the basis of conduct," said Poirier. "It held that Hastings' anti-discrimination policy protecting LGBT folks would prevail over a CLS policy requiring celibacy."

Ginsburg held that exclusion on the basis of sexual conduct was tantamount to discrimination on the basis of status as homosexual.

"So based on this paragraph, there would appear to be a risk, if an educational institution had both a non-discrimination policy including sexual orientation and a policy requiring celibacy outside of marriage, and also doctrinally limited marriage to opposite sex couples, that the anti-discrimination policy would be read by the court to trump the celibacy policy," Poirier said.

"To be sure, in other contexts courts have given the status/conduct distinction weight, but not in the circumstances of *CLS v. Martinez*," said Poirier.

Notre Dame's campus advocacy for a self-governing student group and legal protections comes at a time when the South Bend City Council approved a measure by a vote of 6-3 that provided protections for residents from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Notre Dame is not located, save a building, within city limits. And yet, Coccia termed the vote "fantastic," adding, "It gives us a lot of motivation, too."

University spokesperson Dennis Brown, an assistant vice president of Public Information and Communications, said in e-mail correspondence, "We have received material related to a gay straight alliance and sexual orientation in the non-discrimination clause—as well as many other requests—from concerned students and are not making any comments until we've had the opportunity to thoroughly review and evaluate the material and then respond directly to

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- Gay Mormon students record 'It Gets Better' video
- Dallas County's HIV rate hits five-year high

them. We believe they deserve that courtesy."

Brown added, "That said, as articulated in the Spirit of Inclusion, we welcome and value all members of our community, we condemn discriminatory harassment of any kind, and our policy explicitly precludes harassment based on sexual orientation."

The Spirit of Inclusion statement to which Brown refers dates back more than a decade when then president Malloy wrote in it, "We choose not to change our legal non-discrimination clause, but we call ourselves to act in accord with what we regard as a higher standard—Christ's call to inclusiveness, coupled with the gospel's call to live chaste lives."

Nonetheless, 4 to 5 movement Whitfield sees room for improvement. "The Spirit of Inclusion is a nice step for the university to take towards creating a welcoming environment, but the statement has no legal meaning. How can the campus environment be open and welcoming if the university doesn't offer a group of people protection from discrimination?"

Advocates for change at Notre Dame point to St. Mary's College, "where policies, practices, and procedures are administered in a manner consistent with our Catholic identity," according to the school's policy on equal employment opportunity.

The policy also states, "With the foregoing understanding, Saint Mary's College will not engage in discrimination based on gender, race, national origin, religion, age, mental or physical disability, all as provided by law. Based on Catholic values, the College also commits to avoiding discrimination based on sexual or political orientation."

Gwen O'Brien, the school's media relations director, said in e-mail correspondence, "The Straight and Gay Alliance (SAGA) is one of the college's approved organizations. SAGA's purpose is to provide students opportunities to openly discuss and question how they may best live their lives as sexual beings within the framework of Catholic teaching."

SAGA is self-governing, is open to all students, has a constitution and elects officers—the same as any other student organization—with one caveat, said O'Brien: "SAGA cannot serve as an advocacy group."

GALA-ND/SMC's Dacey applauds the advances at Notre Dame's sister school. "Right now it is getting better at St. Mary's, but we aren't seeing the same sort of progress at Notre Dame," he said. "How can this be viewed as anything but one big Catholic hypocrisy?"

**A 1978 graduate of the University of Notre Dame, Chuck Colbert is a co-founder of GALA-ND/SMC and a former co-chair of the organization, which is not affiliated with the Notre Dame Alumni Association.**

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# SPLC, Truth Wins Out hold meetings on conversion therapy

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) and Truth Wins Out held community meetings to discuss "conversion" therapy at the Provo Community United Church of Christ in Provo, Utah, April 11 and at the First Baptist Church of Salt Lake City in Salt Lake City, Utah, April 12.

"We wanted to raise awareness of the harm that 'conversion' therapy causes people ... that this isn't a thing of the past and is still taking place around the country and abroad," said Sam Wolfe, a civil-rights lawyer for SPLC who helped launch the LGBT Rights Project.

The meetings were held in Utah, Wolfe told Windy City Times, because of his personal connection to the area, growing up as a Mormon and attending Brigham Young University where he first encountered "conversion" therapy as a student. Also, Wolfe said, Mormons tend to be a strong constituency within the conversion-therapy movement.

"About 15 people attended the Provo meeting and about 20 people attended the Salt Lake City meeting," said Wolfe. "They included community members, health professionals and other survivors who were not on the panel. So far the Provo meeting was the most powerful one we've had."

According to the SPLC website, "Conversion therapy (sometimes known as reparative or 'sexual reorientation' therapy) is a danger-



Sam Wolfe. Photo courtesy of the SPLC

ous practice based on the premise that people can change their sexual orientation, literally 'converting' from gay to straight. The therapy includes everything from counseling to acting out scenarios to in some cases shock treatment. Conversion therapy has been discredited or highly criticized by virtually all major American medical, psychiatric, psychological and professional counseling organizations. People who have undergone conversion therapy have reported increased anxiety, depression and, in some cases, suicidal ideation."

Panelists included survivors of conversion therapy; Wolfe; Wayne Besen, founding executive director of Truth Wins Out; Dr. Lee Beckstead, a Salt Lake City psychologist; and Lisa Diamond, associate professor of psychology and gender studies at the University of Utah.

Each panel member discussed a different aspect of conversion therapy citing his or her own experiences and research on the topic. The survivors of conversion therapy told their stories and how the therapy impacted them to help other LGBT people who have undergone or are

considering "therapy" to "cure" themselves.

Wolfe said that this therapy is not just about counseling individuals; it is a movement. Many of the major figures in the conversion-therapy movement, Wolfe explained, are actively fighting against LGBT equality by using their ex-gay conversion therapy data. Wolfe said that the SPLC is also seeing the influence in schools such as the Anoka-Hennepin School District case in Minnesota.

Besen explained the history of conversion-therapy movement and the figures who were supportive but have since denounced the practice.

"We want to educate the public that these kinds of therapies are ineffective and destructive," said Besen. "People are wasting money and time to chase a false hope that they can change their sexual orientation. These groups

are relying on junk science and religious propaganda to defraud people into thinking they can turn straight.

"We are excited that these groups are getting exposed and are on the losing side of history since their experiment has failed. We aim to make sure that people know this information so they don't get sucked into their web. The only 'ex-gay' people out there to promote any success stories are still a part of "reparative" therapy organizations. No one else is espousing this philosophy outside of these organizations."

Diamond said that conversion-therapy organizations have used her written material against her, according to Wolfe.

Wolfe added that Beckstead went into how unethical it is for therapists to use conversion therapy. He also mentioned his involvement with the American Psychological Association's Task Force to evaluate sexual-reorientation treatments and provide recommendations based upon that evaluation.

The question that most people asked was what they could do to help expose conversion-therapy organizations such as the Utah-based Evergreen International. Suggestions included protests, complaints to professional medical boards and lawsuits.

As for the future, the SPLC wants to collect as

many stories as possible so they can take further action against conversion therapy groups. "The bottom line is that this is a fraudulent practice that has harmed many people and needs to stop," said Wolfe.

SPLC and Truth Wins Out held previous community meetings on this subject in Washington, D.C.; Baltimore; and Atlanta.

See [www.splcenter.org/conversion-therapy](http://www.splcenter.org/conversion-therapy) and [www.truthwinsout.org](http://www.truthwinsout.org) for more information.

## Groups push Obama on executive order to ban LGBT bias

Pro-LGBT organizations have responded to President Barack Obama's failure to sign an executive order that would prohibit federal contractors from discriminating on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity.

"This is a political calculation that cannot stand," said Tico Almeida, president of Freedom to Work. "We will continue to publicly urge them to reconsider for many months to come."

Polling from the Human Rights Campaign has shown that 73 percent of U.S. residents support an executive order barring federal contractors from discriminating against LGBT employees.

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From left: Siena Garcia-Rizzo, Daryl Rizzo and Jaime Garcia. Photo from the Garcia-Rizzo family

## Local gay couple attends White House Easter Egg Roll

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Suburban Chicago family Jaime Garcia, Daryl Rizzo and their 4-year-old daughter, Siena Rose Garcia-Rizzo, were among the 35,000 people who attended the 134th annual White House



Siena Garcia-Rizzo.

Easter Egg Roll April 9.

The theme for this year's event was "Let's Go, Let's Play, Let's Move." Attendees were able to participate in sports activities and games, hear stories, watch cooking lessons, hear live musical performances and participate in the traditional Easter Egg Roll competition.

The White House Easter Egg Roll dates back to President Rutherford B. Hayes' administration. Hayes and the first lady, Lucy, invited children to the White House South Lawn for egg rolling for the first time on Easter Monday in 1878. During the Eisenhower administration the first lady, Mamie, opened the event to African-American children for the first time. Over the years gay and lesbian parents and their children have attended the event; however, President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama have officially included gay and lesbian families in the annual event since hosting their first egg roll in 2009.

The White House contacted LGBT organizations across the country and asked them to identify and invite gay and lesbian families to attend the annual event. The pro-LGBT organization Equality Illinois knew Garcia, Rizzo and their daughter from their participation in Chicago's inaugural civil-union ceremony at Millennium Park last June, and asked them to attend. The couple has been together for 12 years and are active members of Equality Illinois.

The Garcia-Rizzo family recently moved from Chicago to west suburban La Grange. They share their house with Siena's grandmother and three dogs. To be one of many other same-sex couples and their children invited to participate in the White House Easter Egg Roll was a thrill for their family, Rizzo shared.

"The contrast between the previous administration and the Obama administration is stark," said Bernard Cherkasov, CEO of Equality Illinois. "While families with gay and lesbian parents had to invite themselves into the event during the Bush years and often felt shunted off to the sidelines, the White House under President Obama has worked to ensure full involvement of families with gay and lesbian parents."

"For our daughter, it was all about celebrating Easter," said Rizzo. "For us, it was about celebrating the diversity of our country and the openness of the Obama administration. We were just like any other family at the event, however, we did set out to raise awareness of same-sex families just by being ourselves."

Rizzo said they didn't get to see the first family since they had tickets for later in the day (spending two hours at the event); however, they did get to watch singer Janelle Monae perform. Their daughter participated in the egg roll, and rolled down a hill with other kids in her fancy Easter dress. They also got to meet another lesbian couple and their four children.

"The things that Siena loved the most were the costumed characters, especially Clifford the Big Red Dog, and the Easter Egg Roll," said Rizzo. "Siena had just learned about the president and White House at school, and it was cool for her to see it in person."

As they left the White House grounds, their daughter received a wooden egg to commemorate the event.

## U.S. entrant comes in third at Mr. Gay World

BY ROSS FORMAN

Kevin Power, a New York-based teacher who stresses anti-bullying, finished third in the annual Mr. Gay World competition, held April 4-8 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Andreas Derleth, 32, from New Zealand was the winner, while South Africa's Lance Weyer, 24, finished second.

"I was very happy [finishing third,]" Power said in a phone interview shortly after the competition concluded. "Sure, I wanted to win, but meeting all of the delegates that I met, it really was anyone's possible title [to win]. Everyone had amazing qualities, amazing personalities."

The Mr. Gay World competition is a public performance where delegates represent their nation as the best spokesperson to embody the spirit of their nation. The competition features various challenges, including a photo challenge, sports



Kevin Power. Photo by Michael Craft/Twisted Images

challenge, fashion show/runway challenge, swimsuit challenge, public speaking and a local outreach challenge where delegates work with a local charity to give back to the community that is hosting the competition.

"I was somewhat disappointed with myself; I thought I would do better in some of the challenges, but finishing third [overall] is still amazing," Power said. "It was just an honor to be on the stage with some of these guys. I'm extremely happy."

"Coming in third has really helped fuel my passion, with an anti-bullying campaign, and traveling around making a difference."

Power, 22, graduated from SUNY-Oswego, and hopes to return to the classroom teaching in the fall.

"My favorite aspect of the trip, of the entire experience, was [on Saturday] when we [met local] children ... and I brought about 10 children's books," for them, he said. "We spent hours with these amazing kids—some who have no homes, some who have one parent, etc. It was an amazing experience, very emotional."

Power is a certified high school science teacher, specializing in biology and chemistry.

He formed his own anti-bullying campaign, Common Sense For The Intolerable, and has been traveling to Lower Manhattan-area schools, talking about tolerance. "What I stress to these kids is, it's not just about homophobia, but [also] about sexism, racism—all of these social issues and social aspects that we tend to overlook," he said.

Power started speaking in schools on the topic last September.

"Being a teacher, I see [bullying directly], some times kids have the courage to come talk to us and sometimes they won't have that courage," he said.

"Bullying has definitely changed. A decade ago and before [that], bullying in school was mostly physical, emotional and mental. Now, it's largely cyber-bullying. Everything starts with the Internet; everything starts with social media that kids are using without parental supervision. They are going on Facebook, Google Plus and elsewhere and getting into people's business and ripping them to a new level. That includes pictures and status [updates]. It can be streamed to millions of people in a hour. Now, the problem isn't just within the classroom, but something that is now on a much larger, global scale."

In his school seminars, Power brings out the fears and possible outcomes from using social media networks without understanding the impact that they really have.

"Something that a person posts on Facebook, for instance, is something that that person will have to live with for the rest of their life," he said.

Power said he did encounter a lot of bullying when teaching, though kids often did not also view it as bullying as well, he said. Such as, name-calling. "The issue is, those tiny acts are what start to build up," he said.

Power often would stop teaching lessons mid-sentence to confront the issues, face them head-on. "A lot of people disagreed with my methods because they thought it was taking away from instruction, but, to me, a school teacher is not just someone who teaches you things that you can find in a book. A teacher is someone who teaches you life-lessons that you will take through life," Power said. "By combating those lessons right then and there, I was able to say that this was something that we weren't going to tolerate, that this is something that we're not going to perpetuate; that this is something that we have to end, now."

Power's speech at the finale of the Mr. Gay World competition was apparently so direct and raw with emotion that the audience responded with a standing ovation, "which was amazing," he said.

Power returned to the United States April 16, after vacationing in the southern tip of Africa.

### Researcher rejects own 'ex-gay' study

Dr. Robert Spitzer has invalidated his much-criticized 2001 study that claimed some "highly motivated" people could go from gay to straight, according to a Truth Wins Out press release.

Spitzer's rejection of his own research was originally published in the Archives of Sexual Behavior.

"Dr. Spitzer's repudiation of his 2001 study is an earthquake that severely undermines the validity of 'ex-gay' programs," said Truth Wins Out's Executive Director Wayne Besen, who criticized the study in his 2003 book, Anything But Straight: Unmasking the Scandals and Lies Behind the Ex-Gay Myth. "Spitzer just kicked out the final leg from the stool on which the proponents of 'ex-gay' therapy based their already shaky claims of success."

About the criticisms that have been leveled at him, Spitzer told American Prospect, "In retrospect, I have to admit I think the critiques are largely correct. The findings can be considered evidence for what those who have undergone ex-gay therapy say about it, but nothing more."

In 1973, Spitzer led a movement to have homosexuality declassified as a mental illness. However, in 2001, he released a study that contended it was possible to change one's sexual orientation.

# Howard Brown holds press conference on updates

BY YASMIN NAIR

Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC) held a press conference April 16 to provide updates about its financial status and its plans for providing medical care. The event was held at its 4025 N. Sheridan Road location.

The presentation included key Howard Brown personnel, such as Jamal Edwards, CEO and president of HBHC; Wil Raj, vice president and chief administrative officer; Kristin Keglovitz Baker, medical director; Lowell Raven, senior director, finance and accounting and controller; and Michael McFadden, director of social services and community health services.

Edwards spoke of HBHC "working hard to resolve its financial issue" as well as to the ways that the organization is making changes in its



Jamal Edwards. Photo by Kat Fitzgerald

methods of patient outreach including, according to him, the elimination of the waiting list. He and subsequent presenters emphasized the use of new technology and that HBHC is moving into a "patient-centered" model that would strive to cover peoples' needs from "birth to the end of their lives."

Keglovitz Baker referred to an "interdisciplinary care model" that would include spiritual counseling and pediatric care, as well as to the increased use of hand-held electronic tablets. According to her and Raj, these, already in use by many of the providers, provide them instantaneous access to patient records.

Their use is especially significant in medical-crisis situations, when they can be used to quickly send necessary information to emergency rooms. The tablets are also part of an integrated care model; social workers can now instantly upload their information to medical providers without waiting to file paper reports. Patients will also be able to use online forms to communicate directly with their doctors.

When Windy City Times asked about low-income patients with limited online access, Raj said that their needs would be seen to through the use of computer banks and kiosks on the premises and ensuring that their needs were also being met by medical professionals.

McFadden spoke of continuing what he described as HBHC's ongoing commitment to providing a range of services rooted in community

needs. Using the Broadway Youth Center as an example, he said that program was a model for community-based interventions that could be applied to all other facets of HBHC care.

WCT asked about recent stories about BYC's move from its Lakeview locale. Edwards responded that HBHC was "not in a position to address that in any great level of detail." Calling BYC "one of Howard Brown's crown jewels," he added that "how we go about serving LGBT youth" would have to shift with respect to changing issues in healthcare but that HBHC's commitment to them would remain.

Raven spoke of the changes to financial reporting and accounting within HBHC. He said that in addition to the treasurer sending financial reports to the board, "We are very good about sending monthly financial internal documents to the programmatic directors." He pointed out that the FY11 audit was now available on the website, and that where the FY10 deficit was more than 2.1 million, 2011 saw a surplus of 1.2 million.

Responding to a question about Illinois possibly facing cuts to Medicaid patient spending, Edwards said that while this was a concern, "we have taken other steps by looking at fundraising efforts, our pharmacy program [which is federally funded] and Brown Elephant sales."

In response to a question about whether the organization had cut programs to ensure what it touted as massive cuts in spending, Edwards was less clear about specifics. He gave an example of the expenses related to the MACS grant which has been transitioned to Northwestern University. However, to the best of WCT's knowledge, and he did not dispute this, those expenses were, in fact, already built into the grant.

As WCT has already reported, HBHC's spending cuts apparently include cutting healthcare for Brown Elephant employees by making many of their positions part-time; the organization has yet to provide details about this.

## 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](http://www.headlineclub.org).

## Indiana man charged in 'sexploitation' case

BY KATE SOSIN

An Indiana man could face up to 30 years in prison for allegedly "sexploiting" teenage boys over the internet.

Richard Leon Finkbiner, 39, of Brazil faces two charges of sexual exploitation of children after he allegedly coerced at least two 14-year-old boys into sending him explicit videos and threatening to make the videos public if they did not continue to send videos.

According to a statement released by the FBI, thousands of photos and videos were found on Finkbiner's computer containing hundreds of possible victims.

U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana Joe Hogsett said in the statement that there could be victims across the country.

"This defendant may not remember his alleged victims, but the true tragedy is that not one of them will ever forget," Hogsett said.

Investigators cannot estimate a number of victims until forensic evidence is processed, the statement said.

In the two known cases, victims were from Michigan and Maryland and were allegedly communicating with Finkbiner from November 2011 through February 2012.

According to the complaint, Finkbiner allegedly coerced the Michigan victim into sending him explicit videos on two nights and insisted that he continue to send videos or he would make the video public online.

The victim eventually broke down and told his brother who alerted his parents. The victim in Maryland told his guardians what was happening before sending additional videos.

According to Tim Horthy, a spokesperson for the U.S. Department of Justice, no other victims have been identified yet.

The complaint against Finkbiner alleges that he admitted to victimizing at least 100 young boys.

"We think it may have started further back but how far back is difficult to say at this point," Horthy said.

Finkbiner is being held without bond.

Authorities are searching for other victims.

## LGBT Asian lawyers reception April 19

The Asian American Bar Association (AABA), the Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago, the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) and the National LGBT Bar Association will host an LGBT Asian American/South Asian Lawyers cocktail reception Thursday, April 19, 6-8 p.m. at McDermott Will & Emery, 227 W. Monroe St.

There will a keynote address from Peter S. Ohr, regional director of the National Labor Relations Board.

The event is free; however, donated proceeds will support scholarships for students to attend the National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance conference in Washington, D.C. in July.

To RSVP, visit [www.nqapia.org](http://www.nqapia.org).

## Cassidy, Steans part of Earth Day clean-up

State Rep. Kelly Cassidy, state Sen. Heather Steans and the Touhy Park Advisory Council will host an Earth Day park clean-up Saturday, April 21, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Touhy Park, 7348 N. Paulina Ave.

Call 773-784-2002 or 773-262-6737.

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# Halsted development moves forward despite community reservations

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Following months of contentious meetings between community members, 46th Ward Ald. James Cappleman's office and JDL Development Corporation, a five person subcommittee voted April 4 to send the proposed 3750 N. Halsted Development through the city's zoning process—which, if approved, will go to the full City Council for a vote.

The proposed mixed-use development would replace the parking lot next to the IHOP on the corner of Halsted and Bradley in Boystown, just down the street from the Center on Halsted.

At the March 26 ward zoning and development committee meeting, the committee voted to create a five person subcommittee to work with the developers on a compromise that would address many of the community members concerns.

The subcommittee, which the alderman appointed, was composed of representatives from East Lakeview Neighbors, Northalsted Business Alliance, Grace Neighbors, Magnolia-Malden Neighbors and an architect who lives in the neighborhood.

The subcommittee held a meeting April 4 with

Jim Letchinger from JDL Development Corporation (the company spearheading this development), Rick Filler from Harlem Irving Companies (business partners with JDL) and architect Jim Plunkard for three and a half hours. It was during that meeting that the subcommittee voted 4-1 in support of the development with the design changes. Grace Neighbors voted against the project during that meeting.

Also present during the April 4 meeting were staffers from Cappleman's office and Patrick Murphy from the Department of Housing and Economic Development for the City of Chicago.

The development has gone through many design stages since last fall. The design that was proposed in March had the Halsted Street tower at 178 feet and the Grace Street tower at 104 feet. The latest design that was approved on April 4 lowers the Halsted Street tower by two floors to 155 feet and raises the tower on Grace Street by two floors.

Of the new plans, a representative from Halsted Neighbors (which wasn't a part of the subcommittee that voted April 4 since the organization does not hold a seat on the zoning and development committee) said, "We are still concerned with the current design and its impact to the

neighborhood, including especially the value of units at the Gill Park Co-op. We are in favor of developing the parking lot, but we feel strongly that the current development is still too tall and dense.

"We were shocked that the process ended so quickly and we don't feel there were meaningful reductions of height and density to address the stated concerns and objections of the neighborhood. We also understood that East Lake View Neighbors and the Northalsted Business Alliance was opposed to the development on similar grounds and are surprised that they voted in favor of the development despite such minor changes compared to what JDL presented on Mar. 26."

"Last week's meeting was respectful and productive, and I am very pleased with the outcome of this process," said Cappleman. "I am very grateful to the committee members and wider community that gave their time over the past seven months to share their ideas on what is best for our neighborhood and city. We've held over 10 meetings throughout the community to make sure everyone could be heard and voice their opinion. I'm pleased with the outcome and the transparency that was achieved in this process."



Rendering of the development. Image courtesy of JDL Development

## Preckwinkle, Paretsky at April 19 Planned Parenthood gala

Planned Parenthood of Illinois will host the second annual Generations Gala on Thursday, April 19 at the Fairmont Hotel Millennium Park, 200 N. Columbus Dr.

A VIP reception will be at 5 p.m., with a program at 6 p.m. and a cocktail reception/silent auction at 7 p.m.

Chicago leaders such as Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, actress/comedienne Julia Sweeney and best-selling author Sara Paretsky will note how each generation approached the fight for reproductive justice and what Planned Parenthood is doing today to protect reproductive health care for future generations.

Salon.com editor-at-large and MSNBC political analyst Joan Walsh will also speak, and will be at the VIP reception.

Tickets are \$75; see [www.plannedparenthood.org/illinois](http://www.plannedparenthood.org/illinois).

## Day of Silence/Night of Noise April 20

Students throughout the country will mark the Day of Silence/Night of Noise Friday, April 20.

According to the Day of Silence website, "Students from middle school to college take a vow of silence in an effort to encourage schools and classmates to address the prob-

"We were pleased to be able to participate in the alderman's process. It provided a rare opportunity for productive negotiations between developer and the community," said Letchinger. "The final outcome provides an exciting new project for a neighborhood that will benefit greatly from a new, class-A, market-rate apartment building. We will be turning a dark, non-tax-generating surface lot into an asset for the community. We are excited to be part of this neighborhood's strong and unique culture and are confident that this building will provide a high-quality living option for residents in the area."

According to the alderman's office, the proposed development is estimated to bring approximately 200 construction jobs; more than 50 permanent retail, maintenance and management positions; and \$1 million per year in tax revenue. They plan to engage and update the community as the proposal moves through the city and will meet with any ward resident to discuss their concerns.

Halsted Neighbors plans to ensure that the City Planning Commission and Zoning Committee understands its concerns, which, it says, the alderman's office did not adequately address.

lem of anti-LGBT behavior by illustrating the silencing effect of bullying and harassment on LGBT students and those perceived to be LGBT."

Locally, Night of Noise will take place at Thompson Center Plaza, 100 W. Randolph St. Youths will gather at 5:30 p.m. to break the silence. Then, there will be people performing poetry, dance and more. Email [iman@illinois-safeschools.org](mailto:iman@illinois-safeschools.org) for more information.

## Chicago 'Instagreeter' site now at Center

Chicago visitors can experience the communities of Lakeview, Wrigleyville and Boystown this summer when a new "InstaGreeter" neighborhood location opens Saturday, May 26, at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St.

This free visitor service offered by the Chicago Greeter program at the Chicago Office of Tourism and Culture (COTC) provides one-hour guided walks led by locals.

InstaGreeter returns this summer to the Pilsen neighborhood at the National Museum of Mexican Art, 1852 W. 19th St.; to Old Town at The Second City, 1616 N. Wells St.; and to Hyde Park, departing from a new location: Smart Museum of Art, 5550 S. Greenwood Ave.

Neighborhood locations are open 11 a.m.-3 p.m. on alternating Saturdays May 26-Oct. 6. Walks are given on a first-come, first-served basis and are limited to six people or less with no pre-registration required.

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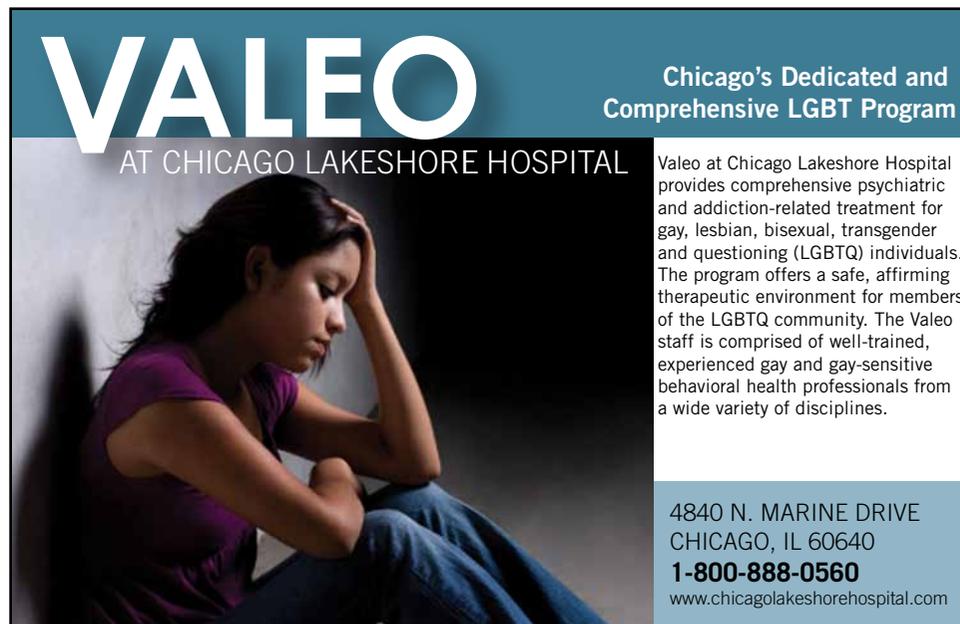
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Father Dennis O'Neill. Photo by Tracy Baim

## Icons on display at Bonaventure House

BY JON PUTNAM

LGBT Christians have seldom seen themselves reflected in histories of their faith, but a new installment of paintings at Alexian Brothers Bonaventure House reveals that same-sex attraction and departure from gender norms were not uncommon among the most revered saints and martyrs.

Bonaventure House hosted a celebration April 13 to present the artwork to the public.

Commissioned by local pastor Father Dennis O'Neill, the 21 paintings all represent holy icons who historically have been marginalized by the Catholic Church. For example, Saints Sergius and Bacchus were officers in the Roman army whose romantic devotion to one another was clearly recorded in early Greek manuscripts, circa 303 A.D. Although homophobia later took root, these manuscripts indicate a widespread acceptance of homosexuality in the earliest centuries of Christianity.

Other art features the "Patrons of the AIDS Epidemic"; Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz; Saint Joan of Arc; Holy Priest, Anonymous One of the Sachsenhausen (from the Nazi concentration camp); Saint Wenceslaus (Vaclav) and Podiven, His Assistant; and many more.

Bonaventure House is a fitting home for this

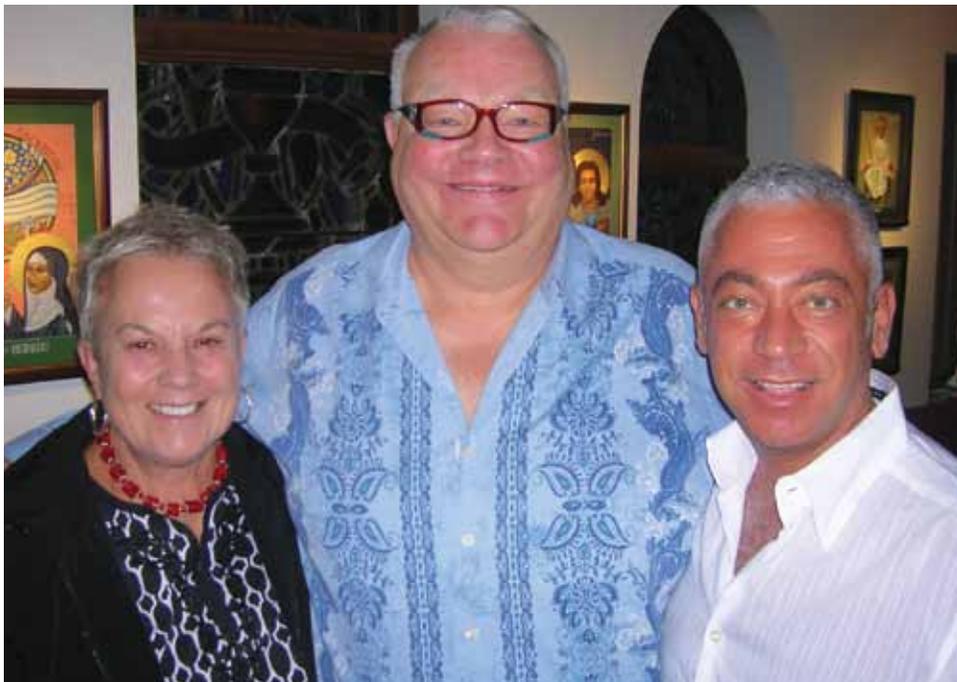
gallery of overlooked figures. Founded in 1989, the agency provides service and spiritual care to Chicagoans who in many instances have themselves been marginalized as a result of HIV/AIDS. By demonstrating the significant contributions that sexual and gender minorities have made to Christian tradition, the paintings will allow the residents of Bonaventure House the opportunity to view their own spirituality in a new way.

"I just think it's inspiring," said Cheryl Potts, executive director of the Alexian Brothers AIDS Ministry, "for the residents to come in during their meditations or reflections, and be surrounded by these individuals who have done wonderful things with their lives."

Three artists (William Hart McNichols, Lewis Williams, and Robert Lentz) created the paintings.

Michael Leppen and Christ Church of Winnetka also contributed to the installation, which was sponsored by the LGBT spirituality center The Living Circle.

O'Neill is the author of *Passionate Holiness: Marginalized Christian Devotions for Distinctive People*. Many of the icons are in his book, with full descriptions of their lives. He has ministered for many years to the LGBT community.



Attendees (from left) Amy Maggio, Michael Leppen and Danny Kopelsen. Photo by Jon Putnam; more pics online at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com)

## CBA committee hosts event with Quigley

BY JAMIE ANNE ROYCE

The Chicago Bar Association LGBT committee hosted U.S. Congressman Mike Quigley April 11.

Quigley discussed the current state of LGBT-rights legislation in Congress, and outlined what he is doing to further a progressive agenda in a Republican-controlled House of Representatives.

He highlighted some recent accomplishments for LGBT rights, including the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (DADT) and the passage of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act. He also applauded President Obama and the Justice Department's decision to no longer defend the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in court. Quigley is also working to reassess the policy banning gay men from donating blood.

Quigley pointed out that social issues often get attached to an unrelated bill, sometimes making them hard to get through Congress.

"These wedge issues have made everything difficult. The issues you care about get tied to contraception and public radio," Quigley said.

The margin by which each party controls Congress is razor-thin, Quigley stressed.

"When you're in the minority, you have to compromise to get anything done," Quigley said.

"[Republicans] say a lot 'This doesn't have a chance in the Senate, but we're messaging,'" said Quigley, in reference to social-issues bills, such as those that limit access to abortion and contraception.

While DADT has been repealed, gay military families still don't receive the same benefits because of DOMA, which bars the federal government from legally recognizing same-sex couples as married.

However, Quigley remained hopeful for the federal issues that still need to be addressed,

like the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and DOMA.

"We can make progress through the courts. So much has happened in the U.S. because of the courts," he said, citing the U.S. Supreme Court case *Loving v. Virginia*, which struck down bans on interracial marriage.

## Gerber/Hart readying for move

BY KATE SOSIN

Gerber/Hart Library and archives appears to be readying for its move to Rogers Park, just two weeks before it is set to leave its Edgewater home.

The LGBT library held a weeklong book sale in anticipation of the move, and its future home now displays a sign noting that library is moving there.

Signs of progress come after weeks of speculation over the readiness of the library's new space, located at 6500 N. Clark St., for occupancy.

The library has been subject of a Windy City Times investigation since January, when the paper discovered that its current Edgewater home is for rent amid questions around its observance of its bylaws and Illinois non-profit guidelines.

Gerber/Hart's future home continues to appear empty and not under construction. Old building permits remain at the site, and the City of Chicago website does not indicate permits issued since 2006.

The library does have a provision in its lease that will allow it to store materials in the new building in the event that the space is not built out in time, according to Michele Kurlander, the real estate attorney who handled the library's property search.

Little apparent progress at the new location made some wonder if Gerber/Hart was in fact moving to the building at 6500 N. Clark St. Dispelling rumors to the contrary, however, is a new banner that reads "Future Home of the Gerber/Hart Library and Archives" on the front door.



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# Center on Halsted CEO on controversies, five-year anniversary

BY KATE SOSIN

When Center on Halsted opened in the heart of Boystown in 2007, many LGBT people hailed it as a new beacon for the community. Among other things, the Center brought hundreds of programs, HIV testing, food, a computer lab, a gymnasium, new meeting spaces, crisis support, a theater and a space to hold large events for the community. In addition, it wrapped those services into a massive gleaming building, brand new and green in design.

However, not all Lakeview residents celebrated its arrival, which brought scores of LGBT youth to its front door from across the city, making some believe that the center posed a safety threat to the neighborhood. Also, the youth themselves have complained that some Center policies further marginalize them.

As Center on Halsted prepares to celebrate its five-year anniversary, Windy City Times sat down with CEO Modesto "Tico" Valle to talk about the Center's historic start, its bright future and the ugly rumors in between.

**Windy City Times: So, five years—**

Modesto "Tico" Valle: It really has gone by fast, and part of it, for me, is about the tremendous amount of people that have come here and the unmet needs in our community. There was a lot of conversation prior to the Center opening that, "Was there a need for a Center of this magnitude to open? How will it impact other social service organizations? Is it going to be an empty building? Can the community support it?" All good questions. But to celebrate five years—and the number of people coming through the doors have remained steadfast every single day and month and year—is pretty remarkable.

**WCT: Does it look like you imagined it would?**

MV: It looks better. We definitely were very intentional to create the Center as a destination because we heard from the community that they wanted a place that they could gather and it be safe and nurturing, hence the mission. Did we know that you walk through the building and it would be as packed as it is? I didn't anticipate that. The need was greater than we expected.

**WCT: What are the most significant ways that you think the Center has grown in the last five years?**

MV: I think as I look from day one to now, that we've been adaptable and not stuck with "this is the only way we're going to do something." It's not about our ego and ourselves but it's about the people that we serve.

The other thing that sometimes we take for granted is ... that [our staff members] know the complexities around homelessness, transgender issues, violence, and that sometimes we have to stop, and we have to train our own people to make sure they're culturally competent to deliver service.

**WCT: How does the Center measure success?**

MV: Across the board, we do client evaluations. We set goals of numbers of participants or clients that we serve a year against our budget, and the board looks at that one a monthly basis. Feet coming through the door is another way. We're in strategic planning right now, and we're going to be doing surveys in the community on the corners to get the neighborhood input, on-line surveys and some focus groups.

**WCT: How do you perceive the community that you serve?**

MV: It's diverse, like the Center—and it really is diverse.

**WCT: You have recently received some significant HIV-related grants. Is the Center**

**moving towards health services?**

MV: Not our intention... Our first year, we were contracted to test 1,500 people, and we tested 3,000. What we noticed was we were seeing a very high rate of positivity. So the CDC [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] would like to see around 1 percent test for positivity. We were seeing sometimes 7, 8 percent in our youth, and it was alarming. So the high positivity rate was important to us because we wanted to move these young people into care. So that really moved really quickly into the CDC and state saying, "Wow, you're the site that's getting the community that needs to get tested and move into care." So we immediately moved into partnerships.

**WCT: The Center has been controversial for a lot of Lakeview residents worried about safety, especially last summer with the "Take Back Boystown" Facebook page campaign. Why do you think that is?**

MV: We are a significant presence on Halsted Street. This is the go-to place. In one way, it is a compliment because, wow, if they think we're causing that and we should be able to be the police to solve the problems... I think the issue is a lot more complicated and it involves a lot of the "isms" of our society. Some of it has to do with fear and facing your own prejudices. When you really have the opportunity to speak to some individuals in the community and challenge tone and language, people can pause for a minute and realize "hmm, maybe there is a bit of racism." So, how does that get solved as a community?

**WCT: What were you hearing from youth in the Center last summer when this was going on?**

MV: I heard from a lot of young people a roller-coaster of emotions: anger that they were being blamed for something that they had no role in, [and] sadness because they came into a community that they thought was going to embrace them and be safe after being beaten, raped, abused in their neighborhoods, in their families. They kind of saw this as their safe haven and their family. The community—not everyone, but some—slammed the door in their face in a very ugly way.

**WCT: Why is the Center security team now armed with guns? How long has that been the case?**

MV: At one point, we had a different security team. ... We consciously made a decision to fire them. The security just was not culturally sensitive to address people by the proper pronoun, and there was no effort to try. That, to me, was alarming enough to say, "I'm done, we're making a change." So, we went to the police department and we went to secure LGBT police officers who we work with.

**WCT: How do you secure LGBT officers?**

MV: Well, there's an officer who has a firm of off-duty police officers, and he hires LGBT police officers. So I wouldn't say all of them. They come from this precinct. Those officers had relationships with our young people because many of those officers play volleyball in the gymnasium. ...

These officers worked well with the Center; [they] go through sensitivity training and [are] part of our community, not a subcontract that just visits. So them carrying guns ... they're officers who are required to carry guns. Even off-duty officers have their guns with them. People don't know that. So, I've asked them to hide it put, it away, do what you have to, but that's not the message I want delivered here.

**WCT: Are people scared to see guns?**



Center on Halsted CEO Modesto "Tico" Valle. Photo by Kate Sosin

MV: I've had one complaint. Most people, they're fine. It's interesting. Even our young people have never raised it with them.

**WCT: There have been some complaints about the Center from youth. One is that they are asked to use the side door, while everyone else uses the front door.**

MV: The side door was always intended to be the entrance for the youth program. That's why it was designed ... so that youth could have their own privacy. We did use it the first year and a half, and then we stopped. We haven't used it for two years now because of that response. We don't want people to feel like they're second-class citizens. We do use all the doors when the house is packed.

**WCT: The male and female bathrooms here have been an issue with some trans people in particular. What is happening there?**

MV: Bathrooms here is such an interesting topic. Honestly, where the struggles come through is because the Center brings so many communities, allies, straight people; it's an education. So what we're looking at is trying to make it more of an educational opportunity.

**WCT: Are you moving towards gender-neutral bathrooms?**

MV: It's come up, yes. It's an option. So, if I could do it all over again, this building, they'd be all unisex bathrooms.

**WCT: Is it true that if you're caught stealing from Whole Foods, you are banned from the Center?**

MV: If you are caught stealing and you're a patron of the Center, there is restorative justice. Restorative justice means you're banned; you have to come back and meet with everyone that is involved in the consequence and how are you going to make it right. Whole Foods works really closely with us and in most cases, they let it go.

**WCT: Why is the Center policing for Whole Foods?**

MV: We want to be a good neighborhood here. And if there is a challenge here and someone is stealing food, instead of Whole Foods prosecuting them, and they can, calling us instead really makes a difference because they're also being a good neighbor.

**WCT: There is also a rumor that the Center has a list of people with warrants and that those who come for services can be handed to police.**

MV: No. We do have a list of who we have banned from the Center.

**WCT: In what circumstances does the Center**

**call police on people?**

MV: Violence.

**WCT: Has there been a security concern about Center being such a visible LGBT presence?**

MV: Every day. It's one of the reasons why my staff and security is all about supervision, knowing who's in the building and being client-centered. We are responsible for the safety of a lot of people, and that's something we're always teaching.

**WCT: Have you had any scares?**

MV: No, but when I've heard about—for instance, a couple years ago there was a threat of a bomb in one of the synagogues—I was a little scared. It was a little close to home. Anytime Fred Phelps shows up, even though he means nothing to me, I get a little worried because emotions get high and violence can trigger.

**WCT: The Center has grown in a time when other organizations have shrunk. Why do you think that is?**

MV: We've done a lot with very little. We've stayed around \$4.5 million all these years. This year was a big year with major grants, and we're going to continue to grow. But we're not going to grow for the sake of growing. We're going to grow because there is a need that needs to be filled.

**WCT: You had some cuts around 2009. Have you hired those back?**

MV: Yes. Most of them have come back and more.

**WCT: What happened to Hope Barrett? [Barrett was senior director of public programs until recently, and her departure went unreported until now.]**

MV: Great person. I can't talk about [human resources], but I love Hope. She did great work, but her position was eliminated.

**WCT: So no one is being hired in her place?**

MV: No.

**WCT: What programs are going to be emphasized in the future, and will any be cut?**

MV: I wouldn't say any are going to be cut. The senior programming, they need more case managers here because the program is growing so rapidly. I am looking at the Anti-Violence Project and how do we bring it to the next level and moving Lisa [Gilmore, director of education and victim advocacy] more into advocacy work. She's doing it, but [we need to] really focus [on] that work. In order to do that, she needs more help in the Anti-Violence Project. So, if anything out of the strategic plan, I'm hoping that it really comes out that we as an organization need to do more advocacy and policy work.

**WCT: What does the future hold for the Center?**

MV: One, we know about the senior-housing project that we're working with Heartland Housing. I have a dream of wanting to create a youth center. So, when we created the Center, there was always a vision of Center on Halsted throughout the City of Chicago. It didn't have to be the size of this building, but it could be a part of another organization and in the five years, as I've seen the young people come here and the numbers ... it's made me humble to really look at the complexity of the issues. They come here and they really trust the Center. There are things that we can do better, and that we learn from them. But there's such a need there, and I feel that our city has failed them.

**Center on Halsted will celebrate its first five years at its annual Human First gala, which will feature singer k.d. lang and Bravo's Andy Cohen. It will take place Saturday, May 12, at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph St., at 7 p.m.**

**This year's honorees will include Amina Dickerson, Laura Ricketts, Greg Cameron, Richard and Susan Kiphart, Kraft Foods, the Chicago Community Trust and Chicago Cubs Charities.**

**Tickets for the event start at \$125 each; see [www.centeronhalsted.org/1stv/#5](http://www.centeronhalsted.org/1stv/#5).**

—Assistance: Yasmin Nair

# Ugandan LGBTI activist to seek support from Nobel laureates in Chicago

BY CHARLSIE DEWEY

On April 22-25, Nobel Peace Prize laureates will gather in Chicago for the Nobel Summit, and Ugandan LGBTI activist Frank Mugisha will be there to ask the laureates to publicly recognize LGBTI rights as human rights.

Mugisha is working to raise awareness about the criminalization of homosexuality in Uganda and other African countries through his work as the executive director of Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG). Although LGBTI visibility has increased in African nations, many countries have laws, or are considering laws, that criminalize homosexuality—some with the punishment of death.

He believes that one of the most effective ways to stop the sanctioned brutality against LGBTI individuals is through human-rights leaders around the world acknowledging LGBTI rights as human rights. He was disheartened recently when Nobel Peace Prize winner and Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was quoted in the Guardian supporting the criminalization of homosexuality and referring to her country's traditional values.

Mugisha received the 2011 Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award and the 2011 Rafto Prize for Human Rights from the Rafto Foundation in Norway for his work. He spoke with Windy City Times by email about his upcoming visit.

**Windy City Times: What is the purpose of your upcoming visit to Chicago, and what do you hope to achieve?**

Frank Mugisha: I will be in Chicago to attend the Noble Peace Summit and meet with local faith leaders. My goal is to raise awareness about LGBTI violations in Uganda by lobbying Nobel Peace laureates and to advocate at the summit by highlighting these violations.

**WCT: Why meet with the Nobel Peace Prize laureates now?**

FM: In Uganda, we have a bill in Parliament that could make it illegal for any LGBTI person in Uganda to simply live at peace. Nobel Peace laureates are advocates who are respected in the field of human rights, so if I can meet with them and get them to lobby members of our Parliament, the government will listen to them about not passing this law.

**WCT: What difference do you think can be made by having the Nobel Peace Prize laureates recognize LGBTI rights as human rights?**

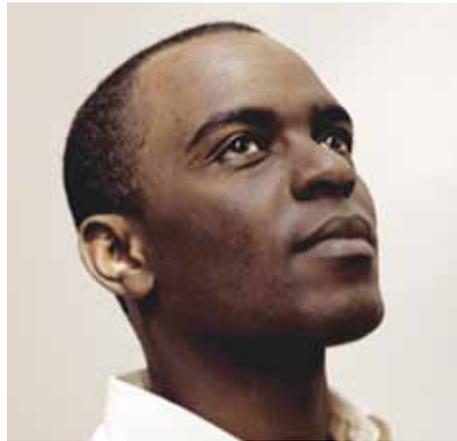
FM: Noble Peace Prize winners recognizing LGBTI rights makes a big difference—these are respected human rights defenders who have spoken out against many human rights violations around the world. If they speak out now, it shows the world that LGBTI rights are part of the broader human-rights platform.

**WCT: Recently, Liberian President and 2011 Nobel Peace Prize winner Ellen Johnson Sirleaf made statements defending her country's anti-gay laws. What is your response to having someone who has been honored for her human-rights work make statements so opposite of human rights and discriminatory to the LGBTI community in her country?**

FM: I would just be honest that her statement was disheartening. It was a step backwards for human rights in Africa, and it showed me that our struggle still has a long way to go. It reminded me that there is so much ignorance on LGBTI rights in Africa.

**WCT: What is the current situation in Uganda like for LGBTI individuals?**

FM: Times are changing so fast in Uganda, and however often we face threats and persecution, there are still many people continuing to come



Frank Mugisha.

out and accept their sexual orientation. We see so much visibility growing.

**WCT: Why do human-rights leaders continue to separate LGBTI rights from human rights?**

FM: Ignorance—most leaders do not work to talk about LGBTI issues because of their cultural background and religious and political views.

**WCT: You have mentioned before that one of the reasons that the criminalization of homosexuality became such a focus was due to the anti-LGBTI activists in the United States reaching out in Uganda. Are there still anti-LGBTI activists from the United States working with leaders in Uganda to try and promote their agendas? How about other countries?**

FM: Yes, evangelicals and other religious leaders come to Uganda to support their sister and brother churches, but their work is not as vocal or advertised as it once was.

**WCT: What is a gay person's daily life like living in Uganda or another country that has laws criminalizing homosexuality?**

FM: Daily lives vary country to country and area to area, based on how open people are ... those who are out face harassment and threats often.

**WCT: By coming out and being an activist for LGBTI rights you have put yourself in great danger. What overrides the fear and helps you to keep fighting for LGBTI rights?**

FM: I do not call it fighting; I call it surviving to live. I speak because it is the only way to make a difference, and as I speak every day I am compelled to say more. What drives me is that fact that I know when I speak I am heard and that my voice protects and inspires other LGBTI people.

**WCT: Have there been positive changes and advances in any countries that have or do criminalized homosexuality and how have those occurred?**

FM: I have seen progress in India where the court ruled that a sodomy law should be abolished.

**WCT: Recently you received the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award for your work. How does that award impact your continued efforts?**

FM: The award has been important to my work; in a way it has legitimized my work, and showed the world that LGBTI rights are human rights.

**WCT: With the Robert F. Kennedy Award, you received a stipend and a six-year partnership to support your work. How are you using these resources?**

FM: Some of the resources are used to support my organization, and through our partnership with the RFK Center, we are doing advocacy and lobbying work for the LGBTI community at all levels.



Cary and Augie.  
Photo from Victoria "Pickles" Martinez

## REUNION from cover

work to be done. Augie and C.K. ran a tight ship, but always rewarded the employees for their loyalty.

"The bar was hard work. It was just in my blood," said Augie.

Augie's partner took on co-ownership of the bar when C.K. accidentally shot herself. She carried a revolver in her pocket that happened to have a broken safety latch. One night when C.K. went to put the money in the safe, which was built into the floor in the backroom, the gun fell out of her pocket and discharged, hitting her in the temple.

"C.K. never thought she'd make a lot of friends, but everybody loved her," said Martinez. "The procession—there were just blocks of cars. It's amazing how many people came out" for the funeral.

Even after losing C.K., the community at the bar continued to thrive. The employees celebrated holidays together and kept the spirit of the bar alive.

"Every New Year's we'd all have to get our suits and dress up for the occasion. Most of the girls would have the tuxedos and the effeminate girls would wear the dresses, but it was mostly tuxedos," said Martinez. "After we worked until 4 o'clock in the morning, the staff would all go to somebody's house and have our own little New Year's."

Augie's & C.K.'s was in business for more than 20 years when Augie decided to finally close up shop.

"After that many years of business I was tired, and it started getting a little rough in the neighborhood," said Augie. "I founded a real nice dancing bar. I came a long way."

Although Augie's & C.K.'s closed in 1994, many of the customers and employees have maintained friendships since then.

"We were all like one big family. We brought a lot of people together," said Martinez. "I just met a lot of good people through the years. Especially being a bartender. There's still a close-knit group of us that still get together and still go on outings together."

However, there was still a call for a larger meeting to reunite the entire community.

"Augie's & C.K.'s was the hottest women's bar ... Since it closed, every year people ask, 'When are you going to have a reunion?'" said Martinez.

So, Augie's & C.K.'s will host the reunion Saturday, May 12, at the L26 Restaurant and Lounge in the Chicago South Loop Hotel, 11 W. 26th St., 7 p.m.-3 a.m.

There is a \$10 cover and an optional raffle. All raffle proceeds will go to breast cancer awareness, in memory of Christina Santiago, Renae Ogletree and Lisa Tonna.

Rooms are available at a discount; call 312-225-7000 and mention Augie's & C.K.'s. For more information or to submit a photo for a reunion slideshow, call 773-507-6378 or email martinez-victoria@sbcglobal.net.

## Protest against racial profiling in gay clubs

BY TRACY BAIM

from *Out & Proud in Chicago: An Overview of the City's Gay Community* (2008, Surrey Books)

Gay bars are a reflection of society, so it should be no surprise that some bars have been accused of racism or sexism over the years. Various attempts to fight this bias, including surveys and random spot checks, have been met with resistance, or ignorance.

When African-American lesbian activist Pat McCombs saw her Black and Latina friends face this bias in December 1974 at CK's lesbian bar by being asked for more identification than white customers, she fought back in the way she had learned as a civil-rights activist—both in the streets and in the courts. She and others formed the Black Lesbians Discrimination Investigation Committee, picketing in front of CK's, 1425 W. Diversey Pkwy., calling for a boycott, putting out posters and getting white lesbian attorney Renee Hanover to help. White lesbians also joined the picket lines, and the state liquor commission investigated.

On March 10, 1975, the Illinois Liquor Control Commission gave the bar a citation, according to The Chicago Gay Crusader, requiring owner Carol Kappa to appear before the commission to "show cause why her license should not be suspended or revoked." The commission dismissed the citation April 15 after Kappa and Hanover entered into an agreement for the complainants, calling for Kappa to serve all customers equally and to clearly post her identification policies.

The carding policies of CK's (which later merged with Augie's to become Augie's & CK's at 3726 N. Broadway, now the site of the bar Charlie's Chicago) were not isolated. Dozens of gay bars over the years have been accused of keeping out people based on race or gender, having a "quota" so as not to tilt the balance in their bar. The Gay and Lesbian Coalition of Metropolitan Chicago, a 1970s group of organizations and businesses, faced an internal struggle because bar owners did not want the Coalition to investigate such bias. Even in the 2000s, many gay businesses have not completely dealt with their stereotypes, and some have been accused of racism, sexism and even bias against older people. However, few patrons fight back as McCombs and Hanover did.

McCombs also responded to such bias in other ways. Executive Sweet, an African-American lesbian social events group, was started around 1979 by Pam Turrell and DJ Sheron Webb. McCombs began helping, and she and Vera Washington took over operations in 1982. It is still operating in 2012 as an alternative to the bars.



COMPILED BY KATE SOSIN

## Renee James

**Name**  
Renee James

**Pronouns**  
She, her

**Identifies as**  
"Bi-gendered MtoF (I live in both genders, was born male)."

**Neighborhood**  
Wheeling, Ill.

**Life's work:**  
"I'm working on the marketing launch of my first novel, *Coming Out Can Be Murder*. It's about a woman in transition who gets involved in a murder investigation and becomes the target of a man who likes to use, then kill, trans women."

**Job**  
"I make my living as a freelance magazine writer. I had a long career in magazines, as an editor and later, as an owner ... all in my male identity. I'm at a point in my life where I'd really like to write fiction—for a living."

**Hobbies/interests**  
"I love dogs, grandkids, hiking, wilderness canoeing, hair dressing, reading, and hot baths on cold winter evenings."

**When did you start questioning gender?**  
"I felt the first unmistakable tremors of the gender earthquake at age 18, as a college student."

I buried the thought, but it kept resurfacing at long intervals as I progressed into adulthood. I didn't admit to gender variance, even to myself, until middle age and didn't deal with it until I was in my mid-fifties."

**Do you have a coming-out story?**  
"I had been visiting transgender web sites on the computer my wife and I shared. One day, she looked at the history of site visits for some other reason, saw all the trans sites, and thought the cleaning people were messing with the computer. She was going to fire them, so I had to come clean. I didn't like the cleaning people, but you can't let someone get fired for your lie, right?"

**What is the best thing about being trans/gender-variant?**  
"It makes everything harder, from interpersonal relationships to going to the bathroom. It's like going to war—if you make it, it's the most intense chapter in your life. Of course, if you don't survive the experience, whatever else is good about being gender variant is somewhat academic."

**What are the most important issues facing trans/gender-variant communities?**  
"We are chronically, pathetically unorganized. Almost all the progress in our civil rights has been derived from the largesse of the gay/lesbian coalition. We need to find a way to be less self-centered and more invested in advancing our own causes—and supporting the work of the greater GLBT community."



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

## Columnist Paul Varnell remembered

BY TRACY BAIM

Longtime gay activist and columnist Paul Varnell was remembered during a memorial tribute April 15 at the Leather Archives & Museum. The event was held just one day shy of what would have been his 71st birthday.

Varnell, who died Dec. 9, 2011, was remembered for his wide range of interests and activism. Greg Nigosian, who organized the event along with Milan Vydareny, started the program with his own memories of Varnell.

Jack Rinella, Dr. David Ostrow, Tim Drake and Vydareny each gave his personal take on the complicated man they knew.

Rinella said Varnell was his mentor into the worlds of hustling and writing. On the flip side, Ostrow spoke of Varnell's intense involvement in

AIDS activism and his understanding of the details of AIDS research.

Drake, a fellow member of the Chicago Area Republican Gay Organization (which operated in the 1980s and 1990s), said while Varnell was not Republican (he was Libertarian), he understood the need to have gays working inside both major political parties. Drake also said Varnell is often overlooked as a primary behind-the-scenes advocate for fair coverage of gay issues in the mainstream media.

Vydareny spoke of Varnell's strong Libertarian background, and of his vast collection of writings.

The second half of the program featured a discussion moderated by Andrew Patner and Kit Duffy reading from Varnell's columns.

Patner said that those long-ago disagreements

that were so fierce at the time now seem irrelevant. The work back then was so often done by fiercely independent people, he said, leading to inevitable strong disagreements.

During the discussion, former colleagues, including Larry Bommer and Gary Barlow, spoke about working with Varnell. Several others also shared memories, including Duffy, who said even though she and Varnell were almost always on opposite sides of an issue, they did both agree on the same goals.

## Chicago readying for 'Worldwide' LGBTQIA civil-rights march

BY KATE SOSIN

Chicago is readying for the "Worldwide" LGBTQIA Civil Rights March, scheduled for Saturday, April 21, at noon downtown.

The march, one of 30 to be held around the world Saturday, has been in the works for months, part of a larger effort for a grassroots day of action around LGBT rights.

Chicago's event has been billed as an "LGBTQQ-IAAP" awareness march. The acronym stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, allies and pansexual, said Noa Shayden, leader organizer for the march.

"We also intend to start dialogue around issues that face the community, which include youth homelessness, physical and nonphysical violence, and employment equality, to name a few," said Shayden in a statement.

According to Shayden, the march does not have a permit, and there are no confirmed guest speakers. Rather, Shayden said, there will be a "speak out" of attendees.

Reports from national LGBT organizations that they were not consulted on plans for the march seemed to have left some uneasy about the marches, which are primarily being led by up-and-coming organizers.

The Chicago event is sponsored by Marriage Equality USA, Gay Liberation Network and Occupy Chicago.

Attendees are invited to bring signs and banners, said Shayden. The march kicks off at noon at Pritzker Park at State Street and Van Buren

## 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](mailto: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.

and moves north on State to Washington. It will continue east to Michigan Ave. before turning north onto Oak Street. The march will be followed by a party at Oak St. Beach.

More information on the marches is available at [www.letsreachonemillionpeople.com](http://www.letsreachonemillionpeople.com). Information on the Chicago march can be found on Facebook at <http://on.fb.me/ChiMarch2012>.

## 'Against Equality' at Mess Hall April 21

Karma Chávez, Ryan Conrad and Yasmin Nair, members of the Against Equality Collective, and others will celebrate the launch of the second Against Equality anthology, *Against Equality: Don't Ask to Fight Their Wars!*, Saturday, April 21, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., at Mess Hall, 6932 N. Glenwood Ave.

Against Equality is an online archive, publishing and arts collective focused on critiquing mainstream gay and lesbian politics.

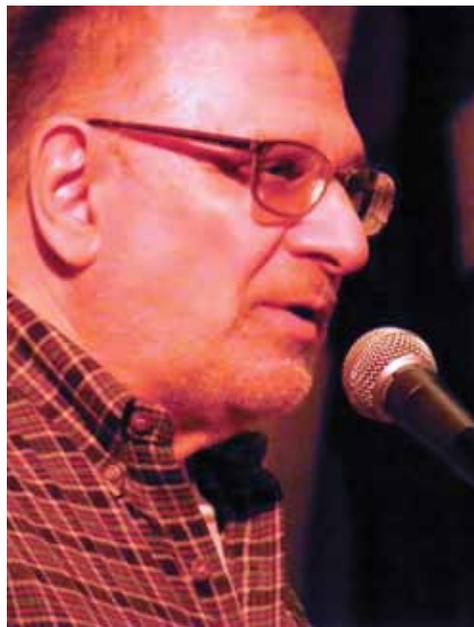
In the book, the writers put forth the perspective that it is the politics of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" repeal, not the exclusion itself, that needs to be thoroughly examined.

The event is being promoted as a "brunchluck." See [www.AgainstEquality.org](http://www.AgainstEquality.org).

## Greaves to be honored at April 24 Vanguard Awards

Several bar associations "will honor the individuals and institutions who have made the law and legal profession more accessible to and reflective of the community at-large" Tuesday, April 24, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., at The Standard Club, 320 S. Plymouth Ct.

The Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago will honor William W. Greaves, former director of what is now the City of Chicago's Advisory Council on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues. Tickets are \$65 per person; for reservations, contact Tamra Drees at 312-554-2057.



From left: Greg Nigosian and Jack Rinella spoke at the memorial. Photos by Tracy Baim; more pics online at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com)

**GAY** *in the* **LIFE**  
**William Melnyczenko**

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY ROSS FORMAN



**Age**  
24

**Neighborhood**  
Edgewater

**Hobbies**  
Weight lifting, participating in endurance-sports events, and traveling

**Job title**  
Midwest Account Manager, Strategic Diagnostics

**Relationship status**  
Partnered with Jordan Conover, 30

**College**  
Loyola University (Chicago)

**Favorite TV show**  
The Walking Dead

**Favorite restaurant**  
That Little Mexican Café

**On the road again**  
Travels for work throughout the Midwest four days each week



William Melnyczenko was raised on a small goat farm in Northwest Indiana and he even had two reserve grand-champion dairy goats, plus ducks, chickens and other animals.

His upbringing also included some rather unique pets: a South American opossum and a six-foot iguana; he even had a koi pond in his bedroom.

Today, it's just his beloved dog, Marla, 2, rescued from Chicago Animal Care & Control.

Also in northwest Indiana a few years ago, Melnyczenko went on an ice-skating first date with Jordan Conover, followed by dinner at Hooter's.

"Talk about tons of fun in northwest Indiana," Melnyczenko said, laughing.

The two have been faithful partners for the past three years.

Melnyczenko is a fashion-conscious, fitness-minded, driven Chicagoan who has bartended at Minibar and previously worked for Kraft Foods Chicago Bakery. He enjoys the local late-night excitement of area bars, though prefers low-key, off-the-beaten-path pubs.

"When I have something in my mind to do, I do it; I get it done," said Melnyczenko, who graduated from college with a major and two minors in four years.

"I never, just settle."  
 Melnyczenko, GoPride.com's Model of the Month for January, has a gregarious, out-going, very approachable personality and often is the one who knows everyone in a room filled with people—and they know him, too.

He sports a silver, diamond-studded ring—a college graduation gift from his parents—on his right hand. However, when traveling for work, he switches the ring to his left hand to appear like a wedding ring.

"I just feel it deters" potential, unwanted advances, said Melnyczenko, proud to say that his relationship with Conover is not an open one. "We love each other very much and that is the backbone to my success."



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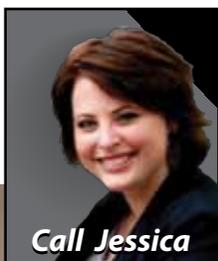
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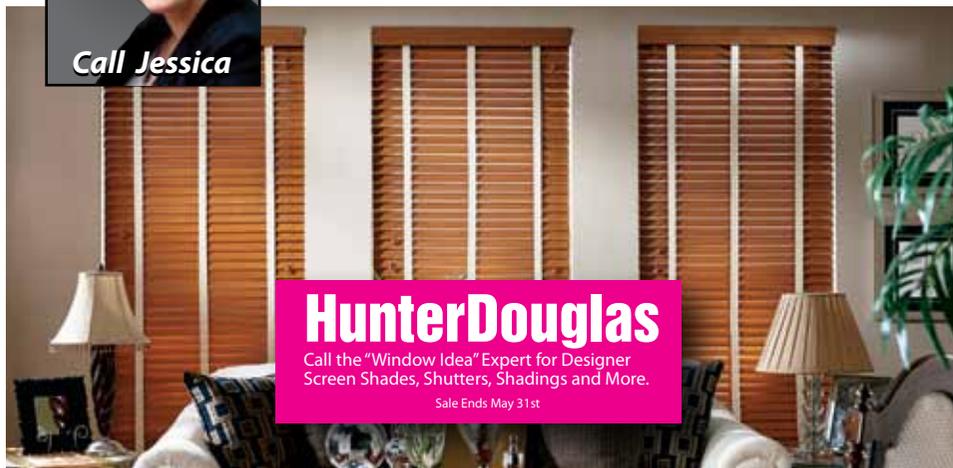
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# WHARP coordinates West Side response

BY ERICA DEMAREST

Like so many of the organizations that arose during the AIDS epidemic's early years, the West Side HIV/AIDS Regional Planning Council (WHARP) got its start with two simple elements: concerned citizens and a problem.

Several activists, service providers and HIV-positive individuals on Chicago's West Side felt there were considerable gaps between what the community needed and what city planners ordered.

In 1995, local nonprofits and businesses banded together, and the Austin Action Council was born. The multi-member coalition provided input to the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) and Ryan White planning bodies.

"[The members] felt they could fill the gaps in planning and primary care prevention services," former Chair Beverley Walker-Donley said.

In 1998, the fledgling coalition—which included health centers, direct-care providers, consumers and businesses from Chicago's Austin and Garfield communities—rebranded as WHARP.

In addition to maintaining open dialogue with planning committees, WHARP members spent the next few years collaborating to promote awareness and education. Guest speakers, training sessions and planning panels were regularly scheduled occurrences.

"WHARP was, and still is, probably the biggest thing happening in any one community in the city of Chicago," Walker-Donley said.

Current member organizations include the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC), Austin Health Cen-

promotion organizations," Walker-Donley said. "[The legislators] basically rely on us to get them new information ... If they don't understand the services that are needed, they can't assist us."

Though the breakfasts originally operated annually, they are now held every other year due to funding restraints.

Such budget issues were the inspiration for the Quality of Life lottery ticket program, one of WHARP's greatest successes to date. Under the program (the first of its kind), the Illinois Lottery sells Red Ribbon scratch-off tickets, and 100 percent of net proceeds go toward HIV/AIDS prevention services.

The idea arose during WHARP meetings in the early 2000s, Walker-Donley said. Attendees had been kicking around possible solutions for ever-present budget concerns, and a lottery ticket seemed fun and feasible.

"It would give the community another source for funding," Walker-Donley said.

Members of the coalition put together plans, but met heavy resistance in Springfield.

"[Legislators] told us: No, I don't think I want to support gaming. That's gambling," Walker-Donley said. "We had to actually come back to the table and rephrase our approach. How can we make them understand the impact that such a devastating disease has on the community?"

The lottery program was unveiled Feb. 11, 2008, by then-Illinois Lottery Acting Superintendent Jodie Winnett, who called the launch "a very long journey."

By the end of 2011, the program had distributed more than \$3 million to organizations with



State Sen. Jackie Collins.

dom distribution in prisons—a move that Green said will be essential in reducing community viral loads.

"Sex is happening," she said. "What's happening in prisons on the inside affects our community on the outside. People [contract the virus] and return to our communities. We want to make sure it's a public health issue, versus a sex issue."

The coalition lobbied Springfield legislators, hoping to pass statewide legislation.

"We got shot down pretty bad," Green deadpanned. "We recuperated from that, and now we're back trying at the county-level. We'll see what we can get done in [there]. The Cook County jail is a little more welcoming because we've already worked with them, so there's more leverage."

WHARP members have met with states that already boast condom accessibility in prison, and have begun piecing together plans for Illinois. Several WHARP members and AFC staffers are working to draft legislation on the county level.

That type of collaboration is what WHARP is all about.

"If organizations are going to be able to get

through funding cuts and increases of new infections, we have to come together because resources are shrinking," Green said. "Unless we start pooling our resources, I don't see how we're going to be able to survive this."

**WHARP meets the third Monday of every month from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at 33 W. Lake St.; all meetings are open to the public. For more information, call 773-378-4195, ext. 30.**

#### WHARP member organizations:

- AIDS Foundation of Chicago
- Austin Health Center
- Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus
- Circle Family Healthcare Network
- CORE Center
- Garfield Counseling Center
- Greater Westside Development Corporation
- Haymarket Center
- Legal Assistance Foundation
- Men and Women in Prison Ministries
- Prevention Partnership, Inc.
- 7th Congressional District HIV/AIDS Task Force
- Stroger Hospital of Cook County/Connect to Protect Project



Beverley Walker-Donley, former WHARP Chair.

ter, Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus (CBGMC), Stroger Hospital, CORE Center, Garfield Counseling Center and Legal Assistance Foundation.

In 2000, WHARP extended its outreach efforts with the inaugural legislative breakfast, a then-yearly event where West Side legislators gather for tasty meals and frank discussion.

"We try to make sure they understand what the issues are and how they impact the community," Walker-Donley said. "We [let them know]: We need your assistance. We will be coming to Springfield to lobby. We will be asking you for help with the wording of bills ... We will be coming to explain to you what we need and how you can help us."

Each breakfast focuses on a theme; funding cuts have been a priority in recent years. WHARP members—including staff from the CDPH and Illinois Dept. of Public Health—educate legislators on how various issues affect each sector of the community.

Walker-Donley said the breakfasts are valuable networking tools for each party involved.

"We have sitting at the table at WHARP executive directors, pharmaceuticals staff, people from hospitals, and people from city and health

statewide reach, including the Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus, Project VIDA, the AIDS Legal Council and the Cook County Department of Health.

The original bill included a sunset date of Dec. 31, 2012. WHARP members rallied for an extension, and state Sen. Jackie Collins sponsored in early 2011 a bill that would extend the lottery another five years.

"Funding for HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention programs is vitally important given the increasing prevalence and devastating nature of this disease in our communities," Collins said.

At press time, the bill was in committee. State Rep. Karen Yarbrough is sponsoring similar legislation in the House of Representatives.

Moving forward, WHARP will continue to prioritize stigma reduction, continued education efforts and legislative outreach. Coalition members regularly visit barbershops, beauty salons and churches to speak to community members on their level.

"We need to make sure we're not killing each other with stigma and homophobia," said the Rev. Doris Green, WHARP's current chair.

One of WHARP's main concerns for 2012 is con-



Prevention Partnership, Inc., a WHARP member organization.

# Fighting AIDS: At 85, a mother walks for her son

BY GREGORY TROTTER,  
AIDS FOUNDATION OF CHICAGO

Mae Smith sits with her two of her daughters in her homey Glendale Heights kitchen. A coffee pot gurgles from the counter. Her youngest granddaughter plays quietly in the adjacent living room.

If you saw Mae Smith on the street, you might not immediately suspect she's a passionate and determined HIV/AIDS advocate. She's diminutive, soft-spoken and frail with age, with clear blue eyes behind her glasses. And there's the fact that she's 85 years old, placing her in a generation not often associated with the AIDS epidemic.

But looks can be deceiving. Smith will be participating in her 20th consecutive AIDS Run & Walk Sept. 29, 2012—and she's not planning on stopping anytime soon. She hasn't missed one since her son, Ron Smith, died of AIDS at age 33 in 1993. Participating in the annual event has brought the family some measure of peace and community since Ron's death, as well as a feeling of satisfaction that they're making a difference.

Their T-shirts and banners have changed from year to year, but their motto has not: "For Ron, we walk and love."

"It's so much fun. You see someone from pretty much every walk who has known Ron. ... To be out and see all these people out for the same cause and we know that pretty soon, maybe it will be wiped out," Smith said. "I'm not a pessimist. I'm an optimist. Things will get better."

Ron Smith was a hairstylist in Wheaton, Ill., a charming young man who enjoyed traveling and dancing, one of Mae Smith's eight children from two marriages. He graduated from Glenbard North High School, in Carol Stream, Ill., and then studied horticulture at the College of DuPage.

He was gay but did not come out to his family until he was in his late 20s.

"We had suspicions. It wasn't a total shock," said Gayle Lutz, one of Ron's four sisters. "He was my brother, her son ... It was just like, so? So what? We love you. It doesn't matter."

After spending a couple years in Oregon, Ron



Ron Smith. Photo courtesy of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago

returned home to pursue a career in hair styling. It was an obvious path. For years, he had styled the hair of the women in the family.

"I haven't had a good haircut since!" said Sue Miller, another sister of Ron's. The three women at the kitchen table laughed and relished the memories.

"He was a wonderful person taken away from us way too soon," Lutz said, softly.

In 1987, Ron Smith was diagnosed with HIV. He told only his sister, Diana Guido, but as the years passed, it became necessary to tell his entire family. He struggled with alcoholism, developed shingles and, eventually, contracted pneumonia.

Refusing the medications, Ron turned to his faith. He gave up drinking in his last year of life, earning the one-year sobriety medal from Alcoholics Anonymous one week before he died in 1993. Once hospitalized, he did not suffer long.

"It could be wrong or it could be miracle he was taken, but to see him in the hospital in that much pain, I prayed to God to take him away," his mother said, her gaze unwavering.

Ron's father, Mike, was a jovial man who loved

to crack jokes, always sticking out his tongue when the camera was trained on him. But he had been quiet about his son's diagnosis.

"The first time I saw him cry was when Ron passed away," Mae Smith said.

Mike Smith died in 2009 at age 79. Before then, he had joined his wife every year at the AIDS Run & Walk, even after he had heart surgery a few years ago. In 2008, he participated in his wheelchair. Several family members attempted to persuade the aging matriarch to use a wheelchair, too. She complied, if briefly.

"How long did I sit in it?" Mae Smith queried her daughters.

"Not long!" Gayle and Sue replied in unison.

"You got that right. Just to make them happy," she said, sternly, to their laughter. "It's a walk and I'm his mother and I want to help."

With the organizing help of her daughter-in-law, Tammy Smith, Mae Smith is hoping to bring out record numbers of family and friends this year. If they can successfully tap their family network, it shouldn't be a problem. In addition to her six surviving children, Mae has 17 grandchildren, 32 great-grandchildren and six great-great-grandchildren.

"Everyone in the family has received an email, informing them that Grandma only accepts doctor's notices," Tammy Smith quipped from the livingroom.

Even if they don't have large numbers or raise a lot of money, Mae likes the idea of bringing new awareness to people: With proper treatment, AIDS is no longer a death sentence. But it

is still very much an epidemic affecting the lives of 1.2 million Americans, many of whom are not on medication.

Mae's had her share of heartache. She lost another son, Michael, to the throes of alcoholism in 2000. As a young girl, she had dreamed of being a nurse. But her father died when she was 16 years old, ending her hopes of college and nursing.

"Then there was the war and I got married," she said, her voice trailing off.

So this is her way of making a difference?

"That might be it," Mae Smith said. "If we can prevent people dying, I think it's wonderful. I don't care if it's in this country or whether they're white or Black or anything."

She plans on participating in the AIDS Run & Walk for another 10 years.

"Then if I can't walk, you can put me in the wheelchair," she said to her daughters, who erupted in laughter. "It ain't going to happen because I'll still be walking."

She turned quiet before speaking again, staring at the tabletop, seemingly lost in thought.

"I'm just happy we're doing something," Mae Smith said, faintly smiling. "And Ron would be happy."

The room went silent with that sentiment.

For Ron, they walk and love.

Registration is now open for the 2012 AIDS Run & Walk Chicago on Sept. 29, starting at Soldier Field. Go to [www.aidsrunwalk.org](http://www.aidsrunwalk.org) to learn more about the event, register or make a donation.



A Ron Smith contingent in a previous AIDS Walk.



At a previous AIDS Run & Walk, from right to left, Mike and Mae Smith, and family members Lucky Thomson and Birdie Menke.

#### Dining Out for Life April 26

Dining Out for Life, an international fundraiser for groups battling AIDS/HIV, will be held April 26. On average, \$4 million are raised on just one day of dining, thanks to generous donations from more than 3,000 participating restaurants in 60 cities across North America.

To find restaurants participating, visit [www.diningoutforlife.com](http://www.diningoutforlife.com).

#### Red Dress Party April 21

The Voice's Beverly McClellan has been confirmed to perform at the Chicago Red Dress Party 8 p.m., April 21, at the Joffrey Ballet Studios, 10 E. Randolph St.

McClellan was a contestant in the final four on the first season of NBC's *The Voice*, a popular American reality-competition show, currently in its second season.

Meteorologist Ginger Zee will join the event that is dedicated to creating visibility for the HIV/AIDS movement and raising funds for organizations that provide vital community services. Guests will begin with a decadent VIP red carpet reception with high-energy entertainment by Miss Foozie at 8 p.m., followed by Beverly McClellan's performance at 10:30 p.m. The only rule for the evening is that all guests must wear red.

See [www.chicagoredressparty.org](http://www.chicagoredressparty.org).

## VIEWPOINTS

## WINDY CITY TIMES

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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.



REV. IRENE MONROE

## The Hunger Games' young racist fans

There's a frenzy surrounding the blockbuster film and book *The Hunger Games*. However, the fan attention around the movie has taken a decidedly different turn from the fervor the book caused. The schism originates from the difference between reading (where one's visual images of characters can be both personal and individual)—and watching—where the film's visual images of characters are a literal representation.

The film script follows the book closely and some of fans are apoplectic. The result is a tweeting tsunami of racist comments focusing on the presence of the few main Black characters in the film.

Here are just a few of the racist tweets that have gone viral:

—"why does rue have to be black not gonna lie kinda ruined the movie."

—"Kk call me racist but when I found out Rue was black her death wasn't as sad."

—"why did the producer make all the good characters black."

—"Awkward moment when Rue is some black girl and not the little blonde innocent girl you pictured."

Sadly, there are more vile tweets, some employing the "n-word," that have been collected on a Tumblr page called *Hunger Games Tweets*.

Lionsgate, the distributor of *The Hunger Games*, issued a statement praising fans who

spoke out against the racist tweets, saying, "We applaud and support their action."

Gay-rights activist and actor George Takei—who's best known for his role as Hikaru Sulu, helmsman of the USS Enterprise in the television series *Star Trek*—responded to these tweets, stating, "Some fans outraged that Blacks cast in *Hunger Games* roles. Teens killing each other in futuristic arenas, and they care about what color?"

There are several salient themes both in the book and film, but race is not one of them. While I won't say this dystopic tale is post-racial, the author's, Suzanne Collins, treatment of race is both honest and nuanced.

In April 2011, Collins told *Entertainment Weekly* that her characters "...were not particularly intended to be biracial. It is a time period where hundreds of years have passed from now. There's been a lot of ethnic mixing. But I think I describe them as having dark hair, grey eyes and sort of olive skin. ... But then there are some characters in the book who are more specifically described." Thresh and Rue. Collins said, are "African-American."

And the characters Rue, Thresh and Cinna are played in the film by African-American actors Amandla Stenberg, Dayo Okeniyi and Lenny Kravitz, respectively. Whereas Cinna's skin hue is not mentioned in the book, Rue's and Thresh's are both explicitly depicted as having "dark skin."

In describing the character Rue in the novel Collins writes, "And most hauntingly, a twelve-year-old girl from District 11. She has dark brown skin and eyes, but other than that, she's very like Prim in size and demeanor." Prim is the protagonist's, Katniss Everdeen, sister. I surmise since Prim is white and Rue is compared to her, many fans expected the same—ignoring what's stated explicitly in the text.

And in describing Thresh Collins writes, "The boy tribute from District 11, Thresh, has the same dark skin as Rue, but the resemblance stops there. He's one of the giants, probably six and half feet tall and built like an ox."

ers juxtapose "oppressed gay Palestinians" with "liberated gay Israelis." This distorts the political reality in Israel by tendentiously ignoring the power relations involved in racist occupation, the denial of civil liberties, and the erection of an apartheid wall. These pinkwashers hope to harness the global LGBT movement into supporting Israel at the expense of the Palestinians.

Certainly, we oppose Palestinian mistreatment of gays. But we also recognize that the smug celebration of "LGBT rights" by the Israeli government and its supporters is designed to divert attention from its atrocities against the Palestinian people as a whole, gays included. It shows that Israel is embarrassed and is increasingly concerned about the rising tide of international condemnation of its racist treatment of half its citizens.

WCT would do well to remember this the next time it feels inclined to provide a venue for pinkwashing.

Roger Fraser  
 Bob Schwartz  
 Gay Liberation Network

## On the books

Dear editor:

I'm among many in the community very troubled to read about the situation at Gerber/Hart Library. It's especially frustrating to fear that this

Collins could have never imagined this sort of reaction to her non-white characters, yet it highlights resoundingly the lack of cultural and ethnic diversity in children and young adult literature.

Data analyzed by the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Cooperative Children's Book Center in 2010 found that only 9 percent of the 3,400 children's books published that year contained significant cultural or ethnic diversity.

With the paucity of cultural and ethnic diversity in children and young adult literature, white characters and white culture become an expectation and literary norm that is both learned and internalized by white children as well as children of color.

"People very often talk about literacy with words, but there's such a thing as visual and thematic literacy," said Deborah Pope, the executive director of the Ezra Jack Keats Foundation, which encourages diversity in kids' books. "I think some of these young people just didn't really read the book."

While I agree with Pope that the fans who unabashedly expressed their racist views either didn't read the book or didn't read it carefully, the themes and symbols of innocence and love in an inherently corrupt dystopic world being affixed to a Black 12-year-old girl (as Collins does with Rue in *The Hunger Games*) is neither commonly nor comfortably seen in our world.

Do writers for children and young adult literature have a responsibility to be more explicit when introducing non-white characters in their books? Or would being more explicit when introducing non-white characters play into a racist assumption that literary characters are white, unless otherwise stated?

An easy answer would be to publish, to distribute, and to make part of core curriculum reading authors of color for children and young adults. Otherwise, this outpouring of racist tweets we see with *The Hunger Games* will merely be the tip of the iceberg.

invaluable collection of literature and artifacts might be at risk, yet people are unable to get critical information from the only source who seems to have it: Board President Karen Sendziak.

Nevertheless, I hope we can avoid a rush to judgment here. I don't know Sendziak and have no connection with Gerber/Hart except for occasional participation in the men's book group that meets there. However, I do know that sometimes in community-based organizations, well-intentioned people find themselves isolated and overwhelmed by circumstances that may, or may not, be of their own making.

Without minimizing the need for accountability, fault-finding should give way to problem-solving in this instance. If the library cannot afford its rent because of insufficient funds, it might make a lot more sense for us to raise the necessary funds rather than to face the expense, effort and risks associated with a move. If a move is inevitable, then let's organize to get it done. If greater volunteer involvement is necessary for the library to succeed in its mission, then let's sign up.

Our main expectation from Sendziak should be that she provide the access and information necessary to facilitate that support. Let's encourage her to do that; if she can't or won't, she should step aside.

Morris L. Floyd  
 Chicago

## LETTERS

## In the pink

To the Editor:

Three articles published in the April 11 *Windy City Times* (WCT) by columnist Ross Forman are egregious examples of "pinkwashing." This term refers to appropriating the rights won by Israeli LGBT activists and their allies in struggle for the purpose of downplaying or ignoring the Israeli apartheid regime's human-rights violations committed against the Palestinian people.

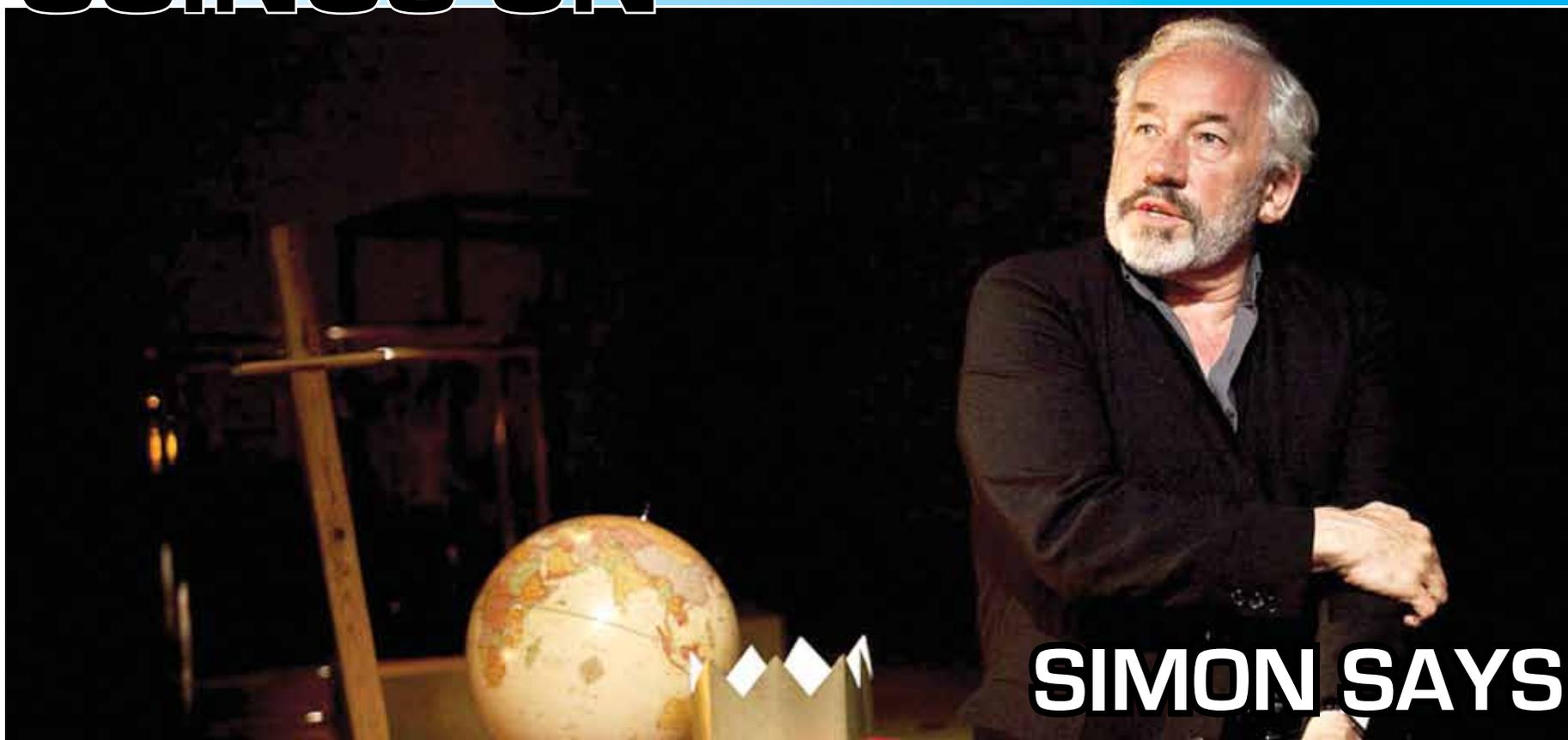
For example, Forman and a gay Israeli tour promoter sketch a rosy picture of gays frolicking on Tel Aviv beaches and visiting bars while ignoring Israeli-enforced squalor in the nearby Gaza Strip, Israel's notorious open-air concentration camp, from which travel is restricted and into which very little food and other supplies are allowed to enter.

Nor does Forman mention the daily humiliations and brutality that the Israeli Defense Forces and Israeli settlers mete out to Palestinians. He does not mention that water rights, as well as the rights to movement, speech, education and jobs, are routinely denied to Palestinians. Nor does he mention that the right-wing Benjamin Netanyahu regime is expanding internationally condemned Israeli settlements that gobble up more and more of the best Palestinian land, a measure the Obama administration either openly backs or turns a blind eye to.

Although Forman's articles simply airbrush Palestinians out of the picture, many pinkwash-

## GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION

Photo by  
Andre  
Penteado

## SIMON SAYS

Out theater icon Simon Callow talks about the influence Shakespeare's had on him. See below.

## DISH

Sturgeon general.  
Page 24.

Photo by Meghan Streit



## SPORTS

Force the issue.  
Page 30.

Photo by Dave Bishop



## THEATER

Loud and 'Proud.'  
Page 18.Photo from We Are Proud  
by Liz Lauren

## NUNN ON ONE: THEATER

Out theater icon  
Simon Callow does  
it the Bard way

BY JERRY NUNN

Simon Callow may be the epitome of a theater actor. Born in jolly old England, he worked his way up from box-office worker while watching actors rehearse at the National Theatre.

After appearing in several productions he landed the part of Schikaneder in the film *Amadeus*. Then a role in *Four Weddings and a Funeral* followed, which brought him more acclaim, bridging him into a *Room With a View* and *Postcards from the Edge*.

His private life became an open book after penning *Being An Actor*, in which he came out of the closet.

His television roles continue to entertain, especially in the UK with the BBC's *Doctor Who*; he also was a judge on *Popstar to Operastar*.

Callow has had a special connection with Shakespeare through the years, performing in festivals and the movie *Shakespeare in Love*—and now he finally has arrived in Chicago with a one-man show exploring the myth of the man. Using excerpts from the Bard's plays and poems, the audience can get to know one of the greatest authors ever and in a whole new way.

Windy City Times talked to the theater icon while he was in New York before heading to the Midwest.

**Windy City Times:** Hello, Simon. How are you?

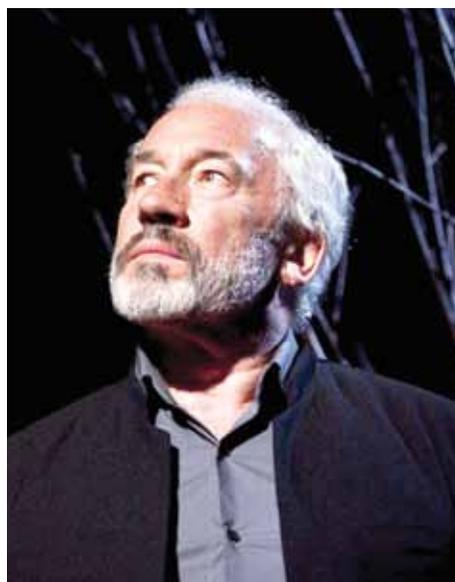
Simon Callow: Splendid, nice to hear from you.

**WCT:** You are coming to Chicago. When was the last time you were here?

SC: Let me think—maybe 10 years ago. Has it changed a lot since then?

**WCT:** [Laughs] I think it has! Tell me about this show.

SC: The title, *Being Shakespeare*, gives a pretty good clue. It is an attempt to find out who that man really was that wrote all of those plays and how they came about. It is quite odd to do this because everybody knows that there aren't many facts about Shakespeare. There are solid facts like where he was born, when he got married and how many children he had, or when and where he died. What we don't have is any private information. We don't have any idea about what went on in his mind or his opinions were. We don't have letters or diaries. He never did an interview, for example.



Simon Callow. Photo by Andre Penteado

It is a question of looking at the facts that we do have and looking at the world he lived in. We took the famous speech from *As You Like It*—"all the world is a stage"—which describes the seven ages of man. We have asked of each age what was it like. What was it like to be an Elizabethan baby, soldier or schoolboy through the ages? I felt if that was true for everyone, then it must be true for him as well. We plug that into the plays and look for examples of what we have discovered. It is done with smoke and mirrors, but [it's] an attempt to bring the man to life.

**WCT:** So it is dissected as a study within a show?

SC: Kind of, but I would like to stake a claim that it is a theatrical event rather than a lesson. It is a journey for all of us, me, you and everyone.

**WCT:** Was it difficult to make it entertaining?

SC: [Laughs] No; the work is fantastically entertaining and one comes from it in a fairly

light-spirited kind of way. We do go to deep and dark places in the show, and I think we need to because Shakespeare gave the best account to what it is like to be a human being all around. Being a human being is not without its distresses. He, better than anyone, was good at describing those things like jealousy, rage and hatred. Equally, he is the inspired chronicler of love, tenderness, hope and passion. We attempt the impossible to give a sense of the man and his whole work.

**WCT:** What do you think of the controversy that someone else wrote some of the work?

SC: I give it no time at all. I waste no thought upon it. Why would the plays of William Shakespeare be written by other people, when his collaborators and actors put his work together a couple of years after he died?

His chief writer, Ben Jonson, wrote his introduction, which started "Sweet swan of Avon." I am not aware of any of the other contenders having come from anywhere the banks of Avon. I can't think how, in a tiny little village that the London theater, someone wouldn't have blown his cover. It just seems to be preposterous.

**WCT:** Well, I am listening to you because you are the Shakespeare expert.

SC: That is what I like to think! [Both laugh.]

**WCT:** How was it performing with two sirs—Sir Ian McKellen and Sir Patrick Stewart—in *Waiting for Godot*?

SC: It was extraordinary because it is an extraordinary play.

**WCT:** That was a dream team. Shakespeare has been big in your career.

SC: Shakespeare has been huge in my life. I have also performed his sonnets, which not many people have done, in my experience with great artistic expression. It was a secret in a series of poems written from one man to another. We don't know if he had sex with the people that he wrote the poems to. We don't even know who that person was but it suggests that he was a

Turn to page 20

## THEATER REVIEW

**We Are Proud...**

Playwright: Jackie Sibblies Drury  
 At: Victory Gardens Theater at  
 the Biograph, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.  
 Tickets: 773-871-3000;  
 www.victorygardens.org; \$20-\$50  
 Runs through: April 29

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Every performance workshop, sooner or later, es- says the kind of project where a team of young student-actors choose a historical event—in this case, the attempted genocide of a southwestern African tribe by German colonialists—as the basis for a text forged through classroom exercises inspired by the available existing documenta- tion. When the latter proves to be insufficiently topical in content, the eager thespians depicted in Jackie Sibblies Drury's play come to rely in- creasingly on their own resources as a gateway to the experience they propose to replicate, a practice leading them dangerously close to the boundaries of aesthetic distance.

Our ensemble—identified, at this stage, by such generic labels as “White Man” or “Black Woman”—begin self-consciously, intent on “Process” and recoiling from the disturbing im- ages inherent in their subject, despite the ac- tor-playing-Black-Man's exhortations to greater “authenticity” in their exploration. No sooner do we relax in anticipation of continuing in this satirical vein, however, than the action suddenly strikes a familiar note: the work songs of intern- ment camps become those of antebellum chain gangs, the German guards' accents resemble those of the America South and the scenario as- sumes an intensity terrifying even the partici- pants.

Long before Stanislavski introduced theatrical- training techniques based in personal recollec- tions, the myth of play actors carried away by their illusion has been a popular literary theme.



We Are Proud...  
 Photo by  
 Liz Lauren

Even after the improvisation is halted, we detect a marked difference in the ease with which the individual players are able to divest themselves of their recently shared emotional upheaval. The operative word “shared” applies to us, too, since director Eric Ting has instructed his cast to sucker-punch us with slam poetry-style vocalizations and choreography invoking an infec- tious visceral response that tends to obscure the play's intellectual dimensions—sometimes a bad thing, sometimes not.

Whether you agree with all of the arguments Drury raises—“Black” being synonymous with “African,” for example—what's certain is that a story recounting the progress of a potentially devastating game of “let's-pretend” demands a profound level of trust among the real-life ac- tors whose portrayals require them to immerse themselves in dionysic frenzy seven times a week without likewise succumbing to meltdown. This commitment can be contagious—on open- ing night, during the abrupt blackout ending the show, a spontaneous whoop was heard in the darkness before the cast, now safely distanced from their roles, filed out to enthusiastic cheers and whistles for their well-deserved curtain call.

## THEATER REVIEW

**The Improv Play**

Playwright: Randall Colburn  
 At: InFusion Theatre Company at  
 DCA Storefront Theater, 66 E. Randolph St.  
 Phone: 312-742-8497; \$15-\$25  
 Web: www.infusiontheatre.com  
 Runs through: May 20

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Don't be surprised if some members of Chica- go's improv community react to InFusion The- atre Company's The Improv Play like a slap to the face. A few characters in Randall Colburn's world-premiere comic drama trash talk some Chicago-area comedy institutions, or slam them by omission.

In particular, the cocky and self-destructive 24-year-old performer Walker (Nick Mikula) expresses a very damning opinion of why he thinks iO Chicago is a money-grubbing pyramid scheme. And when the lovable but also mocked “funny fat guy” Stan (Rob Grabowski) announces that he may move out to Schaumburg for a job promotion, he and his improv team friends crack jokes about IKEA and creative comedy death without once mentioning the successful subur- ban short-form improv venue Laugh Out Loud Theater located at Woodfield Mall.

The Improv Play largely focuses on Ben (Kevin Crispin), a 33-year-old improv regular who is not only facing the break up of his long-term relationship with Lindsay (Sarah Gitenstein), but a job loss and bubbling-under jealousy when one of his comedy troupe castoffs, Walter Regan (Will Gillespie), is cast on Saturday Night Live.

There's also the much admired improv comedi- an Ellie, whom Ben, Walker and Walter all pursue despite her overwhelming cynicism and difficult past history. Interspersed throughout, the char- acters perform improv scenes based upon sug- gestions from the audience, though some shout- outs are clearly plants from other cast members to further Colburn's plot along.

One gets the impression that Colburn feels it is his duty in The Improv Play to present a pes- simistic view of the performers who have ambi- tions that one day they'll hit it big after honing

their craft in Chicago's comedy and theater com- munity. Colburn's very large cast features many characters who start realizing that their years of comedy training and performing aren't going to add up to much.

While this realist perspective is something that many Chicago storefront theater performers have to face up to, you often wish that Col- burn's presentation of it wasn't so sprawling and loosely structured in The Improv Play. You also may wish that some of the more interesting and funny supporting characters like Jamie Bragg's Gwen and Frances McKearn's Delilah received more attention, while it feels like a mistake that Colburn actually shows the future SNL performer Walter onstage since it makes audiences ques- tion Gillespie's comedy chops and ask, “Really, he got in?”

On the plus side, director Mitch Golob coaxes some very funny performances from the large cast during a string of strong individual scenes in The Improv Play. And though his scattershot perspective is largely one of pessimism, Colburn does shed some revealing light on all those hopefuls striving to hit it big and beyond Chi- cago's thriving comedy scene.



The Improv Play. Photo by John W. Sisson Jr.

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## THEATER REVIEW

**The Butcher  
of Baraboo**

Playwright: Marisa Wegrzyn  
 At: A Red Orchid Theatre, 1531 N. Wells St.  
 Tickets: 312-943-8722;  
 www.aredorchidtheatre.org; \$25-\$30  
 Runs through: May 20

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Skeletons in the closet aren't the sleek, shiny Jolly Rogers of Halloween decorations and neo-romantic fiction. As television shows like CSI have made evident, secrets left to fester unseen tend to spread crippling contagion affecting everyone in the surrounding envi- ronment, conspirators and bystanders alike. Even a wholesome community like Baraboo, Wis.—site of a circus museum, neighbor to an outdoor amusement-park, a prestigious university and the state capitol—isn't safe from the creeping malaise of misanthropic impulses.

At first, the cadaver in Marisa Wegrzyn's small-town gothic armoire looks to be the mysterious disappearance of village butcher Valerie's husband, a year earlier. The widow's complacent acceptance of her spouse's ab- sence leads her police-officer sister-in-law Gail to suspect foul play, especially after brother-in-law Donal returns home with LDS wife Sevenly and their six children. In the meantime, pharmacist daughter Midge's pro- pensity for off-duty distribution of her wares

guarantees a ready supply of mind-bending substances to escalate the menace invoked by Valerie's at-home assortment of cutlery and Gail's .44-automatic sidearm. Oh, and did I mention the half-gallon jug of animal blood in the refrigerator?

Never mistake a plate of red herrings for steak tartare, however. Wegrzyn repeatedly undermines the expectations of lazy playgo- ers anticipating a cheap-and-shivery thriller by constantly shifting our sympathies to expose a toxic social dynamic rife with re- sentment, mistrust, hypocrisy, prejudice and betrayal—a dystopia where the simplest question may conceal a threat sufficient to elicit contradictory answers from those unsure of the “correct” response. When the innocent are scapegoated by bullies whose own fears are expressed in a vindictive hostility devoid of compassion, who needs murder?

The psychological traction required to veer from sitcom farce (yes, there's a scene where an upstanding citizen turns meth-monster) to Grand Guignol melodrama without skidding out of control has become Red Orchid The- atre's stock-in-trade. Kirsten Fitzgerald and Natalie West, in a moose-and-squirrel turn as the squabbling Valerie and Gail, dominate an ensemble featuring Missi Davis as the slack- erly Midge, HB Ward as the phlegmatic Donal, and returning Chicago expat Lara Phillips as the compliant Sevenly. Under the direction of Shade Murray, with assistance from Grant Sabin's deceptively cozy kitchen, they guide us on a tour through rural America paced to soothe—just before the ax falls.



**After the Revolution.**  
Photo by  
Elissa  
Shortridge

## THEATER REVIEW

### After the Revolution

Playwright: Amy Herzog

At: Next Theatre, 927 Noyes, Evanston

Tickets: 847-475-1875;

www.nexttheatre.org; \$25-\$40

Runs through: May 13

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Amy Herzog's stimulating, intelligent and semi-autobiographical play uses a political story to frame a deeper personal story, providing rich opportunities for a spot-on cast directed by the reliable Kimberly Senior.

Set in 1999, the play presents three generations of the Joseph family of New York and Boston, who are ardent leftists going back to the 1930s Great Depression, when "anyone with a beating heart and half a brain" was a Communist, according to steely grandmother Vera (Mary Ann Thebus).

Her late husband, Joe Joseph, is the idolized family patriarch who rose to high government position during World War II, when the Soviet Union was our ally, but later was hauled before a Congressional committee during the 1950s anti-Red "witch hunt." Now granddaughter Emma

(Christine Stulik) leads a foundation for social justice named after Gramps. When a new book reveals that Joe spied for the Soviets and perjured himself before Congress to protect himself, Emma feels betrayed by the truth and by family members who withheld this truth from her. She becomes estranged from her father, grandmother and boyfriend as she rethinks her beliefs and her priorities.

Politics aside, the deeper personal tale is how any of us might react when someone we regard as heroic and faultless is found to have feet of clay or cracks in his armor, to use the cliché expressions for human frailties and moral or ethical shortcomings. Who among us has *not* had such an experience, or been the cause of such an experience to someone else? The experience is made more complex when it involves family history and relationships.

Herzog does not minimize the emotional complexities. Indeed, in Act I she piles too much on the plate, introducing Emma's recovering-drug-addict sister and apolitical uncle, who pull focus but ultimately contribute little. Herzog brings the focus back to Emma in Act II but wisely does not attempt to resolve all issues. The estrangement between Emma and her family—in particular, her father, Ben (Mick Weber)—isn't completely healed, nor is Emma's relationship with her boyfriend. Emma herself is far from perfect. Politics, love, life and family history must be open-ended propositions subject to periodic (if not constant) re-evaluation.

Senior's company functions as a splendid ensemble, with excellent supporting work from Phil Ridarelli as the amiable uncle, Dana Black as the less-political sister, Tasha Anne James as Ben's wife and beloved Mike Nussbaum in top

form as one of Joe's "fellow travelers" (as non-Communist leftists were called). You'll relish the performances in this fine finale to Next Theatre's 31st season, and—at a time when conservatism once again has become a dark force in American politics—you'll still be thinking about the play the next day.

### 'Bab Fab' to celebrate Streisand's 70th April 24

Three Cat Productions will celebrate Barbra Streisand's 70th birthday with its fifth annual "Bab Fab: A Barbra Streisand Celebration" at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, April 24, at the Wilmette Theatre, 1122 Central Ave., Wilmette.

The show will cover Streisand's career from the early Greenwich Village days to the present.

Chicago theater veterans scheduled to appear include Christine Bunuan, Rob Dorn, Scott Gryder, Beckie Menzie, Tom Michael and Jason Paul Smith, among others.

Tickets are \$20-\$25; visit [www.wilmettetheatre.com](http://www.wilmettetheatre.com) or call 847-251-7424.

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## CRITICS' PICKS

**Beyond the Fringe**, Oak Park Festival Theatre at Madison Street Theatre Studio, through May 6. Die-hard fans of British comedy won't want to miss the chance to see this very funny sketch revue originally penned and performed in the early 1960s by Alan Bennett, Peter Cook, Jonathan Miller and Dudley Moore. It's a period piece now, but it was very influential in its day. SCM

**Chesapeake**, Remy Bumppo Theatre Company at Greenhouse Theater, through April 29. Lee Blessing's one-man magical realism drama about a bisexual performance artist and his efforts to kidnap a bigoted and homophobic senator's dog offers lots of laughs and plenty to think about when it comes to judging just what constitutes "art." SCM

**Hit The Wall**, The Inconvenience at Steppenwolf Garage, through April 22. Ike Holter and the Inconvenience's visceral aesthetic paint a picture of gay history that sweats, bleeds and goes down swinging, only to rise again, noisy and triumphant. MSB

**The Pirates of Penzance**, Marriott Theatre, Lincolnshire, through June 10. Gilbert and Sullivan's comic 1879 operetta gets a joyously silly and vigorously choreographed production courtesy of director Dominic Missimi and choreographer Matt Raftery. SCM

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan



## THEATER REVIEW

### Alex in Wonderland

Playwright: Tony Lewis and Michael Elm  
At: Hydrate Nightclub, 3458 N. Halsted  
Phone: 773-835-0420;

Alex in Wonderland. Photo by Jerry Nunn

www.tix.com; \$10  
Runs through: May 26

BY JERRY NUNN

MidTangent Productions is at it again with more fairy tales at its homo home, Hydrate Nightclub. The same company that penned Snow White and the Seven Drag Queens as well as Twinkie and the Beast now dreams up its version of Alice In Wonderland, with a few things falling down the rabbit hole.

A parody of Enrique Iglesias' "Tonight (I'm Loving You)" provided a shaky start to the show, but things picked up quickly. Max Bever, as Alex Kingsley, has the thankless task of playing the "straight" man but seems a little stiff at times. The White Rabbit arrives and delivers some slick lines, as does stage diva Katerina Papadatos, performing in a dual role of Alex's mother and the Queen of Hearts, taking a cue from Joan Crawford and camping it up.

Singer Natalia Kills' Wonderland track is tailor-made for the show and carried the plot forward. However, an ABBA tune about money could have been left at Mamma Mia.

The Cheshire Cat is a lesbian in this version—with her lover, Dinah—and really has a sweet voice. At times she need to "sing out, Louise" because there was a loud party back-

stage during much of the show, making it hard to hear her dialogue or vocals at times. The stage manager was not quieting the troops down from the dressing room, at least during the April 13 performance. With such a large cast, maybe that is easier said than done.

The Mad Hatter was hilarious, sounding

much like a cross between Paul Lynde and the honey badger's Randall voice on YouTube.

A trio of drag dream worms had strong highlights as caterpillars; however, they weren't always easy to follow.

The characters Tweaker Dee and Tweaker Dum had some nice moments throughout the show, with over-the-top theatrics. Speaking of which, a few simple tweaks could really help, such as enunciating (for many of the cast). Placing glow tape on the stairs would have saved The Queen of Hearts from falling in the dark.

The fun is figuring out where some of the tunes are inspired from, whether it is Pink's "Raise Your Glass" or Katy Perry's "Firework," complete with glow sticks. Lady Gaga somehow deserved two songs.

Things could be cut (as the show is a little long to sustain in a bar atmosphere), running two hours. Also, where were the Alex in Wonderland drink specials?

That could be easily fixed for the future and will keep everyone wondering what this group will do next as it continues improving over past productions.

What's next: Cinderella or The Little Merman? It's a whole new world for MidTangent Productions to parody and there are many more fairy tales ripe for the gay picking.

## CALLOW from page 17

young aristocrat.

It is one of the most exhilarating documents, followed by doubt, depression and despair—ending with the collapse of that relationship. I don't think there is anything to compare with it in the English language. Not many people know that poems such as "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?" were written from a man to a man.

**WCT: Talk about the coming-out process, because you didn't necessarily need to come out of the closet when you did.**

SC: In 1984 it was quite a big deal, but I couldn't see any way around it. I was quite a prominent actor. I was being interviewed a lot and being asked all the time little needling questions about a girlfriend and all of the rest of it. I thought that was ridiculous and didn't want to lie for the rest of my life. So I just told those reporters, "I'm not in a relationship with a woman. I am gay." They never printed it—ever.

**WCT: Really?**

SC: That is the British press for you. They like to expose you. They don't like to be told anything. They want to find you out. It wasn't until I wrote my first book, *Being an Actor*, that it came out. I had been very candid with the press for five years about my sexuality; I finally got it down in print because it was my book, and there it was. I think it was a quite useful thing to do I have to say. I was one of the first celebrity actors that had done that voluntarily. Actors have been outed and arrested, in some cases, in England but nobody had done it voluntarily. I did, and I am rather proud of that.

**WCT: You should be. Now you have been able to be an advocate for our community and perform with the London Gay Men's Chorus.**

SC: That was tons of fun.

**WCT: Are you getting to have fun while you are in town? Will we see you at show tunes at Sidetrack?**

SC: I am being worked within an inch of my life while I am in Chicago. I am doing matinees and evening shows, benefits, galas and so forth.

**WCT: I noticed you were in Doctor Who; [that show has] diehard fans.**

SC: In England, particularly, they do.

**WCT: Do you want to do more television this year?**

SC: No; this year is a year of theater from beginning to end. In February, my biography of Charles Dickens came out so I have been talking a lot about Dickens and will continue to do that. It comes out in America in August. People can purchase it in bookshops or at [www.simoncal-low.com](http://www.simoncal-low.com).

**Being Shakespeare runs April 18-29 at Navy Pier at the Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, 800 E. Grand Ave. Tickets and information can be found at [www.chicagoshakes.com](http://www.chicagoshakes.com) or by calling 312-595-5600.**

## Rich, Levy at Steppenwolf May 7

Steppenwolf Theatre Company, 1650 N. Halsted St., will host an evening of conversation Monday, May 7 between renowned journalist and former New York Times drama critic Frank Rich and Steppenwolf Artistic Director Martha Lavey.

Inspired by Steppenwolf's season theme, "Dispatches from the Homefront," their onstage discussion will offer a perspective on cultural and world events. Following the conversation, the audience will have the opportunity to ask Rich and Lavey questions.

The event will take place at Steppenwolf's Downstairs Theatre. Tickets (\$10); call 312-335-1650 or visit [www.steppenwolf.org](http://www.steppenwolf.org).

## SPOTLIGHT



Get ready for all kinds of comedy created on the spot when the **Chicago Improv Festival** plays at multiple Chicago-area venues from Monday, April 23, through Sunday, April 29. See local, national and international improv troupes perform at these venues: Annoyance Theater, 4830 N. Broadway St.; ComedySportz, 929 W. Belmont Ave.; The Playground Theater, 3209 N. Halsted St.; Athenaeum Theatre, Studios 1, 2 and 3, 2936 N. Southport Ave.; Chemically Imbalanced Theater, 1420 W. Irving Park Rd.; Laugh Out Loud Theater, 601 North Martingale Rd., Schaumburg; and multiple spaces at The Second City, 1618 N. Wells St. (4th Floor Skybox, 3rd Floor DeMaat and 2nd Floor e.t.c. space). Tickets are \$5-\$20 per show; visit [www.chicagoimprovfestival.org](http://www.chicagoimprovfestival.org) for tickets and more information. Photo of the Toronto-based improv group 2-Man No-Show courtesy of the Chicago Improv Festival



## THE CLOSET THU., APRIL 12



Congratulations to the finalists from The Closet, who will advance to the semi-finals at Sidetrack, Sat., June 2.

Photos by Jerry Nunn. More photos at [facebook.com/windycitygayidol](http://facebook.com/windycitygayidol).

Look for photos from Windy City Gay Idol at Crew in next week's Windy City Times and from Jackhammer in next week's Nightspots.

## NUNN ON ONE: TELEVISION

# Kelly Lynch: Making 'Magic' on Starz, dishing on 'L Word'

BY JERRY NUNN

Actress Kelly Lynch began her career as a model for Elite, then went on to appear in such films as *Drugstore Cowboy*, *Cocktail* and *Road House*—which became huge hits in the '80s. She continued playing original and unforgettable characters in *Charlie's Angels* and *The L Word*.

Her latest project is on the Starz network show *Magic City*. Set in 1950s Miami, the story follows Ike Evans (played by Jeffrey Dean Morgan), a high-end hotel owner who becomes involved with the mob. Lynch plays Meg Bannock, the sister of Ike's deceased first wife who comes from old money.

**Windy City Times:** Hey, Kelly. So you are calling from LA?

Kelly Lynch: I am.

**WCT:** I know you are originally from Minnesota.

KL: Exactly. I actually spent a winter in your fair city doing *Curly Sue*, which was John Hughes' last film [he directed]. I had a weird occurrence on Lake Shore Drive. We hit sheet ice with my daughter, who is now 26 years old. I was afraid there would be a 300-car pile up because we were the first ones hitting the guardrail so I got my daughter out of the car and carried her on my back because we couldn't stand on the wind and the ice. I crawled across and got to the side before more accidents could happen.

**WCT:** What made you want to do *Magic City*?

KL: First of all, I slept with the show runner various times to get the part. He's my husband. I have full disclosure here. It wasn't just once, we had to do it a lot. So there is that. I am not too proud to admit it. [Both laugh.]

Mitch was talking about this whole idea as a movie or TV show since we have been together, which has been 23 years. I have been every single character, including Ben Diamond (the mobster) at one time or another!

He really started thinking of this character of Meg Bannock; the older I get, the more I am just in love with [her]. These heiresses breathed different air than the rest of us do. This woman had to say goodbye to husband number two and had no children but all of this wealth, then had to compete in a man's world with power and money. She had real estate and really groovy cars and clothes.

**WCT:** Which do you like more: the hair or the clothes?

KL: I think being a fashionista myself, I don't mind tooting my own horn, I am two-time International Best Dressed winner—actually as a couple, my husband the dashing Mitch Glazer. So clothes would be my first thing.

The hairdos I have taken a clue from Grace Kelly, who wore a simple blonde bob. Maybe in season two Meg Bannock goes wild and ends up in some sort of jazz club and let's her hair do new things.

**WCT:** Why do you think audiences enjoy pe-



Kelly Lynch. Photo courtesy of Starz

**riod shows like this one and Mad Men?**

KL: I have to say looking back on our history from the first turn of the century to this one it was a time when America was America with a flexing muscle, big chrome cars, the space program seconds away, the Kennedy era dying on us, the middle class thriving—it was a golden era.

People in the world still think of this time in a positive way. We explore in our show the underbelly of that. It was a crime riddled and very white power structure. In Miami during this time period 2 percent was Latin; today, it is 60 percent. Women were barely in the job force. African-American people were not allowed the right to vote. My husband used the "colored" drinking fountain as a child because he thought a rainbow would come out!

**WCT:** You played an interesting role on Showtime's *The L Word*.

KL: That was one of my favorite characters of

my life. I had just filmed a big role and my agent asked me what I wanted to do. My rule is to never play the same person twice. I have always felt I am a character actor trapped in a leading lady's body. I wanted to play something romantic.

They mailed me over some sides for a character named Ivan. I thought it was a funny name for a girl. I read it and they included a note that Pam Grier was Kit, Ivan's love interest, and Ivan is a drag king that is sexy and handsome. I had to fly to Vancouver the next day and shoot it. I had to do a drag show and I had never seen drag kings before. My dad owned a drag bar in Minneapolis called The Copper Squirrel when I was a kid.

**WCT:** I didn't know that.

KL: Yeah, he is in the bar-and-restaurant business; he is retired but I grew up loving drag queens. We have a very thriving gay community in Minneapolis. That is something I am really proud of.

This was a completely different world for me so I went online and picked out a song, "I'm Your Man," and I choreographed it that night in my hotel room. It was the most scary, exciting, fun thing I have ever done. I had to beg the hair and makeup people not to make me look like Clint Howard, Ron Howard's funny-looking brother. In my mind, Ivan was the most handsome guy on the planet. I wanted that androgynous quality that would get everyone intrigued, whether they were straight, gay or lesbian.

**WCT:** You have had such a long sustainable career, working with Tom Cruise, Matt Dillon and Denzel Washington.

KL: My leading men have been amazing, without a doubt; then to have had a chance to play a leading man—well there you go! [Laughs] I challenge any other actress to say that...

**Read the entire interview with Kelly at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com), and find out about what she thinks about being blond versus being brunette.**

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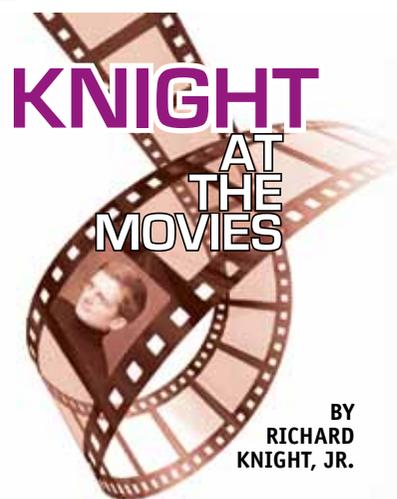
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BY  
RICHARD  
KNIGHT, JR.

## In the Family; film notes

Out writer-director-actor Patrick Wang's **In the Family** really makes a case—albeit a subtle one—for the understated ways in which the term “family” has expanded in surprising directions.

Ostensibly, the movie hinges on the legal wrangling that goes on when Joey (Wang) finds himself in an unexpected custody battle over his 6-year-old son, Chip (Sebastian Brodzia), after Joey's partner, Cody (Trevor St. John), has died in a car accident. We are in Martin, Tenn., in a place where emergency-room nurses are still hesitant or openly hostile when Joey insists that he is part of Cody's family, so what follows Cody's death doesn't surprise us.

We've been down this path before in many a film drama that has mirrored the lives of thousands of gays and lesbian parents in decades past. With each revelation—the will that wasn't quite filed, the adoption papers not secured, the will's executor not part of the everyday discussion—we are one step ahead, knowing that things for Joey with regard to Chip's custody are in big trouble.

But underneath, something not quite nameable is taking place. Part of that, I think, is due to Wang's graceful technique—slow and contemplative with few cuts, filled with long takes with room to focus on minute details—which help move his story away from the stereotypical histrionics the material would suggest. At the film's surprising fade-out, Wang has not only seemed to posit the theory that the definition of “family” has grown in many imperceptible ways—he has demonstrated it.

As we move toward the confrontation between Joey and Cody's surviving sister, Eileen (Kelly McAndrew), Wang fills in the important backstory covering the duo's romance. But, these, too, have unexpected twists and turns and are highlighted by a marvelous scene in which Joey—who has been engaged as a carpenter in the home of Cody, a recent widower left with a young son—is suddenly surprised by an intimate kiss from Cody. The moment—a blend of awkwardness, yearning and palpable desire—is delicately rendered and beautifully acted by Wang



Trevor St. John in  
**In the Family.**

and St. John, whose Cody, we learn, was never involved with men before Joey.

There are many tremendous actors, most of them from the New York stage in Wang's cast (the movie was shot in upstate New York), who register in the long takes—with a special mention going to Brian Murray as a retired lawyer who takes on Joey's case when he has just about run out of hope. With gentle assuredness, Murray provides the movie's last sequence, set in a conference room where Joey is voluntarily being deposed by the lawyer of Cody's sister with an air of grace that emboldens Wang's Joey to rise to the occasion, relating just exactly why he is Chip's one true father and, further, why they are members of his family.

The sequence is close to a half-hour of the movie's 169-minute running time but, by that point, Wang's unforced, contemplative approach—devoid of background score and relying on naturalistic lighting and unfussy cinematography—has seemed like the perfect way to underline his message. **In the Family** opens Friday, April 20, at the Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport Ave., for its exclusive Chicago engagement. This movie is highly recommended. Wang will be present at certain opening weekend screenings. Check with the Music Box for details; [www.musicboxtheatre.com](http://www.musicboxtheatre.com).

### Film notes:

—The charming lesbian romantic dramedy **Jamie and Jessie Are Not Together** from out writer-director Wendy Jo Carlton is going to be screened on Thursday, April 26 at 8 p.m. at the Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport). The one night only screening will be a benefit for the Lesbian Community Cancer Project of Howard Brown Health Center.

Carlton will join members of her mostly locally based cast and crew in celebrating the success of the movie, which has won several awards on the film festival circuit and garnered praise from high profile film critics like Roger Ebert and Michael Phillips at a post screening reception from 9:30-11:30pm at Blue Bayou (across the street from the Music Box). Tickets are \$18 and include the film and after party (drink ticket, appetizers and DJ music). Advance tickets are at [www.musicboxtheatre.com/events/jamie-and-jessie-are-not-together-2012-04-26-800-pm](http://www.musicboxtheatre.com/events/jamie-and-jessie-are-not-together-2012-04-26-800-pm).

—Lesbian actress Fawzia Mirza—who plays a pivotal role in **Jamie and Jessie**—is also seen in a new film, **Promise Land**, which is having its Chicago premiere with a red carpet screening at the AMC River 21, 322 E. Illinois St., on Friday, April 20, at 7 p.m. The movie, directed by Kevin Dalvi (with screenplay by Dalvi, Columbia College's Etta Worthington and Faris Kahn), stars a diverse cast that aside from Mirza includes Anita Chandwaney, Brenda Barrie, Elizabeth Abraham and others. The film is described as a dramedy that focuses on an alternative view of immigration issues in the United States told from a Southeast Asian perspective through three intertwining stories. Members of the

cast and crew are expected to attend the gala event and after party at the NV Penthouse Lounge, 116 W. Hubbard St. [www.promiseland-film.com](http://www.promiseland-film.com)

—Welcome, **Sawyer Lahr**: After nearly eight

## David Pevsner and Tim Kazurinsky to play title roles in 'Scrooge & Marley'

CHICAGO—Respected out gay actor David Pevsner will be joined by former Saturday Night Live cast member and Second City veteran Tim Kazurinsky in the title roles of **Scrooge and Marley** in the new independent film being shot in Chicago this May. Pevsner and Kazurinsky are both native Chicagoans.

**Scrooge & Marley** is a modern-day variation on Charles Dickens' classic holiday story, **A Christmas Carol**.

Acclaimed actor Richard Ganoung, who starred in the groundbreaking gay films **Parting Glances** and **Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss**, has signed on to play Colin.

Two-time Emmy winner Bruce Vilanch will play Fezziwig in the film.

Rusty Schwimmer (**North Country**, **A Perfect Storm**, **A Little Princess**, **Drop Dead Diva**, **Bones**, **Louie**) will portray Scrooge's niece, Freda.

David Moretti, best known as Thom Etheron in here! TV's vampire series, **The Lair** and from **Dante's Cove**, will play Bob Cratchit.

The **Ghosts of Christmas** past, present and future will be played by Ronnie Kroell (**Bravo's Make Me A Supermodel** and the film **Into the Lion's Den**), Megan Cavanagh (**A League of their Own**, **Robin Hood: Men In Tights**, **Exes and Ohs**) and Chicago club kid Jo Jo Baby, respectively.

Other principal cast members include the following acclaimed Chicago actors: Drew Anderson and Nicholas Bailey playing young **Scrooge and Marley**; Christopher Allen as Bill; **TimeLine Theatre** artistic director PJ Powers as Marley's ghostly acquaintance; **About Face Theatre** artistic associate Scott Duff as Drew; **Windy City Queercast's** Amy Matheny as Mary; Fawzia Mirza as Marshall; Peter Mohawk as Kyle; Allison Torem (**The Wise Kids**) as Scrooge's sister, Franny; Michael Joseph Mitchell as Scrooge's father; Becca Kaufman and Richard Knight, Jr. as a comedic cabaret duo; and Colin Sphar as Brent.

The child actors will be Liam Jones as Tiny Tim, with siblings played by real-life twin sisters Dixon and Delaney Kaufman and real-life brothers Elijah and Keante Pendleton.

Additional supporting cast includes Michael Termine, Rafael Torres, Tommy Beardmore, Tom Chiola, Sean Walton, Diana Simonzadeh, Alex Weisman, Steven McQuown, Ryan Lanning, Ellen Stoneking, and WBEZ reporter Alison Cuddy in a voice cameo as a radio announcer. David Cerda, artistic director of **Hell in a Handbag Productions**, and Ed Jones, **Handbag** ensemble member, and both of the

years of non-stop weekly film-reviewing I find myself immersed in an unexpected, though rather delightful project that necessitates my taking a leave of absence from my **Knight at the Movies** column for **Windy City Times**. But fear not—your movie reviews from a queer perspective will continue with the inestimable talents of film writer Sawyer Lahr who, aside from being a member of the **Queer Film Society**, is also the creator and editor of his own queer arts-themed website, [www.gooovertherainbow.com](http://www.gooovertherainbow.com). So what will yours truly be up to? Well, I'm working on my first movie—a modern-day, gay variation on **A Christmas Carol** called **Scrooge & Marley** (executive-produced by WCT's publisher/executive editor Tracy Baim). You can read all about the movie at [www.scroogeandmarleymovie.com](http://www.scroogeandmarleymovie.com). Thanks to all my supportive readers; see you again soon.

Check out my archived reviews at [www.windycitymediagroup.com](http://www.windycitymediagroup.com) or [www.knightat-themovies.com](http://www.knightat-themovies.com). Readers can leave feedback at the latter website.



David Pevsner.

rock band **The Joans**, will be among actors in a series of special Christmas vignettes.

Casting director for the film is Heather Schmucker.

**Scrooge & Marley** is based on an original script by Ellen Stoneking, Richard Knight Jr. and the late Timothy Imse. Knight and Peter Neville will direct.

Executive producers of the film are Tracy Baim (Hannah Free) and David Strzepek (**Foodgasm**), who are joined by several co-producers (Knight, Neville, Stoneking, Kroell and Moretti) and experienced crew. Line producer is Thavary Krouch, the assistant director is Holli Hopkins, the director of photography is Andrew Parrotte and the production designer is Rob Steffen. Additional crew will be announced soon.

Original songs and the film's music score are being written by Lisa McQueen, an ensemble member and musical director at **Annoyance Theater** for 21 years.

The film is being financed by investors and through an Indie GoGo campaign under the name of **Scrooge & Marley Film**. See [www.indiegogo.com/Scrooge-Marley-film?a=396864](http://www.indiegogo.com/Scrooge-Marley-film?a=396864).

Legal counsel for the production is Joseph L. Voss from **Clark Hill PLC**. Companies donating food include **J&L Catering** and **Ann Sather** on Belmont.

The locations for the shoot include 3160 Bar on Clark Street and the old **Bistro Too** disco, in addition to private homes and a cemetery.

Full cast and production team bios are at [www.scroogeandmarleymovie.com](http://www.scroogeandmarleymovie.com).

Items on Twitter are at <https://twitter.com/#!/ScroogeMarleyCH>; on Facebook, see <https://www.facebook.com/ScroogeAndMarley>.

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Director Patrick Wang in person on opening night  
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MOVIES

# Patrick Wang on his gay-custody drama, In the Family

BY SAWYER J. LAHR

Economist-turned-actor and filmmaker Patrick Wang—the director and star of the gay sleeper hit *In the Family*—couldn't be farther from convention. A conversation with a civil-rights attorney inspired Wang to write his first feature film about issues faced by unmarried gay partners.

This gay custody drama depicts an Asian-American contractor, Joey (Wang), who loses his partner, Cody (Trevor St. John), to a car accident and faces moral injustice when Cody's sister, Eileen (Kelly McAndrew), takes Joey's assumed son, Chip (Sebastian Brodziak), into her care as prescribed by Cody's final will and testament.

The first 30 festivals to reject the film surely must have noticed the verbosity of Wang's somewhat unchained aesthetic and loose script, but the critical reception took a 180 once the movie premiered at the Hawaii Film Festival last year. Wang spoke with *Windy City Times* on the phone from his Chicago hotel room.

**Windy City Times: Is it true you were on Saturday Night Live as a guest actor?**

Patrick Wang: Yes. It was right after the Winter Olympics and I played a friend and fellow Olympic athlete of skier Jonny Moseley, the host of SNL that night. I got to throw up on Jonny Moseley.

**WCT: Your claim to fame!**

PW: [Laughs] Yes, in classic high-brow Saturday Night Live style.

**WCT: Getting down to In the Family, why set this story in Tennessee? What makes this story specific to Tennessee?**

PW: I'm not sure it has to be in Tennessee, but there were a lot of lovely things that came out of it being there. I know a lot of people in Tennessee, but I haven't spent a lot of time there. Western Tennessee is, in my mind, a neutral territory in some ways. It's not geographically very confined. Martin, where the movie takes place,

is not a tiny town. There's a university there and people from all over the world.

**WCT: It's in the Bible Belt, but we're also in the Bible Belt here in Chicago.**

PW: It's never one thing. You could be in the most religious towns of the Bible Belt, but you'll find a range of people and a range of an opinion, even people who, within their lifetime, will shift those opinions. I think in the "average," we miss the range of people in a place.

**WCT: How would you describe the nature of Joey and Cody's relationship and the way it blossoms? Why did these scenes come at the end and not the beginning?**

PW: I love mystery. This is how we get to know people in life. We see them in their present moment, but we don't know their stories. We don't know how they fell in love, the darkest moments in their lives, the moment they met. Hopefully, there is enough information that it feels satisfying, that you're getting closer to understanding these characters' life experiences.

**WCT: Why did you choose to have Joey and Cody neglect to transfer guardianship to the other partner in Cody's will?**

PW: There's this point in the screenplay where Joey talks about finding this "fill-in-the-blank" will. Cody is such an organized and responsible person, and he knew what he had to do—what should have been done. It's a tough for so many people and so many couples to talk about their mortality.

For Cody, having lost his wife, I think it made it very hard for him to do this, more so than if he hadn't lost a partner before. Also, hard things get away from us when life is really good. I think he was too seduced by that wonderful thing [Joey] to turn and think of what happens when one of us dies; what do we do about custody. It's frustrating, and from what I understand, it happens quite a bit.

**WCT: Why not take In the Family to a John Q**

by the Chicago Office of Tourism and Culture pairs local Chicagoans with visitors looking for an insider introduction to the city.

Through Chicago Greeter, volunteers share what they know and love about the city and visitors take away a truly authentic Chicago experience by discovering lesser known neighborhood gems. Potential greeters interested in volunteering can apply at [www.chicagogreeter.com/apply](http://www.chicagogreeter.com/apply).

Nearly 200 Chicagoans regularly volunteer their time through the Chicago Greeter program, reaching visitors from all 50 states and more than 90 different countries. Greeters highlight various neighborhoods and interests for visitors on two- to four-hour excursions. They show off their knowledge of local history, ethnic heritage, architectural highlights, culinary hotspots, public art, LGBT Chicago, family-friendly destinations and more.

To learn more, visit [www.ChicagoGreeter.com](http://www.ChicagoGreeter.com).

## LGBT Narcotics Anon. meetings at Haymarket

Narcotics Anonymous meetings for LGBT individuals will take place Mondays 8-9 p.m. at Haymarket Center, 20 N. Sangamon St.

For more info, call Anthony Oltean at 312-208-4021.



Patrick Wang.

**and Denzel Washington level where Joey goes on the run with Chip while Cody's family pursues him across the country? Why not raise the stakes higher and increase the pace?**

PW: That's the movie thing to do. My view of

movies, and the big disappointment for me in movies, is that there is a lot of drama in our lives and I don't think it gets addressed. Those big escapades are what is presented to us as drama, but there a lot of people who are peaceful, whose first reaction isn't fight, fight, fight. I wanted to follow the path of people who take a different approach, but their instinct isn't to fight and create Hollywood tension and drama. I don't think that's in the style of a lot of people. [Laughs] It does happen, no doubt.

**WCT: Maybe a version of that.**

PW: For the most part, life takes place in a different register, and think we need solutions there too and pictures of that. It's great there are those kinds of [Hollywood] movies. I'd like to contribute a different kind of movie.

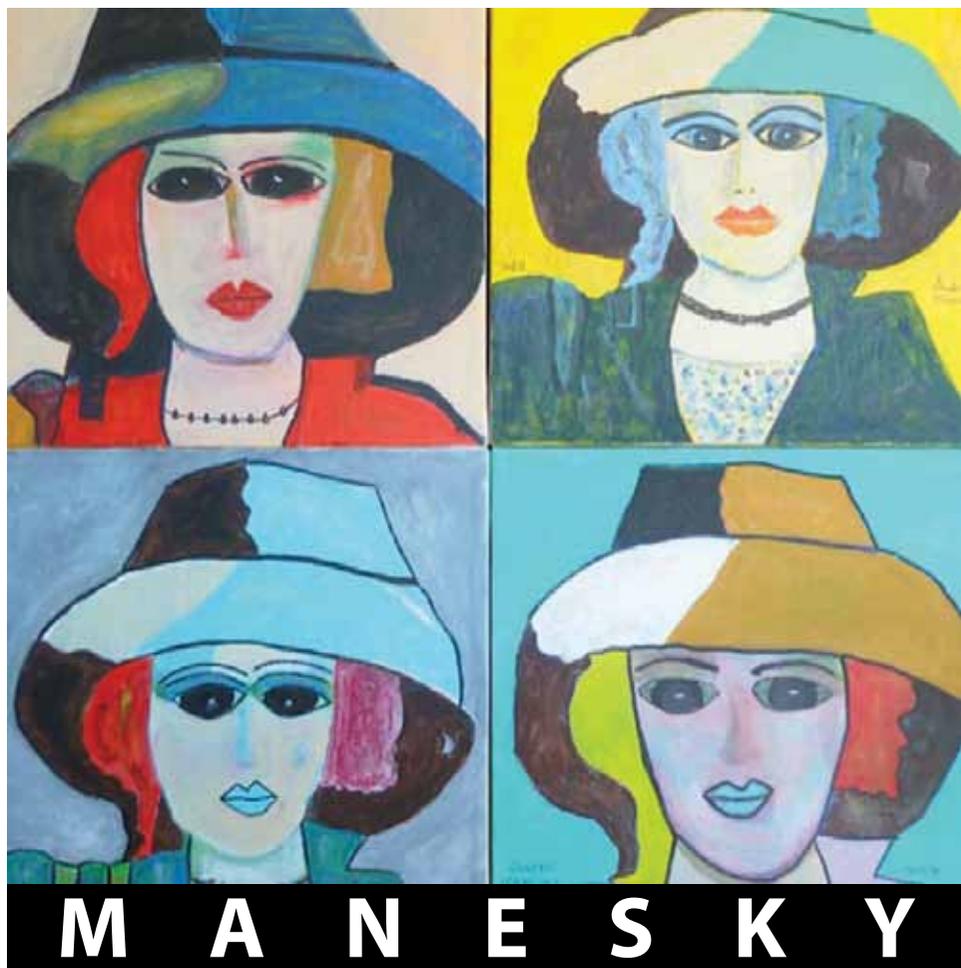
**Wang will be in attendance at the Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport Ave., for screenings Saturday-Sunday, April 21-22.**

## Carol Burnett in Joliet May 8-9

Legendary comedian/actress Carol Burnett will appear in "Laughter and Reflection with Carol Burnett: A Conversation with Carol Where the Audience Asks the Questions."

This event will take place at the Rialto Square Theatre, 102 N. Chicago St., Joliet, on Tuesday-Wed., May 8-9, at 8 p.m.

Tickets are \$39.50-\$125; contact the Rialto box office, Ticketmaster.com, all Ticketmaster outlets or Rialtosquare.com, or charge at 815-726-6600 and 800-982-2787.



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## Alvarez launches victim-awareness program

The Cook County state's attorney's office has initiated a monthlong community awareness campaign to educate and empower residents about victim rights and services, according to a press release.

Advocates in the office's Victim Witness Assistance Unit and Community Justice centers will give presentations in April to increase awareness and highlight services available to crime victims throughout the county as they travel an often difficult journey seeking justice and healing.

Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez will also host a Victim Service Awards ceremony in conjunction with National Crimes Victims' Rights Week (April 22- 28) to recognize those who work tirelessly on behalf of crime victims.

Call 773-674-7200 or visit [www.statesattorney.org](http://www.statesattorney.org).

## City of Chicago wants LGBT greeters

Chicago Greeter is seeking friendly, enthusiastic and knowledgeable volunteers to join the program in 2012.

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## WEEKLY DINING GUIDE IN WINDY CITY TIMES



### Nellcote

BY MEGHAN STREIT

I have a crush on a restaurant. After just one visit to Nellcote, a new West Loop eatery that serves uber-fresh European-inspired cuisine, I am smitten.

Nellcote inhabits the expansive Randolph Street space that used to be home to the now-closed Marche. Those of you who had been to Marche will recall its brightly colored French carnival atmosphere, which I thought worked well at the time and suited the space. All of those bold colors and that over-the-top décor have been stripped away. In stark contrast, Nellcote is decorated completely in soothing whites and ivories, and blinged out with more than a dozen crystal chandeliers. It's one of the most elegant and beautiful dining rooms I've seen in a while.

Nellcote makes a stunning visual impact as soon as you enter, but there's nothing austere or stuffy about the space. It's pretty tough to get a table at Nellcote right now, so expect it to be loud and bustling, and on some nights, there is a DJ playing music, adding to the upbeat party vibe. However, don't be fooled by the clubby atmosphere; Nellcote is seriously focused on food. The servers may also throw you off a bit. They're young, cool and dressed in their own clothes. So you may be surprised when these skinny jeans and hoodie-wearing hipsters start recommending wines like sommeliers and describing food



**Sturgeon with spring vegetables at Nellcote.**  
Photo by Meghan Streit

like trained chefs. I was beyond impressed by the knowledgeable, attentive and just plain nice service I received at Nellcote.

You'll find a handful of \$10 cocktails, all of which sound like tasty ways to begin a meal. I opted instead to sample a few glasses of wine from Nellcote's extensive list. My favorite was the pinot nero, which is actually a white wine made with the same grapes used to make pinot noir. It was one of the smoothest white wines I've ever tried, and while I'm not a huge fan of paying \$15 for a glass, this one was worth it.

Nellcote's menu consists of about 20 small plates made for sharing, so bring a few friends and an open mind to try some new things. While the menu has some European influences, there's a heavy focus on locally-sourced and in-season ingredients. Some of the pairings—like rabbit sausage with olive emulsion and pumpkin with

mint and almonds—sound a bit unusual, but everything I tasted was delightful and on the right side of experimental.

The shaved asparagus salad is a light and refreshing way to begin your meal. The crisp, paper-thin slices of asparagus are ever-so-slightly seasoned with Meyer lemon and Gouda, which is one of those pairings that sounds odd, but it works. I also recommend the risotto, a rich and creamy mixture of saffron, fava beans and Pecorino cheese. The only thing I didn't love about the dish was the gold leaf-topped lump of bone marrow in the center. It's a delicacy, I know, but I just don't need to eat bone marrow, even if it is covered in gold. If you like that sort of thing, I'm positive it would only add to the delicious decadence of the risotto.

There are several meat and fish dishes, ranging from \$8 to \$15. At the recommendation of my waitress, I tried the sturgeon. The sturdy steak-like fish was grilled to perfection with a subtle orange glaze and seasoned with sorrel. It's served with crisp and flavorful spring vegetables that complement the meaty fish.

Don't stop ordering before you get to the pasta and pizza section of the menu. Nellcote has its own on-site flour mill, my waitress told me, so you can be assured these pastas and pizzas are as fresh as any you'll find in the city. The pappardelle with black truffles, Pecorino and tarragon sounded divine, but I decided to try one of the more out-of-the-ordinary pastas, and opted instead for the strozzapreti, a longer curly noodle similar to cavatelli. Nellcote's version is dyed black with squid ink, which also gives the dish a salty flavor. It's tossed in pine nut pesto and mint and topped with a generous portion of tender lobster. Fresno chilies give the cold pasta dish a spicy kick. Again, this was one of those flavor combinations about which I was incredulous until I tasted. Instead of competing with one another, the strong flavors work together in a surprising and inventive way.

There are two tamer pizzas with expected toppings like garlic and oregano and buffalo mozzarella with basil, but all of the other pies surprise with combos like clams, green onions and crème fraiche or pistachios, red onions and ricotta. By

the time I got to the pizza portion of the meal, I was so confident in Nellcote's chefs' ability to make unusual flavors work together that I wanted to order all of the pizzas and had a hard time choosing just one. In the end, I settled on a pizza made with Taleggio, ramps from right here in Illinois and guanciale, a spicy Italian bacon. If you go to the trouble to set up a flour mill in a restaurant, you're probably going to make sure you've got somebody around who knows how to turn that flour into a killer pizza crust. So, not surprisingly, the crust was crisp, golden and bubbly—the Taleggio, ramps and guanciale teamed up to make the perfect bite. My dining partner and I deluded ourselves into thinking we might not devour the entire pizza. I can assure you we left with no doggie bags.

I was expecting the dessert offerings to be as quirky as the rest of the menu, but they were surprisingly straightforward (for the most part), and heavy on homemade ice creams and sorbets. I rarely opt for frozen desserts when warm gooey baked goods are available to me, but the salted caramel ice cream sounded too good to pass up. It was impossibly dense and creamy and struck the perfect balance between sweet and savory. My only complaint is that I wasn't served more of it. I could have eaten an entire pint.

I liked Marche, and I was sad when I heard last year that it would be closing. But after an evening at Nellcote, Marche is just a distant memory, and I could not be more pleased with its replacement. Nellcote doesn't rely on old stand-bys, but it also doesn't push the envelope so far that you feel like you were part of a science experiment rather than a meal (and need to stop for a burger on the way home because you didn't eat any actual food). For that, I expect reservation lines to be tied up for quite some time.

**Nellcote is located at 833 W. Randolph St.; visit [www.nellcoterestaurant.com](http://www.nellcoterestaurant.com) or call 312-432-0500.**

**Do you need some more Sugar & Spice in your life? Follow me on Twitter: @SugarAndSpiceMS for inside scoop and commentary on Chicago's dining scene.**

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773-281-3355  
[roscoes.com](http://roscoes.com)  
Visit our popular outdoor cafe. Salads, burgers, wraps, sandwiches, drink specials, and Sunday Brunch.

**Jane's Restaurant**  
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[janesrestaurant.com](http://janesrestaurant.com)  
An everyday, upscale eatery

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**Hamburger Mary's**  
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[hamburgermarys.com/chicago](http://hamburgermarys.com/chicago)  
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**ASIAN**  
**Miss Asia**  
434 W. Diversey Pkwy., Chicago  
773-248-3999  
[missasiacuisine.com](http://missasiacuisine.com)  
At Miss Asia we provide fine traditional Thai cuisine and an elegant dining atmosphere.

### BAKERY

**Swedish Bakery**  
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[swedishbakery.com](http://swedishbakery.com)  
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**Geja's Cafe**  
340 W. Armitage Ave., Chicago  
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[gejascafe.com](http://gejascafe.com)  
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## NUNN ON ONE: MUSIC

# Beverly McClellan: On TV's 'The Voice,' CD 'Fear Nothing'

BY JERRY NUNN

Singer Beverly McClellan rose to television fame on *The Voice* competing on Christina Aguilera's team. Before she was on the show Beverly had already released five albums independently.

Now she brings her latest offering—*Fear Nothing*, showcasing all of her skills—to the Red Dress fundraiser this April.

Windy City Times talked with McClellan before her upcoming appearance.

**Windy City Times:** Hi, Beverly. I heard you grew up on a farm, so you're a big animal lover.

Beverly McClellan: Yes, I grew up in Gate City, Va. I was born in Kingsport, Tenn.

**WCT:** You played instruments right from the beginning, I read somewhere.

BM: Since I was about 5 with the piano.

**WCT:** Is music in your family?

BM: Yes; I have a thick bluegrass background.

**WCT:** How did you learn to play all of these instruments, from the French horn to the mandolin?

BM: I don't know. I hear it. I have an ear for it. I don't read music or anything like that. I just do it.

**WCT:** How did you get on *The Voice*?

BM: I got this email as a dare. They didn't think I would even audition for it. This was from the fella that records my CDs. He suggested that I do it.

**WCT:** Was it an open audition somewhere?

BM: No, it was done by email. I sent them a YouTube video and, an hour later, they called me. It was real fast. Suddenly, NBC is on the phone.

**WCT:** That is crazy!

BM: I know. It is crazy. How do you think I felt about it? I thought they were kidding. Next thing you know, I am going to Hollywood.

**WCT:** What was the process like?

BM: Within three to four auditions I was standing in front of Christina. She picked me. If more than one judge turns around then you have a choice on who to go with. She turned around first, honey, so that was it. "Oh my Gawd! That diva wants me on her team!" was what was going through my head. I had to do Christina so, sorry everybody else. Hands down, she defines *The Voice*.

**WCT:** How did it feel to get on the show?

BM: I was a bald diva—me and Frenchie [Davis]. It was crazy! We were standing there and didn't have any hair. It was so cool.

**WCT:** I met Frenchie last summer and she was so sweet.

BM: I just talked to her this morning. I love her. I will always have a family with these guys. We went through some extreme stuff together so how can you not?

**WCT:** Do you ever want to grow your hair out?

BM: No way. I don't want to know when I go gray.

**WCT:** How many tattoos and piercings do you have?

BM: I only have on piercing in my face and my ears of course but not sure if that counts. With my tattoos I have stopped counting...

**WCT:** Tell me about your latest album, *Fear Nothing*. It is so rocking and bluesy.

BM: Well, it better be. It is everything I have worked for. It really is.

**WCT:** Being an openly lesbian singer, did they try to downplay that on *The Voice*?

BM: Hell no—not just no, but hell no. They told me to go for it and be myself, tell America

what you want them to know about you. Tyler Robinson came out on the show. Nakia was open about it as well as Vicci Martinez, and let's not forget Frenchie, too.

**WCT:** Have you watched the new season?

BM: Of course.

**WCT:** Do you have any favorites?

BM: Yes, I do. I love Jamar Rogers. He came from a bad background with drugs and contracted HIV. He was homeless for a while. He is on Cee Lo's team so I hope he is good to him. I got his number because I was so compelled to talk to him and tell him that it doesn't matter where you come from this is the time to shine.

**WCT:** How did you become involved with the Red Dress Party?

BM: They contacted me and my management.



Beverly McClellan.

I am ever so happy and honored to be a part of it. I don't know one person that is not affected in some way by AIDS or HIV.

Visit [www.chicagoredressparty.org](http://www.chicagoredressparty.org) to purchase tickets for the April 21 event at the Joffrey Ballet Studios, 10 E. Randolph St., with a VIP red carpet starting at 8 p.m. Good Morning America meteorologist Ginger Zee and actor/model Christian Carabias will co-host.

## Chicago premiere of 'Promise Land' April 20

NEQUA Studios is set to launch its feature film, *Promise Land*, directed by Kevin Dalvi.

*Promise Land* will open Friday, April 20, with a red-carpet premiere at AMC River East 21, 322 E. Illinois St. There will also be an after-party at NV Penthouse Lounge, 116 W. Hubbard St.

The film is a light comedy and drama, with immigration as the central theme. Its three stories intertwine in a tale of love, conflict and hope. Based on true stories, *Promise Land* provides a unique perspective of the South Asian experience in the United States, and an alternative view of the immigration issues faced by millions today.

A profile of out actress Mirza—who played a lesbian in the locally produced movie *Jamie and Jessie Are Not Together*—is in the March 7 issue of *Windy City Times*.

See [www.promiseandfilm.com](http://www.promiseandfilm.com).

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## ANTIQUES

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## ARTISTS

**CALL FOR ARTISTS: SKOKIE ART GUILD'S 51st ANNUAL ART FAIR.** July 14th & 15th, 2012. Fine art. Prizes and awards. Held on the Village Green, 5211 W. Oakton St., downtown Skokie, IL. apply now. **For applications or information: skokieart@aol.com or 847-677-8163. www.skokieartguild.org** (6/27/12)

## CLEANING SERVICES

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**THE JUNIPER CENTER/CENTER FOR RELATIONSHIP HEALTH.** Life gets complicated. You have tried all that you know to solve a problem or repair a relationship. When you are not sure what's next, we are here to help. LGBTQ individuals, couples & families. **juipercenterchicago.com 847-759-9110** (4/25/12-13)

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## LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to "An Act in relation to the use of an Assumed Business Name in the conduct or transaction of Business in the State," as amended, that a certification was filed by the undersigned with the County Clerk of Cook County. File No. D12129807 on April 4, 2012, Under the Assumed Name of "Caviar" with the business located at P.O.Box 81468, Chicago, IL 60681-0468; 9449 S. Kedzie Ave., Suite 138, Evergreen Park, IL 60805. The true name(s) and residence address of the owner(s) are: Rosiland M. Baldwin, 116 W. Elm St., Apt 209, Chicago, IL 60610. (4/25/12-3)

## LEGAL SERVICES

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 email: violaw@rcn.com

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**NEED LEGAL HELP?** Pride Law, Andersonville's legal aid clinic for the LGBT community can help. Clinic hours every Wednesday, 5-8:00 p.m. by appointment only. **Call 1-866-703-5509 or send us an email at prideslaw@tsamislaw.com.**

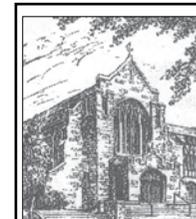
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# REAL ESTATE

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ful woodwork and hardwood floors throughout, stained glass window in 1 bedroom & entry area, central air, ceiling fans, free wireless internet, free laundry, parking spot in garage included, back deck & use of pleasantly landscaped back yard, pets welcome, walk to CTA Brown Line & buses. **Available May 1st \$1350 plus 1 month security deposit (pet deposit separate). Mel -773.506.9693.** (4/25/12-4)

**EDGEWATER COMMUTER ADVANTAGE** you'd be happy to come home to. Walk to beach, bus, redline and shops. Joyously sunny 1000sq.ft. Big bedrooms with walk-in closets. Nice size kitchen and dining room. Cameo and white with red oak floors. \$1250 with heat plus laundry, patio and yard, new sink and intercom. **IT'S YOUR MOVE...773-706-6065.** (4/18/12-2)

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John Merlo Library  
644 W Belmont Ave.  
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**Thursday, April 19, 6:00 pm**  
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Chicago, IL 60642

**Wednesday, April 25, 6:00 pm**  
John Merlo Library  
644 W Belmont Ave.  
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**Wednesday, May 9, 6:00 pm**  
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# calendar

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## Wed., April 18

**Screaming Queens: The Riot at Compton's Cafeteria screening** Discussion of Susan Stryker's documentary to follow; 5pm, Kresge 2-321, 1880 Campus Dr., Evanston, www.northwestern.edu

**Fashion and Philanthropy** Saks Fifth Avenue will host a benefit for Center on Halsted featuring a fashion presentation by Eric Jennings, Vice President, Fashion Director for Menswear. Cocktails, ors d'oeuvres, latest fashion trends. Saks Fifth Avenue will donate 10 percent of the sales up to \$5,000. Space is limited. R.S.V.P. a must: to jkosior@centeronhalsted.org. 6pm-8pm, Saks Fifth Avenue Men's Store, 717 N. Michigan Ave., 2nd Floor

**Queen Bea: A Salute to Beatrice Arthur** The late Beatrice Arthur, better known as Maude and Dorothy Zornik from the Golden Girls was also a Tony Award winning musical theater star. Tickets: \$25; 7:30pm, 312.742.TIXS, Maxim's, the Nancy Goldberg International Center, 24 East Goethe St., Chicago, https://secure.ticketsage.net/login.aspx

**\$1 Drink Night** Join SPIN every Wednesday for \$1 Cocktails, featuring 42 Below Vodka, Wine & Beer and \$5 Bacardi Bombs! DJ's Riley York, Bryan, Dominic and Chester SPIN their two dance floors until 2am; 9pm, Spin Nightclub, 800 W. Belmont Ave., www.spin-nightclub.com

**GL Chamber of Commerce Mega Connect Networking Breakfast** This massive speed networking event is done in partnership with 14 other Chambers to create an amazing morning. 7:30am-9:30pm, Holiday Inn North Shore, 5300 W. Touhy Avenue, Skokie, http://www.glchamber.org

## 'NIGHT' FEVER Friday, April 20

The 2012 Night of Noise will take place at the Thompson Center in the Loop.

Photo by Bahar Partow



## Thursday, April 19

**SAIC Fashion 2012 and The Walk** Taking place for the second consecutive year against the backdrop of beautiful Millennium Park, Chase Promenade, this year's fashion show—featuring more than 300 garments from SAIC's Fashion Design BFA candidates showcased by more than 70 professional models from Factor Runway—will be the largest ever. 12pm-10pm, Millennium Park, 201 E. Randolph St., www.saic.edu/degrees\_resources/departments/fash/index.html#fash\_show

**Generations Gala** Planned Parenthood of Illinois to host Generations Gala featuring Joan Walsh, Editor At Large for Salon.com and MSNBC Political Analyst, to speak about current state of women's health care; 6pm-9pm, Fairmont Chicago, Millennium Park, www.ppil.org/generations

**Howard Brown's Spring Forward Cocktail Party** As a thank-you for ongoing support, join Howard Brown Health Center for an evening of free food and drink and live

DJ music. RSVP to www.howardbrown.org/springforward, as space is very limited. 6pm-9pm, Downtown Bar, 440 N. State, www.howardbrown.org/springforward

**Jomama Jones: Radiate** Produced by Jane M. Saks. Legendary expatriate performer Jomama Jones presents an intimate concert version of her sold-out smash show, accompanied by her collaborator and musical director, Bobby Halvorson, to perform songs from her CDs Lone Star, Radiate and the upcoming EP Six Ways Home while sharing surprising observations of the America to which she has returned. Through April 21. 7:30pm, Victory Gardens Theater, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave., www.colum.edu/institutewomengender

**Girl You Know It's True** When Bixby, a 40-ish playwright fails to get his work produced he conjures up a radical new identity for himself: an impostor. His stand in - an African American lesbian woman in a wheelchair - instantly shoots to fame. 7:30pm-9pm, 773-789-8093, Chopin Theatre, 1543 W Division St., pavementgroup.org

**Windy City Gay Idol** Windy City Gay Idol continues the search for the best amateur LGBT singers. 8pm singer sign up. 9pm, Crew, 4804 N. Broadway, www.windy-citymediagroup.com/lgbt/windy-city-gay-idol-kicks-off-10th-year-/36745.html

**Steampunk Thursdays** Elate is taking its eco-friendly philosophy to new heights, on Thursdays, by re-inventing itself as the Steampunk center of Chicago. 9:30pm, 312-202-9900, Elate, 111 W Huron St., www.elatechicago.com

## Friday, April 20

**Who's Bad - The Ultimate Michael Jackson Tribute** All the thrills of Michael Jackson's live show in musicianship and choreography, with songs dating from MJ's childhood to his reign as King of the Pop Jungle. 1:30pm, 708-388-8881, 115 Bourbon St., Merrionette Park, www.115bourbonstreet.com

**Break the Silence! 2012 Night of Noise** On the evening of the Day of Silence, join 450+ LGBTQ and Ally youth to collectively break the silence, speak out about Day of Silence experience, and celebrate the LGBTQ youth community. Youth will speak and perform poetry and dance and then dance the night away with a DJ. iman@illinoisafeschools.org for more info. 5:30pm, Thompson Center Plaza, 100 W Randolph St.

**Woman Made Gallery's 20th Anniversary** WMG's rich exhibition history includes domestic violence, breast cancer, war related issues, and religious subjects. One of the works, Mary Ellen Croteau's "Women on a

Pedestal," is now in WMG's permanent collection. Will honor Co-Founder/Executive Director, Beate Minkovski. \$65 prepaid or \$75 at the door; 6pm-9:30pm, 312-738-0400, Salvage One, 1840 West Hubbard St., www.womanmade.org

**Equality Illinois Ladies' Night** Looking to start the weekend right? Then don't miss the ladies' night social, coming to you at Parlour on Clark! A \$10 donation to EQIL gets you two cocktails! RSVP to info@eqil.org. 8pm-10pm, Parlour on Clark, 6341 N Clark, Chicago, http://www.eqil.org

**Alex In Wonderland** Alex In Wonderland continues MidTangent's dedication to bringing original works with a familiar twist to the Chicago LGBTQ community, providing once again the chance to relive your childhood with stories that are close to your heart, told the way you've always wanted. 9pm-10pm, Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted St., www.hydratechicago.com; Tickets: http://midtangent.tix.com/event.asp?event=452247

## Saturday, April 21

**Mark Zubro - Author Reading** Chicago's premier gay mystery writer, Mark Zubro, will be reading from Black and Blue and Pretty Dead, Too his gay leather mystery novel. 2pm-3pm, 773-761-9200, Leather Archives & Museum, 6418 N. Greenview Ave., www.leatherarchives.org

**Against Equality Collective's book launch** Anthology "Against Equality: Don't Ask to Fight Their Wars!" For details, contact nairyasmin@gmail.com; 11am-2pm, Brunchluck, Mess Hall, 6932 N. Glenwood Ave.

**Ashley Morgan Birthday Show: Toasting The Showgirl** Join the "Call Girls" along with Ashley Morgan's friends from The Chicago Spirit Brigade as they bring you a show honoring the birthday girl and benefiting Pediatric AIDS Chicago Prevention Initiative. There \$5 suggested donation; 9:30pm, The Call (Chicago), 1547 W. Bryn Mawr Ave.

**Cassidy and Steans hosting Earth Day Action** During Earth Day clean-up, residents will be able to help mulch trees, pick up trash, and beautify Touhy Park. After the clean up, participants are welcome to enjoy pizza, face painting, and other fun activities. State Rep. Cassidy and state Sen. Heather Steans are co-hosting with the Touhy Park Advisory Council. Info at 773-784-2002. 11am-1pm, Touhy Park, 7348 N. Paulina Ave.

**Chicago League of Lady Arm Wrestlers (CLLAW) XIII** Generation of wrestlers battle against returning veterans for the coveted CLLAW sash and crown. See the theatrical fundraising experience Penthouse Magazine calls "one hell of a show!" three-hour open bar package and \$25 tickets available for online pre-sale. Proceeds benefit Sideshow Theatre Company and "Erasing the Distance". \$10 tickets will be available at the door for cash bar only. 10pm, O'Malley's Liquor Kitchen, 3551 N. Sheffield Ave., www.cllaw.org

**Nathan Lane and Brian Dennehy in Goodman's Iceman Cometh** Tickets on sale by web and phone. Price range (\$53- \$119) is subject to change. Luxury Ticket Package includes a contribution to the theater, access to house seats, use of the patrons' lounge private bar, etc. Runs through June 10. 11:45pm, 312-443-3800, Goodman Theatre, 170 N Dearborn St., www.goodmantheatre.org

**2012 Chicago Red Dress Party** The Voice's Beverly McClellan will perform at the 2nd Annual Chicago Red Dress Party 2012. Dress for the fight, End AIDS. 8pm, Joffrey Ballet Studios, 10 E. Randolph St., www.chicagoredressparty.org

## Sunday, April 22

**Urban Village Church: Andersonville service** Andersonville is a neighborhood full of passion, art, diversity, and eclectic energy, all which makes Urban Village



## MAKING HIS MARK

Saturday, April 21

Gay mystery writer Mark Zubro will read from his works at Leather Archives & Museum, 6418 N. Greenview Ave.

Photo from Zubro

Church thrilled to be joining the community! 10:30am-11:45am, 1602 W. Ainslie (at Ashland), www.newchicagochurch.com

**Urban Village Church** Spiritual worship is about coming together as community to make space for God to move in us. 10:15am-11:30am, Urban Village Church, Spertus Institute, 610 S. Michigan Ave., www.urbanvillagechurch.org

**Taverna 750 First Call Brunch** Come sample the amazing food and drink of Taverna 750. Spruce up your Sunday as Taverna 750 unveils its tasty creations and wonderful libations. \$20 packages to meet your Sunday Brunch goals! 11am-2pm, Taverna 750, 750 W. Cornelia Ave.

**Imerman Angels presents Spring Launch** What's Your Date Campaign, recognizing the celebrations, anniversaries, tributes and memorials that dot our collective calendar and have affected all of our cancer fighters, survivors, and caregivers. 4pm-8pm, Moe's Cantina, 155 W. Kinzie St., www.iaspringlaunch.eventbrite.com.

## Monday, April 23

**FUELING THE FLARE-a benefit for Cyon** After a recent home break-in, community icon Cyon Flare is in need of a few items that were stolen. Join friends and supporters in this effort to help replace the essential tools to continue his valued community outreach. \$10 suggested donation provides you with a drink ticket and door prize entry. 6pm-8pm, Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St., www.facebook.com/events/26758390999081/

**Drag Race with Frida Lay** Chicago's only 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 24

**Making the Most of the Distressed Property Market** Learn how to use pre-tax investment dollars in a buyers' market, how to buy distressed properties like short sales and foreclosures. Learn the differences between short sales, foreclosures and "being underwater." 6:30pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., http://cohdistressedpropertymarket.eventbrite.com

## Wed., April 25

**Equality Illinois' annual lobby day** Lobby our legislators for passage of the Illinois Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act. 7am, Illinois State House, Springfield, www.eqil.org

**A Modern Bon Foster** An evening that celebrates the progress of our modern civil-rights movement. 6:30pm program, 6:45 pm buffet reception, open bar. Tickets: \$150, VIP \$250, sponsorships at \$500+; 6pm, 312-663-4413, The Art Institute of Chicago, 111 S. Michigan Ave., Tickets: http://www.lambdalegal.org/bonfoster



## KEEPING UP WITH THE JONES

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Photo from Jane Saks

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# BILLY MASTERS

"I go to the house, I ring the buzzer and no one's there. I go back to my car ... and she drives up ... with the handsome Brad Pitt. I thought, 'Oh man, I'm not gonna get no pussy.'"—Mike Tyson eloquently describes what happened when he tried to reconnect with Robin Givens after their divorce. I think that was good news for Robin ... and for the pussy.

You know what my problem is? I'm too damn nice. I'm sure that's not the first thing you thought of, but it's true. And it's really difficult to write this type of column when you're nice (as my more snarky—and more successful—online counterpart will attest to).

When that famous TV host was caught with his pants down in a transvestite sexual encounter,



Sir Elton John (above) had more than a little fun with Channing Tatum recently.

did I take the thousands of dollars he offered me in an alley to kill the story? Not on your life. I squelched it because I felt bad for him. The fact that he then donated the money to the Pediatric AIDS Foundation was a happy by-product. On the negative side, every time he sees me at an event, he quickly runs in the opposite direction. And those pesky calls from his subsequent female companions have become rather tedious.

But here I am, in that position again. For the past year, I've extolled the virtues of Evan Jonigkeit and his penis, which is on display in the play High. When the national tour of the play starring Kathleen Turner and Jonigkeit commenced, I said I'd share his nether regions with you if it surfaced on film or photo. Lo and behold, a fan provided me with footage, thus causing my dilemma. I'm friendly with many members of the tour and am quite fond of Evan. I ran the situation by playwright and producer, Matthew Lombardo. Not surprisingly, he asked me to not run it—out of respect for Jonigkeit and because of our friendship. One of my friends at a prominent magazine told me that these situations come up daily. They make deals with the people—suppress one thing in return for something else (which sounds like blackmail to moi). Anyway, what could High give me? I already go to all the openings, all the parties. Heck, they even seat me front and center so I get a good view (come to think of it, maybe they just want to keep an eye on me). I suppose I could demand some sexual favors during intermission. Hmm...

Being a theater buff, I grasp every opportunity I can to spend time in NYC and see shows. You will find complete reviews of everything I saw on BillyMasters.com, but let's give you just a taste of my itinerary. The highlight of my trip was seeing the glorious Charles Busch in his latest work, Judith of Bethulia. While I'm sure it's just a coincidence, every performance sold out just days after I wrote about it. This is only the second time in the history of the Theater for the

New City that an entire run sold out before it even began—the first time being for Busch's The Divine Sister.

This play finds Charles in rare form—as a temptress in a Biblical epic with more than a nod and a wink to Mae West. What I adore about Busch is that he lovingly brings to life a style of acting from a bygone era. He most certainly puts his unique stamp on it, but without ever diminishing its authenticity. The entire cast works like a well-oiled machine. In fact, they all seem to simply be having a ball—like they're just putting on a show to amuse their friends. Special kudos to the uproariously funny Mary Testa, who is a perfect foil for Charles. I'd be remiss if I didn't mention the inhumanly hunky Dave August and Larry Bullock, who serve as soldiers and servants who are nearly naked as often as possible. Will this show resurface beyond its limited run? Fingers crossed.

Sting's annual Concert for the Rainforest Fund took place at Carnegie Hall April 3 and included a special performance by Elton John singing "Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend". Elton previously did this number with some shirtless chorus boys at a Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS benefit in 2000. This time around, his guest artist was Channing Tatum. Chan, decked out like a chorus boy in the musical Chicago, used this opportunity to show off his stripper moves, which will be on display in the upcoming film Magic Mike. Elton grabbed Tatum's ass, somehow produced a jewel, and then Channing switched positions to bump and grind Miss Elton with his own jewels. Oh, those silly boys! We have a few pics of Elton and Channing in the act but, alas, no video has seemed to emerge. But we can show the video from 2000 along with the current photos on BillyMasters.com.

Our "Ask Billy" question comes from Thomas in Quebec: "My best friend told me he saw a photo of Zac Efron's penis online. I think he said it was from Australia. Do you have it??"

And this is how rumors get started. Here's the real story. Zac Efron was in Australia doing promotion for his flick The Lucky One. While there, the paparazzi snapped some pics of him walking around his hotel balcony shirtless (one of the more intriguing shots was him reaching into the front of his shorts ... perhaps looking for some change). Someone decided that wasn't good enough, so they doctored the photo to make it look like Zac was naked. Since we've got the original, we know that's not real. What IS real, however, is that moments later, someone's bare buttocks is seen walking by the balcony—a buttock that looks suspiciously like Zac's. Of course, there could be another explanation. He could have some hot friend over who looks a lot like him and enjoys walking around naked. You can decide for yourself when you see the pics at BillyMasters.com.

When I'm giving you a glimpse of Zac's southern hemisphere, it's definitely time to end yet another column. It might have been very theater-heavy, but we still fit in a fair amount of nude men. And, let me once again remind you that if you do happen to see Evan Jonigkeit's penis floating around out there, it was mine first. I guess you could say I had right of first refusal. What I was doing refusing it is another question; one best answered on www.BillyMasters.com—the site that never says no. You can ask me about that, or anything else, by sending a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before Elton shows us what else he found in Channing: a wristwatch, car keys—oh, the possibilities are endless. To all the Albanians out there, "Krishti Ungjall." To the Greeks, "Christos Anesti." And to everyone else, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

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# Force stronger than ever in its 10th year

BY ROSS FORMAN

The Chicago Force celebrates its 10th-anniversary season this spring, boasting its most talented and experienced team ever.

The team has more than 40 returning women from last year's 9-1 team, including many with four years of experience or more.

"It's hard to predict from year to year how a team will develop," said Linda Bache, the Force's owner and general manager. "Even with this many veterans, you don't always know what you're going to get from them. Everybody wants to win a championship—the question is, what is each person willing to do to make it happen?"

"It's about sacrifice and commitment every day. It's about wanting it more than your opponent every day. It's not yet clear how badly these players want it."

The Force—with a combined 68-20 record over the past nine seasons—kick off the eight-game regular season Saturday, April 14, in Kansas City.

"We are excited about this year's team; we have tremendous potential," said Bache, 49, who lives in Chicago's Rogers Park neighborhood. "There's no substitute for experience, and that is the strength of this year's team. We feel confident about our experience, our coaching staff, and the overall talent level of our returning veterans and first-year players."

The schedule is Bache's biggest concern, she said.

"We have games on six consecutive weekends before we get a bye," Bache said. "We have two new teams on our schedule this year, the Cleveland Fusion and Columbus Comets, [and] both are teams that have won division titles and gone

to the playoffs."

Plus, the Force play host to the St. Louis Slam May 5. The Force home game against St. Louis in 2011 was the most physical game of the season, Bache said: "It will be critical to keep players as healthy as possible as we won't have a break until Memorial Day weekend."

The Force home opener is April 21 against Columbus, with kickoff set for 5 p.m. All home game will be played at Evanston Township High School's Lazier Field, 2285 Church St.

"We have a difficult schedule and it really starts out with a bang. We open on the road against our arch rival, the Kansas City Tribe," Bache said. "The last four seasons, each of our games [against the Tribe] has been won by the home team, so we'll be trying to break that pattern. They're a very fast, disciplined, talented team. Beating them on their home field will be an enormous task."

The Force ran the regular season in 2011 undefeated for the third time in organization history. Chicago then defeated Pittsburgh in the first-round of playoffs, but lost to the defending champion Boston Militia. Chicago ended 9-1.

"It was particularly difficult to accept the loss because we did not play well," Bache said. "It's one thing to lose to a better team; it's another to feel like you had a bad game at the worst possible time. Boston went on to win the championship for the second year in a row. They are an exceptional team, but I can't help but wonder what the outcome might have been if we had played our best."

The Force lost four key members of the 2011 roster: outside linebacker Ro Soper, wide receiver Albi Zhubi, running back Jessica Springer and



The Chicago Force in a 2011 game. Photo by Ross Forman

defensive end Angie Bandstra.

Zhubi, now living in New York, has been a perennial award-winner and top contributor, particularly on offense. Soper, the 2010 team MVP, had to retire for medical reasons, Bache said. Springer was the Eastern Conference Offensive Player of the Year. Bandstra was coming off her best season, Bache said. "We will miss these four players both on and off the field."

The top two newcomers to the team were previously core members of the Detroit Demolition, a Force opponent during 2006-2008. April Fowlkes and Porcha Ferguson were both top players for the Demolition, so, "we're very happy to have them on the Force," Bache said. "We're also very pleased with the development of our rookies, particularly Stephanie Precourt, Mary Choules, Chaya Barba, Elisha Okrey, Jen Kelly and Lisa Kadelak."

## Here's a detailed look at the 2012 Chicago Force:

—Offense: "I don't know if our offense will be quite as dominant or explosive as last year, but we're going to score a lot of points," Bache said. "With the amount of talent and experience we have, I think that we'll be very effective."

—Quarterback Sami Grisafe: She was the Offensive co-MVP last year and is entering her sixth season with the Force. She is, arguably, the most accomplished QB in women's football. "We're fortunate to have that kind of talent and experience at such an important position," Bache said. "But Sami's music career is taking off, so she will not be able to participate in all of our games this season. We have several of our top athletes taking reps at QB, such as Jeanette Gray, Ashley Berggren, Elizabeth Strozinsky and Kari Pfeifer. All have shown promise and will be capable of stepping in when Sami is touring."

—Running game: Melissa Smith has returned to the team and is the starting running back. She last played in the 2008 championship game. "Melissa is a powerhouse and it's a huge asset to have her back on the field for us. She is a gifted player and a selfless teammate," Bache said.

—Passing game: "We feel very good about our passing game," Bache said. Wide receiver Jeanette Gray is back and she led the league in receptions last year and was the team's 2011 Offensive co-MVP. Several other key veteran receivers are Brandi Srda, Ashley Berggren, Trish Harper, Martha Dantuma, Elizabeth Strozinsky and Dana Vermilye.

—Coaching staff: John Konecki is back for his fourth season as head coach and offensive coordinator. "He is extremely talented, very dedicated and one of the most respected coaches in the sport," Bache said. Konecki boasts a 33-7 record with the Force, and he also coached the women's Team USA to the gold medal in the 2010

World Championship in Sweden. The Force has a new defensive coordinator: Adam Lewandowski. "Coach Lew is a great motivator and teacher, and he is intent upon returning the Force defense to its previous glory," Bache said.

—Team defense: "I'm expecting our defense to be much improved this season," Bache said. "The first five or six years of our existence, the Force dominated opponents by virtue of a gang-buster defense. That dominance had diminished the last couple years. We've made defense a top priority and we're willing to sacrifice in others areas if necessary to carry that through."

—Team outlook: "This team can go as far as it decides to go," Bache said. "I know that we're capable of going to the championship, but ability is only a part of what a championship requires. Adversity will reveal what kind of team we will be. Starting the season with a hostile road game against one of the top teams in the league will provide significant adversity right out of the gate. If we can meet that challenge, we'll grow as a team by leaps and bounds. I'm very excited about our potential, as are all the coaches and staff members."

**Note:** The Chicago Force won its season-opener Saturday, April 14, defeating the host Kansas City Tribe 21-14. Chicago struck first, but the Tribe quickly answered and it was 7-6 after the first quarter. The Force regained the lead early in the second quarter when Brandy Hatcher scored on a 5-yard run and the team then converted a two-point attempt. It was 14-7 Chicago at half-time, and 21-7 at the end of three quarters. The Tribe cut the lead to seven with 1:52 remaining to play, but Chicago held down the stretch to secure the victory.

## Bears tackle to help open Force season

The women's full-tackle football team the Chicago Force will hold its home opener Saturday, April 21, versus the Columbus Comets at 5 p.m. at the newly renovated Lazier Field, located at Evanston Township High School, 2285 Church St., Evanston.

Chicago Bears defensive tackle Israel Idonije will toss the coin at the opener.

There are eight games total in the season, not including three rounds of playoffs, a conference championship and the national championship, which will be broadcast from Pittsburgh Aug. 4 on ESPN.

Linda Bache, the owner and general manager of the team, stated, "This is the most experienced and talented team we've ever had. We are working very hard in hopes that we will be one of the two teams to make it to the championships on ESPN."

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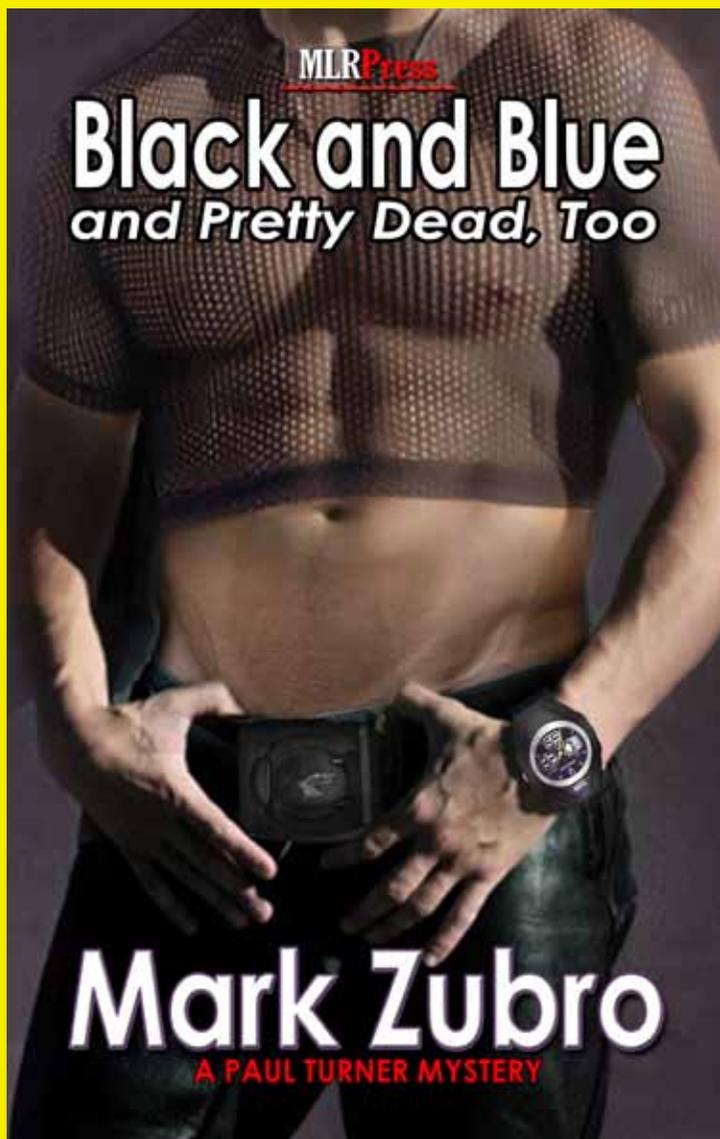
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