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Obama (r)evolves on gay marriage

NEWS ANALYSIS BY TRACY BAIM

Barack Obama returned back to his 1996 view on same-sex marriage last week, but this time he did so as president of the United States.

In an interview with ABC's Robin Roberts, Obama confirmed that he has "evolved" on the issue and personally backs same-sex marriage.

While he said the issue is for the states to handle, which disappointed some, the fact is that Obama can't regulate what states do—and it will be up to the U.S. Supreme Court, and other federal district courts, to decide the application of federal laws that force states to recognize another state's contracts, including on marriage.

Obama's revolution back to his 1996 view, stated in a response to an Outlines newspaper candidate questionnaire (Outlines purchased and merged with Windy City Times in 2000), was part personal and part practical. In 1996, when he was first running for the Illinois state senate, Obama said he would support same-sex marriage

and fight any efforts to limit it—this was in light of the then-new plans for "defense of marriage" state and federal laws.

At the core, Obama actually never changed his view that same-sex couples should have the same rights and benefits as those given to opposite-sex couples. What changed after 1996 was a slow move away from the word "marriage."

In 1998, again surveyed by Outlines, he took no position on the topic of same-sex marriage. By 2004, when he was running for U.S. Senate, Obama told me in an interview that he supported civil unions and all the benefits and rights of marriage for LGBT couples—but not the use of the word marriage—because it was a more realistic and practical goal to have. By the general election that year, Obama first injected religion into the argument.

Which is pretty much where he has stayed ever since—using a religious excuse as a basis for keeping the word "marriage" out of the debate, while remaining in favor of the rights and benefits.

But that practical, academic approach was never going to be enough, because the word "marriage" has very real legal and economic benefits. Setting up an entirely new set of laws for same-sex couples will always be separate and unequal.

Parallel to Obama's own shift on same-sex marriage has been a tremendous shift in public opinion. Some polls show a slight majority of Americans now favor gay marriage. Even though the right wing still campaigns vigorously on social issues, there is a momentum building in favor of marriage equality. Obama boarded the train mid-trip, but the belief is that his words will play an important role moving forward.

I am the first to state that there should be no government involvement in our relationships, including any benefits given to two people who happen to be married. But while there are more than 1,000 financial benefits of marriage federally, plus many locally, those benefits should be equal. I also see the value of the marriage

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Two Obama supporters, Karen Dixon (left) and Nan Schaffer, held a \$1.4 million-dollar LGBT fundraiser for the president in their Washington, D.C. home Feb. 9, 2012. This photo of their 2008 Chicago wedding was on prominent display for Obama to see. The LGBT donor community has been pressing Obama hard to "evolve" fully on marriage equality. [Schaffer is a co-owner of Windy City Media Group.] Photo by Joel Schachtel

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Read about famed magician Brad Ross, who uses his skills to demonstrate the perils of bullying.
Photo from Ross



See photos from the queer prom held last weekend at the National Museum of Mexican Art.

Photo by Karla Munguia



See images from Goodman's annual gala.

Photo by Jerry Nunn

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Obama comes out in support of marriage equality

BY LISA KEEN
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

President Obama said in a White House-arranged interview May 9 that "same-sex couples should be able to get married."

The statement, in an interview with ABC, marks a significant and long expected "evolution" for President Obama in his political position concerning same-sex marriage.

"I've always been adamant that gay and lesbian Americans should be treated fairly and equally," said Obama. "...I had hesitated on gay marriage, in part because I thought civil unions would be sufficient." But after talking to friends and family, neighbors and staff, he said, "I've just concluded that for me personally it is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same sex couples should be able to get married."

The president's remarks can be viewed at <http://gma.yahoo.com/blogs/abc-blogs/presi->



Chad Griffin (left) and Evan Wolfson. Griffin photo from Human Rights Campaign; Wolfson photo by David Shankbone

marriage and equality are universal values that unite us all. They remind us that we are all—as a People and a Nation—striving to form a more perfect Union."

The interview, according to numerous media reports, was pre-arranged by the White House to take place with ABC Good Morning America anchor Robin Roberts of Good Morning America. The media speculated the interview was set up hastily and deliberately to quell the political conflagration that erupted Sunday, when Vice President Joe Biden told NBC Meet the Press that he is "absolutely comfortable" with gay couples marrying and that he believes they should have the "exact same rights" as straight couples to do so.

Prior to May 9, President Obama has not previously expressed proactive legal support for same-sex marriage equality. In October 2010, he told gay political blogger Joe Sudbay that he was "unwilling to sign onto same-sex marriage primarily" because of his "understandings of the



dent-obama-affirms-his-support-for-same-sex-marriage.html. And excerpts will air tonight on ABC's World News with Diane Sawyer.

Reaction was dramatic.

Evan Wolfson, head of the national Freedom to Marry group, said, "The president's support marks a historic turning point for the freedom to marry movement."

Incoming Human Rights Campaign President Chad Griffin said Obama's remarks would be "celebrated by generations to come."

"For the millions of young gay and lesbian Americans across this nation, President Obama's words provide genuine hope that they will be the first generation to grow up with the freedom to fully pursue the American dream," said Griffin. "...As President Obama recognized today, the fight to secure marriage equality is the defining element of our generation's search for greater freedom."

MSNBC commentator Chris Matthews called it "earth-shaking" and predicted right-wing conservatives "will use everything they can to exploit this" politically in the November campaign.

Ted Olson, lead attorney for the same-sex couples challenging California's Proposition 8 ban, said, "Today is a proud day for all Americans."

"The bedrock American principles of freedom and human dignity are central to the political and legal convictions of Republicans, Democrats, liberals, and conservatives alike," said Olson. "President Obama's words remind us that

traditional definitions of marriage." He said "attitudes" about same-sex marriage "evolve, including mine." And he reiterated that position two months later, in an interview with The Advocate's Kerry Eleveld, saying, "My attitudes are evolving on this."

Numerous times since then, Obama and White House Press Secretary Jay Carney have been asked whether the president's position had yet evolved. With the Republican presidential race settling onto Mitt Romney, one national poll indicated the public didn't see much difference between Obama and Romney on same-sex marriage.

The ABC-Washington Post poll, conducted in early April, found 46 percent of 1,103 adults nationwide thought Obama would "do a better job" at "dealing with social issues such as abortion and gay marriages," and 38 percent said Romney would. But the margin of error was 3.5 points, making the difference as small as 4.5 points.

Although there were many big news stories erupting at the same time—including news that the CIA had stopped a plot to blow up a plane—the mainstream media swarmed all over the Biden story. CNN media commentator Howard Kurtz wrote, in a DailyBeast.com blog, "There is absolutely no question that Biden's response was cleared by the White House. Vice presidents are not allowed to freelance on talk shows, especially on such a sensitive issue. So Obama was sending out Biden to further mollify the gay community without having to actu-

ally take a stand himself." MSNBC's news anchor Chuck Todd said the White House was being especially "sensitive" about the remarks because "gay money, in this election, has replaced Wall Street money."

Interest in Obama's position on same-sex marriage was in the news, even prior to Biden's remarks. The Obama re-election campaign had issued a statement in March, opposing the North Carolina Amendment One, which bans legal recognition of any same-sex relationship. The statement said, "While the President does not weigh in on every single ballot measure in every state, the record is clear that the President has long opposed divisive and discriminatory efforts to deny rights and benefits to same-sex couples. That's what the North Carolina ballot initiative would do—it would single out and discriminate against committed gay and lesbian couples—and that's why the President does not support it." The campaign sent out a similar statement April 9 in opposition to a similar ballot measure before voters in Minnesota in November.

Asked about same-sex marriage on the campaign trail, Republican Mitt Romney said May 9 he supports neither same-sex marriage nor civil unions.

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Court: Control of child-porn images determines legality

The New York Court of Appeals ruled May 8 that viewing child pornography online is not a crime, according to MSNBC.com.

The ruling came in the case of college professor James D. Kent, whose work computer had more than 100 images in its Internet cache. The court dismissed one of the two counts of promoting a sexual performance of a child as well as one of the dozens of counts of possession of child pornography.

Previously, Kent argued that someone else at Marist College must have put the images on his computer. He was sentenced to one to three years in state prison in August 2009.

Writing for the majority of four of the six justices, Senior Judge Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick wrote, "Merely viewing Web images of child pornography does not, absent other proof, constitute either possession or procurement within the meaning of our Penal Law. Rather, some affirmative act is required (printing, saving, downloading, etc.) to show that defendant, in fact, exercised dominion and control over the images that were on his screen."

Several organizations responded to the ruling. Patrick Trueman, president/CEO of Morality in Media, urged "the United States Attorney for the Southern District to immediately move to arrest and prosecute the defendant for violating federal child pornography laws."

Writer Maurice Sendak dies

Author Maurice Sendak, best known for writing and illustrating the kids' book *Where the Wild Things Are*, died May 8 at the age of 83, according to People.com. He died of complications of a recent stroke at his Connecticut home.

Besides "Wild Things" (1963), he also wrote works such as *The Nutshell Library* (1962), *In the Night Kitchen* (1970), *Outside Over There* (1981) and *Higglety Pigglety Pop!* (1967), among others. "Kitchen" and "Outside" were a trilogy with "Wild Things."

He also wrote *We Are All in the Dumps With Jack and Guy: Two Nursery Rhymes with Pictures*, a 1993 work that tackles issues such as homeless children, AIDS, crime and inflation.

The New York Times described Sendak as "lower-class, Jewish, gay." In a 2008 piece he told the publication, "All I wanted was to be

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—Pro-gay-marriage Repub not running for re-election (left)

—Fla. lesbian couple raising quadruplets

—San Diego naming street after Harvey Milk

straight so my parents could be happy. They never, never, never knew."

Sendak had a companion of 50 years, Eugene Glynn, who died in 2007; there were no other immediate family survivors.

Quinn supports marriage equality

BY KATE SOSIN

Just three months after teetering on the issue, Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn has come out in favor of marriage equality, according to a Chicago Tribune report.

"Gov. Quinn joins with President Obama in supporting marriage equality and looks forward to working on this issue in the future with the General Assembly," said Brooke Anderson, a spokesperson for the governor, in an email to Windy City Times.

The Chicago Tribune first reported Quinn's announcement, which comes on the heels of President Obama's proclamation to ABC News that he supports marriage equality.



Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn. Photo by Kat Fitzgerald

Quinn signed Illinois civil unions into law last year, but his spokesperson told Windy City Times that the governor was "looking forward to a full legislative debate" on marriage. He had said previously, however, that he would sign same-sex marriage into law.

Quinn has had strong backing from LGBT groups and has regularly discussed his support for civil unions. On May 11, the governor put to rest confusion on his stance on marriage equality.

"Civil unions were a huge victory for civil rights and major progress for Illinois," wrote Anderson. "It took a lot of teamwork and partnership with the General Assembly to win passage of this landmark law, and marriage equality will as well."

Reactions to Obama's marriage statement

COMPILED BY ANDREW DAVIS

President Obama's support for marriage equality, as expected, triggered a ton of responses. What follow are just a few of the replies Windy City Times received from local and national figures and organizations:

—**National Center for Lesbian Rights Legal Director Shannon Minter:** "As he has done on so many other issues facing our community, the president showed his great depth of compassion and respect for the struggles faced by same-sex couples and their families and his commitment to genuine equality and justice for all people. This is an unforgettable day in our nation's history, and one that will bring enormous comfort and hope to millions of Americans."

—**U.S. Rep. Mike Quigley, D-Ill.:** "On this historic day, I applaud President Obama for demonstrating his commitment to equality for all. His affirmation of support for marriage equality today is incredibly meaningful, and I look forward to another day soon, when all Americans can enjoy the full civil rights guaranteed to each of us. As another great leader once said, 'the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.'"

—**The Civil Rights Agenda Executive Director Anthony Martinez:** "I'm proud to be an Illinoisan today. The state that promoted Abraham Lincoln may now also claim the president who will work to end government sanctioned discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. He understands that his legacy rests on the basic issues of civil rights. Like President Lincoln, President Obama knows this is what makes our country great."

—**Equality Illinois CEO Bernard Cherkasov:** "The President's support for marriage equality will change the conversation on the topic. He has now affirmed that loving, committed gay and lesbian couples and their families deserve the same recognition as heterosexual couples. Nothing less—no lesser institution, no second-class citizenship—will do."

—**Nadine Smith, executive director of Equality Florida Institute:** "This is an historic day. In taking a stand in support of marriage equality, the president is in step with the growing majority of people across the country that supports equality and fairness under the law. ... The president's support today moves us closer to the day when all Americans will be able to enjoy full marriage equality."

—**GLAAD President Herndon Graddick:** "The arc of history today bent a little closer to equality for every American. After hearing the stories of countless couples and families, President Obama has drawn the same conclusion shared across party lines and by a majority of Americans today: everyone deserves the opportunity to marry the person they love."

—**GetEQUAL:** "Our work doesn't stop, the pressure doesn't end, and our dream for full LGBT equality under the law remains on the horizon, out of our grasp. But today is a historic day. Today we celebrate, and tomorrow the work continues."

—**Lambda Legal Executive Director Kevin Cathcart:** "There is no bully pulpit bigger than the president's, and loving, committed same-sex couples across the country—and all of us—thank him for using it to speak up for justice and fairness. ... In my thirty years working in the LGBT movement, it has become easier to recognize watershed moments—and this is one."



Center on Halsted CEO Modesto "Tico" Valle and Cyndi Lauper. Valle photo by Kate Sosin; Lauper photo by Ellen von Unwerth



—**Center on Halsted CEO Modesto "Tico" Valle:** "I am overjoyed that President Obama has declared publicly that he supports full and unequivocal equality for LGBT people. It's a proud day to be an LGBT person, a proud day to be a Chicagoan and a proud day to be an American."

—**MoveOn.org Executive Director Justin Ruben:** "This is a historic day. The president's support for marriage equality is great news that's likely to energize progressive activists across the country."

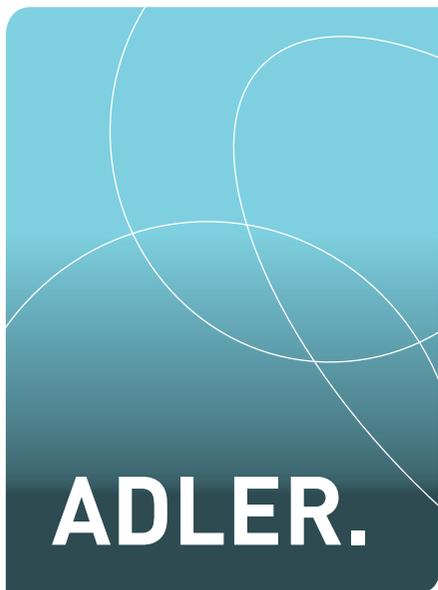
—**Congressman Steve Rothman, D-N.J.:** "As an early and strong proponent of marriage equality, I am very happy that President Obama has made this announcement. Marriage equality is a matter of basic human rights and all of America's same-sex families are now closer to having their unions recognized by our government. This is an important step in our country's march toward achieving true justice and equality for all."

—**Calif. Lt. Gov. and Current TV host Gavin**

Newsom on the TV program The Young Turks: "This is not a politician running for re-election for city council or mayor of a blue city or, for that matter, governor of a blue state. He's running for re-election in a very close election where he's got to pick up these swing states. It was a point of remarkable courage."

—**Cyndi Lauper, singer and founder of The True Colors Fund:** "President Obama continues to be a true leader for equality and I have never been prouder to call him my president than I am today. The president's support of marriage equality gives hope and encouragement to the millions of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people who feel ostracized and alone."

—**Rev. Stephen H. Phelps, interim senior minister at The Riverside Church (in New York City):** "We're dancing! On behalf of The Riverside Church in New York City, I express our exuberant joy for all of America and for all gay and lesbian citizens as we stand with President Obama in his affirmation of marriage equality for same-sex couples."



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Windy City Times Publisher and co-founder Tracy Baim (right) and her partner Jean Albright, a 20-year Air Force veteran who is director of new media for Windy City Media Group, held a private wedding April 28 in Chicago. The couple have been together 18 years. They did not register as a civil union in Illinois out of protest for the unequal treatment of LGBT couples. Mona Noriega, director of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations, lead the ceremony. Also pictured is David Strzepek, who was among those standing up at the ceremony. Photo by Hal Baim

OBAMA from cover

movement in pulling along, in the jetstream of the marriage fight, so many other LGBT rights issues.

What caused this shift for Obama? He has said in recent months that he was evolving on this issue, but most expected the complete evolution to happen after the November elections. That would have been the practical, cynical thing to do. But the other risk was that his base would continue to see his position as hypocritical and without integrity, and that part of his base would stay home, and stop writing campaign checks.

This delicate political balance, however, seems to have been only part of the reason for Obama's "coming out" for marriage equality. In the end, his and Michelle's own personal friendships, and the friendships of his daughters with children of gay and lesbian parents, is said to have also fed into this change. He could no longer reconcile his support of "everything but" marriage in his support of equality. He came to realize that civil unions were not the answer. And he made a decision that may hurt him politically, but relieve him emotionally.

As he told ABC May 9:

"I have to tell you that over the course of several years as I talked to friends and family and neighbors, when I think about members of my own staff who are in incredibly committed monogamous relationships, same-sex relation-

ships, who are raising kids together, when I think about those soldiers or airmen or marines or sailors who are out there fighting on my behalf and yet feel constrained, even now that "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" is gone, because they are not able to commit themselves in a marriage, at a certain point I've just concluded that for me personally it is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same sex couples should be able to get married."

With those words, Obama made history. No president has done as much as Obama has already for LGBT rights and for individual LGBTs (healthcare, hospital access, etc). He can't overturn the Defense of Marriage Act without a bill to sign, he can't rule in the courts, and he can't stop states from voting on anti-gay laws.

But by speaking out as president for marriage equality, Obama can change hearts and minds. And in the end, we will only have long-term suc-

cess by changing those hearts and minds. The 1964 Civil Rights Act did not overnight make it easier for African-Americans. Had the Equal Rights Amendment passed, it would not have stopped sexism. And the federal hate-crimes law won't stop violence against LGBTs. Racism, sexism, homophobia and transphobia will always exist.

But words do matter. And by speaking out, by giving his own personal view, Obama will make a difference. His taking a stand has ramifications beyond the LGBT movement, because other communities who have felt let down by Obama's differed hopes and dreams may now see that he can get out of a middle ground made of quicksand, and take a step on the solid ground of equality.

Tracy Baim is publisher of Windy City Times and author of Obama and the Gays: A Political Marriage.



Group shot of The Civil Rights Agenda's "Unite with Pride" event from June 2011. This event took place last year in celebration of Illinois' decision to legalize civil unions. President Obama's recent statement is significant of the culture's continuing evolution on the subject of same-sex unions. Photo by Kat Fitzgerald, www.MysticImagesPhotography.com



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

The **one** pill for me

Patient model. Pill shown is not actual size.

INDICATION

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

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

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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\$200
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You may be able to save on the co-pay for your COMPLERA prescription with a Gilead HIV Co-pay Assistance Card.

Call 1-877-505-6986 for more information or visit www.COMPLERA.com.*



COMPLERA. A complete HIV treatment in only 1 pill a day.

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

Before taking COMPLERA, tell your healthcare provider if you:

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

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

Serious side effects associated with COMPLERA:

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

Common side effects associated with COMPLERA:

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

Other side effects associated with COMPLERA:

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

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

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

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

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

Please see Patient Information for COMPLERA on the following pages.

*The co-pay program covers up to \$200 per month for 1 year from card activation or until the card expires, up to \$2400 in a calendar year. The program is subject to change or cancellation at any time.



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

Learn more at www.COMPLERA.com

FDA-Approved Patient Labeling**Patient Information****COMPLERA® (kom-PLUH-rah)****(emtricitabine, rilpivirine and tenofovir disoproxil fumarate) Tablets**

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

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

What is the most important information I should know about COMPLERA?**COMPLERA can cause serious side effects, including:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

What is COMPLERA?

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

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

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

COMPLERA may help:

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

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

COMPLERA does not cure HIV infections or AIDS.

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

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

Who should not take COMPLERA?

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

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking COMPLERA?**Before you take COMPLERA, tell your healthcare provider if you:**

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

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

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

Do not take COMPLERA if you also take these medicines:

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

If you are taking COMPLERA, you should not take:

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

Also tell your healthcare provider if you take:

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

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

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

How should I take COMPLERA?

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

What are the possible side effects of COMPLERA?

COMPLERA may cause the following serious side effects, including:

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

The most common side effects of COMPLERA include:

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

Additional common side effects include:

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

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

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

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

How do I store COMPLERA?

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

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

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

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

What are the ingredients of COMPLERA?

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

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

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

Gilead Sciences, Inc.
Foster City, CA 94404

Issued: August 2011

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Buzz continues at Notre Dame as graduation nears

BY CHUCK COLBERT

No drama, no trauma.

That's what school officials at the University of Notre Dame are banking on as more than 2,000 students receive their degrees this weekend (May 19-20) on the South Bend, Ind., campus.

Undoubtedly, school administrators are relieved that President Barack Obama, with his recent move to support same-sex marriage, is not this year's commencement speaker.

Three years ago, the conferral of an honorary law degree and Obama commencement remarks created a media stir and ruffled feathers of conservative alumni and protesting pro-life activists outraged over his pro-choice views.

Conservative alumni concerned about preserving Notre Dame's Catholic identity even formed a non-profit organization in 2006, called the Sycamore Trust, and participated in demonstrating against Obama's 2009 visit to campus.

Unlike three years ago, protests from progressive students, alumni, or others are unlikely even as recent gay-rights push, under the banner of a 4 to 5 Movement moniker, made headlines locally and beyond.

Graduating seniors are expected to wear 4 to 5 Movement buttons, however, according to Facebook postings.

And Notre Dame's graduation ceremonies are not without political and ecclesiastical overtones of significance in Chicago and Illinois, with Archbishop Wilton Gregory, leader of the Archdiocese of Atlanta, and Kevin Hasson, founder and president of the Beckett Fund for Religious Liberty, set to receive honorary degrees. Hasson is a 1979 graduate of Notre Dame.

Some Catholic Church observers believe Gregory is under consideration by the Vatican to replace Chicago's Cardinal Francis George upon his expected any-day-now retirement.

The anti-gay Beckett Fund defended Illinois Catholic Charities over its discriminatory policies in refusing to provide adoption and foster-care services to same-sex couples.

Based in Washington, D.C., the non-profit Beckett Fund is a "private interest law firm defending the freedom of religion for people of all faiths," according to its mission statement.

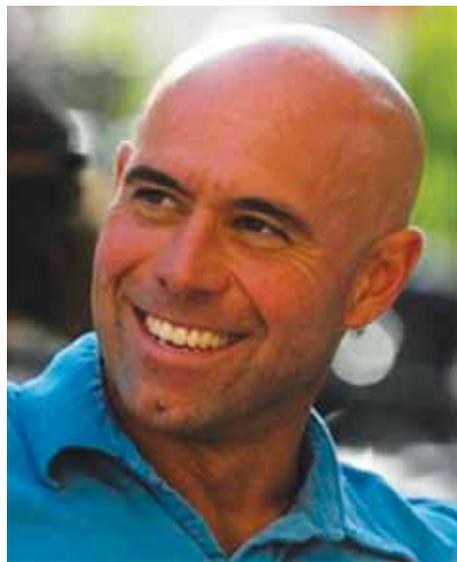
Just in time for commencement 2012, Notre Dame has recently said it will not add sexual orientation to the university's non-discrimination clause at the same time a university spokesperson said approval of a gay-straight student alliance group (GSA) have all been put on hold.

"We received a thoughtful and well-crafted application for official club status for a gay-straight alliance," said Dennis Brown, an assistant vice president for public information and communications, in e-mail correspondence.

"We have come to the conclusion that, in light of a good deal of discussion in recent weeks, it would be best for us to review the breadth of structures and services currently provided to gay, lesbian, bisexual and questioning students and their allies in an effort to make the best decisions possible to support our students and the campus community as a whole—all within the context of Catholic teaching," said Brown.

"As a result, we will continue to consider the application for a gay-straight alliance while we undertake that review, and defer a decision until early in the fall semester," he said.

The good deal of discussion to which Brown was referring resulted from campus-wide efforts



Victor Fehrenbach, a retired Air Force veteran and Notre Dame alumnus who fought discharge proceedings under the now defunct "don't ask, don't tell" policy. Photo is courtesy of Servicemembers Legal Defense Fund

to make Notre Dame more LGBT friendly and provide legal protections for students, faculty, and staff.

An "It Needs to Get Better" video—posted on YouTube, with more than 20,000 views so far—spurred renewed conversation and advocacy for a sexual orientation non-discrimination policy and an official gay/straight student organization, an effort now more than 15 years old.

Notre Dame sophomore Alex Coccia, a leader of the 4 to 5 Movement, voiced hope over the deferred decision on the GSA.

"I am very encouraged by the deferral of the decision on the gay-straight alliance until the fall," he said. "This is the first time that such a decision has been made and that the club has not been denied outright upon application."

Added Coccia, "It is important to note as well that the decision on the gay-straight alliance is part of a broader review of the structures and services available at Notre Dame for the LGBTQ community and their allies."

Advocacy of an officially recognized GSA, said Coccia, "is not the end of our path towards inclusion of LGBTQ community and allies but is a substantial and necessary means towards that end."

In e-mail correspondence, Brown provided additional information surrounding the decision not to add legal protections to the school's employment non-discrimination clause.

"It is very important to us that our faculty, students and staff not only feel comfortable here, but that they know that, if necessary, they have access to a full range of remedies, including legal remedies, if they are wronged because of their sexual orientation, race, religion or other characteristics," said Brown.

He added, "We believe that those protections are embodied in our harassment policy and in the Academic Articles' prohibition against bias and discrimination. Unlike the great majority of Catholic colleges and universities that have added sexual orientation to their non-discrimination clause, neither our state nor local governments require Notre Dame or other institutions to do so."

"The nature of the legal commitment involved in voluntarily including sexual orientation in

the non-discrimination clause would be unclear and—given the litigious nature of our society—likely decided in the context of lawsuits, and there would be no assurance that a civil court would respect important distinctions in Catholic moral teaching."

In explaining Notre Dame's rationale, Brown invoked the university's "Spirit of Inclusion" statement, which he said, "articulates our commitment to welcome gay and lesbian members of our community. We strongly reaffirm the ideals articulated in this statement and, in the weeks ahead, we will consider how we can even more fully live up to them."

"We will work to heighten campus awareness of the Spirit of Inclusion's foundational message of respect and welcome, and underscore its explicit condemnation of harassing or discriminatory behavior," said Brown.

And in one of Notre Dame's strongest statements to date about harassment and discrimination, he said, "First and foremost, Notre Dame does not discriminate and does not tolerate harassment against any individual on the basis of personal characteristics or qualities—including sexual orientation.

"Our discriminatory harassment policies specifically provide that such conduct can and will be punished."

Still, the Spirit of Inclusion provides cold comfort to alumna Lisa Karle, a former secretary of Gay & Lesbian Alumni of Notre Dame and St. Mary's College (GALA-ND/SMC).

"First of all, the very existence of the Spirit of Inclusion has always seemed somewhat degrading to me," she said, adding, "I want to be treated equally and valued as a human being; I don't appreciate it when that document is used in an effort to conceal institutional discrimination."

Karle also said associations with her alma mater remain "bittersweet."

As she explained, "My favorite spot on campus is the Sacred Heart statue on God's quad. On it, Jesus' own words are inscribed, 'Venite ad me omnes,' Latin for 'Come to me, all of you!'"

For Karle, "That represents true inclusion and the standard to which I hold my alma mater," she said.

In response to an e-mail question about a censorship policy of the Notre Dame Magazine, Brown declined to address how the classnotes section policy of banning use of the word marriage in acknowledging same-sex civil wedlock, fits with the Spirit of Inclusion.

It was Allyn Amato's letter to the editor of the magazine earlier this spring that first brought light to the block-out policy. In noting Amato and his husband Mark Montel's marriage in the District of Columbia, magazine editors changed the word marriage to "united in a ceremony."

Brown also declined to address how the university reaches out outreach LGBT alumni and what steps Notre Dame takes to acknowledge, let alone celebrate her gay sons and daughters.

And yet, during reunion weekend (Saturday, June 2) the Notre Dame Alumni Association is scheduled to hold an hour-long panel discussion entitled "Current Gay and Lesbian Life at Notre Dame and St Mary's: How Has It Changed?"

Panelists include current students, faculty, staff and alumni, including openly gay ones such as Chicago-based Brad Mattan, a 2008 alumnus.

In fact, one of Notre Dame's most famous alumni is Tom Dooley, the world-famous Navy doctor, who while serving in Southeast Asia provided medical care to countless people. Dooley died in 1961.

In researching his book, the late gay journalist and author Randy Shilts discovered that Dooley was gay and outed him in the 1993 book *Conduct Unbecoming: Gays and Lesbians in the United States Military*.

Dooley is not the only gay Notre Dame alumnus with a military background who has achieved a measure of notoriety.

Another is retired Air Force veteran Victor Fehrenbach. A lieutenant colonel, Fehrenbach served with three combat tours and 88 combat

missions as an aviator in Iraq and Afghanistan.

For years, Fehrenbach fought discharge proceedings under the now-defunct "don't ask, don't tell" policy that barred openly gay service, and was a frequent guest on the Rachel Maddow Show.

In October 2010 Fehrenbach returned to Notre Dame to receive GALA's Distinguished Alumni Award.

While the "Spirit of Inclusion is welcome," Fehrenbach emailed, it is "a tiny step for the administration," a "half measure at best."

Fehrenbach also said Notre Dame is copping out by claiming no state laws or local ordinances require the university to provide legal protections.

That justification, he said, "Is perhaps the most troubling part of the university's official position."

It's "pure cowardice, hiding behind the lack of legal requirement," said Fehrenbach.

As he explained, "When Father Hesburgh marched alongside Martin Luther King, Jr., in the fight for civil rights, he didn't wait for laws to change to be required to do so. Father Hesburgh led because it was the right thing to do, it was the Christian thing to do."

"Notre Dame's administration is clearly not following Christ in this case," said Fehrenbach.

"There is a choice for Notre Dame policy makers," he added, suggesting that school officials ought to "follow the teaching and example of Jesus Christ" and not Vatican "dogma" on homosexuality.

Added Fehrenbach, "I hope my university that I love makes the right choice."

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Lakeview, North Center hit by suspected arson

BY KATE SOSIN

Fire officials and police are investigating four separate fires set in the Lakeview and North Center neighborhoods overnight.

According to Chicago Police News Affairs Officer Robert Perez, the fires happened within close proximity and time of each other May 9.

One of the fires damaged the shed of Taverna 750, a popular Boystown eatery.

The first fire occurred on the 3900 block of North Marshfield Avenue at 12:40 a.m., where a motorcycle had been lit on fire. The second occurred 35 minutes later on the 3900 block of West Armitage Avenue. There, a trash can had been ignited, damaging nearby garages.

Fire officials responded the third fire at 2:45 a.m. on the 700 block of West Cornelia Avenue, the location of Taverna 750.

Chicago Pride reports that the fire destroyed the storage shed of Taverna 750, 750 W. Cornelia Ave. Owner Paul Canella told Chicago Pride that the restaurant would remain open for business. The restaurant did not appear to be damaged.

A fourth fire broke out at 3 a.m. on the 1900 block of West Belle Plaine Avenue in another garbage can. That fire damaged a fence and garage.

Several media reports stated that 12 fires had been lit overnight. According to Perez, the number was inaccurate. Chicago Fire officials reported that they had received 12 calls about fires in the two neighborhoods.

"Three or four of those could have been for the same incident," said Perez.

It is unknown if the fires are connected, said Perez, who added that they did occur within a close proximity and time frame. The Chicago Police Bomb and Arson unit is investigating.

Gerber/Hart president talks move, archives

BY KATE SOSIN

Gerber/Hart Board President Karen Sendziak has released information about the LGBT library's recent move to Rogers Park, including the current location of the library's archives.

Community members have been asking about the location of the archives, after the library relocated to an unfinished building amid accusations that the organization has become too insular.

Sendziak released details of the move in an email response to Windy City Times inquiries a week after the move.

According to Sendziak, the archives are being stored at Extra Space Storage, 6331 N. Broadway, while the library's new location is under construction. The archives are housed in a temperature and light appropriate space, she said. The Extra Space Storage website indicates that climate-controlled rooms are available at that location.

The library was moved by Carney-McNicholas, Inc., Sendziak said, an Ohio-based company that specializes in moving libraries, art collections and other niche moving services, according to its website.

Sendziak declined to disclose the cost of the move, stating that "No legitimate business or non-profit discloses the cost of a service that is provided by one of its vendors. In addition, the moving business is highly competitive. We do not wish to sabotage the competitive position of Carney-McNicholas by making this information available to its competitors."

Exactly when the library will re-open also remains unclear.

Sendziak said that the library would open as soon as possible but that a specific date had not yet been set.

"We know that the landlord is building out the Gerber Hart space on the second floor in accordance with the plans created by the architect and derived from our approved space plan, and that the architect is working with the City to finalize the plans and obtain building permits," she wrote. "We also understand that to the extent other elements of the building are being worked on or required to be worked on in order to approve the second floor space for occupancy, that work is also being done by the landlord and the architect. We obviously cannot answer this question with any specificity [sic.] since only the landlord and his architect know the details."

With the exception of a zoning review permit, the City of Chicago does not appear to have granted work permits for the site. Seven permits, including electrical and plumbing reviews, are listed as "denied" on the website.



Karen Sendziak. Photo by Kat Fitzgerald

Sendziak said that she has been informed that architectural revisions will yield permits for the build-out, which will occur promptly once permits are secured.

"The City advised our representative that, indeed, they were waiting for revised plans from the architect, that they had worked with this architect before—and that there is a regular weekly meeting at the City where appointments are made for original or revised plans to be presented, because all of the reviewers for all of the trades (such as the electrical inspector, the plumbing inspector, etc.) are there to do the review at the same time; and although the City would not go into the details of each of the elements leading to the 'denials,' our representative was advised that the 'turnaround time' since the plans were originally submitted has been 'short' compared to what is often the turnaround time at the City; and that many of the requested changes were relatively minor or at least not unusual," she wrote.

Asked if the landlord had a deadline to complete the build-out, Sendziak responded, "as soon as possible!"

In the meantime, the library's lease did mandate that the landlord provide storage within the building while construction is underway.

According to Sendziak, the temporary storage in the building is keyed and secure. Sendziak said that because the City permitting process is often uncertain, "we made sure that the lease provided for such rent-free alternative space so that we could move out of the Granville Avenue space in a timely fashion—which, as you know, is exactly what we did."

Sendziak said that Gerber/Hart's future home is divided into two sections, one for the public

and one private area set aside for administrative offices, cataloging, processing, archive storage and book sale storage.

"Our staff who are cataloging, processing, and working with our donated books will be working away from the public eye," Sendziak wrote. "This is a major change from the Granville Avenue space, where private work areas were minimal."

The public area will house the library, a meeting/exhibition room, a kitchen and an area for book sales, which the library has held every few months to fundraise.

Information about the move may not quell the concerns of a group of former library board members, historians and volunteers, however.

Friends of Gerber/Hart Library and Archives (FOGHLA)—a group that formed shortly after news of the library's move—said its concern is not with the library's new home but with its present leadership.

"Although it's a nice new place, it's going to

move with the same old problems," said Dave Howser, a former library present and longtime volunteer. "I still get the sense that it's pretty much Karen [Sendziak] naming everything that happens."

The group has accused Sendziak, now in her ninth term as board president, of closing off the organization to its members and supporters. The organization recently changed its bylaws to take away member voting rights and extend the allowed service of the board president, after questions arose surrounding Sendziak's time.

Howser worries that a lack of clarity on when the library will reopen leaves researchers and students in the dark. He also wants the board to host a community meeting and field questions from the public.

Howser declined to comment on FOGHLA's plans, but confirmed that they now have an attorney.

"That's all I can say at this point," he said.

Dyke March talking community relations in Uptown

BY KATE SOSIN

In an effort to increase interactions between Chicago Dyke March and its host community this year, the Chicago Dyke March Collective held what will be the first of two meetings in Uptown May 12. (The other has not been scheduled.)

The two-hour meeting at the Bezazian Library focused on issues of race, youth, queer community and privilege.

Dyke March is scheduled to pass through Uptown's Argyle Street, which houses a large community of South and East Asian businesses and organizations, in June.

Uptown is the third neighborhood to host the march since organizers decided to relocate the event from Andersonville to neighborhoods across Chicago. The march moves every two years now in an effort to highlight the presence of queer people throughout the city.

Collective member Joy Messinger noted that the change was made "to raise resistance and create visibility within those communities [where Dyke March is held]."

However, some have lamented in recent years that the march's engagement with those communities has remained limited.

The 2011 Dyke March in the South Shore neighborhood ended with a picnic and rally in Jackson Park, which some argued was isolated from the South Shore community. The march has also been held in Pilsen.

Organizers said Saturday's discussion was meant to provide an opportunity for conversation with the surrounding community.

"Here in Chicago, we are really commit-



Emilia Chico. Photo by Kate Sosin

ted to moving across different communities," said Emilia Chico, a Dyke March Collective member.

Chico noted that the collective made the decision to hold the march for two consecutive years in a neighborhood so that marchers had two years to form relationships with the host community.

"It's not just drop in and leave," Chico said.

Collective members have been canvassing local businesses, they said, in an effort to strengthen relationships between the march and the community along Argyle.

Messinger also noted another important tie between Dyke March and the Argyle community. Several collective members are also active members of Invisible (i2i), organization that serves LGBT Asian/Pacific Islanders, and already have relationships with the community.

Beyond discussing Dyke March, organizers talked more broadly about the intersections of race and queerness in a brief panel discussion. In addition to Chico and Messinger, Kevin Kumashiro, Asian American Studies professor at University of Illinois Chicago, presented. Liz Thomson of the Dyke March collective moderated. Attendees broke into small groups for discussions.

This year's Dyke March is scheduled for June 23. The details of the march have yet to be announced. More information is available at chicagodykemarch.wordpress.com.

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Lesbian writer/activist Jeanne Cordova looks back at her life

BY SARAH TOCE

Her breadth of work in journalism has been weaved throughout our culture's history—staking claim at some of the most precarious moments in the gay-rights movement. For better, for worse, for richer or for poorer, she has been there and she has worn no veil. Jeanne Córdoba has written "a memoir of love and revolution," *When We Were Outlaws*, with a forward by Lillian Faderman.

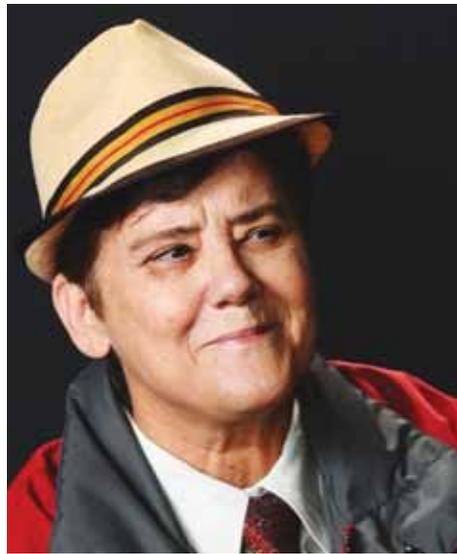
Córdova began her civil-rights journey by first entering a convent.

"Entering the convent at age 18 was my first step toward becoming a life-long social justice activist. In high school, I made the pivotal decision to join the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) order, instead of a cloistered Carmelite novitiate. I chose the IHMs because I saw that they were an out-in-the-field, liberal Order. In the Black ghetto was where I saw poverty, racial injustice and the refuse of capitalism. Here I was radicalized, and knew I had to become a social worker.

"I chose the convent because I knew I wasn't interested in the world of men and women, marriage, children—that lifestyle. Being in the service of God within a community of women felt natural and right. I'm sure the fact that I fell in love with God at the age of seven and made a vow to dedicate my life to Him was much informed by my strong Catholic parents' (one Irish woman and one Mexican dude) teachings, as well as my latent lesbianism."

Lesbianism that could never be wholly explored until her departure from said religious establishment and the patriarchal ties that bound.

"I left the convent because of my political



Jeanne Cordova. Press photo

radicalization and inability to justify the Roman Catholic Church's teachings and actions regarding social justice, and its ongoing battle with my IHM order to keep women in line under patriarchy. My newly realized lesbianism was actually secondary to falling out of love with the Catholic Church, which I had questioned all my life."

In 1972, Córdoba met a lover who was the daughter of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Socialist Worker's Party. The inspired activist turned her attention to the Vietnam War protest and began working more steadily for the rights of the LGBT community.

"As I marched and organized with tens of thousands on the streets of L.A., I realized that

one day the lesbian and gay struggle, as we called it then, had to grow into a mass movement also, in order to affect civil rights on a federal level. I wondered if we ever would or could become as big as this anti-war movement. It taught me that we needed allies, because we are only 10 percent of the population," Córdoba said.

At the age of 22—when most young people are falling in love for the first time—Córdova was earning her masters in Social Work. From there she began organizing the lesbian community into action. One might wonder if she overlooked the potential of a very active love life.

"I did have a totally active love life, but it had to be sandwiched in between the cracks of my movement life; so between 10 p.m. at night and 8 a.m. the next morning. This mostly meant [my relationships occurred] in bed having sex."

Organizing the lesbians into a marching herd was also no easy task, according to Córdoba.

"One of the hurdles was that most of the professional lesbians—the social workers, nurses, teachers, realtors, chiropractors, dentists, doctors, etc.—were afraid to come out and march or use their real names in print or sign any gay mailing lists. Another big hurdle was talking the dykes into organizing with the gay men; many separatists wanted nothing to do with men and thought of gay men no differently than straight men."

Rallying gay men into action was another issue entirely. "Grappling with the men's eternal sexism was another issue. We dykes had to simultaneously teach the men—every meeting was a 'teaching moment'—not to make sexist assumptions, like 'the girls' will march behind us, or make the coffee."

She added, "The largest hurdle was of course going on TV and radio and finding ways to convince straight people that gays were not criminals who wanted to infect their children. Trying not to hate the straight world for what it did to gays psychologically—the suicides, alcoholism, drugs, and decades of therapy—was very hard for me, personally, having grown up a Catholic. I didn't meet any gay-neutral straights until my 40s."

Perhaps by sheer will, frustration, the desire to change the direction of the gay-liberation movement or everything all rolled into one, Córdoba began a publication that would be groundbreaking for its time. The magazine, *The Lesbian Tide*, was celebrated by the lesbian community at-large, but flew mostly under the radar as far as the straight world was concerned.

Speaking of the magazine, Córdoba recalled, "[The lesbian community] was outrageously supportive. As I show in *Outlaws*, over the years about 150 different lesbians and transwoman came to work for free as writers, photographers, layout artists, distributors—everything. It would not have survived without their largely donated staff labor."

Many of *The Lesbian Tide's* writers would go on to pen books. Among them: Sara Schulman, Karla Jay, Sharon MacDonald, Achy Obejas, Nancy Toder and Shirl Buss.

"We were proud that we paid \$10 per story and \$5 per photo—but that was ridiculous. As lesbian historian Yolanda Retter, Ph.D., said, *The Lesbian Tide* became 'the national newspaper of record for the lesbian feminist decade.'"

After *The Lesbian Tide* folded, Córdoba became human-rights editor of the progressive newspaper *LA Free Press*.

"I was first hired as *The Freep's* token 'Chicana, feminist, lesbian' columnist. My weekly essays became known as 'that dyke column' by the largely straight readership, but it got people listening to my voice as I covered the [1973] Battle of the Sexes, the famous tennis match between female (and closeted lesbian) tennis player Billie Jean King and male tennis star, Charlie Riggs," said Córdoba.

As her politics became better known, she moved into the investigative reporter role and began editing all of the human rights stories for the paper. "In this position I became an integral, full-time, staff member and covered big stories of the day like the kidnapping and capture of Patty Hearst by the leftist urban guerrilla group, the Symbionese Liberation Army," she said. "[The book] *Outlaws* covers the in-depth stories of five or six of my most interesting adventures with Angela Davis, Nazi terrorists, and secret meetings with underground FBI fugitives. It was totally different than my role as publisher and News Editor at *The Lesbian Tide*. 'The story' was center stage."

Male domination in media was ever-present at this time in her career, according to Córdoba.

"The sexism, male rivalry, and politics at *The Freep* was again, a brain-twister from working with an all-lesbian staff who presumed we were all fighting for the same larger cause on the *The Lesbian Tide*," she said. "I got a lot of professional training in having to write the same news story for two widely different audiences who looked at American life through widely different lenses. I did get my first book out of those columns [*Sexism; It's a Nasty Affair*] and a core plot line of my third book, *Outlaws*, from those years." She added, "I'm not sure I slept much during that decade of my life."

Córdova crossed over from being a radical activist to becoming the publisher of the first gay and lesbian telephone directory in the USA called *Community Yellow Pages*. The move was both a personal and professional one for the journalist.

"In 1980, after 10 years with *The Lesbian Tide*, my first spouse—the features editor—and I broke up and fewer and fewer women seemed to be coming to help staff. Lesbian feminism was waning and being taken over by a new generation of lipstick lesbians in L.A. I saw that the movement was morphing from its radical base into something more mainstream because the fundamentalist right was launching expensive ballot initiatives against us. It seemed to be it was time for middle class, well-employed lesbians and gays to come out of the closet, meet each other, and start supporting these expensive anti-gay battles," said Córdoba.

She added, "On a personal level, at age 33, I was exhausted and tired of being desperately poor ... but I wanted to stay in gay publishing. So it occurred to me, 'What if I created a vehicle for professional gays to come out of the closet? What if I could prove that it wouldn't hurt their careers but instead could help them?'"

The Community Yellow Pages took shape and a new movement was formed, but not without hard work and a devout need to succeed by the mastermind herself.

"I started walking the streets of Hollywood talking to shop owners, selling them ads to be in a new telephone book that would be marketing only to gays and lesbians. Miraculously, the idea caught on," she said. "In 1982 we published a 99-page book that looked exactly like a straight telephone book. The next year *The Community Yellow Pages* (a nice closet-type name) doubled to 200 pages. Twenty years later, it was 400 pages, and published 100,000 copies per year. Every lesbian, gay man and gay-friendly straight person in Southern California was using it!"

Concurrently, Córdoba became part of the *Stonewall Club* that her mentor, Morris Kight, founded in 1975.

"Becoming its president from 1979-81, I founded a statewide campaign called 'Destination New York' that was part of a national gay



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Bertram Cohler.

PASSAGES

Bertram Cohler

Bertram J. Cohler, the William Rainey Harper Professor in the department of comparative human development at the University of Chicago (U. of C.), died May 9, surrounded by his family. He was 73.

Cohler earned his B.A. from U. of C., his Ph.D. from Harvard and certification in adult psychoanalysis from the Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis. Until his illness, he taught at U. of C. for 40 years and prided himself that he provided instruction for the larger student population as well as in human development.

Cohler was committed to providing *pro bono* psychotherapy and analysis to patients. He mentored and advised numerous graduate and post-graduate students from U. of C. and other universities, and supported psychiatry residents throughout their training. Cohler was an active member in numerous professional organizations, both locally and nationwide. He was a prolific writer, and was a finalist for the Lambda Literary Award.

He was "Dad" and "Grampa" who cherished

Sunday-night suppers with his family, whom he deeply loved. He will be remembered as a wise, humble, gentle man. He was a hero, friend, and gift to all who knew and loved him both privately and professionally.

Cohler was also involved with organizations such as Lambda Legal.

He was the beloved partner of 19 years to Bill Hensley; husband of the late Anne Cohler (nee Meyers); cherished father of Jonathan (Amy) and James Cohler; very proud and loving grandfather of Emma, Kate, and Logan Cohler; brother of Betsy (Daniel Reisman) Lemal.

Cohler was also the son of the late Jonas Robert Cohler and Theresa Belle "Betty" Cohler (nee Cahn).

A website has been created to share memories/thoughts about Cohler at <http://bertramcoehler.wordpress.com>. A memorial service will be held Monday, June 4, at 6 p.m. at the Rockefeller Memorial Chapel at the University of Chicago, 5850 S. Woodlawn Ave. Also, donations can be sent to the Bert Cohler Fund at John Lucy, The University of Chicago, Department of Comparative Human Development, 5730 S. Woodlawn Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60637.

Arrangements by Cremation Society of Illinois, 773-281-5058 or www.cremation-society.com

PASSAGES

Cynthia Pallick

BY KATE SOSIN

Cynthia Pallick, a gay parent and former Calumet City alderman, died April 16. She was 53.

According to a tribute in The Times of Northwest Indiana, Pallick was involved in local charities and in her community. She served as Calumet City's 7th Ward alderman for six years.

Pallick is survived by her son, Jacob Horvath, and partner, Cindy Horvath.

Windy City Times was unable to reach Horvath for a remembrance.

According to Pallick's Legacy.com obituary, she was well-loved, especially by children and seniors.

"She was known as the "pied piper" of her neighborhood," the obituary reads. "Cindi was compassionate to the elderly."

PASSAGES

Jeremy Davis

BY KATE SOSIN

Jeremy Davis, a man who supported LGBT causes and refused to settle for civil unions when he wanted marriage, died April 30. He was 34.

"He made my life happy as well as so many others," said Mario Sullivan, his longtime partner.

Davis grew up in Buford, Ga., where he graduated from Buford High School in 1999 as valedictorian. He went on to attend Emory University, majoring in business.

He eventually moved to Chicago for work. It was there that he met Sullivan in late 2001 on the dance floor at Circuit Nightclub in Lakeview. "He was very shy and quiet," Sullivan recalled.

It took a few months before they started dating. Davis planned a date at a restaurant where Sullivan had previously suffered food poisoning. Their next stop was to a movie that ended up being sold out.

"He told me that if I didn't want to, I didn't have to give him a second date," Sullivan said. "But I knew from that moment that I loved him and that I wanted to spend the rest of my life with him."

Davis and Sullivan lived together in Uptown. Davis was active throughout his life in LGBT causes and politics. He and Sullivan hosted Equality Illinois events at their home and donated generously to the organization and to Lambda Legal.

Bernard Cherkasov, CEO of Equality Illinois, said that Davis was extremely intelligent but

also unassuming.

"He often talked about our movement as one that focused on building bridges but that did not compromise on our dignity," Cherkasov said. "He believed that we had to be assertive in demanding what is ours."

Chuck Little said his close friend's involvement in LGBT activism was as personal as it was political. Davis' family and friends in Georgia struggled to come to terms with his sexuality.

"I think he did a lot of this stuff because of his background," Little said. "He came from a place where being gay was not exactly accepted."

He was also active in local and national politics. Sullivan remembers that he would often watch the news on TV while reading a newspaper.

But Davis also had a humorous side, say friends.

"Jeremy was always such a fun, generous and kind person with just the right amount of mischief," friend Jason Gosnell remembered.

Davis had a successful career as senior director of financial planning for The Apollo Group.

He shared that success with friends, said Little.

"He was good to his friends, his partner and to the community at large," Little said.



Jeremy Davis.
Photo from Mario Sullivan

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Dignity/Chicago marks 40 years

BY KATE SOSIN

Forty years ago, Chicago may have been known for its large Catholic community and for its growing LGBT population, but seldom did the two meet publicly.

That changed in 1972, when a group of Chicagoans adopted the model of Dignity/USA, an organization that had formed three years prior in an effort to embrace people who were both LGBT and Catholic.

On May 19, Dignity/Chicago will celebrate its 40th anniversary.

Dignity/Chicago has grown over the years from a space of worship to an arm for social change and, perhaps more recently, a testimony to the fact that Catholicism and homophobia do not go hand-in-hand.

"You can be gay and be Catholic," said Chris Pett, president of Dignity/Chicago. "You can reconcile those two identities."

When Dignity's Chicago chapter began four decades ago, it was the fourth of its kind in the country. Los Angeles had been the first followed by Louisville and New York City.

A year prior to Dignity's formation, Mary Houlihan, a member of the Catholic laity organization Legion of Mary, had been holding mass for gay and lesbian Catholics in Chicago. When Dignity/Chicago formed, it took on those masses and moved them to St. Sebastian Church in Lakeview (St. Sebastian has since closed).

The organization grew throughout the 1970s. It held Dignity/USA's national convention in 1977 and fought anti-gay initiatives around the country by fundraising against Anita Bryant-backed referendums.

But when the AIDS crisis hit in the early '80s, Dignity—like most LGBT organizations—went into overdrive.

"You had somebody who became ill, and their friends became their family," said Pett.

For many people, that family was Dignity, which ministered to many AIDS patients in their final hours. It was a natural response for an LGBT Catholic organization, said Pett. It was both in service to Catholic values and also to their own community which was being decimated by the virus.

Pett notes that in addition to serving AIDS patients directly, Dignity members sat on the boards of many LGBT organizations that responded the crisis.

In 1988, the organization faced another significant hurdle. Cardinal Joseph Bernardin had begun questioning the existence of Dignity/Chicago. He directed St. Sebastian to cut ties, said Pett. Dignity was presented with a choice: re-



Chris Pett. Photo from Pett

tract their affirmation of LGBT identity or leave the church.

Dignity decided to leave. They began meeting at Resurrection Lutheran Church and then at several other welcoming churches until 1992 when they landed at their present home at Broadway United Methodist Church in Lakeview.

Marianne Duddy-Burke, executive director of Dignity/USA, noted that the displacement of Dignity chapters from Catholic churches has actually strengthened Dignity. For one, she said, Dignity has been forced to form alliances with other denominations that house Dignity services.

"A lot of these things that look like punishments or burdens have become blessings," she said.

As Dignity/Chicago grew over the years, it also changed its mission. It maintained its original goal of providing space for LGBT Catholics, but it also became a force for social justice.

Members held prayerful witness demonstrations outside of Holy Name Cathedral and outside of Bernadine's home. They have lobbied on pro-gay legislation, often demonstrating that people of faith support LGBT causes.

It is a role that Dignity has played increasingly as the Catholic hierarchy becomes more vocally opposed to LGBT rights and as some LGBT people have come to equate Catholics with homophobia.

"There are lots and lots of ways that people live out their Catholicism," Duddy-Burke said. "This is my church. This is my faith. This is where I experience God and community in a way that it truly life-giving."

Dignity/Chicago was one of a handful of local LGBT Catholic organizations to question comments made by Cardinal Francis George late last year about Chicago's LGBT community. Weighing in on one church's request to move the kick-off time of the Pride Parade to a later hour, George commented that the Pride Parade was at risk of morphing to something like the Ku Klux Klan, protesting against Catholicism.

Dignity voiced opposition to the comments in

no uncertain terms.

"Where is the cardinal's charity and love for the LGBT community?" Pett wrote in a statement, adding later, "This is another attempt to make the church appear to be the victim when so many LGBT people and youths have been victimized by the church's exclusion and intolerance."

However, Dignity/Chicago has had to reconcile its own contradictions as well. Two years ago, the organization made a decision to include women priests, ordained by the Roman Catholic Womenpriests.

"If we were to take this step, it was a justice issue and this was the next step in our growth," Pett said. Some disagreed with the decision and left Dignity, but most supported the move, Pett said.

Today, Dignity holds services on Sunday evenings and has more than 40 members. Approximately 20 people attend weekly mass, and the organization has two women priests.

Duddy-Burke believes that Dignity/Chicago's 40th Anniversary is milestone for the larger organization, among other things, as four other chapters celebrate 40th anniversaries this year.

For Pett, the significance of the occasion is perhaps simpler.

"We are an expression of 40 years of fidelity to who we are as Catholics," he said.

Dignity/Chicago will be hosting a celebration dinner May 19 at 6-10 p.m. at Francesca's on Taylor, 1400 W. Taylor St. Writer Jamie Manson will be the guest speaker. Tickets are available online.

Duddy-Burke will give a homily at the Celebration Mass the follow day, May 20, at Broadway United Methodist, 3338 N. Broadway. Mass begins at 5 p.m.

More information on Dignity/Chicago, its upcoming celebrations and ticket purchase is available at www.dignity-chicago.org/content/welcome.

CORDOVA from page 14

and lesbian effort to seat a record number of queers (33 from California among 80 nationally) as official delegates to the 1980 Democratic National Kennedy/Carter Convention in New York," she said. "In between all this, Stonewall was strongly backing Jerry Brown's candidacy to become governor of California (yeah, now he's done it again!), and we met regularly with L.A. City Council people and other elected officials pushing on them to enact more protections in housing and employment for queers."

The move to elect Brown was critical to the new gay and lesbian civil-rights movement at the time, Córdoba said.

When asked what advice, if any, she would give to a young journalist covering the marriage-equality movement today, Córdoba said, "In addition to reporting on new states and new news, I'd be interested in analyzing what effect the marriage equality movement was having on the rest of the LGBTQ lifestyle and struggles—what is not being seen. I'd focus on what aspects of the queer relationship lifestyle might help the heterosexual institution of marriage, which seems to be dying and becoming irrelevant to how modern society is recreating itself. I'm also fascinated that marriage and AIDS have been the only two issues that have caught on with the straight world—why is that?"

She added, "The best part [about media now vs. 20 years ago] is that we get to know everything much more quickly, and hear 20 dozen points of view on every news item. The worst part is that it's more complex for the individual to find the news she wants. You have to be Internet savvy and know where to go. Also, we get the news faster now, but we only get the headlines—and a short online

paragraph—we get much less depth, analysis and truth."

Analysis and truth—two items marked off on her to-do list regarding her new memoir, *When We Were Outlaws*. Why now, I ask her?

"After 40 years of being an activist, and 20 years of being a lesbian publisher, I was 50. I'd always promised myself that one day I'd return to the love of my life—writing. So I sold the gay and lesbian Community Yellow Pages, sold my house and, for some nutty reason, decided the best place to write this book was all alone in Mexico, my father's homeland. Yes, doing the 'Roots' thing seemed to fit well with doing the writer lifestyle! I'd always wanted to be a full-time writer. I figured I was old enough, and had enough stories to write another memoir, so out popped *When We Were Outlaws*, a memoir of love and revolution."

Pan to the present time eight years and four drafts later.

"I missed the queer community so much that I had to return to Los Angeles," she said. "I came home in 2007 and plunged back into finishing the book, finding a publisher, and [rejoining] lesbian activism. This time I became a cultural activist organizing history, art and cultural events for my queer lesbian tribe in L.A. Right now I am doing that while also writing a sequel to *Outlaws* which will focus on discovering the legacy of lesbian feminism and what practices and world views queer women today have inherited from this movement."

It appears that a woman's work is never quite done.

Córdoba will discuss her book, and her life, at Chicago's Women & Children First Bookstore Friday, June 1, 7:30 p.m., 5233 N. Clark St., in an evening moderated by Chicago author Achy Obejas.

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Morocco B. Assouline
 TEXT BY ROSS FORMAN
 PHOTOS FROM ASSOULINE



Age
35

Neighborhood
South Side of Chicago

Job title
Principal and image consultant/
personal brand manager at Chic
Restraint, Inc.

Education
Sorbonne and American University of
Paris

Relationship status
Single

Hobbies
The arts, jogging, yoga, traveling, din-
ing out, spending time with friends

Favorite local restaurant
Blackbird

Favorite TV show
Selling New York



Morocco B. Assouline always aspired to be a physician, since his early days at Brother Rice High School and even for his first three years at Loyola University where he took pre-med courses.

"There was never a question about that," Assouline said.

But then he suddenly decided to take a break, reflect and make some major life decisions—and coincidentally move to Europe, enrolling a year later at the American University of Paris.

"My parents were and still are the best and completely supportive. I was supposed to go [to Paris] for six months, but that turned into seven years," Assouline said.

He found his true calling in Paris, where he started his current career—as an image consultant and personal brand manager.

"I realized that medicine was no longer my career path and, I'll be honest, I had no idea that this would become my career," he said. "I now oversee the image and wardrobe needs of my clients, so they can easily handle all the other important aspects of their busy lives. My clients vary across the board; it's not only high-net worth individuals who seek [my] service, but also every day working-class individuals who deem it necessary to pursue their lifestyle goals."

Assouline and his crew at Chic Restraint, Inc., supervise all of his clients' image and wardrobe needs. From everyday purposes to special events, Assouline and his team create cohesive looks that fit his clients' personalities and lifestyles. Services include wardrobe consultations, personal shopping, hair styling, makeup, and even etiquette coaching for international and domestic protocol via Modet, Inc.

"It's a lot of fun, but it is work. It is more than having an eye for style which is a huge mistake commonly made," Assouline said. "It is a business [and] this is truly my passion."

"In the beginning, the parents of school mates and other acquaintances would request that I accompany them on shopping excursions and merely give my opinion. Eventually, a good friend commented that I should consider it as a career."

Assouline laughed, but followed through.

"I'm just here to assist people actualize their very best person," he said.

So, was it the right decision walking away from the Dr. Morocco title?

Yes. "I've never looked back," he said.



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Sunday, May 20
4:30 p.m.
 Why it Matters that
Katniss is a Girl
 Moderator: **Alicia Sowisdral**

Friday, June 1
7:30 p.m.
Jeanne Cordova
When We Were Outlaws
Spinsters Ink
In Conversation with Achy Obejas


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 COMPILED BY KATE SOSIN



André Pérez

Pronouns
 Ze, he, or they

Identifies as
 Genderqueer along the transmasculine spec-
 trum

Hobbies
 "I'm a photography nut who lives on my bi-
 cycle. When I'm not protesting police brutality,
 I'm making extravagant vegetarian brunches."

Life's work:
 "I've spent several years now founding the
 Transgender Oral History Project, organizing
 trans and gender variant support social groups,
 and facilitating educational workshops about is-
 sues impacting the trans community. I see those
 project as creating trans-friendly spaces online
 and in real life while working to welcome and
 guide questioning or emerging trans folks into a
 supportive community."

Whom do you admire most?
 "I admire community leaders, people who are
 generous with their time and energy, people who
 are willing to stand up for what is right even
 when it requires sacrifice, those who have dedi-
 cated their lives to healing themselves and oth-
 ers from trauma, and, of course, I admire single
 parents."

**What is the best thing about being trans/
 gender-variant?**
 "There are so many! Being gender-variant af-
 fords me the opportunity to be sexy and rebel-
 lious everyday by just being who I am and find-

ing peace with it. I get to play--on the EL, in my
 workplace, in my neighborhood--with how I am
 perceived and to traverse social spaces that are
 usually mutually exclusive. Above all, I feel lucky
 to be a part of such a fierce, supportive commu-
 nity full of people I look up to for their strength
 and compassion."

**How do you explain the way you feel about
 gender to others?**

"Have you ever felt like you were not 'man'
 or 'women' enough? Gender comes with tons of
 rules and regulation, with all too much shame
 and policing. As a result, most of us feel gen-
 dered expectations infringing on who we are or
 who we wish we could be. I feel it more acute-
 ly than most people, and so I have chosen to
 change my social reality to find a space where I
 can live more comfortably."

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

"I'm most drawn to working on issues that im-
 pact queer people and also other marginalized
 communities--increasing access to affordable
 healthcare, stopping police sexual assault, abol-
 ishing prisons, and preventing HIV. I get frus-
 trated that mainstream LGBT activism doesn't
 centralize economic and racial justice in our vi-
 sion for social transformation. I've tried to do
 so by teaching workshops with the Prison In-
 dustrial Complex Teaching Collective, working to
 build leadership in queer communities of color,
 and trying to integrate transformative justice
 into my own community spaces."

To nominate a person
 for T in the life, email: Kate Sosin
 sosin@windycitytimes.com

VIEWPOINTS

WINDY CITY TIMES

VOL. 27, No. 30, May 16, 2012

The combined forces of Windy City Times, founded Sept. 1985, and Outlines newspaper, founded May 1987.

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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.



AUBREY SARVIS

Marriage equality includes the military

"When I think about those soldiers or airmen or marines or sailors who are out there fighting on my behalf and yet feel constrained, even now that Don't Ask, Don't Tell is gone, because they're not able to commit themselves in a marriage...it is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same-sex couples should be able to get married."—President Barack Obama, May 9, 2012

It was indeed an historic moment May 9 when President Obama linked the freedom for all to serve with the freedom for all to marry, whatever their gender, whatever their orientation. Although proponents of marriage equality are in an increasing majority, it took more than moral conviction for the president to make that heartfelt statement; considering the polarized state of the nation today and the clamor of the opposition, it took political courage.

Consider that North Carolina, on May 8, vot-

ed by a 22-percent margin for a constitutional amendment that would ban not only same sex couples from marrying but also ban all civil unions and domestic partnerships, same sex or opposite sex. Its ramifications would extend to cases of domestic violence and child custody, end-of-life issues, and more. What makes it even more absurd is that gay marriage is already illegal in North Carolina. But I guess you can't be too careful.

The situation as it stands in our country today is untenable. In North Carolina, two gay soldiers stationed at Fort Bragg who want to get married and commit themselves to each other are unable to do so.

Yet the same two soldiers, should they be transferred to Fort Drum in New York State, could marry and have that marriage recognized by the state. Unfortunately, though legally married in New York, their marriage will still not be recognized by the Pentagon nor will they receive the same benefits other married military couples receive. Why not? Because the so-called Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) prohibits it.

Without the president's extraordinary leadership, there would have been no repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (DADT). Working for repeal allowed the president to get to know more of our gay and lesbian service members and their families, to hear their stories and the challenges they faced and still face. They helped persuade the president that it was time to bring about the

end of DADT.

Today, the president, his attorney general and the secretary of defense are fully aware of the constitutional case that the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN) has brought on behalf of several legally married service members and veterans. We are fighting in court to overturn DOMA and assure that gay and lesbian married military couples receive the same benefits from the Pentagon and the Department of Veterans Affairs that their married straight comrades take for granted.

On May 9, the president connected the dots between repeal of DADT and marriage equality, underscoring the impact of gay and lesbian service members in the ongoing marriage equality debate.

Those gay and lesbian service members whose stories the president heard, who were discriminated against and kicked out of their jobs because of their sexual orientation, will be heard and seen again in the debate on Capitol Hill and in the courts as the fight for marriage equality escalates.

I fail to see how we can embrace and thank these patriots for their military service and sacrifice and yet deny them the fundamental right to marry the person they love. I think the president doesn't see it, either.

Aubrey Sarvis is a U.S. Army veteran and executive director of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network.

LETTERS

Panelists speak out

Dear Editors:

We would like to respond to the article written about the recent event held at DePaul, "Asking for it: A community conversation around sexual violence, shame and stigma in gay male communities," by Terrence Chappell.

While we appreciate the coverage of this important event in *Windy City Times*, as a panel member and participant in the event, and as a group of activists, therapists and social workers focusing on trauma and violence within the LGBT community, collectively for more than 50 years, we found the article to be disappointing, inaccurate and disjointed. We are appalled that this article went to print, circulating false information to our community about our event and the discussions that occurred.

Rarely are there opportunities for groups of people to discuss some of the unique issues that present for gay men who experience violence, either childhood sexual abuse, intimate partner abuse, hate crimes, or adult sexual assault. As testament to the importance and uniqueness of the event, the room was filled not only with DePaul students, but with many people from the Chicago community interested in learning more about violence against gay men. The article written by Mr. Chappell focuses on a thread of a conversation that might have lasted a total of five minutes, while the event itself was two and a half hours.

John Garver, Randall Jenson and Aaron Gray were all misquoted. The information about the moderator and specific survivors in the story was not put into the appropriate context as key information discussed was omitted resulting in a portrayal that was insensitive, inaccurate and disrespectful. This unreliable reporting and article further helped perpetuate stigma and shame around the issues after our event was over.

The very nature of the event and focus on violence against gay men created a space to discuss a topic that is often stigmatized, marginalized, misinterpreted and/or dismissed. By explicitly creating space to discuss these issues,

participants had an opportunity to respond to the powerful vignettes that were presented from the 50Faggots documentary series, to identify micro and macro themes related to violence against gay men and to share personal experiences. Please let us take an opportunity to enumerate what we believe to be several of the most significant themes that arose:

—Despite (or in some instances even because of) exposure to insidious trauma, interpersonal violence, and rape, gay men develop significant adaptive coping strategies, finding ways to claim power in some of the most disempowering of circumstances.

—The intersection of gender, sexual orientation, race, class and violence against gay men is fraught with complications related to power and power differentials, the struggle with what constitutes consent, and the socialization of men in general around the expression of sex and sexuality.

—Early exposure to familial violence, intimate partner violence and childhood sexual abuse frequently becomes the lens through which many gay men see the world, learn about relationships, and come to understand sex—often experiencing early sexualization that later leads to confusion when confronted with unwanted sexual advances when they are adults.

—Defining what constitutes sexual violence and/or rape for a gay man is often subjective and can't be easily defined by age differentials between two or more people. Because of the extra-developmental challenge of negotiating a gay identity, chronological age doesn't necessarily equate directly to emotional and/or sexual "age."

—Because of how men are socialized, and the way a man uses his penis (genitalia) often defines power and masculinity, those gay men who prefer other forms of sexual activities are frequently not seen as powerful, despite their experience of feeling empowered sexually in other ways.

Institutional and state violence (i.e., barriers and discrimination that impact gay cis-men accessing social services, health care, law enforcement, etc.) presents both opportunities and

challenges for gay and queer cis-men to envision strategies to prevent and interrupt sexual and intimate partner violence; transform the very conditions that create sexual and intimate partner violence; practice, embody and shift community norms around consent; and create community accountability when violence and abuses occur.

These are just a few of the significant themes for the evening. The fact that Mr. Chappell chose to focus on only several comments, that he decontextualized these comments and quoted them incorrectly did a huge disservice to the event and further stigmatized and marginalized violence against gay men. What was structured so eloquently by Randall Jenson as a safe space to address often silenced violence in gay male communities, became an unsafe space and one that was inaccurately sensationalized as a result of this article.

At this time, we know you have removed the article from your website. However, the article that was printed is still available for people to read and misinterpret. We encourage you to include an article in the next issue of the *Windy City Times* that captures the true nature of this event, quotes panelists accurately and provides information for the larger community about violence against gay men. Specifically, we ask *Windy City Times* to run a multipart series on violence, shame and stigma in gay male communities and feature resources from community service providers and agencies.

Respectfully,
 Jeff Levy, Live Oak, Inc.; Randall Jenson, Executive Director, 50Faggots.com; Rodrigo Sebastián Torres, PhD, MA; Coordinator, Office of LGBTQA Student Services, DePaul University; John Garver, AM, LCSW, AVP Therapist and Training Delivery Manager, Center on Halsted; Lara Brooks, panelist

GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



Photo by Carol Rosegg

LAVIN EVERY MINUTE OF IT

Linda Lavin and Dick Latessa star in the Broadway production *The Lyons*. See more about NYC offerings below.

DISH

Holding torte.
Page 32.

Photo of *Premise's* chocolate torte by Meghan Streit



MUSIC

Soul man.
Page 30.

Photo of JC Brooks



THEATER

'Baby' love.
Page 26.

Photo by Rick Aguilar Studios



SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Broadway's leading ladies

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

It's time again for theater fans everywhere to prognosticate about performers and productions vying for the Tony Awards, those exclusive silver medallions that honor excellence in New York Broadway shows.

The nominations for the 2011-12 season were announced earlier this month and the awards themselves will be handed out at a glitzy ceremony from New York's Beacon Theatre Sunday, June 10. (CBS continues its tradition of televising the Tony Awards, once again with celebrated host Neil Patrick Harris, who memorably opened last year's show with the hilarious production number "It's Not Just for Gays Anymore!")

In the meantime, audiences journeying to New York have a chance to compare and contrast the nominees (if the shows they are nominated for haven't already closed.) A recent weekend jaunt to New York allowed me the privilege to see two top contenders for Best Actress in a Play, which is definitely one of the most hotly contested categories of the season.

It's impressive to see how Olivier Award-winning British actress Tracie Bennett and Tony Award-winning U.S. star Linda Lavin (*Alice, Broadway Bound*) are both operating at the height of their acting powers. Bennett previously triumphed as Judy Garland in Peter Quilter's play *End of the Rainbow* in London and a regional run at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, and she's now blowing away audiences on

Broadway. As for Lavin, she brings expert timing and new colors to her stereotypical role of a tough Jewish matriarch named Rita Lyons in out playwright Nicky Silver's dark comedy *The Lyons*.

As plays themselves, *End of the Rainbow* and *The Lyons* aren't perfectly constructed, which is probably why neither was nominated as Best Play. However, the leading ladies in both shows more than make them into must-see affairs—particularly for gay audiences who either worship the late gay icon Judy Garland or want to see a living comedy legend expertly deliver finely crafted cutting comic putdowns and remarks.

End of the Rainbow focuses on a fraught six-week period in 1968 near the end of Judy Garland's life as she was making yet another concert comeback in London and soon to marry her fifth husband, nightclub promoter Mickey Deans (a very boyish-looking Tom Pelphrey).

Switching back and forth between a suite at the Ritz Hotel and the stage of *The Talk of the Town*, *End of the Rainbow* shows Garland as a struggling addict and needy for love and attention. One moment she's petulantly sparring with the hotel manager over the phone, the next she's adamant about not being able to go on and perform.

As foils to Garland, Quilter offers Deans as both a reformer and enabler, and the fictional Scottish accompanist named Anthony (Michael Cumpsty doing his best at maintaining the difficult accent) to represent Garland's legion of gay fans who identify with her struggles. Jay Russell also doubles up in some great cameo perfor-



Tracie Bennett in *End of the Rainbow*. Photo by Carol Rosegg

mances ranging from a BBC radio interviewer to a prissy assistant stage manager.

But the focus rightly is on Bennett, whom you fear will blow out her voice at any moment replicating Garland's late-in-life raspy go-for-broke voice. Under Terry Johnson's fine direction, Bennett gets Garland's choreographed struggles with her microphone cord down perfectly, and she looks stunning wearing picture-perfect recreations of her iconic outfits by production designer William Dudley.

Bennett also cuts to the emotional bone of Garland, just straying to the right side away from imitation and caricature, but still disturbing enough to imperil anyone's idealized notions of the MGM star who died of an overdose at the age 47.

As a play with loads of music and a live band, *End of the Rainbow* sometimes too neatly positions the song selections to mirror or ironically comment on the scene that just happened. It's also a tad too obvious sometimes at offering up back story details and facts. But when you have such a galvanizing and giving-it-all-up performance such as Bennett as Garland, you're willing to overlook these faults and just bask in the fabulousness of her performance.

One fault with Silver's *The Lyons* is that it shifts focus from whom you think should be the main character (Lavin as Mrs. Lyons) to her overly sensitive adult gay son, Curtis Lyons (an endearing Michael Esper). And *The Lyons* also appears initially to be yet another play where bad parenting can once again be blamed for the messed-up lives of grown children.

But Silver is too clever for that, since he also lays plenty of the blame for the unhappy existences of the Lyons children at their own feet. *The Lyons'* overall message of overcoming one's self-centeredness and reaching out and connecting to others is slightly sappy, but Silver and director Mark Brokaw make sure that there are enough comic jabs and jolts on the journey to make it all worthwhile.

In addition to Esper, *The Lyons* features hilarious supporting work from Dick Latessa as the dying-of-cancer patriarch Ben, Kate Jennings Grant as the alcoholic grown daughter and single mother Lisa, Gregory Wooddell as the gorgeous but incompetent New York real estate agent and Brenda Pressley as the initially compassionate Nurse (whose name later becomes a major point of contention).

Yet it is Lavin who shines the brightest as the tough-love mother relishing her forthcoming freedom as a widow. Even though her character is frequently a controlling bitch, Lavin's perfect comic timing, expertly modulated inflections and strategic movements of the body all ultimately make her dark comic character into an admirable and unstoppable force of nature.

Competing against Lavin and Bennett in the Tony Award category of Best Actress in a Play are Sex and the City star Cynthia Nixon in a now-closed revival of Margaret Edson's *Wit*, *The West Wing* star Stockard Channing in Jon Robin Baitz's *Other Desert Cities* and relative newcomer Nina Arianda in David Ives' *Venus in Fur*. Picking between these skilled actors is going to be a difficult one, so let's hope for a tie so that the Tony Award can be at least partially shared among these amazing leading ladies.



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Photo from
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THEATER REVIEW

Rent

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Tickets: 773-409-4125;
www.atcweb.org; \$45-\$50
Runs through: June 17

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Early in the play, a struggling songwriter yearns to write "one great song" before dying. Jonathan Larson, composing that lyric, probably didn't know that his own days were numbered, but his recollections of urban romantics dwelling amid the squalor that was New York City's Lower East Side in the 1980s had certainly acquainted him with the *carpe diem* mentality characteristic of youth the world over, but in those years intensified by the fatal AIDS epidemic sweeping the United States.

This may account for so many of Larson's songs emerging as anthems: blood-stirring hymns to passion, to independence, to making the world

better, to the comfort of shared sympathies, to the terror of having your whole future—whether lengthy or brief—ahead of you. This also explains why the show is less a traditional book-musical than it is a documentary—rather like the one that Mark, our guide to this lifestyle, is filming. You'll find no central plot line in it, no star turns, no lockstep chorus drills, no "name" cameos to attract older demographics. In this portrait of a subculture, each individual does his or her *own* thing (to use an old-school phrase).

The empathy that is the goal of this genre mandates that physical distance between actor and audience be minimal, thus allowing for an undiluted (insofar as possible) exchange of the energy vital to the performance dynamic. The American Theater Company accomplishes this by reconfiguring their auditorium to an alley-style arrangement locating spectators no more than seven rows deep on both sides of the playing space, resulting in a panoramic stage picture rendered vibrant and kinetic at all times.

Under the direction of David Cromer, movement is choreographed for 360-degree visibility and body-mikes ensure audibility in all corners of the house (or will, once the op-night bugs have been ironed out of the brand-new—and manifestly improved—tech system), while wagons, hand-held spotlights, portable speakers trailed by miles of extension cord and other scenic furniture is wheeled in at a vigorous gallop only to disappear just as speedily. The play's dramatic progress also reflects the requisite urgency, its often-stilted recitative endowed by a pumped-up cast with an appealing conviction spurring the fourth-wall breakdown contributing to this show's well-documented cult following. As the weather warms, look for it to draw first-time converts (like me) and revitalized pilgrims alike.

CRITICS' PICKS

After the Revolution, Next Theatre, through May 19. Amy Herzog's intelligent play is less the political tale it seems and more a family "dramedy" of how we react when our idols turn out to have feet-of-clay. There's a top-notch cast with a delicious steely turn by veteran Mary Ann Thibault. JA

El Mari Chi Chi: A Robert Rodriguez Burlesque, Gorilla Tango Theatre, through May 29. Gothic-western movies meet pasties and G-strings in Gorilla Tango's latest skin-and-satire extravaganza. (Is that a Colt .45 in your pocket or are you just glad to see me?) MSB

Hairspray, Drury Lane Theatre, Oakbrook Terrace, through June 17. Tammy Mader's staging of this 2002 Broadway musical smash hit may not be as fluid as it could be, but it still puts over the infectious score and its desegregationist storyline with plenty of aplomb. SCM

The Iceman Cometh, Goodman Theatre, through June 17. Director Robert Falls has assembled an amazing ensemble led by Tony Award winners Nathan Lane and Brian Dennehy to embody the lowlife drunks who populate Eugene O'Neill's towering American drama. People will definitely be talking about this production for years to come. SCM

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

'Conquest' thru May 19

Ludicrous Theatre will present *Conquest of the Universe or When Queen's Collide*—an '80s version of Charles Ludlam's *Conquest*—May 11-19 at BoHo Theatre at the Heartland, 7016 N. Glenwood Ave.

Conquest of the Universe interweaves the Bible as well as writings of Chaucer, Henry Miller, James Joyce, Bram Stoker, Bertolt Brecht and Benjamin Franklin, among other items, into its near-theater of the absurd script. Among the characters in Ludicrous' version are Madonna, Joan Collins, Billy Idol and Pee Wee Herman.

It will run Thursdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m., and Sunday, May 13, at 2 p.m.

Tickets are \$20 each; see www.BrownPaperTickets.com and www.HotTix.com. There is also a special walk-up discount the day of the show.

THEATER REVIEW

Her Naked Skin

Playwright: Rebecca Lenkiewicz
At: Shattered Globe Theatre at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave.
Tickets: 773-327-5252;
www.shatteredglobe.org; \$18-\$34
Runs through: June 3

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

The BBC's marvelous 1974 dramatic series, *Shoulder to Shoulder*, related the history of the women's suffrage movement in Great Britain, the title coming from the marching anthem of the suffragettes. The series later was big hit on PBS. *Her Naked Skin* acknowledges *Shoulder to Shoulder* as its inspiration and source, which makes me wonder why it was written. Despite a strong production by Shattered Globe, *Her Naked Skin* doesn't satisfy as history or as a play about women.

Part of the reason why is that it can't decide what it wants to be. Set in 1913, it begins as a history play about the suffragettes and the repressive reactions of the male-dominated political establishment, all material that the earlier TV series (and book) covered in far more devastating detail and depth. However, the politics quickly disappear as prominent historical figures such as Prime Minister Herbert Asquith and Lord Curzon vanish after two or three scenes.

That leaves *Her Naked Skin* as a play about women discovering and empowering themselves, and confronting social norms including sexual and sensory experiences. The play's fictional story explores these aspects, set within the history of suffragism.

The central tale tells of fictional suffrage leader Lady Celia Cain and the working-class follower, Eve Douglas, she meets during one of the many brutal imprisonments suffragettes endured (forced feeding, rape, denial of due process). They have a compelling affair but ultimately Lady Celia breaks it off, unable to overcome the ultimate English taboo of choosing a partner beneath one's socioeconomic class. Indeed, both Celia and Eve are victims of their own con-

ventionality, although the play barely touches this aspect. Audiences in the UK (where this play began) would understand this instinctively, but U.S. audiences do not. What makes the play more bittersweet is that Cain also leaves her liberal and supportive husband apparently because he cannot fulfill her physically (after years of marriage and a number of children), something which he ruefully comes to understand.

Shattered Globe has created a powerful physical production with the help of Andrew Hildner's dominating two-story prison set (with nifty hints of lacy Victorian ironwork) and Lindsay Schmelting's good period costumes. The huge cast of 18 is mixed in quality, but the lead performances by Shattered Globe stalwart Linda Reiter (Lady Celia) and Sheila O'Connor (Eve) are quite wonderful (and they both are lovely women, if I may be forgiven a sexist opinion). Tim Newell is persuasive as the unhappy Sir William Cain, who risks his career to defend his wife's name. Under astute director Roger Smart they engage our sympathies, but they cannot knit together the play's various loose ends and subjects.

FYI: British women gained the vote in 1918, two years ahead of U.S. women.



Her Naked Skin. Photo by Kevin Vol

THEATER REVIEW

Kin

Playwright: Bathsheba Doran
At: Griffin Theatre at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave.
Tickets: 773-975-8150;
www.theaterwit.org; \$35
Runs through: June 10

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The action in Bathsheba Doran's play begins with an academic treatise entitled "Keats' Punctuation," but a more intriguing topic for scholarly study might be an ethnographic analysis of its *dramatis personae*: The characters include two young women from different parts of the South given to copious tears of both the quiet and stormy varieties; an elderly Irish matron leading a hermit's life following an assault decades previous; and three men of diverse ages at a loss to cope with these emotional issues, along with assorted relations, mostly estranged or deceased, whose influence—in particular, their predilection for suicidal melancholy—lingers on. Also making brief appearances, by way of contrast, are a flinty Texas spinster bravely confronting terminal cancer and a sturdy New England damsel undergoing rehab after *her* bout with self-destruction.

If this roster seems lifted from the literature of two centuries earlier, it's because Doran's universe does not concern itself with external social or economical factors (everyone is financially well-off), but purely with *spiritual* comfort—identity, security, the pursuit of an

idealized and therefore, elusive, happiness. Its narrative fulcrum is the courtship of Anna, a Columbia University Ph.D., and Sean, an athletic instructor, who meet via the Internet. No sooner do we make their acquaintance, however, than we are introduced to Sean's agoraphobic mum and her expat brother; Anna's military-officer dad and his lady friend; and Anna's high-strung chum from boarding-school days.

The evolution of these pilgrims doomed to waffle in indecision and misunderstanding spans seven years and two countries—or so we are told, since the demarcations on Scott Davis' open-plan stage are as nebulous as the chronology of its inhabitants' progress, though Kathy Logelin's dialect instruction provides welcome geographical context. Under Jess McLeod's direction, a cast of hard-working actors mine their roles for psychological subtext, creating personalities ultimately sparking our sympathies, despite the exasperation engendered by Doran's affinity for therapyspeak. (Having rejected the word "crazy" for the gentler "troubled," Anna triumphantly declares herself, "fragile—but not troubled.")

Doran arrives with impressive credentials—Oxford, Cambridge, the aforementioned Columbia, awards on both sides of the Atlantic, a writing gig with HBO's *Boardwalk Empire*—and there's no denying this Griffin Theatre production's appeal to a wide audience demographic. Although its insularity is better suited to a novel than to a play, that same quality should earn it the acclaim of hankie-wringing romantics.



A Little Night Music. Photo by Michael Brosilow

THEATER REVIEW
A Little Night Music

Book: Hugh Wheeler;
Score: Stephen Sondheim
At: Writers' Theatre, 325 Tudor Ct., Glencoe
Tickets: 847-242-6000 or www.writerstheatre.org; \$35-\$70
Runs through: July 8

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

There is much to praise in Writers' Theatre's new production of A Little Night Music.

This award-winning 1973 Broadway musical by composer/lyricist Stephen Sondheim and playwright Hugh Wheeler (adapted from Ingmar Bergman's 1950s film Smiles of a Summer Night) is a lush, romantic operetta about sex, love and the immutable march of time. Although many opera companies have previously tackled A Little Night Music on a grand scale, Writers' Theatre makes an overwhelming case why the show should be chamber-sized.

There's no need for microphones in Writers' Theatre's intimate space, which prompts all of the performers to sing and speak with welcome announced ardor. The audience's proximity also demands honest performances from the ensemble, and they certainly deliver.

It's a pleasure to be so close with such a wonderful cast, especially Deanna Dunagan and her regal turn as the aging former courtesan Madame Armfeldt. (This is the first time Dunagan has returned for a long Chicago-area run since originating her Tony Award-winning performance as Violet in Steppenwolf Theatre's August: Osage County in 2007.)

Shannon Cochran, a veteran of the tour of August: Osage County, plays the leading lady of Desiree Armfeldt with down-to-earth sensuality

as her actress character calculates to replace one married lover, Count Carl-Magnus Malcolm (the comically hyper-butch Brandon Dahlquist), for the more compatible lawyer and former lover Frederik Egerman (a beautifully sung Jonathan Weir), who will make a good father for her illegitimate daughter Frederika (a solid Shannon Corey).

Of course, there are complications with Desiree's two suitors' wives, which include the still-a-virgin bride of Anne Egerman (the wonderfully girlish Kristen French) and the embittered Countess Charlotte (a wryly acidic turn by Tiffany Scott). There's even more sexual frustration with Frederik's seminary-trained older son, Henrik (Royen Kent, who has to fake his sung high notes), who secretly has his sights on his stepmother but will try and make do with the willing maid, Petra (an earthy Brianna Borger).

Director William Brown mostly solves the show's built-in difficulty of the quartet of Lieder singers by having the all the characters (including J. Michael Finley as the randy servant Frid and the gorgeous-voiced Cory Goodrich as Malia) double up on roles and deliver their own Greek chorus-style commentary sometimes from off-stage.

Now there are a few quibbles here and there, ranging from Cochran's delivery of the immortal number "Send in the Clowns" (more pathos can be mined from the song and bittersweet situation), to the shaky cello playing of Kent in "Now, Later, Soon."

But otherwise Writers' Theatre's A Little Night Music is a dream come true. This kind of theatrical intimacy can make the audience feel extremely lucky to be in on all the action.

SPOTLIGHT



Merri Biechler's world premiere of **Bombs, Babes and Bingo** promises to be a different play at every performance since a bingo game supposedly determines an outcome from up to 3,628,800 possibilities. See how Mortar Theatre Company handles this ever-changing dark comedy involving a forgetful bomb maker, a mother in clown college and an all-important bingo game of chance. Bombs, Babes and Bingo plays at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays with 3 p.m. Sunday matinees from Sunday, May 20, through Sunday, June 17, at Luna Central (formerly Live Bait Theater), 3914 N. Clark St. Preview tickets (through May 23) are \$15 and \$20 for the regular run. Call 773-819-5862 or visit www.mortartheatrecompany.org. Photo of Cruz Gonzalez and Stephanie Stroud in Bombs, Babes and Bingo by Morgan Anderson

'My Asian Mom' at Stage 773 through May 26

A-Squared Theatre Workshop, Chicago's only pan-Asian dramatic theater company, presents My Asian Mom, an evening of eight 10-minute, one-act plays.

Performances will be held Fridays and Saturdays through May 26 at 8 p.m. at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave.

Tickets are \$15 general admission, and \$13 for students; call 773-327-5252 or visit www.stage773.com.

Qweirdo to feature 1, 2, 3 Fag!

Qweirdo, a recurring showcase of Chicago's top gay comedians and improvisers, will be showcased Thursdays May 31-June 28 at 10 p.m. at 3541 N. Clark St.

Troupe 1, 2, 3, Fag!—consisting of Kellen Alexander, John Hartman and Seth Dodson—will perform together for the first time in two years. Among the others set to perform are stand-up comedian Cameron Esposito, cabaret performer D'Juana Cyber and sketch group GayCo.

In honor of June being Gay Pride Month, a portion of all ticket sales will go to the Broadway Youth Center. See Chicago.ioimprov.com.

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ABOUT FACE THEATRE SEASON 27

NUNN ON ONE: THEATER

'Star Wars' actor Ian McDiarmid stars in 'Timon'



BY JERRY NUNN

Actor Ian McDiarmid is bringing a rare Shakespeare show to the Chicago Shakespeare Theater at Navy Pier. Timon of Athens tells the story of fortune and how the world of wealth can change in an instant.

McDiarmid grew up in the theater eventually winning a Tony Award for Best Performance by a Featured Actor in a Play for his performance in Faith Healer in 2006.

Audiences may recognize him from as the emperor with the black hood in Return of the Jedi as well as the Star Wars prequels.

Windy City Times traveled down to visit McDiarmid on the set during early rehearsals for Timon.

Windy City Times: Hello, Ian. So you are from Scotland?

Ian McDiarmid: The east coast [of Scotland]. I was born in Carnoustie, which is a golfing village, but I was brought up in the next largest town, called Dundee.

WCT: You wanted to be in theater since you were little, correct?

IM: I suppose so. I first had the experience of seeing variety theater in Dundee. Variety is simply no longer in existence like your vaudeville. I had to go along because my uncle was the stage manager. I didn't know what I was going to. My parents were a bit doubtful about taking me to the theater when I was 5 years old, but I sat there mesmerized. It felt like a dream when the dancers came on. When their feet hit the stage I thought they were making the sound the orchestra was making because I didn't see the orchestra.

WCT: It was magic to you.

IM: Exactly—magic. The comic came on and in those days they wore quite a lot of makeup. When I went backstage to meet him I was both terrified and fascinated of this clown. I think then at 5 years old something started in me that led into what I am doing now.

WCT: Look at that. You have done lots of Shakespeare's work.

IM: I have done a bit. I was a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company but I haven't done tons of Shakespeare because oddly enough they do more contemporary plays than old ones. The last one I have done was The Tempest at a theater that I used to run in London. Barbara Gaines, the director of Timons, used to come to that show and wanted me to work with her someday. She put her cards on the table with a 25th anniversary coming up, so here we are. I am very happy to be here.

WCT: Tell our readers about this show.

IM: Well, I like Timon of Athens first of all because it is hardly ever done. I think you do it in the U.S. more than we do it at home, although having said that there is a production coming out later in the year at the National Theatre in London.

The reasons are pretty simple. If you read it, it's very messy. Shakespeare didn't finish it. It was never performed in his lifetime. We think maybe because it would have been too offensive for the then king, James VI of Scotland. He was a spendthrift because he threw a lot of money at his friends and this play deals with that. We don't know all the reasons.

I have always been fascinated by it. Barbara and I agreed that we should make it clearer than it has been up until now without taking away from the spirit of the play, which is strangely jagged. We have had the time to do it so we worked on this version that you will see when we open.

WCT: Where is the play set in?

IM: We agreed that it should be set in contemporary America. It deals with people that have too much money then when one character runs out of it tries to borrow from a friend. The one friend says, "It is not a good time to lend money."

WCT: Which is very current!

IM: Yes; it is hitting us in the face. It would be irresponsible not to do it. I also like the no-

tion in this because I am a British lord who has been born with a great deal of money then comes to America and makes even more. All of these things seem exciting and a good idea. I always like working with American actors and have done it in movies but never in the theater before.

WCT: Are there actors from Chicago in the cast?

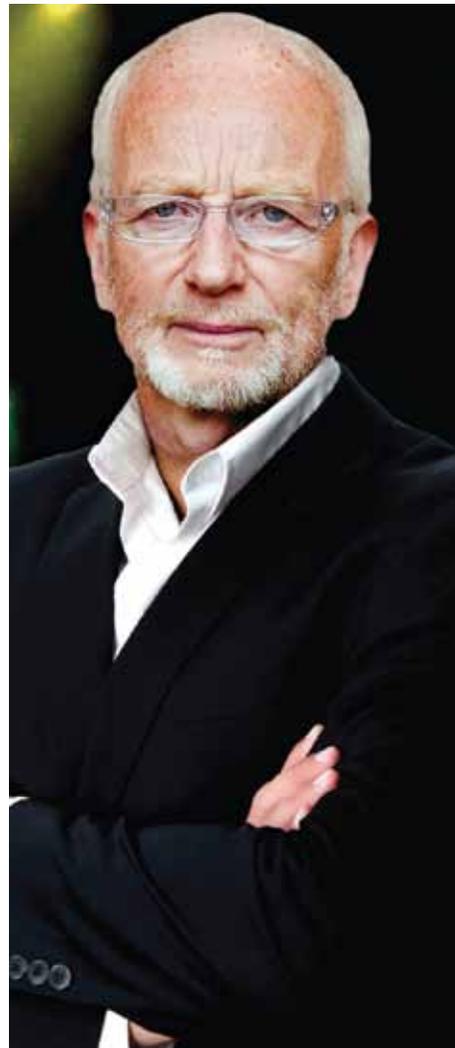
IM: There are a large number of Chicago actors as well as actors who have done lots of Shakespeare work in other cities. I am learning from them so we are giving and taking from each other.

WCT: Is it a big cast?

IM: It is because we have a dance team in it, too. I heard 38 [members], but I can't believe it. Originally it was a dance of Amazons but the dance captain at the Joffrey has choreographed our segment.

WCT: How are rehearsals going?

IM: Very well; we just got on the stage for the



Ian McDiarmid. PR photo

first time this morning. We got quite a bit done today. This is a shorter show with two acts of 50 minutes so people can have dinner after.

WCT: There are some long Shakespeare plays out there.

IM: I think people associate Shakespeare with long but they won't feel too duty-bound with this one.

WCT: What is the tone of the show?

IM: It is very hard to describe. It is a mixture of styles. It is amusing at first but then in second half he turns into revenge mode and destroys the house. He's a giver in the first half then misanthropic in the second half.

WCT: Is there something special for our LGBT audience in the show?

IM: I don't think they will be disappointed. There is something for everybody. It is that kind of house that Timon keeps. It is interesting that, apart from servers and dancers, there are no women in the play. In the original there were two whores that were women that came on, but this has been transmuted into one man. Sexuality in the play, as it is in life, is highly ambiguous.

WCT: As far as your movie career, it was amazing that you were able to be in so many of the Star Wars movies.

IM: That was luck. They originally wanted to cast the part for someone that was 128 years old. That was impossible but they did find a character much older. He couldn't take contact-lens tests so they had to let him go. The casting director saw me play a Howard Hughes character in a small English theater. After meeting George Lucas briefly I got the part as the emperor of the universe. With that name I had to do it!

When the prequels came around I was the right age to play myself. He could have asked anyone in the world to play the part but he asked me. So wasn't I lucky?

WCT: There is a rumor about a Star Wars television series.

IM: It is not a rumor. They have scripts, this after episode three when I rule the universe. George's notion is to get people you haven't seen into that. The problem is the budget because it will cost so much to make one episode. He doesn't compromise. Until he can get that money guaranteed they won't go forward.

WCT: Just like in Timon of Athens, everything is all about money!

IM: Indeed.

Timon of Athens runs now through June 10 in Chicago Shakespeare's Courtyard Theater at Navy Pier, 700 E. Grand Ave. Visit www.chicagoshakes.com for ticket information and show times.



Sexy Baby. Pic by Rick Aguilar Studios

THEATER REVIEW

Sexy Baby

Playwright: David Cerda

At: Mary's Attic, 5400 N. Clark St.

Tickets: 800-838-3006;

www.handbagproductions.org; \$15-\$22.

Runs through: June 16

BY JERRY NUNN

Hell in a Handbag Productions is at it again. Formed in 2002, these campy theater souls have tackled the holidays with Rudolph, the Red-Hosed Reindeer, flown south with cinema spoof on Hitchcock's The Birds and even turned it upside down for Poseidon! Now, we enter the wide world of children's pageants while celebrating the group's 10th anniversary.

The brainchild of creator David Cerda opening night packed the house with a line down the street outside of Hamburger Marys attesting to the following his troupe has built.

Baby started with video spotlighting past cast

members that was a hoot to watch and something different for the group although it did make you wish some of them had parts in this production. Ed Jones, as Mary Kay, come ring my doorbell!

The jokes started coming fast and furious with star Swann Black playing off of the original pageant princess, JonBenet Ramsey, while singing the peppy "When I Was Five." Her mother Robin is played with white trash gusto by Heather Currie.

John Cardone hits the stage a shade darker than the "tanning mom" but less orange than Snooki, to loud guffaws. Just the look is so pitch-perfect, complete with tight white pants and a skunk wig. I haven't seen him since his stint in Naked Boys Singing, but it's good to have him back onstage.

The show features men in drag playing kid competitors, as the show borrows from the movie Waiting for Guffman and reality shows such as Dance Moms. "Go-go juice" and Pixy Stix are free-flowing, along with a hilarious skit (pre-

sented by Beyansay Riddle) inspired by the movie Obsessed. Little Miss Sunshine had nothing on this show, where things continue to go over the top. Where else can audience members see a dancing Pop Tart and wear their own tiaras?

The musical works well in the Attic space but could be even better in a large school auditorium or even a church basement.

This show has something for everyone, whether you feel a little twisted watching children compete or want to be a star yourself. The cast has a lot of fun with the campy material, making this a strong addition to the company's repertoire. Proceed with caution when crossing Clark Street to see the Sexy Baby pageant—it may cause laugh-out-loud moments or, at least, a few nightmares.

Take a break during intermission for \$6 Baby Crack drinks made with tasty citrus vodka. Also, look for an upcoming benefit performance of Sexy Baby Wed., June 6, for the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame.

The K Dock experience: Parties for Chicago's Black LGBT community

BY MARK CORECE

There's an adage, some optimist probably coined, which simply says, "When you know it's right, you know it's right." Judging from sheer numbers of their events, and "the experience" they employ for their patrons, it's "the right" time to throw parties for Black LGBTQ folks in Chicago—at least for the people at K Dock Media.

When shaping the story of K Dock Media, the chicken-or-the-egg question is something one might grapple with for a moment in terms of what came first: the party or the promoters.

In 2010 Tee Lam Dubois, the man behind the launch of K Dock, was tapped to collaborate with Crimson Lounge to throw a party at its "opulent" bar inside Sax hotel, for a sophisticated, upscale crowd. He decided to pull together a crew of collaborators using—what else?—social media.

"When I thought about who I'd get to work with me to throw parties, honestly it was Facebook that helped me find people," said Dubois, 30, who's one of now six members in the fashion-forward business collective. He handles talent and venue acquisition.

He added, "I looked on Facebook and saw who had the most friends and approached them, and then came K Dock."

That's just part of the story. The desire to provide partygoers of color an alternative with finesse and "class" is what brought them together, according to Dubois.

Before K Dock became, well, K Dock, a group of ambitious—and, perhaps—open-minded friends came together to throw its first White Party. The event will now have its third annual installment, and the members of K Dock have promised it will be bigger and better. Although they would not reveal the location, they confirmed it'll be near the lake.

The name "K Dock" is as extemporaneous as the formation of the business enterprise itself.

"We were on a photo shoot at Montrose Harbor [dressed in all white] to promote the first White Party," said Keân Ray, an educator and Ph.D. candidate who serves as head of operations and finance for K Dock.

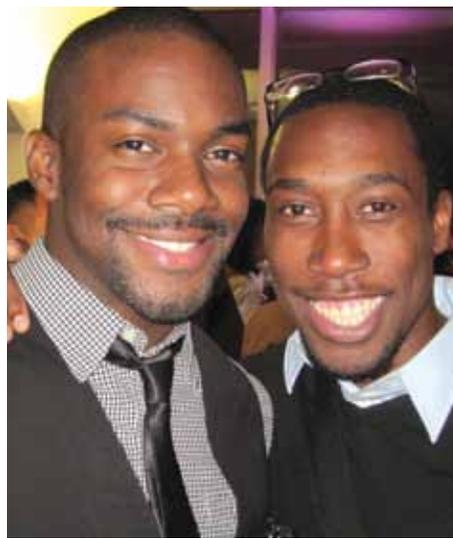
"There, it was suggested that our name be 'K Dock' because it was the name of the dock we happened to be at."

"We decided we want to create an exquisite experience wherever one of our parties are held, added Rannon Harris, the business developer.

It's no secret the experience, however one may feel about it, has drawn crowds in the hundreds, maybe thousands, at venues such as Sawtooth, Dana Hotel, The Mid (where media mogul B. Scott was the guest of honor), the monthly party at Lokal and even the 2011 Howard Brown benefit party at minibar called "Candyland."

"It's about setting new standards," public relations head David Dodd said.

"Why not provide nice things to our own community—our family—because we're not just promoters?" Dodd said. "We always make new



K Dock Media's David Dodd (left) with Lenox Magee. Photo by Andrew Davis

friends at our events and we're not just Boystown."

K Dock worked diligently to build its name and reputation—even winning a community-selected award for "best male promoters" by Windy City Black Pride last year.

Fashion stylist and frequent K Dock partier David West explained the allure, using a recent event as an example: "Last week's party [at Red Violet] was wrapped around corner. It's always a fun party with fashionable people."

In packed rooms, communities seem to demand elaborate parties meant for socializing and a dance move or two; however, sometimes even a two-step is difficult because of the amount of bodies amassed at one of K Dock's city-wide floating parties.

Last March, at K Dock's House of Blues party with co-collaborators B.BLYSS! Productions and High Society Ent. Group, the foundation room was the epitome of a K Dock party. The room

was gaudy, decadent with spectacularly lit hues of golden drapery and Victorian-style furniture everywhere.

The more women-centered B.BLYSS party was upstairs and the K Dock men's soiree was downstairs, joined by a twisted, carpeted stairway with a chandelier to light the path—complete with the sounds of deep Chicago house, top-40 music and hip-hop.

"We cater to a diverse crowd," said DJ Sandra Suave, of B.BLYSS.

Her business partner, Tamara Allen, added, "K Dock is fun, professional and easy to work with. Everyone has their role."

Although the bumps for K Dock have been far and few between, it has been difficult at times. "We've received opposition from bars because we are Black or because we are gay," Ray said. "Some clubs are afraid to throw parties for African Americans because of perception."

"[An undisclosed] owner sat us down, [who didn't allow them to hold their party there], and told us what establishments will fear."

Trisha Martinez handles event logistics, and has been donned first lady of K Dock. She told Windy City Times about trying to include straight women in gay spaces because of the safety it provides at times.

"I come and help change the perception for straight people," Martinez said. "Gay men come in all shapes and sizes. My friends come around and are amazed at how different the men are. It's an all around good thing."

The sixth member of K Dock, Tony Williams, handles the marketing.

Like the magnetic pull that brought the group together, social media is largely how they promote. K Dock uses email blasts, twitter, Grindr app pop-ups and Facebook, where people can find tons of info on the members and upcoming events like the June 16th White Party.

Harris said, "I want people to leave our parties and say, 'Wow! That was an experience.'"

Cheers, hugs and tears at Augie/C.K.'s reunion

Augie & Cary held their first-ever reunion May 12 at the L26 Restaurant and Lounge in the Chicago South Loop Hotel. The girls flew in from as far away as Las Vegas to—as someone yelled out from the crowded room—"as close as the South South" to relive, if only for one night, the days of Augie & C.K.'s, a lesbian bar that flourished in Chicago during the 1970s and '80s.

If seeing the more-than-600-photo slide show streaming on a screen of old friends didn't take you down memory lane, the music definitely did. The night also served as a fundraiser for the Lesbian Community Care Project (LCCP). **Text and photos by Ed Negron**



Chicago Gay Men's Chorus (CGMC) took a "quantum leap" back to the 1980s in their spring concert, That '80s Show, Fri., May 11 at the Francis W. Parker Auditorium in Chicago. Under the artistic and musical direction of Patrick Sinozich, the chorus relived the neon decade with lively dancing, colorful costumes and, of course, lots of singing.

Text by Kirk Williamson, photos by G. Thomas Ward Photography.



MOVIE REVIEWS

The Dictator; Bernie; film notes

BY SAWYER J. LAHR

Warning: There are spoilers in this review.

Sacha Baron Cohen—British comedian and star of the *Ali G Show*, as well as the movies *Bruno* and *Borat*—has worn out his welcome.

In *The Dictator*, directed by Larry Charles (*Bruno*, *Borat*, *Seinfeld*), Cohen makes a mockery of the First Amendment. Having run out of *Ali G* characters to adapt to feature-length films, Cohen invents a sexually ambiguous Saddam Hussein-like dictator, General Aladeen of Wadiya, who travels to what he calls “The Devil’s Nest of America” (a.k.a. Manhattan) for a UN summit where he gets secretly expunged by his right-hand man, Tamir (Ben Kingsley, *Ghandi*), and replaced by a “simple” Wadiyan peasant.

While in the United States, Aladeen—the Wadiyan Golden Globe-winning star of *You’ve Got Mail Bomb*—falls in love with Zoë (Anna Farris of *Scary Movie*), a Jewish woman who changes him from a democracy-despising dictator to a freedom-loving one. After Aladeen marries the feminist liberationist, Zoë announces

controls the wealth and banks get bailed out by the government who are in the pockets of the corporations.

Inside *Job*, *Too Big to Fail* and other films have covered this topic. We don’t need Noam Chomsky to tell us that you can’t wage a war on a political ideological held by terrorists or that the conglomerated media is a pundit press with policies that dictate entertainment value over investigative journalism. We are living it, and *The Dictator* is basically infotainment. What the film does do well is reiterate an issue echoed by the Occupy Movement, which counts for a pretty small population of citizens actively engaged in lobbying their government. Consider that less than 40 percent of registered voters turn out at the polls for general elections.

Aside from the clever politically incorrect jokes you’d be too embarrassed to repeat without fear of decapitation, *The Dictator* expertly remixes popular American songs into Arabic-sounding tracks with vibrato voices and a sitar in place of other instruments. For example, there are Marvin Gaye’s “Let’s Get It On,” sung by Mohamed Amer,



Shirley MaLaine and Jack Black in *Bernie*. Photo courtesy of Millennium Entertainment

the opening of women’s centers on Good Morning Wadiya while Aladeen continues developing nuclear weapons on the side with his pal and engineer, played with some comic relief by Asif Mandvi.

Don’t miss the celebrity cameos by Edward Norton, who gets paid to receive fellatio by a Chinese businessman Chang Lau (Bobby Lee of *Pineapple Express*, *Harold and Kumar*) and an appearance by Megan Fox as a high-class hooker who ranks among Aladeen’s celebrity sex partners—a list that also includes Lindsay Lohan and Bryan Cranston (of TV’s *Breaking Bad* and *Malcolm in the Middle*). Saturday Night Live’s Fred Armisen appears as an anti-Aladeen restaurant host in the fictional Little Wadiya, Queens, N.Y.

In the action leading up to Cohen’s teachable moment about U.S. hypocrisy, Aladeen turns, The Free Earth Collaborative—Zoë’s pro-feminist, anti-racist organic produce store—into a well-oiled machine so that she can win back her contract with the Lancaster hotel, where Aladeen will stop his double from signing a new democratic constitution for Wadiya. While turning the grocery store into a mini-dictatorship glorifying their passionate manager, Zoë, Aladeen haphazardly saves the day by delivering a customer’s child on the floor of the store. Here, Aladeen and Zoë bond romantically for the first time—with their hands elbow deep in the woman’s cervical cavity.

Writers Cohen, Alec Berg, David Mandel and Jeff Schaffer resort to gross-out humor only to make a moot comparison of the United States to a dictatorship where 1 percent of the population

and R.E.M.’s “Everybody Hurts” reconfigured by MC Rai, who also had a song in the movie *Rendition*, starring Jake Gyllenhaal and Meryl Streep. *The Dictator* is a Paramount Pictures release. It opens Wed., May 16.

Preview:

Bernie stars Jack Black (*School of Rock*) as the flamboyant Bernhardt Tiede II, the prime suspect in the murder of crotchety Texan widow Marjorie Nugent (played by Shirley MaLaine). The movie is based on a true story that took place in Carthage, Texas, in 1997. Matthew McConaughey—who will star in the upcoming stripper movie *Magic Mike*—plays District Attorney Danny Buck Davidson. Director Richard Linklater (*Before Sunset*; *Dazed and Confused*) was inspired to write *Bernie* after reading an article in *Texas Monthly* by Skip Hollandsworth (the co-writer of this film).

Although there were suspicions by the men in a local coffee shop that Bernie was “a little light in the loafers,” the socially conservative Carthage residents defended him despite the overwhelming evidence that Bernie not only murdered Mrs. Nugent, but donated money in her name to citizens in need. Among other signs of his sexual preference were 50 videotapes of men performing “explicit acts” confiscated from his home by the police. Bernie was so well-liked by the townspeople that no one believed he committed the murder.

The real Bernie was known for putting on a good funeral, if that is any suggestion of his guilt. He would cruise around town in his Lincoln Continental wearing colorful Tommy Hil-

finger outfits and apparently showed no interest in women besides his travel buddy and sugar momma, Mrs. Nugent. The opportunity to see Black try to steal the show should be worth the price of admission. It opens Friday, May 18.

Film notes:

—Natalie West (TV’s *Roseanne*) and Gaby Hoffmann (*Field of Dreams*, *Uncle Buck*, *Sleepless in Seattle*) star in **Nate & Margaret**, a new film by Chicago-based queer filmmaker Nathan Adloff, premiering at Gene Siskel Film Center Friday, June 8-12. West and Adloff play two halves of a modern-day Harold & Maude-type duo—the difference being that Nate is gay. Adloff co-starred in the Shumanski Brothers’ *Blackmail Boys*, which features Chicago Mumblecore director Joe Swanberg as a closeted anti-gay evangelist who gets blackmailed by two young lovers who need money to get married.

—The popular Gay men’s film series *More For Gay Men Movie Night* screens **Just a Question of Love**, the unforgettable French drama about

a lab student and his supervisor who fall in love over petri dishes and microscopes. It shows at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., on Friday, May 18, at 6:30 p.m.

—The only exclusively bisexual movie night in the city will screen **Bedrooms & Hallways**, Monday, May 21, at 7 p.m. at Center on Halsted. The movie night takes place every third Monday of the month.

—Acclaimed Chicago-based queer filmmaker Ky Dickens (*Fish Out of Water*) will hold a fundraiser for her new documentary, **Sole Survivor**, at Vertigo Sky Lounge, 2 W. Erie St., atop the Dana Hotel, 6-9 p.m., on Tuesday, May 29. The film follows commercial-aviation disaster survivors such as Jim Polehinke, co-pilot of Comair Flight 5191 that crashed in Lexington, Ky., on Aug. 27, 2006. *Sole Survivor* documents Polehinke adjusting to life without the use of his legs and the case being made to exonerate him of the charge that the plane crashed solely due to pilot error.

DVD REVIEW

We Were Here

BY STEVE WARREN

Speaking as objectively as possible, *We Were Here* is a well-made documentary by David Weissman about the early years of the AIDS epidemic in San Francisco. In it five people detail their individual experiences during the plague years, touching chronologically on key events of the period. Archival photographs, film footage and news clippings flesh out the broader story. The focus is on the eyewitnesses to history, each of whom had a unique perspective near the center of the action.

But no one—especially not a gay man—who was alive in the ‘80s and ‘90s can watch *We Were Here* objectively. Each of us had his life affected in some way—by getting sick, losing friends and family members, becoming caregivers and activists, changing sexual behaviors and being scared shitless, if not straight.

I lived in San Francisco from 1979 to 1993, so the film brought back memories of people I knew, places I’d been, events I’d attended, experiences I’d shared. Lines that sound like clichés to me may be new to people who observed from afar, or from another city that experienced the same things on a smaller scale. There was a time I was attending memorial services every week, while also mourning friends lost in other cities.

Someone speaks half-jokingly of not buying large economy sizes because you didn’t know if you’d live to finish them, but in San Francisco in the mid-‘80s it was true. Death was all around and those of us who’d lived the same lifestyle as the deceased had no reason to expect not to be next.

Daniel Goldstein speaks with largely suppressed emotion about the partner he lost, an immunologist who got them both into one of the first drug studies: Suramin. Daniel couldn’t take the side effects and dropped out after a month. Everyone else in the study died. He tells of attending the suicide party of a friend who’d been told he had only days to live.

Ed Wolf couldn’t find a clique to fit into before AIDS but became a volunteer caregiver for Shanti Project and other organizations. An artist himself, he started Visual AID so his fellow artists wouldn’t have to choose between buying food and art supplies.

Eileen Glutzer was a feminist who helped found the Haight-Ashbury Women’s Clinic. She became a nurse just before a lot of men would have a sudden need for nursing and there was so much ignorance about AIDS that San Francisco General, the only hospital with a dedicated AIDS ward, left it up to staff



We Were Here.

members whether they wanted to work there.

Paul Boneberg came to San Francisco as a hippie but turned into an activist, leading the Mobilization against AIDS and other organizations. He wanted to be “one of the crazy dreamers” but wound up as one of the most practical and political of the lot.

Observing the passing parade from his flower stand in the heart of the Castro, Guy Clark had his heart broken repeatedly, watching once-beautiful men wasting away, but got to see the trend reverse in the mid-‘90s when the pandemic turned a corner, deaths declined, men started living longer and the focus turned to prevention.

From the pre-AIDS party to the hope for a post-AIDS future, *We Were Here* cuts a broad arc through modern queer history. While images of disease-ravaged men qualify it as the horror movie of the year, it also shows how the disease brought us together as a community, including uniting lesbians and gay men. Though they’d been largely shunned by their brothers in the past, gay women stepped up to act as caregivers, donate blood and otherwise demonstrate their solidarity.

I was there, and *We Were Here* wasn’t as hard for me to watch as I expected it to be, but I can imagine a broad range of reactions from others. Although our guides are pleasant it’s not a nice story to relive—or for younger men to live for the first time. Weissman lays it all out, calmly and professionally, and lets you take it as you will—like a cinematic Rorschach test.

We Were Here is available for purchase at many retailers, including Amazon.com.

MUSIC

Holly Near and Toshi Reagon: On careers, Chicago show

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Among the performers at a tribute concert for Woody Guthrie on May 19 called "This Land is Our Land! A Centennial Celebration of Woody Guthrie" are singers Holly Near and Toshi Reagon, who have huge followings in the lesbian community.

The concert, presented by the non-profit organization portoluz, is being held at the Metro, 3733 N. Clark St., the day before the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) summit begins in Chicago.

portoluz decided to stage this event during the NATO summit in order to, according to its website, "celebrate the joyful expression of protest as voiced through the power of participa-

riety television and movies roles during the early 1970s. During that time, Near joined a group of performers who were doing a show called "Free The Army." "The material was based on the writing and experiences of soldiers who were against the Vietnam war," said Near. "Thousands of soldiers were resisting the war and racism and gender inequity from within the military. That is where I really got my global education.

"I started a record label so I could record my own songs. The music industry thought the lyrics I was writing were too political. Before I knew it I morphed from an actress into a social change singer."

Of the LGBT community, Near said, "My songs have helped people to stay alive, to love out loud, to kiss each other hello and goodbye in

National Association of Recording Arts and Sciences, Ms. Magazine (Woman of the Year), the Legends of Women's Music Award and the Impact Fund.

Currently single, Near has been in relationships with both men and women over the last 40 years and classifies herself as a monogamous feminist person.

As for Reagon, she said music can move people to focus, unite and mobilize. The daughter of Freedom Singers co-founders Dr. Bernice Johnson Reagon and Cordell Hull Reagon, she said she has never shied away from the truth and that her music reflects what she sees in the world. Reagon's mom also founded the African-American female a cappella ensemble Sweet Honey in the Rock. Mother and daughter sometimes collaborate on musical projects.

Social activism has been a part of Reagon's whole life. Her father was a leader of the civil-rights movement in Albany, Ga., and a member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Reagon, who says she has never been in the closet, has infused her entire life and career with social activist causes and stresses the importance of fighting for LGBT equality on all fronts.

Reagon first took to the stage at the age of 17 and has performed everything from rock to blues to R&B to country to folk to spirituals to funk music. "I have always felt a connection to music, it has never not been present in my mind. By the time I was teenager I knew this is what I would do," said Reagon.

Over the last 30 years, Reagon has shared the stage with many legendary artists including Lenny Kravitz, Elvis Costello, Ani DiFranco and Pete Seeger. She made her television debut during the fourth-season finale episode of The L Word, and her music has been featured in the film The Secret Life of Bees and on many television shows.

In February 2010, Reagon performed with her mother and the other members of the SNCC Freedom Singers at the White House as a part of the "In Performance at the White House: A Celebration of Music from the Civil Rights Movement" PBS broadcast. Of the performance Reagon said, "It was amazing to be in the White House. It is building I've seen most of my life because I was raised in Washington, D.C. It was such a pleasure to be there and meet President Obama."

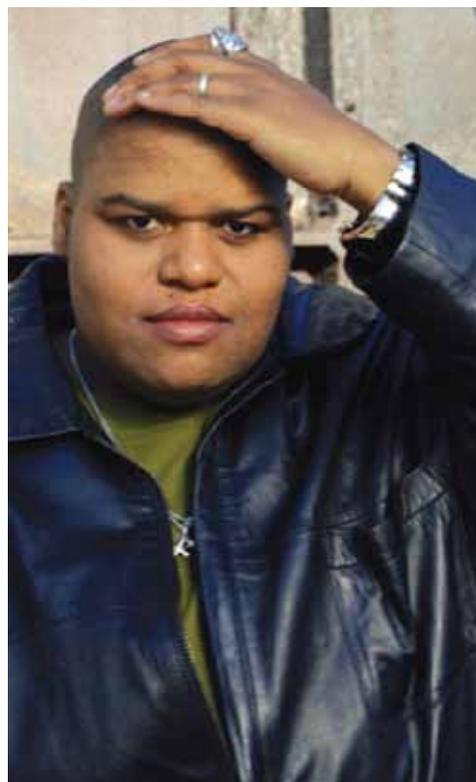
Reagon eagerly anticipates her visit to the Windy City: "Chicago is an amazing city and I always feel good when I visit. It is one of the heartbeat cities of America and so much has to pass through Chicago to get through anywhere else. I am looking forward visiting."

The 2009 Out Music Award, the 2007 Black Lily Award for Outstanding Performance and a 2004 New York Foundation for the Arts award for music composition are among the many honors Reagon has received.

Reagon has a partner of 10 years, and they live together with their teenage daughter in New York City. The couple has no plans to get married, however, they will throw a commitment party sometime in the future.

Neither singer has settled on specific songs to perform at the Guthrie tribute concert, although Near did say she would sing his "Pastures of Plenty."

See www.hollynear.com and www.toshireagon.com to find out more about both artists, and www.portoluz.org/event.php?event_id=29 and www.metrochicago.com/shows for information about the concert and to buy tickets.



Toshi Reagon (left) and Holly Near. Reagon photo by JOMOTO; Near photo from official website

tory culture" and to honor Guthrie who "wrote and sang the stories of the 99 percent."

A bevy of artists will be performing, including The Klezmatics, Son del Viento, Jon Langford, Bucky Halker, Kevin Coval and Tom Morello as well as Near and Reagon.

Music has been in both women's blood since they were kids.

For Near, this concert is an expression of her musical style: "I sing social-change music. The style can range from a mountain style chant to Broadway show tune. As long as the song feels right coming out of my voice and out of my mind, then it works for me."

At 8, Near first performed in public at a talent contest put on by the Veterans of Foreign Wars. This was in the mid-1950s, and since her parents loved music they ordered many records from catalogs. "We didn't have a TV so we were our own entertainment," said Near. When the family did get a TV in 1965, the news footage of civil-rights protests and speeches influenced Near greatly.

At the center of social-change movements over the last 40 years, Near participated in her first protest in 1966 against the military recruiters who came to her high school—during the Vietnam War. Near has been a part of social-justice movements ever since.

Not only is Near a singer; she also performed in the Broadway musical Hair and acted in a va-

airports, to come out to family, to fall in love against all odds. And perhaps most importantly, to put the challenges of the LGBT community in a global context because no one is just gay."

When asked who their musical inspirations were, Near said she admires female singers from all genres: "I used to stand in front of a mirror and lip sync the words, feeling all those voices come through my body. All those women were great teachers for a rural child." Reagon said her inspirations include Nona Hendryx, Joni Mitchell, Bob Marley, Meshell Ndegecello and her own mother, among many others.

As for favorite new music artists, Near said she likes anyone who comes from the heart and does their homework. Reagon was more specific, naming acts such as Little Dragon, a girl group called King, Lizz Wright, Concha Buika, TheeSatisfaction, Tamar-kali and Chocolate Genius.

"Chicago has a long cultural and political history so it's always exciting to come and feel a part of that history. I am looking forward to working with these socially conscious artists, some of whom I know very well," said Near. "I've worked with Toshi before and I think she is spectacular, knowledgeable and articulate. It is a pleasure to cross paths with her again. I've known her since she was a little girl."

Near has received numerous awards including honors from the ACLU, the National Lawyers Guild, the National Organization for Women,

Northalsted Market Days to feature Olivia Newton-John

Olivia Newton-John will headline this year's Northalsted Market Days Aug. 12.

The four-time Grammy winner will perform on the North Stage. Other legends slated to sing include The Pointer Sisters ("I'm So Excited") and Sheena Easton ("Strut"). Former American Idol finalist Paris Bennett is also scheduled to sing.

LGBT acts on the bill include Eric Himan, Tony winner Levi Kreis and Matt Zarley. There will also be local acts, such as the Chicago Spirit Brigade and

The 31st annual Northalsted Market Days (which will take place Aug. 11-12, 11 a.m.-10 p.m.) will take up six blocks on Halsted between Belmont and Addison, and feature three music stages.

Full lineup:

Saturday, Aug. 11

Rivers Casino Stage
3:30 p.m. Levi Kreis
5:45 p.m. Jessica Sutta
9:05 p.m. The Pointer Sisters

Roscoe Stage
12:30 & 2 p.m. He Said, She Said
3:45 p.m. Isaiah Grass
5:30 p.m. Abba Salute
7:40 p.m. Eric Himan
9:10 p.m. Jessie and the Toy Boys

Belmont
12:30 p.m. Comasoft
2:15 p.m. The Wanton Looks
3:30 p.m. Chicago Spirit Brigade

4 p.m. The Handcuffs
5:30 p.m. Dot Dot Dot
8:15 p.m. Lez Zeppelin

Jazz Stage
1:30 p.m. Lucy Smith Quartet
3:45 p.m. Red Hot Riot
6 p.m. BMR4

Sunday, Aug. 12

North Stage
3 p.m. Mia Martina
5 p.m. Adam Barta/Matt Zarley
7:15 p.m. Karmin
9:05 p.m. Olivia Newton John

Roscoe Stage
12:15 p.m. A Thousand Julys
2:15 p.m. Windy City Cowboys
2:50 p.m. The Personnel
4:30 p.m. Chicago Spirit Brigade
5:30 p.m. Sheena Easton
7:45 p.m. 16 Candles

Belmont
12:30 & 1:50 p.m. Almost Famous
3:30 p.m. Kimi Hayes
5:15 p.m. Planet Claire (B52s tribute band)
7:30 p.m. Don't Speak (No Doubt tribute band)
9:10 p.m. Paris Bennett

Yoshi Stage
1:30 p.m. Soulio
3:50 p.m. Stache
6 p.m. Lil Ricki and The Licorice Sticks

NUNN ON ONE: MUSIC

Alt Q performer JC Brooks talks soul music, Gay Idol

BY JERRY NUNN

JC from JC Brooks and the Uptown Sound steps out on his own as performer at the Alt Q Fest this weekend. Don't worry, he's not leaving the group just showing more of what this mega talented performer can do.

If you missed the group that performed *Passing Strange* at the Bailiwick last year, then get ready to discover a blend of styles with their latest release called *Want More*.

After a huge crowd at the recent gig at Metro, we can see big things are headed for the group including *Lollapalooza* this summer.

Windy City Times talked with Brooks, who just



JC Brooks.

WCT: How would you describe the Uptown Sound?

JC: I would say post-punk/soul. Our older description was "maximum fucking R&B" but "post-punk/soul" works for me. My favorite was when someone said, "It is like Otis Redding fronting The Stooges" or "Wilson Pickett had whipped the Velvet Underground off of heroin!" Wow—that is pretty descriptive in comparing us to other musicians.

WCT: Explain the song "Sister Ray Charles."

JC: It is about a relationship of convenience in the most gentlemanly terms. It is about a fuckbuddy when one side is taking it way too seriously. The other side wants a little more than

what I heard.

WCT: Do you think you will be nervous for Lollapalooza?

JC: Maybe a little bit but we probably won't have so many wild cards for that one. Not to say that we are not going to do anything interesting but we will have more time with the additional elements of the band.

WCT: Do you have a new CD coming out?

JC: We released our last one this past fall and this upcoming fall or winter we plan on recording a new one to hopefully release around South by Southwest next year.

WCT: People can keep up with it on your website?

JC: Yes, it is the longest URL ever; it's www.jcbrooksandtheuptownsound.com.

BOOK REVIEW

Every Time I Think of You

by Jim Provenzano
\$14.95; CreateSpace;
258 pages
BY DAVID-ELIJAH NAHMOD

You never forget your first love. With this, his fourth novel, Jim Provenzano offers a lovely, lyrical tale of love at first sight that tugs at the heartstrings.

In the late 1970s, studious Reid and Everett, a privileged boy from the town's wealthiest family, meet in the woods on a cold winter's night. They have sex on the spot, but it doesn't end there. Over the course of a weekend, they fall deeply in love.

But life throws them many curve balls. There's the class difference. Everett attends a private school hundreds of miles away, so the time they can spend together is limited. With heart and humor, the author details those first few weeks of what looks to be a long-term relationship. We share the boys' excitement as they send each other packages, and speak on the phone when they can. When they meet for occasional weekends, we share in their joy. It's a beautiful story that will bring back warm-hearted memories for many readers. We've all been there.

Provenzano told Windy City Times why he made his story a period piece: "The time and

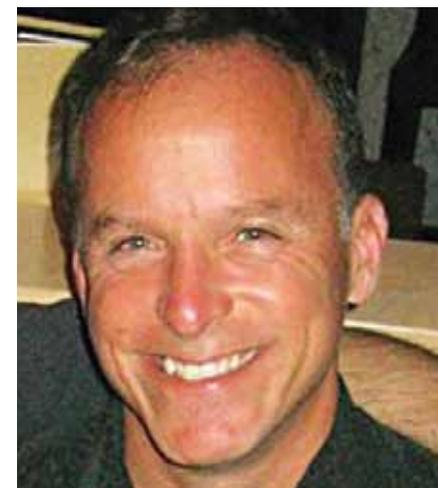
WCT: Well, that makes sense.

JC: We hope to purchase a shorter domain when it becomes available in a month and a half. You can also Twitter us @theuptownsound.

WCT: Anything else you want to say about the Alt Q show?

JC: I am very excited and honored to be part of the lineup, especially as a pseudo untried talent. Scott has seen me with the band but maybe not all of my personal work out there. I like that he thinks I have something valid to say.

Head to the Old Town School of Folk Music Saturday, May 19, at 7 p.m. at 4544 N. Lincoln Ave. to check out JC and many other acts. Visit www.altqfestival.com for the complete lineup and details.



Jim Provenzano.

of Pittsburgh thrown in. With his elegantly written prose, the author draws his readers back to a fondly remembered time when young gay men were free to explore their sexuality without fear of HIV.

The book draws part of its power from Provenzano's sharp descriptions of its settings. As he describes the tree where the boys first meet, it's easy to picture its bare branches framed against the night sky. Readers will feel the winter chill in the air as the boys "reveal" themselves to each other. It's rare for a writer to paint such vivid images with words, but Provenzano has done it.

The genesis of the book came from a most unexpected place. "It started with a series of dreams I had in early January 2011. I woke up and realized that there was a connection, and the scenes were quite evocative. I just started typing, even though it was four in the morning. Fortunately, I kept typing, and fortunately, it was a Saturday."

It's definitely not a children's book. The love/sex scenes between Reid and Everett are graphic, but they're never pornographic. The boys aren't "tricking," they're making love, and these sequences are filled with the special kind of excitement one can only feel with a soul mate.

About midway through the story, the seemingly idyllic love story of Reid and Everett takes a sharp, dramatic turn. An unexpected tragedy threatens to come between the boys, and the remainder of the book focuses on how they, as teens, will deal with what the universe has given them. "Along the way of writing *Every Time*, I just realized that it could happen. I didn't set out from the beginning to have it happen, but all of a sudden, I realized how many people I've known in my life who've used wheelchairs, and I became fascinated by the potential for conflict and compassion between the two main characters."

Every Time I Think of You has been nominated for a Lambda Literary Award, and Provenzano promised that a sequel is now in the works. The book is available in both print and Amazon Kindle editions.

so happens to be part of the Windy City Idol family.

Windy City Times: Hi, JC. I heard about you are appearing at the Alt Q Festival. Did you know Scott Free before this?

JC: Sort of; I had been to Homolatte a couple of years back. I had seen his name around town doing random stuff but until he actually approached me to do this I don't think we had actually had a conversation about anything.

WCT: He is very excited about having you.

JC: Nice—and I am excited to do this. I don't know if I had told you or not but it has been a while since I had performed my own stuff out, either my music or poetry. I am really looking forward to this.

WCT: I didn't know you do a lot of poetry.

JC: I used to. I did a little stand-up, poetry, music—anything that would get me in front of a room full of people.

WCT: You are multitalented, mister! When did they first start calling you JC?

JC: It is just with this band. I have never really had a nickname before.

WCT: How did the band come together?

JC: Our guitarist put an ad on Craigslist and was trying to put together a band that would make progressive dance music. I was the singer that answered. I can't say that it is my band because I didn't put it together.

WCT: Were you raised in Chicago?

JC: No, I am actually from New Jersey.

WCT: When did you move to Chicago?

JC: I moved here back in 2004.

WCT: I hear you are being compared to Sam Cooke. Do you want to be the next one?

JC: No—I would rather be the next Tina Turner without the beatings!

WCT: I like that answer.

JC: Oh, I am not really sure who I would like to be the next incarnation of. I like the artists that people hear in our music but inevitably we will be compared to other artists.

the main character is willing to give.

WCT: When did you first come out of the closet?

JC: When I was 6 years old and my mother didn't believe me—she thought I had been molested by someone. Then I tried again to tell her when I was a freshman in high school and that one took.

WCT: Everyone in the band is cool with it?

JC: Yes, our guitarist actually used to play guitar in a country band fronted by a gay dude called Devin & The Straights.

WCT: I love that name for a group.

JC: We used to use one of their songs on the beginning of ours. I like their sound.

WCT: I remember when you auditioned for Windy City Gay Idol and I was judging. Were you in the finals for Idol?

JC: I won my round at Cellblock. I made it to the finals but didn't win.

WCT: You are like the Jennifer Hudson of our Idol competition! [Both laugh.]

JC: I don't know about that, but I got a little something...

WCT: You are getting a lot of hype so it is really fun to watch. How did the Metro show go?

JC: It was crazy and a lot of fun. I couldn't have asked for anything better. I am just so glad that it went the way that I hoped it would. I don't usually get nervous before shows or anything like that but every now and again I do. I just had one of these moments before that show thinking about fifty ways that it could go wrong.

We added two horns to the percussion player and the only way we could get them to rehearse was right before the gig. I came home to shower before the show and got stupidly nervous but the show went great.

WCT: Gold Hotel opened, and I have wanted to see them play live.

JC: They are a good band but I didn't get to see much of their act. They sounded great from



age of the two protagonists is the same as mine, but the story's completely made up. I wanted to set a work in this special moment in time, when, as a teenager, I felt very okay about being gay, and people around me did as well. Plus, I didn't particularly care to write about an era of cell phones and Facebook just yet."

The story is primarily set in small-town Pennsylvania, with a few visits to the big city

NUNN ON ONE: ART

Tennessee Loveless: Gay color-blind artist brings works to Chicago

BY JERRY NUNN

Center on Halsted is bringing Tennessee to Chicago and the world of art will never be the same.

Tennessee Loveless was born in Greenville, S.C., and eventually studied fashion design in Atlanta—but he always wanted to be a painter. Being born almost entirely color-blind almost crushed his dreams, but he devised his own system and moved to California where he soon rose to the top of his field at Disney in their Collection Editions department.

Loveless arrives this week in our neck of the woods, bringing his pop-art collection with him.

Windy City Times: Hey, Tennessee. When did you first start creating art?

Tennessee Loveless: I went to school for art and have always been a sketcher and a painter. I ended up going to Savannah's School of Art and Design for studio painting back in 1996 but I quickly left a year later when they told me I shouldn't be a painter because of my color choices.

I then got a degree in fashion design in a school in Atlanta. I had never really painted until moving to San Francisco. I think it was seven years; I stopped painting until a drag queen saw me sketch and wanted me to paint her. I told her that I can't see color very well. She didn't care but just wanted a portrait.

WCT: So you did it?

TL: Yes, I ended up painting her and her drag-queen daughter saw it and asked me to paint her. Suddenly every drag queen in San Francisco wanted me to paint [her]! I became the artist for drag queens in San Francisco. That is how it all started. School didn't really do anything, it was just training.

WCT: So the lesson is, kids, drop out of school and hang out with drag queens!

TL: Exactly. I was a drag queen, too, in San Francisco for a long time. I became real involved in that area. After that I had a few shows there, mostly at street level and whatnot. I then went to L.A. and did the RuPaul's Drag Race art show at the World of Wonder Gallery. James St. James saw my work and asked me to do season one at that gallery. They eventually gave up the gallery to the Betty Page store.

I did another show there called Cartoon Nation. I was working a temp job as a business analyst for Disney and one of the executives came to the gallery and saw that I was painter. He asked why I was painting more and I told him about being color-blind. I started working internally at Disney and they pitched me working at Division Pop, which is a great division of Disney Fine Art.

WCT: So that is how you got in the Mickey Mouse Club.

TL: [Laughs] Yeah, through drag queens! When I showed executives my work at Disney they thought they were "lovely ladies" and I said, "Actually they are men." Many people who work at Disney have a passion for it and I love it, but [I] came from an underground street-level drag-queen art perspective. They were taking a risk bringing me on the team.

WCT: What was your drag name?

TL: Loveless—it was just my last name. There was a thing called Tranny Shack in San Francisco that changed my life. I am from the South, which usually means you impersonate Reba McEntire or try to look fishy. Going to San Francisco, that whole world changed me. It was very punk rock, very avant-garde and very DIY at the same time. These were heavily tattooed drag queens so I found the place I wanted to live! Tranny Shack



Tennessee Loveless. Photo from Loveless

eventually went all over the United States. There are two movies, a Sundance Film Festival documentary and a really lovely coffee table book about it now. That was very revolutionary for me.

WCT: Does the name Tennessee come from living in Tennessee?

TL: My dad is from Tennessee. He is from Rutherford, Tenn. You are from Tennessee, aren't you?

WCT: Yes; I grew up there.

TL: I had to read your blog a bit and saw you in that nun outfit. I thought it was amazing!

WCT: Thanks. Is this your first time in Chicago?

TL: I lived in Chicago for a brief amount of time in 2000. I was living in Philadelphia, traveled through Chicago and decided to stay for a little bit. Winter came and I had to leave. I am coming back after 12 years. I love it there and I am dying to do a residency out there. No, it is not my first time but feels like it, with me coming back and being a lot older.

WCT: Your art uses gay icons such as Joan Crawford and Dolly Parton. Are you a big fan of theirs?

TL: Oh, yeah. I have always been a fan of villains and Joan's face was modeled after the evil queen in Snow White. Walt Disney loved Joan Crawford. When I was researching Joan Crawford facts, the day that she was buried was that day that I was born, which is kind of creepy. I do have such an affinity for Joan Crawford, Bette Davis and the starlets. I like the power they exuded. Back in those days you had to fight to be a woman. There is also lots of camp in how drag queens act, too. I like to paint them for the overdramatization. It is the colorful nature that I like to paint on people.

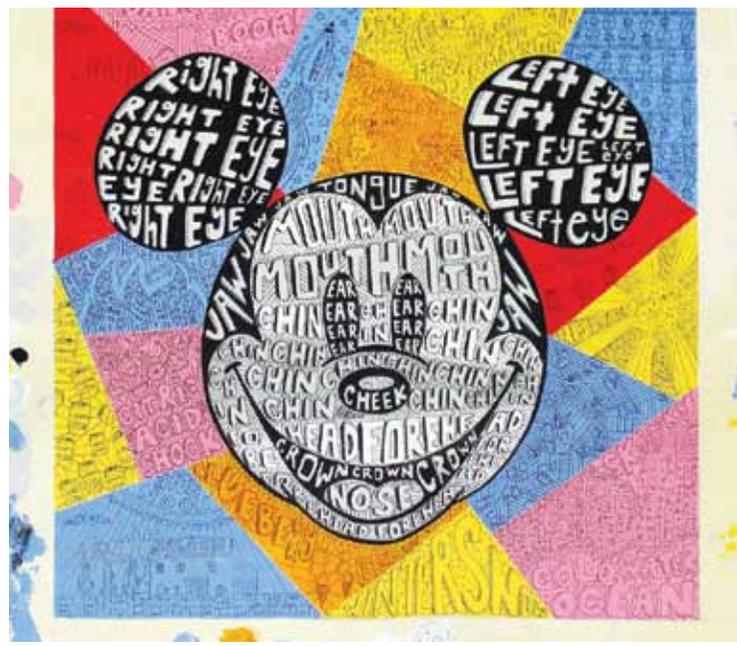
WCT: How does it work being color-blind? I read you see in hot and cold.

TL: I am not completely blind. I don't just see in black and white. There are versions of chromatopsia, but I can see hot and cold. I can pick out the color range of where it is going but I can't pick colors out. If it is a deep hot color then I assume it is red. With cold colors I am so screwed. I can't begin to know what I am painting. Neutral and pastel colors don't exist. They are muddy colors that could be a combination. Most of it is a guessing game.

In pop art things have to be exact so I paint on a mathematical scale. Every color has a pigment code and has a designated color scheme. A yellow will have 5 percent green and there is a whole index to it. When I paint, everything is gridded out.

WCT: Sounds a little tricky.

TL: It has been a trying process. The more I paint and the more it has been my career, the



One of Tennessee Loveless' works: This Chord is Discord. Photo from Loveless

more complex these patterns have become.

WCT: You taught yourself this process?

TL: Yes, no one is going to teach it for me. When I was in college it became an issue because everyone said my color choices were obnoxious. These teachers wanted everyone to be commercial artists and they said I would never be commercial with the color choices that I used. I was very sensitive about that. Once I got over that via the power of drag queens I soon learned what was comfortable for me.

The only colors I worked with were orange and ultramarine blue, and as time went on I started using other colors but I had to understand them on a fundamental level and how they worked. Studying pigment code, researching it online and creating my own index was how I trained myself because no one else was going to do it for me.

WCT: How long will you be in Chicago for?

TL: I am spending the weekend there. I want to stay for a while. The great thing about L.A. is

that you can always come back. It is a very transient city. I would like to sublet my place and stay there for five months.

I am creating two Chicago pieces with Mickey's head inside of it. I am working on it right now. His head will say Midwest and each shard will represent a stop on the CTA. The red will say Bryn Mawr and blue will say Damen so ... [it's] a story about the transit train. The CTA is amazing, coming from a train that goes two places.

WCT: I look forward to seeing the piece at the show.

TL: I am really excited especially showing at the Center on Halsted because being gay and an artist it is really nice to show at an LGBT center. It is an homage to my sexuality and where I came from, also combining the art with it.

Loveless' exhibit will be at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., on Friday, May 18, for a limited run. Visit www.centeronhalsted.org for information and details.

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the **DISH**

WEEKLY DINING GUIDE IN **WINDY CITY TIMES**



Premise

BY MEGHAN STREIT

Several weeks ago I saw a woman on a ladder painting over the sign that used to mark the entrance of In Fine Spirits, a much-loved and, by all appearances, highly successful wine bar in Andersonville.

A few swipes of the paintbrush and an interior redesign later, our beloved and relaxed little neighborhood spot for reasonably priced wine and small plates was gone. The owners transformed the wine bar into an upscale restaurant called Premise.

When I first heard the news, my first thought was, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." The Clark Street strip in Chicago's North Side "gayborhood" is slowly but surely transforming into quite the destination spot for fine dining. That's not a bad thing, but I fear we're reaching a bit of a saturation point. We now have a number of upscale dining options (Anteprima, Big Jones, Acre, Bar Ombre), a few good bar-and-grill types (T's and Lady Gregory's come to mind) and more than our fair share of Mediterranean restaurants (and antique shops!). What Andersonville is now conspicuously missing is a wine bar.

Full disclosure: I live in Andersonville and I really, really like to drink wine. So, I was baffled when I heard In Fine Spirits was going away, and I heard similar rumblings from neighbors and friends who frequent the neighborhood. Nevertheless, I decided to give Premise a try.



Premise's carrot cake with pea gelato (left) and Maine cod (right). Photos by Meghan Streit

I was pleasantly surprised when I walked into the transformed space. Black walls, bright white chairs and catchy jazz music at the perfect volume create a truly sophisticated dining room. My next surprise was not quite as pleasant. The menu prices are startlingly high. There's an \$18 prawn starter and entrees range from \$24 to \$27. Yikes! I was nostalgic for In Fine Spirit's overpriced cheese plates before I ate a single bite of food. In fairness, the man preparing the high-end, artfully experimental cuisine at Premise is Chef Brian Runge, who was formerly chef de cuisine at Graham Elliot—not a resume to sneeze at and perhaps worth a few extra bucks.

I started with the fava agnolotti (a fancy word for ravioli). The pasta was filled with morel mushrooms and dotted with thin slices of country ham, wood sorrel and ramp ragout. The flavor combination was so delightful that had the pasta itself not been undercooked, this appetizer may have been worth the \$16 it cost me. Fresh bread, still warm and crusty from the oven, was served on a bizarrely long plate with a little dot of green citrus butter placed about 12 inches away from it. I appreciated the drama and the presentation to detail—which continued throughout my meal. The bread was fantastic, but the citrus butter was a little to, well, citrusy.

You're probably thinking, "Enough about the bread and the chairs. What's on the drink menu?" The answer is anything and everything. There's a long list of gins, vodkas, rums and whiskeys with the same focus on locally produced small

batch liquors that In Fine Spirits had. You'll also find about a dozen delicious sounding specialty cocktails for \$10 a pop and a wide selection of beers from breweries near and far.

What's disappointingly short is the list of wines available by the glass, considering the place used to be a wine bar, where glasses of wine flowed freely. There is, however, an extensive list of wines sold by the bottle. Note to fans of In Fine Spirit's reasonably priced bottles (I, for one, recall many happy nights over \$28 bottles of Prosecco): Those days are over. The cheapest bottle on Premise's list is \$40, but most are in the \$50 to \$60 range, and a few are even more than \$100. Sigh.

While the wine prices might suggest you're about to have a snooty, inaccessible dining experience, the lovely staff makes it anything but. The wine director knows his stuff and is happy to help you find the perfect wine to complement your food selections—and he does it without a hint of arrogance. He recommended the Domain Jean-Paul & Benoit Droin Chablis. Normally, I don't like Chardonnay, but this lovely French version was sturdy with a creamy texture and paired nicely with everything I ate.

The menu at Premise isn't long and overwhelming. You'll find just a few carefully selected (and highly imaginative) offerings for each course, which I'm sure will be changing with the seasons. For my main course, I tried the cod. I was lured in by the leek fondue it would be served with, but it was the fish itself that stole the show. The cod was tender, seared golden

brown on top and was perhaps the most perfect preparation I've ever eaten of this normally hum-hum fish. The potatoes served with it were a bit underdone, but not enough to ruin the dish. I also tried the grass-fed beef, which was flavorful but a little chewy. The tough texture of the meat was unfortunate because the hearty cream sauce and nicely cooked vegetables it was served with were fantastic.

The dessert menu is similarly short. On my visit there were just three choices. Based on their descriptions, none of them jumped out at me. But in the name of research, I let the waiter talk me into the carrot cake, which is served with pea gelato and freeze-dried peas. The dessert is the chef's playful reinvention of childhood admonitions to "eat your peas and carrots." It's cute, I'll admit, but as it turns out, I can't be cajoled into eating peas and carrots any easier than I could be 25 years ago. The carrot cake itself was denser than most versions and tasty enough, and the pea gelato was surprisingly refreshing—slightly sweet with (mercifully) just a hint of pea flavor. The freeze-dried peas were dusted with sugar, but that still doesn't make them dessert in my book. Overall, the clever carrot cake was fun to try—once.

If you prefer more traditional desserts, like chocolate, Premise accommodates. I tried the chocolate torte, which is anything but ordinary. Ancho crumble and chorizo espuma give the sweet cake a spicy kick, and cinnamon ice cream rounds out the flavor combination.

I think I speak for a lot of people in Andersonville when I say, "I miss In Fine Spirits." But, it's gone and Premise is worth a try. If you want to check out the place, but aren't ready to commit to a pricy meal, have a cocktail in the upstairs lounge, which has been remodeled into a dark and sexy lair with sleek oversized furniture and a VIP "king's table" tucked away in the back. And don't worry: The back patio you came to love at In Fine Spirits remains at Premise, so you can still enjoy a glass of wine out there this summer. Just bring some extra cash.

Premise is located at 5420 N. Clark; call 773-334-9463 or visit www.premisechicago.com.

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Center on Halsted marks five years at gala

BY KATE SOSIN

The Center on Halsted celebrated its five-year anniversary at their Human First Gala on May 12.

An estimated 500 guests attended the dinner at the Harris Theater downtown, and more than 1,000 people attended a concert immediately following.

Bravo's Andy Cohen kicked off the evening's performances while lesbian singer-songwriter k.d. lang and the Siss Boom Bang band headlined the event.

"I don't think I've had this many men in my audience ever," Lang joked. Lang then sang Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah," which she performed at the opening ceremony of the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver.

Cohen regaled the audience with stories of his experiences coming out and then did a Q&A with audience members. Asked if he might consider producing a Real Housewives of Chicago show, he remarked that at least two other shows set in Chicago are being seriously considered.

"We're desperate to pitch a flag in Chicago," he said. But a great deal of the night's focus was on the center's fifth anniversary.

Cohen highlighted the center's work with youth, in particular. "It totally warms my heart and it should warm yours, too, that you're participating in this tonight," he said.

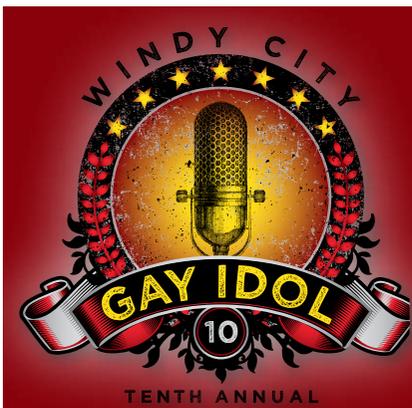
Modesto "Tico" Valle, CEO of the center, told the audience that before the facility was built, many community members questioned if the building would actually be utilized. He marked the occasion as proof of the center's necessity.

"Tonight we celebrate together five remarkable years," he said.

Valle has said the center sees up to 2,000 people daily now. He thanked supporters for making the center a reality and said the organization will continue to grow.

Community Spirit awards went to Chicago Cubs Charities, Chicago Community Trust and Kraft Foods. Leadership awards were given to Amina Dickerson, Laura Ricketts, Greg Cameron and Richard and Susan Kiphart.

Photos by Kat Fitzgerald, www.MysticImagesPhotography.com. See more online at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com



DS TEQUILA CO. THU., MAY 10

The talent keeps on coming as we welcome three—count 'em, three—new finalists: Aditi, Dan and Robert (who was granted the second Rainbow Ticket of the season). Windy City Gay Idol 2010 Matt Rivera entertained the crowd as the votes were being counted. Photos by Dave Ouano. More photos at facebook.com/windycitygayidol.

Look for photos from Windy City Gay Idol at The Call in next week's Nightspots and Roscoe's in next week's Windy City Times.



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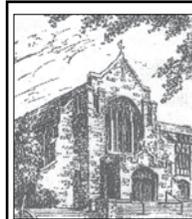
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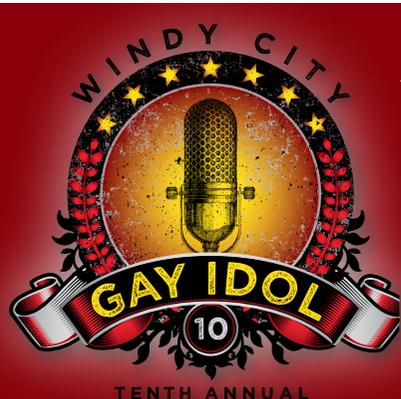
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SPIN MON., MAY 14

The final Rainbow Ticket of the season (?) was granted to Josh, who joined Noah and Kara to advance to the semifinals, June 2 at Sidetrack. Photos by Kirk Williamson. More photos at facebook.com/windycitygayidol.

Look for photos from Windy City Gay Idol at The Call in next week's Nightspots and Roscoe's in next week's Windy City Times.



Kat Fitzgerald's goodbye party

A going-away fundraiser for musician, Chicago resident and longtime Windy City Times photographer Kat Fitzgerald—"Kit Kat Kalamity and Farewell Extravaganza! (And COH Fundraiser!!)"—was held May 9 at the Center on Halsted.

It was a musical extravaganza, featuring performers such as Monica del Castillo, Jeannie Tanner and Jeff Brown, among many others. Fitzgerald will be relocating to California later this month. Photos by Dave Ouano



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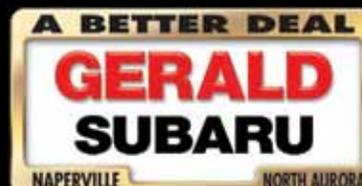
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calendar

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Wed., May 16

Little City Foster Care & Adoption Orientation Care to Foster? Little City Foundation is in need of people willing to care for DCFS children in their home. Little City's foster care and adoption program serves children with special needs between the ages of 0-21, with the greatest level of need being for children between the ages of 8 and 16 with moderate to severe developmental delays and/or emotional/behavior issues. 6pm-8pm, 773-265-1671, ext. 236, Little City Foundation 700 N. Sacramento Ave., www.littlecity.org

Civil Unions: Important Estate Planning Tips 6:30pm-8pm, 773-472-6469, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St.

Superstar Karaoke This uber-fun and chill after work set is comprised of cool young professionals, great drinks, and a microphone for you to own up to your superstar destiny! Come out and network, get buzzed, & sing your heart out each and every Wednesday at this relaxed Wicker Park lounge. 7pm, 773-342-5282, Seven Ultra Lounge 1270 N. Milwaukee Ave., www.7ultralounge.com

\$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.

Curtains Up! Showtune Video Night A night of your favorite showtune videos in Andersonville! All of the classics from stage and screen and a lot of new ones thrown in for your singing, laughing and watching enjoyment! 9pm, The Call (Chicago), 1547 W Bryn Mawr Ave.

SAM I AM Saturday, May 19

Sam Hamilton (right) is among those slated to be inducted in the CMSA Hall of Fame induction ceremony at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St.

Photo from Hamilton



Thursday, May 17

Windy City Gay Idol Windy City Gay Idol continues the search for the best amateur LGBT singers in the Windy City. 9pm singer signup. 8pm, The Call (Chicago), 1547 W Bryn Mawr Ave., www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/windy-city-gay-idol-kicks-off-10th-year-/36745.html

Dollhouse Drag Revue Join The Princess, Phi Phi O'Hara and different guest stars each week for a fresh, creative and exciting drag show unlike any other that you've seen before! Featuring up-and-coming talent with lots of energy! 9pm, Spin Nightclub, 800 W. Belmont Ave., www.spin-nightclub.com

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

Hard Rock Hair Flip Luxury Management is celebrating Chicago fashion and phi-

lanthropy in 2012 with the launch of a series of fashion shows that will focus on supporting charitable causes during a new season. The first show entitled Hard Rock Hair Flip, kicks off in support of Locks of Love. 7pm-9pm, Hard Rock Hotel 230 N. Michigan Ave., http://hrhf.eventbrite.com

Friday, May 18

Human Rights Watch Film Festival Human Rights Watch Film Festival (May 18-30) showcases the heroic stories of activists and survivors from all over the world facing human-rights issues. 12pm, Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State St., www.siskelfilmcenter.org/hrwfilmfest

Tennessee Loveless Fine Art Exhibition Los Angeles based Pop/Op artist, whose work drips with irony, considering the monumental fact that he is severely colorblind. Disney related works and pop culture inspired fine art portfolio based on starlets, celebrities, and underground drag culture. 7pm-9:30pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., www.centeronhalsted.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 St., www.eqil.org

k.d. lang Out singer/songwriter k.d. lang and the Siss Boom Bang. Tickets \$37 to \$76. 8pm, 847-263-6300, Genesee Theater, 203 N. Genesee St., Waukegan; www.genesee theatre.com

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-11pm, Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted, St. www.hydratechicago.com

Club Kylie Celebrate Kylie Minogue at the original Kylie party. DJ Riley York plays rare videos, remixes and live performances of the Aussie Diva. 9pm, The Call (Chicago), 1547 W Bryn Mawr Ave.

National Asian and Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day HIV Health Fair HIV/AIDS workshops, testing and free educational materials will be available. 10pm, Vietnamese Association of Illinois, 5110 N. Broadway, www.weuniteamerica.org

Saturday, May 19

OPALGA Garage Sale Fundraiser To help raise money for Oak Park's July 4th Parade. Email info@opalga.org for details. 3pm-9pm, Private residence, www.opalga.org

2012 CMSA Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony The pre-ceremony reception 6-7 pm, ceremony at 7 pm. Doors will close by 7. This year's inductees are Shawn Albritton, Jack Neilsen and Samantha Hamilton. All CMSA members are welcome to attend this ceremony. 6pm-9pm, Sidetrack, 3349 N Halsted St., www.chicagomsa.org

Dignity/Chicago 40 years of ministry Anniversary dinner. \$60 and up. Also see May 20 for info on anniversary Mass at Broadway United Methodist Church. 6pm, Francesca's on Taylor, 1400 W. Taylor St., www.dignity-chicago.org

12th Annual Alt Q Music Festival Featuring Daphne Willis, JC Brooks, Alix Dobkin, Nhojj, E Nina Jay and Band Practice, hosted by Scott Free, emceed by Aerin Tedesco and Marvin Astorga. A meet-the-artists reception will follow the event. A portion of proceeds of this event will be donated to Broadway Youth Center. Tickets available at 312-728-6000 or at www.oldtown-school.org; 7pm-10pm, Old Town School of Folk Music, 4544 N. Lincoln Ave.,

Asians and Friends outing to Chicago Red Line performance Performance in which Asians and Friends member Joel Camden will perform. Members RSVP by April 30 for \$20 group tickets at the AFC phonenumber. 8pm, 312-409-1573, Mayne Stage, 1328 W. Morse Ave., www.afchicago.org

Piano Man Mark Farris at 3160 Piano Man Mark Farris returns to Chicago's 3160 for a perfect evening of show tunes and medleys. Don't miss out on a great evening of entertainment! 9pm, 3160 N. Clark St., www.markfarris.com

Sunday, May 20

Urban Village Church: Andersonville service Andersonville is a neighborhood full of passion, art, diversity, and eclectic energy, all which makes Urban Village Church thrilled to be joining the community! 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

Great Parker Garage Sale Why Pay Retail? Support Francis W. Parker School and check out the quality clothes for everyone, including a designer boutique with Prada, Gucci, Escada and more. Toys, electronics, sports equipment, furniture, art, fashion accessories, house wares and more. General Sale-Cash Only. Boutique now accepting credit cards. 10am-4pm, 773-353-3000, Francis W. Parker School 2233 N. Clark St., www.fwparker.org/

Wit and Wisdom from Children's Public Television Chicago cabaret performer Justin Hayford has put songs from Sesame Street and Mister Rogers' Neighborhood together for this special program, along with the fascinating stories behind their creation. Admission: YOU SET THE ADMISSION PRICE! Every dollar goes to benefit AIDS Legal Council of Chicago. 7pm-9pm, 773-278-1830, Davenport's Piano Bar and Cabaret, 1383 N Milwaukee Ave.

Robyn Showcase Presented by Absolut Vodka This monthly polar music party features music and video from Robyn and electronic superstars of Scandinavia (Lykke Li, The Knife, The Sounds, Röyksopp and more). Absolut tasting 11 pm-1 am. 10pm, Berlin Nightclub, 954 W Belmont Ave., www.berlinchicago.com

Monday, May 21

Windy City Gay Idol Wild Card City Gay Idol continues the search for the best amateur LGBT singers in the Windy City. Invited guests plus open slots for new singers. 8pm door opens. 9pm, Roscoe's, 3356 N Halsted St., www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/windy-city-gay-idol-kicks-off-10th-year-/36745.html

Live Band Karaoke with Amy Armstrong



ALIX IN WONDERLAND Saturday, May 19

Alix Dobkin (in addition to Scott Free, below) will perform at the ALT Q Music Festival.

Photo by Tracy Baim

Every Monday night at 10 p.m. in the front bar, hosted by the one and only Amy Armstrong; Roscoe's, 3356 N. Halsted St., www.roscoes.com

Tuesday, May 22

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. 9pm, Roscoe's, 3356 N Halsted St, Chicago, www.roscoes.com

Wed., May 23

Superstar Karaoke This uber-fun and chill after work set is comprised of cool young professionals, great drinks, and a microphone for you to own up to your superstar destiny! Come out and network, get buzzed, & sing your heart out each and every Wednesday at this relaxed Wicker Park lounge. 7pm, 773-342-5282, Seven Ultra Lounge 1270 N. Milwaukee Ave., www.7ultralounge.com

The Experience with Rebecca Ferguson Sony Music Entertainment and The Music Experience present; 7pm-9:30pm, 773-493-0154, The DuSable Museum, www.amusicexperience.com

Friday, May 25

IML Opening Ceremonies IML Opening Ceremonies doors open 8pm, begins 9pm; 8pm-11:30pm, Location to be determined, http://www.iml.com

Saturday, May 26

Out & Proud Chicago LGBT Tour Out & Proud Chicago, an LGBT tour coordinated by the Chicago Office of Tourism & Culture, is happening this summer on three dates. Led by Tracy Baim, Publisher and Executive Editor at Windy City Media Group. 10am-2:30pm, 312-742-1190, Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington St., www.explorechicago.org/city/en/things_to_see_do/tours/tourism/out_and_proud.html

Belmont-Sheffield Music Festival Popular annual event, held on Memorial Day Weekend, unofficially kicks off Chicago's summer outdoor street fest season. Features regions top tribute bands, food, libations and arts & crafts. 12pm-10pm, North Sheffield between Belmont & School, http://www.chicagoevents.com/event.cfm?eid=140

2012 Grabby Awards The 2012 Grabbys hosted by ChiChi LaRue and Honey West. See your favorite adult film stars in an evening that highlights the top talent and performances in the industry. 7:30pm-11pm, Park West Chicago, 322 W Armitage Ave., www.grabbys.com



FREE TO BE

Saturday, May 19

Scott Free will host the 12th Annual ALT Q Music Festival at the Old Town School of Folk Music, 4544 N. Lincoln Ave.

PR photo

BILLY MASTERS

"The president's position on gay marriage is anything but precise."—Anderson Cooper used his "Keeping Them Honest" segment to give his opinion on Mr. Obama. The next day, the president stated that he supports same-sex marriage. I believe he might have wanted to add, "And while we're keeping them honest, is there anything you want to say, Andy?"

It was a big week for gay marriage. Between Joe Biden jumping the gun with his support and North Carolina going out of its way to ban it, President Obama came forward with the news everyone pretty much already knew—he supports gay marriage. To call this "news" is almost perfunctory—he unequivocally supported it in



Andy Cohen (above) didn't plead the fifth about Lance Bass.

1996, but was more circumspect when running for president. Still, it's a brave statement from someone in an election year. Ironically, he's running against a person who was the sitting governor of the first state in the union to legalize gay marriage. In fact, under Romney's watchful eye, Massachusetts also adopted universal health care. The poor guy—he can't even campaign on the two biggest accomplishments of his administration.

While this was going on, John Travolta was being attacked by battling masseurs who claim the star propositioned them for gay sex. As we previously reported, an unnamed guy claims that Travolta hired him in Beverly Hills for a massage, proceeded to touch the professional's genitals and then proposed a three-way with an anonymous starlet also staying in the hotel. (How many of you are thinking Tara Reid?) The masseur bolted and filed a \$2 million lawsuit for general damages (or, in this case, genital damages). He also says he can prove his story: "I passed a lie detector test for the National Enquirer." I'm not sure how helpful (or admissible) that will be. Travolta's legal team states that the star was not even in California at the time, but was actually in New York. The attorneys have a receipt from a Chinese restaurant where Travolta dined. How does our accuser respond? Easy. "It was a miscalculation of the date. The lawsuit will likely be amended, but this doesn't change the facts of the lawsuit." Uh-huh...

While Travolta was trying to deal with this mess, a second guy came forward and joined the lawsuit (wanting his own \$2 million). This masseur says his incident happened at a resort in Atlanta on Jan. 28—where, as it turns out, the star was indeed staying. In this scenario, Travolta was naked under a sheet, but took it off, claiming it was "sticky." He then asked the masseur to work his "glutes," and then spun around to expose his erect penis—which is commendable, given Travolta's current physical shape. The accuser says he has "substantial documentation and numerous witnesses regarding the substance of Travolta's actions." He plans to use hotel surveillance footage to bolster his case. Allegedly, it will show the actor going into the spa to request the massage, and later, shows the masseur going in and out of his room quite rapidly (which isn't what Travolta wanted him going in and out of).

Days later, a THIRD guy came forward with a similar claim. Let's cut to the chase—how many of you have NOT been propositioned by John Travolta? Hands? I didn't think so. This latest case is slightly different. Fabian Zanzi was working for Royal Caribbean in 2009 when Travolta was on a cruise. Allegedly, Johnny approached him, saying that he had something on his neck. When he approached, Travolta dropped his robe and revealed his naked body. How many of you have seen John Travolta in the past few years? This is not a guy who should be dropping his robe unless it's during a power outage! What makes this incident more ridiculous is that Zanzi isn't even a masseur. Let me get this straight—John Travolta is exposing himself and asking for massages from random guys on a boat? On the positive side, Travolta allegedly offered the guy \$12K. On the negative side, Fabian turned him down and reported the incident. He was then confined to quarters and fired when the ship got to port.

Our amusing "Ask Billy" question comes from the outrageous Betty Bowers: "Andy Cohen admitted to Wendy Williams that he made out with Lance Bass—which means he plowed him because if you get to the make-out stage with Lance, you're getting in. Have you heard any other details?"

My, my, my—those are a lot of assumptions about dear little Lance. First, bear in mind that Andy's tryst occurred with a pre-Dancing With The Stars Bass. Back then, Lance was a little out of shape and had that lazy eye. (Maybe that's what he and Cohen bonded over.) Anyway, I know two people who also made out with Lance around the same time and they would dispute your theory about his easy virtue. Both of these close personal friends are rather attractive, and both state that the making out did not lead to anything further. In fact, one of them was making out with Lance in a hot tub! Now that I think of it, I have no idea why he didn't get further with Lance. But, riddle me this—would you really be bragging about having sex with Lance Bass?

When people aren't able to seal the deal with Lance Bass, it's definitely time to end yet another column. As we go to print, I'm in a bit of a daze having just spent several hours with the luminous Lindsay Wagner—and devoted fans know how special Lindsay is to me. But that's a story for next week. Be sure to keep up with all my exploits at www.BillyMasters.com, the site that, unlike Lance, is a sure thing. If you've got a question that needs my immediate attention, drop a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before Travolta has to defend himself against so many lawsuits, he gets one trial for free! Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

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Teammates on the field, partners off

BY ROSS FORMAN

The Chicago Force was heading to Atlanta for a game back in 2005, and teammates Amanda Malsch and Tricia Charbonneau were on their first road trip. They were seated next to each other for the near-90-minute flight, which truly changed their lives.

"Although I knew her as a teammate, I hadn't had a chance to get to know her well," Malsch said. "During the flight we had great conversation and she quickly became a good friend. I was impressed by her intelligence and drive."

Charbonneau added, "The universe decided to give us adjacent seats on the plane ride to Atlanta. That was the first time we ever spoke. We were fast friends before anything else."

They dated soon after and on April 2, 2011, the two had a ceremony to celebrate their relationship. Then, literally a year later, on April 2, they had a civil-union ceremony.

On April 14, they were on the football field in Kansas City with their Force teammates, opening the 2012 season—their eighth in pads. And, on April 21, the two were back in gear at Evanston High School, when the Force opened the 2012 home schedule against the Columbus Comets.

"I consider us both very driven individuals," Malsch said. "We debrief about work on a regular basis and offer each other advice, constructive criticism and support daily. Her drive has challenged me to be a better educator, friend, teammate and person."

Malsch, 37, is an assistant principal at a Chicago Public School. Charbonneau, 35, is an associate principal at Morgante Wilson Architects.



Tricia Charbonneau (left) and Amanda Malsch. Pics courtesy of Charbonneau

They have been dating since August 2005, and live in Edgewater. They also are Force co-owners with Linda Bache, "which essentially means we wear lot of hats," Malsch said. "We share responsibility on everything from travel to player personnel to recruiting to social media to sponsorship to advertising to written and visual content for print and website marketing and much, much more. However, we couldn't do it without the help of our talented management group."

Malsch plays on the Force defensive line. Charbonneau is the team's kicker and punter.

"I don't consider any one moment [to be] a [career] highlight," Malsch said. "To me, just being part of this amazing group has been the highlight of my life. I can't think of what my life would be like without the Chicago Force."

Charbonneau tagged the 2012 season-opening road win over Kansas City as her career highlight, surpassing the team's championship game appearance in 2008.

"Our team played so well [against Kansas City]; there were so many contributors—offense, defense, special teams—against our biggest and most hated rival," Charbonneau said. "We dominated the Tribe, wore them down, didn't let up and ran them into the ground. The [final] score, 21-14, doesn't illustrate what a strong performance it was. The aura on the sideline, the positive attitude of the players, and the precise execution on the field was different than any other game I can remember. I don't want to jinx it, but I have a great feeling about our team this year."

Last season, the two intentionally came face to face against each other on the practice field—well, sort of.

"We both participated in a drill where we had to tackle each other," Malsch said. "I knew we would be tested in this way; I honestly think our defensive coach wanted to see how we would handle the conflict. After the whistle [to start the play], we ran toward each other and at the moment before contact, stopped and gave each other a hug. Needless to say, it was not the reaction our coach was looking for. I'm pretty sure we couldn't co-exist as teammates if we had to compete in that way."



Malsch and Charbonneau.

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BURIED IN DEBT WITH SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS - PART II

Last week's article concerned the individual who was unable to pay his credit card bills and was using his social security to pay bills and groceries since he had not been able to find a job.

Many individuals who worry about debts are, in fact, judgment proof. If someone is unemployed and owns only personal property such as household furnishings, a car with a low market value and a small amount of money in the bank they are probably judgment proof. Same applies if they are receiving social security and social security disability benefits.

There are certain kinds of benefit payments which are exempt from garnishment (judgment proof) under state and federal law. State of Illinois law exempts Social Security benefits, unemployment compensation, public assistance benefits, veterans benefits, disability benefits, illness benefits, unemployment benefits, and certain alimony, support or separate maintenance. Federal law exempts Social Security payments along with Railroad Retirement Act and Veteran's benefits.

What if the benefit payments are deposited in a bank account, are they still exempt? The law says that public benefit payments remain exempt from garnishment procedures even after they are deposited in a bank account.

A federal court has previously ruled that veteran's benefits and social security payments deposited into a savings account retain their exempt status so long as the funds remained subject to the demand of the recipient to be used for his needs and were not converted to a "permanent investment." Needless to say, if you do deposit such benefits into a bank account maintain good records to be able to show a judge that the bank account was established with public benefits.

While the "do nothing" approach may be appropriate for judgment proof individuals it will not get rid of the underlying debts and could lead to severe credit problems. Furthermore, there might be implications in not paying certain creditors. For example, you might consider paying those creditors who are medical care providers in order to not prejudice future access to medical care.

Bankruptcy may be an appropriate option if you are not judgment proof but your debt is massive. Bankruptcy can also allow the reduction of payments on many secured debts, and provide a reasonable time to cure any back due debt on a secured asset allowing a debtor to retain a house, car or furniture that would otherwise be lost.

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Force breezes by Mayhem

BY ROSS FORMAN

She sings and she slings.

Quarterback Sami Grisafe sang the national anthem May 12 before the Chicago Force home game against the West Michigan Mayhem, and then threw three touchdown passes—all to Jeanette Gray—as the Force crushed the Mayhem 54-0 at Lazier Field on the campus of Evanston Township High School.

The Force improves to 5-0, while the Mayhem drops to 3-2.

Gray's grabs were her first touchdowns of the season, highlighted by a 78-yard catch at 10:22 of the second quarter, which made the score 30-0. The Force led 38-0 at halftime.

Grisafe passed for 357 yards of offense, more than her total in the team's first four games. The Mayhem, meanwhile, only managed 74 yards of offense as Darcy Leslie, Kim Marks, Amber Burns, Brenda VanCuick, Elisha Okrey and Dorian Bridges anchored the Force defense.

"But now that she is the kicker, I get to see her on the field and cheer her for her from the sidelines. Conversely, when our defense breaks from the huddle, I can hear her voice yelling for me; it's very inspiring. I never want to let her down."

Both said being teammates with their significant other is not, and has never, been an issue. "I wouldn't have it any other way," Malsch said. "The best part is that we get to spend so much time together. We work very hard and it would be difficult to do if we weren't able to do it side-by-side. There is no 'worst part.'"

There are just plenty of shared memories, such as when Malsch's nieces and nephews come to games. "My sister made T-shirts for all the kids and, on the front, [the shirt] says '#92: Aunt Mandy' and on the back '#88: Aunt Tricia.' Family is very important to me, so it was so touching when they came out *en masse* to cheer both of us on," Malsch said.

Charbonneau said, "The Force consumes a considerable part of our lives—practice, marketing, management, etc.—so the fact that we can lean on each other or bounce ideas around is really great; we can help each other meet deadlines, deal with correspondence. Certainly, things are a little different on the field. I love to cheer Amanda on, and I can always hear her voice loud and clear on the turf. She is my biggest fan as well, which always makes me feel good. One of the reasons I continue to be involved with the Chicago Force is nostalgia; it's where I met my wife. I don't ever want to forget that."

Okrey and Bridges were named co-winners of the Spin Nightclub Game Day defensive MVP awards. Gray grabbed the offensive MVP award.

Melissa Smith rushed for 163 yards and four touchdowns, bringing her season totals to 852 yards rushing and 15 TDs.

The Force takes its show on the road this week, visiting the Cleveland Fusion. Chicago's next home game takes place Saturday, June 2.

Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame's first Celebrity Bowl

Friends of the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame (GLHF) will hold its first Celebrity Bowl, Sat., June 9, at Waveland Bowl, 3700 N. Western Ave., starting at 10 a.m. The event is open to all on a first-come basis. To secure a spot or for more information, contact the event coordinator Dick Uyvari, at 773-769-5115 or CelebrityBowl2012@yahoo.com.

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

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