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FILM LOOK AT AIDS ACTIVIST VITO RUSSO

WINDY CITY TIMES

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BAR OWNER ROGER HICKEY DIES

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TALKING WITH MARINA AND THE DIAMONDS

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RIDE FOR AIDS WRAP-UP

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Scholars excel in, out of classroom

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Among this year's 29 undergraduate and graduate students receiving Point Foundation Scholarships, five have local connections: Angela Filley, Tyler Kissinger, Alyssa Mandula, Pete Subkoviak and Kayla Wingert.

They were chosen out of nearly 2,000 scholarship applicants, and join the 47 Point Scholars currently receiving financial assistance and programming support from the foundation for the 2012-2013 academic year.

Filley—who grew up in West Lafayette, Ind.—will be studying financial engineering with a minor in sustainable energy beginning this fall at Columbia University's School of Engineering and Applied Sciences in New York City. Although Filley was accepted by her family and close friends when she came out of the closet, she said she was disappointed by the way that her community and school responded to her sexual orientation. Not one to sit on the sidelines, Filley decided to implement the "ThinkB4YouSpeak" campaign at her high school and

was active in launching her high school's gay-straight alliance.

Eager to begin working towards her future career goals, Filley has been doing research at Purdue University on a comparative analysis of cap and trade policies. Through this research, Filley was introduced to the challenge of energy security. This has inspired Filley's strong commitment to develop and implement sustainable energy resources. She also worked at the Birck Nanotechnology Center in a lab that develops regenerative solar cells. Currently, Filley is working in an agricultural and biological engineering lab that deals with water quality.

Science is just one of many other passions that Filley has pursued. In the business arena, Filley was involved in her high school's business organizations and has served as state president of the Indiana Future Business Leaders of America. Politics is also an important part of Filley's life. To feed that passion, she plans on working to challenge anti-LGBTQ policies.

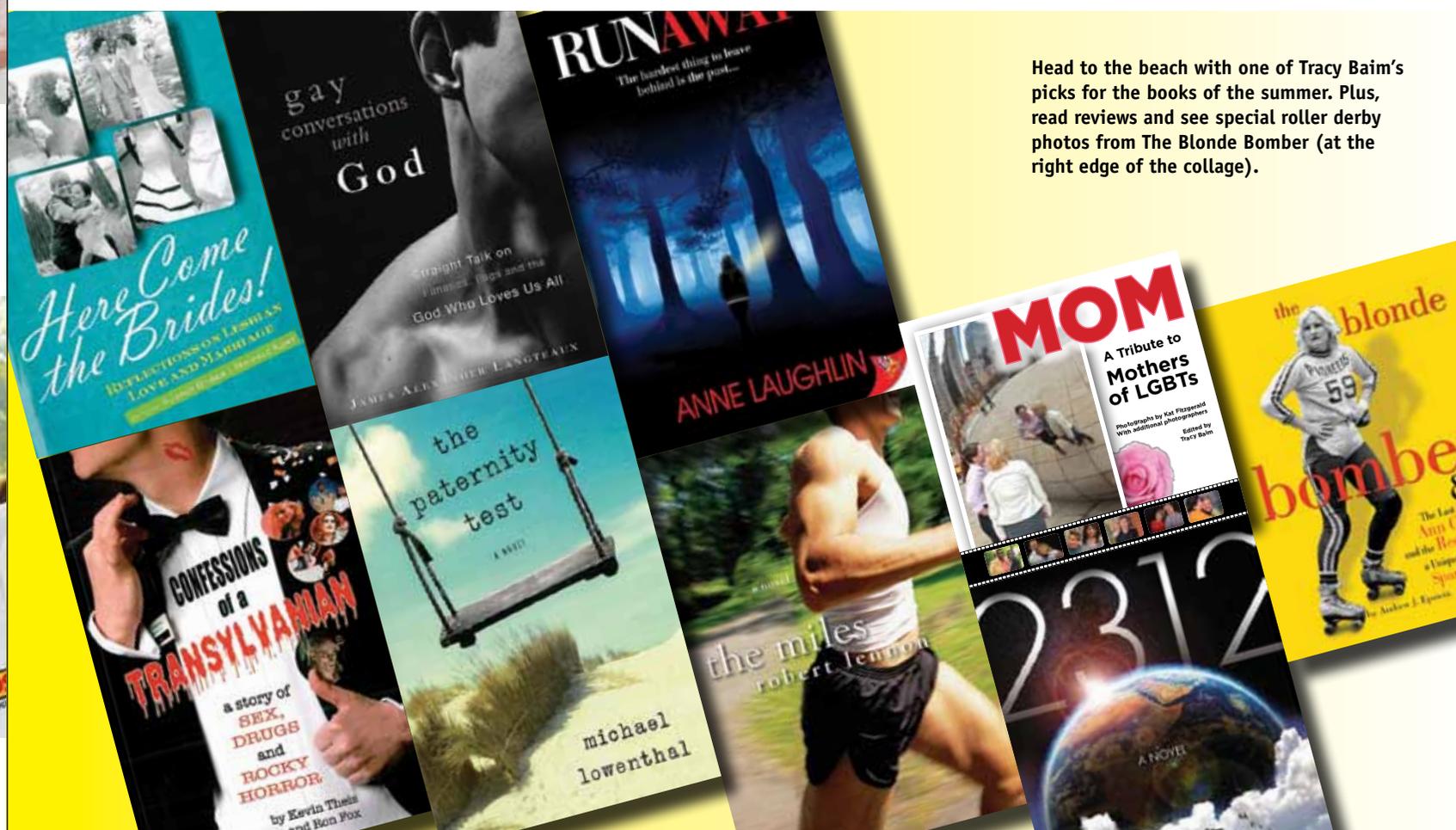
In order to fulfill her future goals, Filley began researching scholarship opportunities to offset the cost of college. While searching the web, Filley came across Point's website. Reading more about the organization, Filley said she found that the organization's mission was applicable to her situation. The mentor program excited Filley the most, she explained, since she has only had one out adult to look up to where she grew up. After some initial fears about being out and how that would affect her future career plans, Filley decided that visibility was the best option so she went ahead and submitted her application.

On finding out that she was chosen as a Point Scholar, Filley said, "It was surreal. It was pretty funny actually because the best part was that even if I hadn't been named a Point Scholar I wouldn't have been disappointed because after meeting all the finalists in San Fran-

Turn to page 8

SUMMER BOOKS SPECIAL

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Head to the beach with one of Tracy Baim's picks for the books of the summer. Plus, read reviews and see special roller derby photos from The Blonde Bomber (at the right edge of the collage).

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this week in WINDY CITY TIMES

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Photos on cover (left, from top): Photo from the documentary Vito by Bettye Lane/HBO; 2005 photo of Roger Hickey from Outlines/Windy City Times archives; image of Marina and the Diamonds by Caspar Balslev; Ride for AIDS photo by Ross Forman

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A KATIE ISSUE
Read about Katie Romano, a lesbian who plays football but is currently representing the U.S. in soccer's Deaf World Cup.

Photo by Ross Forman



Read Stephen Fallon's column on healthcare socialism vs. same-sex marriage.
Photo from Fallon



Lesbian comedian Cameron Esposito talks with Windy City Times.
Photo from Esposito

NATURAL SELECTION
Financial expert Phil Sitar talks about natural disaster planning for small businesses.

CAPITOL GILL
Read an interview with Congressional candidate and LGBT ally David Gill.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT
Read entertainment news about Haley Joel Osment, Madonna and Anderson Cooper.

plus **DAILY BREAKING NEWS**

WELCOME, MATT



Actor Matt Doyle talks about his role in the movie Private Romeo, now out on DVD.

Photo from Wolfe Video

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Global AIDS report: Where are the gays?

ANALYSIS BY BOB ROEHR

Imagine two senior HIV/AIDS administrators delivering prepared speeches on the PEPFAR (President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief) program that assists countries hardest hit by the epidemic and not uttering the word "gay," or even the more clinical term "men who have sex with men" (MSM).

It would be disappointing but not surprising during the George W. Bush administration. It is disheartening when it is the Obama administration in 2012.

The speakers were Ambassador Eric Goosby, U.S. Global AIDS coordinator, and Nils Daulaire, director of the Office of Global Affairs at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The venue was the July 10 unveiling in Washington, D.C., of the 278-page thick issue of the journal Health Affairs. It focuses on evaluations of PEPFAR, perhaps the only shining legacy of the George W. Bush presidency.

Neither the speeches the two men gave nor the papers they contributed to the journal mentioned the group hardest hit by HIV on all continents.

It can't be out of ignorance. Goosby did his medical training at UCSF and has spent his career alternating between Washington and San Francisco dealing with HIV. He knows better.

Instead of a balanced discussion that included all of the major groups affected by the HIV epidemic, Goosby focused on advances made in prevention and treating women and children.

In the bad old days, say 25 years ago, they were the "innocent victims" of the disease while, to many, gay men were not so innocent, they had brought the infection on themselves. What progress we've made—from being demon-



Julie Scofield. Photo by Bob Roehr

ized to being ignored, despite the fact that gay men were and remain disproportionately affected by HIV in nearly every country in the world.

Even while that six-hour briefing continued to roll on, a mile away at the National Press Club a handful of AIDS advocates tried to draw a little attention to the still-festering domestic AIDS situation before the International AIDS Conference dominated the news coverage.

The Obama administration wants to believe that health reform in the shape of the surviving Affordable Care Act (ACA) will take care of everything.

AIDS advocates hope it will help address many of their concerns, but major provisions won't take effect until 2014 and evaluating their effectiveness will take even longer. One still has to get from here to there, and even with expanded Medicaid coverage there will still be a need for HIV-specific support programs.

HIV in the United States remains "an epidemic of the marginalized...of discrimination and neglect," said Cornelius Baker with the National Black Men's Advocacy Coalition. "It is still largely a disease of white, Black and Latino gay men who comprise more than a majority of the cases despite being only 2 percent of the American population."

The perception is that science has solved the problems, he said. "There is a low perception of risk" despite that fact that 50,000 new infections a year occur in the United States. And while the problem continues to grow, funding for AIDS education continues to shrink. "We have a population that is becoming increasingly ignorant about the epidemic."

Julie Scofield, executive director of the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors, said the goals of the national AIDS strategy, unveiled two years ago, "cannot be achieved without significant increases in funding for critical HIV/AIDS discretionary programs."

At least \$190 million is needed for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP). Only 4 percent of total HIV domestic spending goes toward prevention, a number that would have to double "to make a big difference in the epidemic in the U.S.," Johns Hopkins University HIV researcher David Holtgrave told a congressional hearing in 2009.

Scofield called on Congress "to meet and exceed the president's budget" for HIV programs. But she fears the sequestration process of an automatic slashing of appropriations to non-defense spending that will take effect in January if Congress does not agree to specific substantial cuts toward balancing the budget.

Ronald Johnson of AIDS United called on all political and private actors "to end the acrimo-

AIDS Foundation of Chicago President/CEO David Ernesto Munar, in a separate statement, said, "AFC has long supported the development of new prevention technologies, including PrEP [pre-exposure prophylaxis] and vaginal and rectal microbicides. The FDA's decision on Truvada is exciting. Our challenge now is to implement PrEP as strategically as possible, and to ensure the people who need it most, those who are most at risk for HIV, have access."

Lesbians file suit to stop deportation of same-sex spouses

In California, a lesbian couple filed a class-action federal lawsuit to stop the deportation of same-sex spouses, Advocate.com reported.

The suit, filed on behalf of Philippines citizen Jane DeLeon, adds to the list of recent cases backing immigrants in same-sex marriages whose legal status is nullified by the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). DOMA prevents the federal government from recognizing DeLeon's marriage to Irma Rodriguez, a U.S. citizen.

In a press release from the Center for Human Rights and Constitutional Law, Rodriguez said, "For over twenty years I have loved and been in a committed relationship with Jane DeLeon, and in 2008 we were lawfully married. ... It deeply saddens me that despite President Obama's support of the rights of gay married couples, after living here for twenty years, my spouse has been told by immigration authorities that her presence here is unlawful and she must leave the country.

"If President Obama believes that discrimination against gay married couples is wrong, he should suspend the removal of all immigrants in same sex marriages who are eligible to legalize

ONLINE AT
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NATIONAL NEWS

- Grindr reaches 4 million users
- Utah police solve cold case murder of gay man
- Kevin Jennings (left) now heads Arcus

nious battles over healthcare reform and move toward full implementation" of the ACA.

The AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) continues to act independently of most other advocacy groups. It held a Washington news conference July 9, chastising President Obama for being "MIA—missing in action" for not having yet committed to speak at the International AIDS Conference set to open here July 22.

The group has criticized the administration for lagging on AIDS education, needle exchange and other programs, as well as not devoting adequate resources to the epidemic. AHF spokesman Tom Myers said, "It may be better if the president not attend the conference if he is coming without any concrete proposals to fix these problems."

Earlier in the month White House staffers met with a number of AIDS advocates about what Obama might say in a speech to the conference. A participant who does not want to be identified said the staff seemed to be more concerned with spin than with offering anything new.

their status until the courts decide whether this form of discrimination is constitutional."

Communion-denying priest out of parish

The Rev. Marcel Guarnizo, the Roman Catholic priest who denied communion to lesbian Barbara Johnson at her mother's funeral in February, is no longer at the church where the incident occurred, according to Advocate.com.

At the service, Guarnizo—then-vicar of St. John Neumann Catholic Church in Gaithersburg, Md.—told Johnson, "I cannot give you communion because you live with a woman and that is a sin according to the church." However, it is unclear if Guarnizo's departure is related to the incident.

"Fr. Marcel Guarnizo is a priest of the Archdiocese of Moscow, Russia, who was given a temporary assignment at St. John Neumann parish," Chieko Noguchi Scheve, director of media and public relations for the archdiocese of Washington, told MSNBC.com. Johnson told the website she was "relieved" that Guarnizo is gone.

Cream City Foundation 'Straight' event July 26

Milwaukee's Cream City Foundation, an LGBT organization, is hosting the "My Best Friend Is Straight" summer party Thursday, July 26, at 5:30 p.m.

The event will take place at North Point Lighthouse, 2650 N. Wahl Ave., Milwaukee. There will be an after-party at Club Charlie's, 320 E. Menomonee, at 9 p.m.

Admission is \$25-\$75. See www.creamcityfoundation.org.

Report released on LGBT youth homelessness

BY KATE SOSIN

According to a new report, an overwhelming number of homeless service providers are serving LGBT youth.

The report, released by The Palette Fund, True Colors Fund and the Williams Institute, shows that 94 percent of homeless service providers work with queer youth, a 12 percent jump from a decade ago.

The study surveyed 354 agencies throughout the country and found that approximately 40 percent of homeless clients identified as LGBT.

According to the agencies, 68 percent of LGBT youth had been rejected by their families, with 43 percent stating they were forced out by their parents for being LGBT. An additional 46 percent stated they had run away from home due to family rejection, while 32 percent said they were homeless as a result of abuse at home. In total, 54 percent of youth said they had been abused at home.

Agencies reported lack of funding as a major barrier to improving LGBT services as well as the fact that LGBT youth issues were not central to their missions.

The report confirms what many LGBT service providers have reported over the years.

"The findings from this survey demonstrate that many LGBT youth are at high risk of homelessness, often as a result of family rejection and abuse," said Laura Durso, a co-author of the report from the Williams Institute, in a statement.

The report also noted that while less than half of agencies served transgender youth a decade

ago, more than 75 percent say they now serve trans youth. Trans youth made up at least one percent of clients, according to the reporting agencies. But researchers believe that all the totals for LGBT youth may be falsely low because some are hesitant to self-identify.

The report, "Serving Our Youth; Finding from a National Survey of Service Providers Working with Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, and Transgender Youth who are Homeless or At Risk of Becoming Homeless," is available at www.fortytynone.org/resources/serving-our-youth.

FDA approves Truvada for HIV prevention

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved Truvada as the first HIV-prevention pill, according to CBS News.

Gilead Sciences' Truvada has been taken by HIV-positive people over 12 in conjunction with other antiretroviral drugs since the FDA first approved it eight years ago. The newest approval applies in combination with safer-sex practices for preventative use in healthy individuals who are at a high risk for HIV or who may have sex with HIV-positive people.

However, the FDA strongly recommended against using Truvada to prevent disease transmission in individuals who may already have HIV.

In a statement, FDA Commissioner Dr. Margaret A. Hamburg said that Truvada's "approval marks an important milestone in our fight against HIV."

Chicago lesbians among those starting new PAC

BY KATE SOSIN

Prominent local lesbians are among those backing a new political action committee (PAC) that aims to give political voice to queer women.

Billing itself as the first of its kind, LPAC launched June 11 with the support of Chicago Cubs co-owner Laura Ricketts, Chicago-area native Jane Lynch and Chicagoan Sarah Schmidt, whose family owns U.S. Venture. Both Ricketts and Schmidt sit on LPAC's advisory board.

The group said it strives to elect candidates who support LGBT people, reproductive freedom and social-justice causes.

"This year we have seen politicians repeatedly support policies that harm women," said Lynch in a statement. "It is important to me to elect leaders who care about issues that impact women and their families."

Other big-name backers of the PAC include Billie Jean King and Urvashi Vaid, former executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

Schmidt, who is LPAC's chair and treasurer, said the group started the committee because the members had been "shocked" by politics over the past year.

"Lesbians could no longer stand by and witness continued attacks on reproductive freedoms, marriage equality, and be immersed in a political sphere where women are not given a meaningful voice in politics," she said in a statement.

LPAC lists a dearth of reproductive healthcare, lack of marriage rights for LGBT people, a U.S. House vote to defund Planned Parenthood, op-



Sarah Schmidt. Photo from Sarah Kennedy

position in the House to the Violence Against Women Act, a Senate vote against equal pay legislation and the exclusion of women from hearings on birth control as motivations for starting the PAC.

According to the group's website, the PAC is a bipartisan effort.

Members of the advisory board are:

—Sarah Schmidt: The Chicagoan is founder and principal of Sarah Schmidt Consulting, LLC. She is also heavily involved in her family third-generation business, U.S. Venture, Inc.

—Valerie Berlin: She is co-founded and principal at BerlinRosen Public Affairs, a strategic communications and political consulting firm in New York City and Washington, D.C.

—Emily Giske: A government affairs specialist for Bolton-St. Johns, LLC, Giske has extensive knowledge in Albany and New York City and has lobbied for corporations, financial institutions, not-for-profit entities and local municipalities.

—Laura Ricketts: She is director and part-owner of the Chicago Cubs, becoming the first out gay woman to own a Major League Baseball franchise.

—Alix Ritchie: She is a media-strategy consultant and former founder, owner, and publisher of the Provincetown Banner, a community newspaper for Cape Cod, Mass.

—Margaret Traub: Traub is president and CEO

of Adesso, a company that designs, manufactures and sells contemporary home décor. Traub and her partner, Phyllis Dicker, sponsor an annual scholarship that awards funds to worthy lesbian college and graduate students.

—Urvashi Vaid: The longtime partner of comedian Kate Clinton heads the Engaging Tradition Project at the Center for Gender and Sexuality Law at Columbia Law School. Vaid is an attorney, writer and longtime leader in LGBT and social-justice movements.

—Donna Victoria: Victoria is the founder of Victoria Research & Consulting and has worked on a wide variety of non-discrimination, marriage equality and political messaging projects for the LGBT community.

For more info, see www.TeamLPAC.com.

Y-Me closes its doors

Y-Me—the Chicago-based national breast-cancer organization known for its annual Mother's Day race/walk—closed its doors last week, according to the Chicago Tribune. (The website has also been terminated.)

The agency's board made the decision to shut down the 32-year-old organization. Margaret Harte, who founded the race more than two decades ago, told the Chicago Sun-Times that "incompetence and mismanagement" led to Y-Me's financial collapse.

Y-Me's main focus was running a hotline where those recently diagnosed with breast cancer could talk to others who had gone through the illness as well.

"I think the way it was handled was extremely insensitive," said Harte. "I think it was cruel. There were volunteers who were talking to women at different stages of their illness and now you can't get an answer on the hotline. It's wrong."

Rev. Monroe to receive GLAD award

Rev. Irene Monroe—nationally renowned African-American lesbian activist, scholar and public theologian—will receive this year's Spirit of Justice Award from Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD), according to a media release.

"Reverend Irene Monroe was enthusiastically selected by board and staff for her contributions to the advancement of equality for LGBT people," said Dianne Phillips, GLAD's board president. "She has set an inspiring example of leadership and compassion for us all."

The award will be presented at the 13th annual Spirit of Justice Award Dinner on Friday, Oct. 26, at the Boston Marriott Copley Hotel.

Monroe also is a writer, having penned many columns that publications, including Windy City Times, have run.

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Longtime business owner Roger Hickey dies

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Roger J. Hickey Jr., 76, co-owner of the Boystown bar the North End, died July 12 from a heart attack. Hickey died just one day shy of his birthday.

Micah Hilgendorf, the general manager of the North End and Lucky Horseshoe Lounge bars, reported the news.

Hickey was born in Petersburg, Va., and was raised in both Petersburg and Richmond, Va. He later lived in both New York City and Boston before moving to Chicago.

After serving in the U.S. Coast Guard, Hickey headed the reservation/call-center division of Holiday Inn of both North and South America where he set up their worldwide reservation computer program.

Not only did Hickey co-own the North End, but he was a partner, along with Fred Kramer, in Carol's Speakeasy until the bar closed in 1991. Hickey also previously founded and owned Cell Block from the mid-1990s into the early 2000s. He ran Cell Block and the North End concurrently before selling Cell Block in 2003.

Hickey was a board member of the Center on Halsted as it was taking shape and being built, and served as a member of the board of the Northalsted Business Alliance for 10 years.

Hickey is survived by his partner of 32 years, Kenneth John Smith Ph.D.; brother of Patricia (Sidney) Masri, and Michael (Marcia) Hickey; uncle of David (Sally) Masri, Rebecca (Joe) Abrenio, Sean (Crystal), Ryan (Becky), and Travis; and his beloved rescue dog Gunner. He was preceded in death by parents Roger J. Hickey Sr., a car

salesman, and Ruth Hickey.

"Roger was a great guy. His interests in the community always came first and his business interests were secondary. Improving the community drove all of his decisions as a community member and business owner," said Ben Allen, owner of the Lucky Horseshoe Lounge and partner along with Hickey at the North End.

Art Johnston, co-owner of Sidetrack, said of Hickey, "I had the privilege to know Roger since the early '80s. Roger was always a responsible community member, a business leader and a kind, honorable man. He was one of the first business owners to commit sustaining financial support to the serious work for a gay-rights law statewide in the early '90s, support which he continued through the passage of Illinois' non-discrimination law in 2005.

"At the same time, Roger committed substantial personal time and resources in helping build Halsted Street into the business center it has become, always speaking not only for his own business interests, but for the interests and needs of the entire LGBT community. We will all miss Roger."

"Roger built an institution—the Cell Block—that provided a much needed space for all leather folks to walk through the door and feel very welcomed," said longtime activist Israel Wright. "Cell Block was one of the leather bars that acted as the leather folks community center on so many levels. The bar held a number of contests, including hosting and sponsoring contestants for International Mr. Leather.

"Roger was willing to take chances on a number of start-up organizations. One that comes

to mind for me was Onyx, the leather group for people of color. Roger outside of the bar was quite the businessman. He had interest with other bar owners on Halsted Street including North End. Roger you will be missed here on this side but your star will shine forever."

Leather activist Doug O'Keeffe added, "Roger was a thoughtful, considerate gentleman whose contributions to the leather community are both unsung and unparalleled. I will always value Roger's generosity and tenacity. How terribly I'll miss him."

Longtime AIDS activist Lori Cannon said Roger "was one good and loyal friend to [HIV/AIDS

agency] Open Hand. Along with his then-bar manager, David Boyer, he always devised ways to raise much-needed funds to keep our pantry—Groceryland—well stocked with groceries and personal care items for our low-income clients living with AIDS. He was a quiet and selfless gentleman. May he R.I.P."

A memorial service is being planned for the morning of Sunday, Aug. 12, at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St. Donations can be made to the Center on Halsted at www.centeronhalsted.org. Contact the Cremation Society of Illinois on Addison Street for more information about the memorial service at 773-281-5058.



A pro-choice and pro-life advocate discuss matters at Daley Plaza. Photo by Kate Sosin

Pro-life, pro-choice groups face off in Daley Plaza

BY KATE SOSIN

In two quiet, simultaneous protests, pro-choice activists faced off with pro-life groups in Daley Plaza July 11.

Pro-life groups Operation Rescue and Pro-Life Action League spent the day demonstrating against abortion with graphic images and large placards along Washington Street, while a truck with an anti-abortion image circled the plaza.

Advocates from NARAL (National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League) Pro-Choice America and the Chicago Abortion Fund countered the demonstrations with pro-choice posters and messages.

Pro-life demonstrators largely outnumbered the pro-choice groups.

"I know we are smaller in numbers, but we are big in spirit," said Benita Ulisano of NARAL.

Anti-abortion activists flock to Daley Plaza every summer to demonstrate and are met by counterprotesters.

Gaylon Alcaraz, executive director of the

Chicago Abortion Fund, noted the importance of providing an opposing presence to the pro-life groups.

"Apathy is the anti-choice's best weapon," she said.

Still, both sides appeared to remain cordial throughout the demonstrations.

According to Nate Scheidler of Pro-Life Action League, Daley Plaza is one of several stops the group is making on its eight-day "Face the Truth" tour. The group is also demonstrating in Joliet, Aurora, Palatine, Lake Zurich and in Chicago's South Side, Scheidler said, to "show the truth about abortion."

Citizens Alert honors Mary Powers

Mary Powers, a social-justice activist who is also a staunch ally of the LGBT community, received the seventh annual Elizabeth I. Benson Award from the police-accountability organization Citizens Alert recently at Wellington Avenue United Church of Christ.

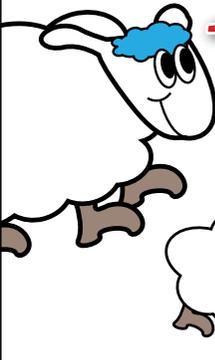
Citizens Alert began as an affiliate of Chicago's former Alliance To End Repression. One of Citizens Alert's campaigns involved in the infamous Capt. John Burge case. Powers helped found the organization.



Mary Powers. Photo courtesy of Bill Kelley

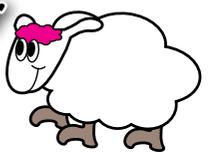


Roger Hickey (right) with fellow bar owner Ben Allen in 2001. Photo from Outlines/Windy City Times archives



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Out lesbian selected as federal magistrate judge

BY KATE SOSIN

Mary Rowland, an out lesbian attorney who has argued high-profile civil rights cases has been appointed to serve as a U.S. magistrate judge in the Northern District of Illinois.

Rowland takes the bench in October. She is one of few out LGBT people to be appointed to serve as a federal judge in the country.



Mary Rowland. Photo courtesy of Hughes Socol Piers Resnick & Dym, Ltd.

Rowland, a partner at Hughes Socol Piers Resnick & Dym, Ltd., served as a federal defender for a decade, before taking on high-profile civil cases. Rowland's firm had a hand in the winning case against the City of Chicago on behalf of African-American firefighter applicants who alleged discriminatory hiring practices as well as a case against a Sioux Falls, S.D. practice of strip-searching all juvenile detainees.

"I have been involved in what some would call controversial cases," said Rowland.

Rowland is included on the Illinois Super Lawyer list for 2012 and is a member of the board of directors of the Federal Bar Association. She is also a member of the Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago and has done volunteer work for Lambda Legal.

A native of Akron, Ohio, Rowland graduated from the University of Chicago Law School, where she met her wife Julie Justicz. The two were married in California in 2008.

Rowland said she has wanted to serve as a judge for a long time.

"I think it's a position of great public trust,

and I'm honored that they chose me to do it," she said.

Rowland was selected along with attorney Daniel Martin out of more than 65 applicants, according to a statement from the Northern District.

"Each of the recommended finalists was well-qualified to serve as a United States Magistrate Judge," said Chief Judge James Holderman in the statement. "We district judges were very fortunate to have such excellent candidates from whom to choose our district's next United States Magistrate Judges."

Rowland said she never felt that being openly gay limited her professionally, nor does she believe it will be an issue for her as a federal judge. She cites several cases in which attorneys unsuccessfully argued that a judge's identity presented a conflict of interest, including the Proposition 8 case, when same-sex marriage opponents argued Judge Vaughn Walker was biased because he is gay.

Asked if she could see a situation in which she might be forced to rule against her conscience, Rowland said she could not.

"I don't think you rule against your conscience," she said. "My conscience is that I have a belief in this system."

Trans activist heads Equality board

BY KATE SOSIN

LGBT-advocacy organization Equality Illinois has announced that transgender activist and photographer Catherine Sikora is the organization's new board chair, making her the first transgender person to hold that position.

It also marks the first time two women have headed the organization's two major boards, according to a statement from the organization.

Algerian-American LGBT advocate Dalila Fridi currently sits atop Equality Illinois' Education Project board.

"We are most fortunate to be led by two amazing women with such interesting personal histories that bring unique perspectives to our ongoing struggle for recognition and equality," said Bernard Cherkasov, CEO of Equality Illinois, in a statement.

Sikora, a 2005 Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame inductee, has worked on the expansion of transgender protections in county and city government. She recently served on the now-defunct Chicago Advisory Council on LGBT Issues.

Sikora took over as board chair July 1.

Activists Rick Garcia, Art Johnston, Jon-Henri Damski and Lana Hostetler founded Equality Illinois in 1991.



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SCHOLARS from cover

cisco and hearing all the other amazing stories, I thought everyone deserved their accolades and then some. I didn't even have an inkling of who would be chosen, and I definitely did not envy the Point regents and board members' job. So hearing that I had been selected to be a scholar meant a lot to me. It is very difficult to describe the joy I felt knowing that not only would I be receiving a scholarship, but would now be a part of a community so inextricably tied together by a passion for the pursuit of equality."

Kissinger—who hails from a suburban town outside Winston-Salem, N.C.—will major in physics and mathematics with a focus on astrophysics and network mathematics beginning this fall at the University of Chicago (U. of C.) with the hope of becoming a university professor. During his early teen years, Kissinger focused on academics to avoid confrontation about issues surrounding his sexuality. To escape an environment in which he had to mask a part of himself, Kissinger transferred to the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics—a public, residential high school located in Durham, N.C.

Thriving in his new high school environment, Kissinger pursued a number of academic and personal interests including serving as the co-president of his school's Spectrum Gay-Straight Alliance and as an activist fighting against the anti-gay North Carolina marriage amendment (which ultimately passed). Kissinger's school honored him with the "Golden Cupola" award for his leadership, citizenship and community service.

Kissinger told Windy City Times that he plans on continuing to work on political causes to help the oppressed and those without a voice.

Knowing that he wanted to study at the U. of C., Kissinger applied for a Point Scholarship since he needed additional money—he will also be receiving grants and federal loans—to offset the high cost of attending the school. He heard about the scholarship from Kyle Vey, a previous scholar winner at his high school, and remarked that he fell in love with the organization during the selection process.

Reacting to the news that he was selected as a Point Scholar, Kissinger said, "I got the phone call while I was eating dinner in the cafeteria at school. As soon as I saw the area code on my phone, I knew what the call was about. I went outside—heart pounding—and was fortunate enough to get the good news I was hoping for.

"I was almost in tears; it was raining outside, and I could barely breathe. I felt so secure, knowing that this organization was willing to invest in my future and would help me accomplish my dreams. More than anything, I felt so



From left: Angela Filley, Pete Subkoviak and Kayla Wingert. Photos courtesy of the Point Foundation

incredibly honored to be a part of such a talented, successful and passionate group of people that makes up the Point Foundation."

Mandula—who was born and raised in Bloomington, Ill.—is currently double-majoring in peace justice and conflict studies and philosophy with a minor in LGBTQ studies at DePaul University. Although she grew up in a conservative town, Mandula started her high school's gay-straight alliance and ran the Central Illinois Safe School Alliance. Mandula's has also worked as a national ambassador for GLSEN, served on the Youth Advisory Council for The Trevor Project and served as a peer educator for Planned Parenthood.

As a freshman at DePaul this past year, Mandula has continued her advocacy work with the university's LGBTQ group Spectrum. Through this work, Mandula has become more passionate about equality and plans on making a career out of fighting for educational equality for transgender and gender queer youth. Mandula also noted that her older sister Holly has been a motivating force in her life and she looks up to her sister as a mentor and friend.

Facing the prospect of massive student loans—having already accrued over \$20,000 in loans after her first year in college—Mandula knew she had to get assistance since leaving DePaul was not an option. She applied for a Point Foundation scholarship, having heard about the organization through her work in LGBTQ activism.

"It was surreal," said Mandula of her Point scholarship. "Receiving the scholarship was the difference between me finishing my bachelors degree or having to drop out. It also has provided me with the comfort of knowing I have an

amazing group of mentors and peers to help me make a difference in the queer community."

Subkoviak—who was born and raised in Madison, Wis.—will be pursuing a masters in public health with a focus on policy and leadership at the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health. Although born in a female body, Subkoviak never identified as anything other than male and from the age of 3 he declared that he was a boy. Subkoviak noted that his childhood was fraught with turmoil; however, when he moved into his teen years he gained a second chance on life when he began to physically transition. Throughout the transition process, Subkoviak had the support of his family and friends.

While attending the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Subkoviak began teaching medical and education professionals about the transgender community. He also spent time as an intern for then-Sen. Russ Feingold, D-Wis., while attending the university. After Subkoviak graduated he moved to Chicago and worked for the AIDS Foundation of Chicago for the last six years. With his degree, Subkoviak hopes to address the systemic failures of the health care system at both the state and federal level through his public health work.

Along with his other advocacy work, Subkoviak has partnered with a local charity to create an innovative transgender employment program that they plan on implementing over the next year and if it is successful it will be the first dual housing and employment program for the transgender community.

Subkoviak's decision to apply for a Point Foundation Scholarship stemmed from his desire to gain personal and professional development outside of the academic realm as well as what the foundation provides in the way of the financial support.

"When I got the news that I had been chosen as a Point Scholar, I just felt incredibly humbled, affirmed, and invigorated to redouble my efforts and meet my academic and professional aspirations," said Subkoviak. "It's tremendously important to feel supported while making your way in the world as an LGBT student, so that in and of itself is a wonderful gift which Point provides to so many."

Wingert—who grew up in suburban Western Springs, Ill.—will be majoring in sports/entertainment/event management at Johnson and Wales University in Providence, R.I. Coming out as a lesbian at the age of 16 to supportive parents, Wingert has fought to promote anti-bullying efforts and garner support for the LGBTQ community in her predominately conservative neighborhood and within her Catholic high school.

Although the administrators at her high school turned Wingert down when she wanted to start an LGBTQ support group and her request to hold an LGBTQ anti-bullying week, she successfully ran two workshops for students on the topics

of tolerance and acceptance of LGBTQ people. Wingert was also asked by the school administration to host a mandatory workshop for the school's staff and faculty about incorporating LGBTQ students into the classroom environment. After graduating from college, Wingert said she wants to work as an event coordinator for a non-profit organization that benefits and serves the LGBTQ community.

Wingert decided to send in her application after finding it online through the Trevor Project. She said that her parents lacked the means to send her to college due to financial difficulties brought on by her father's unemployment status. Wingert said this scholarship opportunity gave her hope that there were supportive people who knew she had potential and wanted to see her succeed.

"When I first received the news from Point that I was named a scholar, I was completely humbled," she said. "I am so grateful that the Point Foundation saw my potential and acknowledged my hard work by deciding to support me in my continuing education."

This year's crop of winners is, according to the foundation, the most racially diverse scholar class in its history, with 45 percent of the new scholars identifying as other than white. Women make up 41 percent of the scholars this year, compared to the 32 percent in the 2011 class. Rural-area recipients account for 39 percent of the new scholars, and 28 percent of the new scholars are the first generation in their families to go to college.

In order to receive the scholarship—which averages about \$15,000 per year for each student—students agree to give back to the LGBTQ community by participating in an individual community service project each year. Each scholar is paired with a mentor and participates in leadership development and training in civic engagement. After graduation, Point Scholars are connected with professional contacts around the country to assist them as they make the transition into the workplace.

Point Foundation Executive Director/CEO Jorge Valencia said, "Point Foundation owes much of its success to the support of Chicagoans. Some of our first board members came from the Chicago area, as do two of our current national board members, and Point has a Chicago Board of Trustees. We've held our annual Scholar and Alumni Leadership Conference here four times, and we are incredibly grateful for the continued generosity of businesses in Illinois.

"Point is proud to have a growing number of current scholars and alumni who have Chicago roots and connections; the city is an integral part of their academic and professional achievement. We're looking forward to seeing many of the scholars and alumni at our Aug. 8 Chicago Cornerstone Society reception."

For more information on the Aug. 8 Chicago Cornerstone Society reception, visit www.pointfoundation.org/page.aspx?pid=927 and www.pointfoundation.org.



From left: Tyler Kissinger and Alyssa Mandula. Photos courtesy of the Point Foundation



From left: Lisa Hernandez, Daniel Biss, Maher Alhaj, Reyna Wences, Razan Abu and state Rep. Kelly Cassidy. Photo by Jamie Anne Royce

LGBT immigrants increase visibility at ICIRR summit

BY JAMIE ANNE ROYCE

The Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR) marked Democracy Day with a stakeholder meeting, workshops, trainings and a rally at Benito Juarez High School in Pilsen July 14.

The workshops—lead in English, Spanish and Polish—explained the benefits and implementation of President Barack Obama's DREAM (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) Act-related executive order that temporarily halted the measure.

In accordance with the executive order, the Department of Homeland Security will not deport undocumented people who are under 30 years old and came to the United States before age 16; have lived in the United States for at least five years; have clean criminal records; and are in school, are high school graduates or are military veterans. The policy, announced June 15, allows eligible undocumented immigrants to obtain driver's licenses and work permits.

"Our main goal is to protect our youth. We want to give them relief, as well as help their parents. We want to build a movement," said Cindy Agustin, the Uniting America youth civic leadership trainer at ICIRR.

ICIRR estimates 75,000 undocumented youth in Illinois will benefit from the new policy.

"While this [announcement] is great, we have to keep working to get more reform to benefit our entire community," said Arianna Salgado, a member of Immigrant Youth Justice League (IYJL).

Many attendees of the stakeholder meeting cited the executive order as a stepping stone and a move in the right direction, but not the final destination for immigration reform.

"We have so many LGBT multinational couples who are struggling. We're getting closer, but we're not there," said openly lesbian state Rep. Kelly Cassidy, citing a couple she is working with in her district. "She's terrified everyday that her wife will be deported. These are real people with real lives."

Approximately 150 people from various community organizations and universities attended the stakeholder meeting. Several other state representatives were at the meeting, including Lisa Hernandez, Greg Harris and Daniel Biss. U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, Congressman Mike Quigley and Congresswoman Jan Shakowsky sent staff members on their behalf.

"I want to be sure LGBT immigrants are as welcome in this country as all immigrants," said Harris.

At the meeting, ICIRR representatives unveiled plans to assist undocumented immigrants with grassroots outreach sessions similar to the ones they hosted for Democracy Day, as well as voter registration drives and canvassing.

"For the last year, our organization [ICIRR] has been trying to build bridges between the immigrant community and the LGBT community," said Joshua Hoyt, chief strategy executive for ICIRR. "There's parts of our constituency that will never support issues within the LGBT community ... but I see parallels and we need to seek strength within each other."

Several community members shared their stories at the stakeholder meeting including Reyna Wences, an undocumented immigrant and self-identified queer youth who attempted suicide two days after graduating from high school. Because she is not a U.S. citizen, she was unable to accept scholarships offered to her by colleges.

"A lot of doors were closing on me," said Wences. "I think I lost all hope. All I was thinking that night was a funeral would be cheaper than college."

After a brief hospitalization, Wences sought out allies, eventually joining IYJL. But at the same time as coming out as undocumented, Wences was also coming out as queer.

"There are undocumented people who are queer and gay and lesbian and trans that aren't talked about," said Wences. "People like us who are at an intersection are likely to suffer from different things. We're not just one identity."

Several members of both the LGBT community and the immigrant community touted a need for collaboration between the groups.

"I would like to ask my LGBTQ brothers and sisters for their support, for people may not be so involved with immigrant issues to get involved," said Wences. "We all have different identities. We're all over the map."

"We're present here and we're part of the dialogue," said Julio Rodriguez, board president of the Association of Latino Men for Action and chair of the LGBT Immigrant Rights Coalition. "LGBT people are no longer invisible in the immigrant-rights movement. We're not only visible as allies, but our issues are part of the discussion."

"We're here, we're queer, we're immigrants."

New LGBT report targets state lawmakers

BY KATE SOSIN

A new report on LGBT families that aims to educate state lawmakers may surprise some LGBT people as well.

According to the report just released by the Movement Advancement Project (MAP), Family Equality Council and Center for American Progress, more same-sex couples are raising kids in Mississippi than in any other state.

That reality is one of several laid out in "Securing Legal Ties for Children Living in LGBT Families," intended to teach policymakers about LGBT families. The report is the third in a series following MAP's "All Children Matter" report that was released last October.

The report argues that most state laws for families are based on heterosexual married couples raising kids, neglecting protections for other families, including LGBT ones.

"Regardless of whether same-sex parents plan a new family together using donor insemination or surrogacy, become foster or adoptive families, or become stepfamilies later in life, in at least 30 states, it is likely that children in these households will be legal strangers to one of their parents," the reports states.

According to the report, heterosexual married couples are raising just 69 percent of kids, a steep decline since 1970, when it was 83 percent.

Those families are racially and ethnically diverse, the report says. Forty-five percent of kids in LGBT families are of color, compared to 30 percent in heterosexual families.

LGBT families live everywhere, according to the report. Same-sex couples live in 93 percent of all U.S. counties, with more couples

raising kids in Mississippi than any other state. Mississippi is followed by Wyoming, Alaska, Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Kansas, Alabama, Montana, South Dakota and South Carolina. The report notes high poverty rates among half those states and well as a lack of LGBT protections within them.

In total, the report found that children in same-sex marriages were twice as prone to poverty and far less likely to qualify for government assistance because many states do not recognize LGBT households.

On top of these hardships, many children are without legal ties to their parents, the report notes. The result is that children are often barred from visitation with a non-legal parent if the parents split up, are denied inheritance and the right to sue for wrongful death and are often left to grapple with vague state laws that are open for interpretation.

Parents themselves, especially transgender ones, also face discrimination as a result.

The report recommends that state lawmakers pass laws that specifically eliminate bias against LGBT families and provide recognition for parents.

In Illinois, the report suggests allowing same-sex couples to marry, explicitly banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in the foster care and adoption systems, passing de facto parenting laws and turning case law that allows for second-parent adoption into state law.

The report was produced in partnership with the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute and the Equality Federation, which includes Equality Illinois.

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Episcopal vote to have minimal impact on local churches

BY KATE SOSIN

The U.S. Episcopal Church became the largest in the country to bless same-sex marriages last week, after the church voted overwhelmingly in favor of the move at its General Convention in Indianapolis. But what may have practical implications for many churches around the nation, might only have symbolic meaning for many Chicago-based Episcopal congregations.

Some local Episcopal churches have been blessing same-sex unions for years, and the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago already performs civil unions.

"It will have no impact on our parish," said Rev. Brian Hastings, rector at Church of Our Saviour in Lincoln Park and an openly gay man. "I mean we've been blessing gay and lesbian people for decades."

Hastings said his church has "absorbed" LGBT people comfortably and without controversy at least since the mid '90s, when a church rector at the time, close to retirement, came out as gay.

However, Episcopal support for Chicago's LGBT community goes even further back.

St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Evanston held its first same-sex commitment ceremony in the summer of 1988 and has many out LGBT parishioners to date.

"When we say God loves all people, we mean all people," said St. Luke's Rector Rev. Dr. Jeanette DeFriest, who is an out lesbian.

DeFriest and Hastings are among several out LGBT people within the church.

In addition to voting to bless same-sex unions last week, the church also voted to ordain transgender people, although clergy members say there are already transgender priests throughout the country.



Bishop Jeffrey D. Lee. Photo from the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago

While the significance of last week's vote on unions is largely symbolic for congregations like DeFriest's, it will have real benefits, she said. Among them will be an official liturgy or ritual for same-sex ceremonies.

In the past, LGBT-affirming Episcopal churches created such liturgies piecemeal, by adapting a liturgy for heterosexual couples or borrowing liturgies from other congregations.

"When I sit down with heterosexual couples, I can say, 'this is the liturgy from which we start,'" she said. "With same-sex couples... it was more challenging to find a liturgy... It was challenging to say 'No, there is no recognized rite in the Episcopal Church.'"



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Not all local Episcopal churches are completely LGBT-affirming. The Episcopal Diocese of Chicago, which encompasses northern Illinois, contains 124 congregations. Of those, six are part of the Chicago Coalition of Welcoming Churches, a group of churches committed to embracing LGBT people.

However, three years ago, the General Convention decided that churches could bless unions in accordance with their state laws. When Illinois civil unions became available to same-sex couples last year, the Diocese of Chicago was able to start offering civil union ceremonies.

Even before that, same-sex union blessings were largely regarded as "a local pastoral matter," according to Bishop Jeffrey D. Lee, who leads the Diocese of Chicago.

"In the Diocese of Chicago, it has been relatively non-controversial," said Lee.

Churches that fully embraced LGBT people did so without risk of repercussion, choosing individually what worked for each congregation.

Now, Lee hopes the vote will make LGBT people aware that Episcopal churches in Chicago can be affirming places for them.

The Episcopal Church, said Lee, has a history of allowing for diversity going back to its Anglican roots.

In Hastings' congregation, that legacy manifests as a belief in that every person makes their own journey.

"Episcopalians have a longstanding tradition of trusting the conscience of the other person," Hastings said.

Still, Hastings is aware that not every Episcopal church in the country will embrace LGBT unions. The churches are still allowed to decide for themselves if they will bless same-sex unions. Also, Hastings is aware that in Illinois at least, he still can't marry same-sex couples.

"Many people might see this as a step along the way," he said. "But we're waiting for full equality."

Accounts differ about club's exclusion from summer Pride events

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

For the first time this Pride season, Hunters Chicago Nightclub attempted to become a vendor at both the June Chicago Pride Fest and the upcoming Northalsted Market Days this August. They were turned down by the Northalsted Business Alliance committee and Special Events Management—which runs both events—from participating as a vendor for both events.

Mark Hunter, owner of Hunters Chicago, said that the alliance decided to exclude the nightclub from both events due to space limitations and the fact that the nightclub is not located on Halsted Street. Hunter noted that although his club is located in Elk Grove Village, Ill. it has, in the past 30 years, participated in approximately 20 Pride parades since 1982 as well as donated time and money to support agencies like Chicago House, the Center on Halsted and Howard Brown Health Center. (The last two are located on or near Halsted Street.)

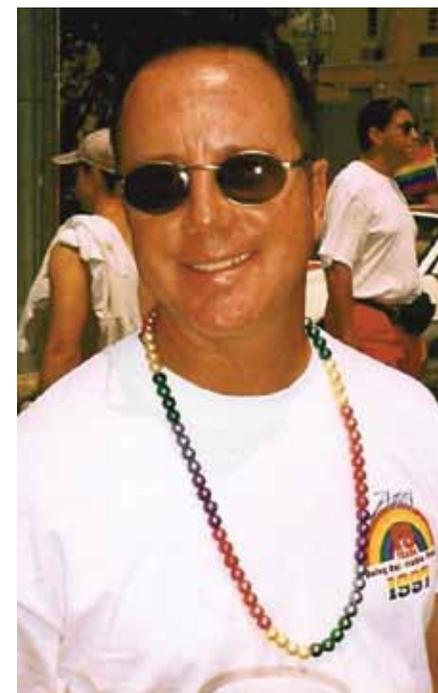
"Hunters Chicago has been a vital part of the Chicago LGBT community for 30 years," said Hunter. "Steeped in history and being one of the first openly gay bars in the suburbs, Hunters Chicago has been a beacon of gay pride for thousands of people. Our longevity is a testament to its dedication and commitment to its community."

Jay Lyon, executive director of Northalsted Business Alliance, said, "Northalsted's events have grown tremendously in popularity over the years. For every event, we have a tremendous number of applicants, often hundreds more than we could accommodate. We take the selection of non-profits and vendors very seriously.

"Our events have a specific geographic footprint, and they cannot be expanded despite the great demand. As these are chamber events, our local businesses are given priority. Our business members spend a tremendous amount of energy and effort to make Northalsted and its events successful, efforts that happen year-round and which the general public never gets to see."

Lyon indicated that the alliance has never had a category for an applicant such as Hunters Chicago. However, he claimed the alliance offered the nightclub an opportunity to apply for a sponsorship role—with Hunters opting out of that role.

Hunter said the club was emailed about



Mark Hunter. Photo from Windy City Times archives

this decision. He noted that the application process for the events never mentioned any protocols for exclusion, which Hunter said was explained to him after being told that the club would not be considered as a vendor for the events.

Hank Zemola of Special Events Management said, "Hunters has never submitted an application or payment for consideration for Market Days as a vendor. Prior to Pride Fest, I talked to Hunter personally and explained that he doesn't fit our vendor criteria.

"I suggested that the only consideration would be to participate as a sponsor, but that would still be reviewed and considered by the festival committee. He hasn't reached out to further inquire about sponsorship and I have given him my direct number to contact me in the future."

Although Hunter said he is disappointed with the alliance's decision, the nightclub instead held its own suburban pride event June 24, which Hunter said was a success. Also, on Aug. 11-12—when Northalsted Market Days will take place—Hunter said that his nightclub will be donating 20 percent of all its receipt totals to a local Chicago charity.

GAY *in the* **LIFE**
Nick Holevas
 TEXT BY ROSS FORMAN
 PHOTOS FROM HOLEVAS



Age
41

Job title
Manager, Chicago Pita

Relationship status
Dating Michael Davis

Hobbies
Running, traveling, writing

Favorite Chicago restaurant
Taxim in Wicker Park

Favorite TV show
Mad Men

Favorite movie
Terms of Endearment

Little-known fact
Fluent in three languages (Greek, French, English)

Nick Holevas hit rock bottom a few years ago, losing all his money in the real-estate business, partially due to the economic downturn and part due to some poor personal decisions, he admitted.

So he started writing a book on his experiences as an investor, but he's hit the wall with his words.

"I don't know if it's fear or if it's laziness, [about completing the book, maybe] a little of both," said Holevas, who now manages a small, family-run, carry-out fast-food restaurant in Chicago's Hegewisch neighborhood. "I'm really glad I got to go to work for the family [business] because they did provide me with the emotional support I needed to get through the rough times, and see my mistakes from a different point of view, learn from them and start fresh."

Chicago Pita is a 900-square-foot restaurant that specializes in kebabs, gyros and beef sandwiches. "We don't have any vegan options, but we do have, in my opinion, the most delicious meat in the City of Chicago," Holevas said.

Holevas ran the 2011 Chicago Marathon, finishing in 5:46:10. He is again training for the 2012 Chicago Marathon through the AIDS Foundation of Chicago's endurance-training program, the Team To End AIDS (T2).

"I am truly excited about the training. I love going every Saturday morning [to the T2 training runs along the lakefront] to see highly motivated people doing some good for humanity.

"T2 is a win-win situation, where I get to exercise and make a small contribution to the world. I have a few friends who are HIV-positive and can't think of a better charity than this one. I am very pleased with the progress science is making for this disease and, at the same time, I will not stop until there is a cure."

His goal for the 2012 Chicago Marathon is: 5:30.

To support Holevas with his T2 fund-raising for AFC, visit www.holevas.org.



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Noa Francis Shayden

Pronouns
 "Gender neutral, though I'm starting to not really pay any mind to pronouns."

Identifies as
 Genderqueer and trans*

Job
 "I currently work the front of The Bleeding Heart Bakery in Lakeview."

Life's work
 "Raising awareness for the trans*/gender-variant community, as well as pointing folks to resources that they might not know are out there."

Hobbies
 "Other than activism, music is a big one. I also enjoy reading, writing, playing video games, and doing stuff in the city."

Do you have a coming out story?
 "I started questioning my own gender after a partner of mine came out to me as trans*. I did a bunch of research online to become familiar with what that meant because I had never heard the term before. Eventually the gears in my head started turning and my research became more of a checklist and I came to terms with my own trans*ness. I have been the happiest I have ever been since then."

What is the best thing about being trans/gender-variant?
 "There's a few: I get to wear whatever I want,

I have learned to love and accept my body for what it is and not what it isn't, and the community is absolutely fantastic. They're so inspiring!"

Do you consider yourself an activist?
 "Absolutely! I have done work with queer rights groups and currently organize for Genderqueer Chicago. I also consider myself a trans*/gender-variant educator and advocate since most folks I run into don't know much about trans* or gender-variant folks. I take the time to answer questions they may have and inform them on what not to say to members of the community."

How do you explain the way you feel about gender to others?
 "Everyone does gender in their own way. No two people have the same gender, even if they both identify with the same word(s)."

In your opinion, what are the most important issues facing the trans/ gender-variant community?
 "Housing, employment, access to resources, targeting by police, and the biggest is social acceptance. It's hard to believe that we still have to fight just to be accepted."

(Editor's Note: When used with an asterisk, "trans*" aims to be inclusive of all gender non-conforming identities).

VIEWPOINTS

WINDY CITY TIMES

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"Windy City Media Group generated enormous interest among their readers in this year's LGBT Consumer Index Survey. Out of approximately 100 print and online media partners who participated in the survey, Windy City was the best performing regional media in the U.S. Only survey partners with a nationwide footprint were able to generate a greater number of responses." —David Marshall, Research Director, Community Marketing, Inc.

Community Marketing, Inc.



JEFF BERRY

Reflections from an epidemic: Carrying the torch to AIDS 2012

In only a few days, nearly 25,000 people from around the globe will descend upon Washington, D.C. for AIDS 2012, the XIX International AIDS Conference being held in the United States for the first time since 1990, following President Obama's lifting of this country's 22-year travel and immigration ban against people with HIV.

I will be attending the conference, along with many of my fellow HIV advocates and activists, as a media representative for Positively Aware magazine, as I have for three of the last four conferences. World AIDS, as the biennial conference has been dubbed, is quite a spectacular event to witness, especially if you've never experienced it before, and the theme of this year's conference is "Turning the Tide Together." The conference is a great way to meet and network with others who are working in the field, to share ideas, and to get the latest data on advances in HIV prevention, research, and care, and to take the opportunity to renew our passion and commitment by marching and demonstrating for our rights, as well as the rights of those who are unable to advocate for themselves.

The conference will also be an opportunity to

reflect and to honor and remember those who we've lost along the way, in this now 31-year struggle against HIV and AIDS. One of those opportunities will be by visiting and taking in the impact of The AIDS Memorial Quilt, which is on display that same week on the National Mall and at various sites around the capital.

I volunteered at the Quilt when it was in D.C. back in 1996, and it was an incredibly powerful experience. The unfolding ceremony in itself is extremely moving, and there are even boxes of tissues strategically placed, for that moment when suddenly you are overcome with emotion as you come across the panel of a loved one, or maybe even a stranger, whose life is all wrapped up and gently handed to you like an offering, in a tidy little patch of fabric.

Following the Quilt in 1996, there was a candlelight march from the Capital Building to the Lincoln Memorial in which many of my friends and co-workers took part, along with 100,000 others who had gathered in our nation's capital. As we came upon the now obligatory "Reverend" Fred Phelps contingent holding up signs that declared "God Hates Fags" and "The Wages of Sin is Death," I suddenly became filled with anger that welled up from somewhere deep within. I began shouting "Shame! Shame! Shame!" and "God Doesn't Hate!" and soon hundreds of people were joining in. I was literally shaking in my boots, but my brothers and sisters around me who were voicing their support lifted me up and gave me the strength to continue. That night, an activist was born.

Another chance to look back and reflect will be when I have the privilege to attend a benefit performance in D.C. of The Normal Heart at the Arena Stage the week of the conference. Larry Kramer's powerful 1984 play written during the early days of the epidemic chronicling the apathy and indifference to the looming epidemic is

receiving rave reviews, but I know from what I've read and heard that it is going to be an emotional evening. More tissues will be needed.

It's difficult for many of us who have lived through such devastation, and the loss of so many friends, lovers, and loved ones, to dredge up those emotions, once again, and over and over. Sometimes it's necessary to push them down and tuck them away, because the pain is too unbearable.

So I realize it's going to be a busy week, a fulfilling week—but also an emotional week for many of us. But the way I look at it, at least we have the luxury of even being emotional. My friend Eugene, who passed away in 1989—the same year I was diagnosed with HIV—regretably does not have that luxury. So I will march for him and for the many, many others who were gone far too soon, and way ahead of their time. I will shed my tears for my friend and mentor Lou. I will report on advances in treatment, care and prevention, and cure research, for my good friend Carl.

And when it all seems like it is maybe becoming a bit too much, I will retreat, for Ian, and tend to my wounds, and provide some self-care. Then I will get up, and I will continue to fight for all of those who are no longer with us, for those who are still with us but who have no voice, and wage war against the apathy and complacency around us that makes our work at times an uphill battle.

Fight we must—and remember we will. We must never forget. Because we are still here, and this is our calling.

And if we don't fight the fight, who will?

Jeff Berry is the director of publications for the HIV/AIDS agency Test Positive Aware Network.



LETTERS

Protesting the protesters

Dear Editor:

My partner, Craig, and I were walking toward the El stop after the Chicago Pride Parade, which we marched in with Campit Resort, and passed by the small but very vocal group of protesting extremist radical literalist "Christians" who had critical signs.

One guy on a loudspeaker was chanting "sick, sick, sick" and then called someone a "chicken hawk" and had some other disgusting words. At the time we were so tired for walking the parade I didn't realize he was directing his words toward us and called Craig a chicken hawk. Craig explained this to me later when I mentioned it to him. I wish I had my wits about me at the time as I would have had some choice words for this hypocrite.

I can quote the Bible as well as any of his ilk. I am sick of these people and have a hard time feeling any charity or goodwill toward them. Otherwise, it was a wonderful day full of amazing colorful good fun people. It's too bad there are people who preach hate, intolerance and shame. They will be judged in the same manner that they judged us without even knowing us or the many other people (children of God) that they condemned and heaped words of scorn and condemnation upon at the Gay Pride Parade.

Last year, the same group's leader shouted at us long list of vile names, ("filthy abomination" being one on them) and wished that we would get every venereal disease there was and then get AIDS and burn in hell—all over a bullhorn. How would they react if we showed up at one of their church events with hateful signs and bullhorns calling them horrid names? They would

call the police to have us removed. They would claim they are being victimized and persecuted and that their religious freedom was being trampled upon.

Pride Sunday in Chicago is a day for everyone to be proud of who s/he is and celebrate the wonderful diversity of our city and country. Gay or straight, Black, White, Asian, Latino, Christian, Muslim, Jew, Buddhist, Hindu and others—we are all beautiful people in our own way and have something to offer the larger community. All of us should reflect on this: We may be the medicine the world and our community needs.

Dano Pierce
 Chicago

Who's line-up is it, anyway?

Dear Editor:

What is happening with the Chicago LGBT Pride Parade?

The parade took place this year with a new route and, as opposed to the previous year, it seemed to flow more smoothly.

Each year the Pride Parade comes and goes with little notice on how the parade takes place, how decisions are made and what type of accountability is there for funds raised in support of the event. Are there salaries involved, are any audits done of Pride finances in the name of Chicago's LGBT Community or are there any funds available for community charities? I don't believe these are unreasonable questions, or that by asking for accountability I am attacking anyone personally.

Who is really in charge, how does one get involved with the parade committee and are there any publicized scheduled open meetings? This

year we were presented a new partisan political leadership with the addition of Ald. Tom Tunney of the 44th Ward and Ald. James Cappleman of the 46th Ward. How did these two alderman become part of the leadership team, with Richard Pfeiffer, of a major LGBT community organization that is supposed to represent the broad diversity of our community?

The parade line-up is a concern for many event participants; many question the privileged locations for politicians at the front. Perhaps a more equitable solution is to hold a public lottery to assign locations.

The whole issue with Our Lady of Mt. Carmel could have been handled better, from Pfeiffer not responding to a letter he got from the pastor of Mt. Carmel to the private meeting Tunney held with the church's pastor.

I also don't think it unreasonable to believe that the LGBT community's concern with public intoxication should have been ignored in a private meeting with Tunney and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel's pastor.

I have reached out to Pfeiffer, Tunney and Cappleman; Cappleman contacted me. I asked about accountability to the LGBT community in the form of a public follow-up meeting where a report can be given to the community; there would also be a Q&A, understanding time limitations.

My concern is about transparency and accountability to the LGBT community, not personalities. Partisan politics is a part of this community and should have a place in the parade, but it should not dominate other components of the LGBT community.

Joe Murray
 Rainbow Sash Movement

GOINGS-ON



WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION

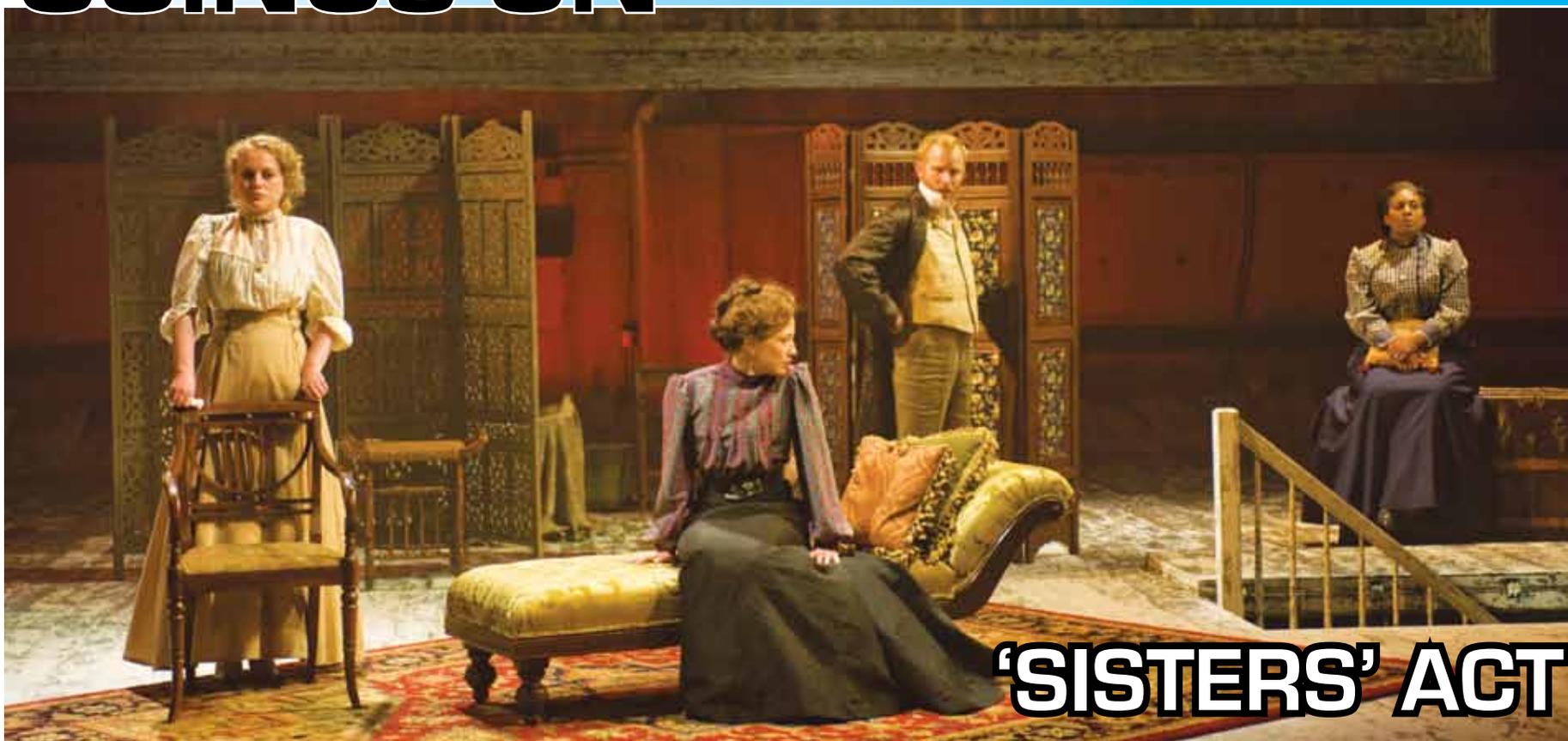


Photo by Michael Brosilow

'SISTERS' ACT

Chekhov's popular work *Three Sisters* gets the Steppenwolf treatment. Read our review on page 14.

DISH

Filet it on the line.
Page 26.

PR photo of filet mignon at Smith & Wollensky



MUSIC

Barry on.
Page 20.

Photo of Barry Manilow by Susan Mattes



PERFORMANCE

Absolutely 'Fabulous.'
Page 17.

Photo from Charles Wayne



SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Three decades of GALA singing

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

I'm ashamed to admit that I was initially disappointed when I saw that GALA Choruses (The Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses) was taking over the entire Denver Performing Arts Complex for its quadrennial international choral festival recently held July 7-11 in Colorado.

Since I was headed to the Mile High City to perform as a member of the Windy City Gay Chorus, I was also hoping that I might be able to catch some world-class theater, opera or ballet at the nation's second-largest performing arts complex at the same time.

However, the Denver Performing Arts Complex's 2,362-seat Boettcher Concert Hall (where the Colorado Symphony performs), the 2,100-seat Ellie Caulkins Opera House (where Opera Colorado and Colorado Ballet perform), the 2,882-seat Temple Hoyne Buell Theatre (where national Broadway touring companies typically play) and the Helen Bonfils Theatre Complex (where the Tony Award-winning Denver Center Theatre Company is housed) were all taken up by GALA programming for 45 ensembles, 130 choirs, 200 performances and more than 6,100 delegates.

I'm happy to say that my initial disappointment instantly faded away once the GALA Festival got underway, since it was such a positive and creatively enriching experience to see so many LGBTQA choral ensembles and troupes from around the globe share their artistry and differing approaches to choral performing.

GALA's second appearance in Denver (the first being 1992) marked the largest gathering yet

for the world's largest gay and lesbian choral event, which has also been staged in Minneapolis (1986), Seattle (1989), Tampa (1996), San Jose, Calif. (2000), Montreal (2004) and Miami (2008). Yet GALA traces its origins to Chicago in 1981, when delegates from LGBTQA choruses met to plan out future festivals in San Francisco in 1982 and in New York in 1983 (when GALA was initially known as COAST—Come Out And Sing Together).

So it's important to note that Chicago choruses had a strong showing in Denver.

Windy City Performing Arts, the umbrella organization for both Aria and Windy City Gay Chorus, garnered more than 55 members to perform separately and in combined numbers led by artistic director and GALA board member Stephen C. Edwards. Chicago Gay Men's Chorus performed with 105 members in attendance under the artistic direction of Patrick Sinozich, while two delegates from the Chicago lesbian feminist chorus Artemis Singers were in attendance to promote partnerships with the Sister Singers Network.

Sinozich, attending his sixth GALA, particularly enjoyed having the festival in Denver, thanks to its world-class performing venues all located in such close proximity to each other. He also saw two distinct focuses running throughout the 2012 festival.

"One of the themes I noticed was GALA looking back at itself and its 30-year history," said Sinozich, noting how much was made of looking back at commissioned works presented at GALA via events like the Our Legacy = Our Song concert which was co-hosted by sex advice col-



Patrick Sinozich. Photo by Tracy Baim

umnist Dan Savage and performer Vanessa German. Sinozich also saw a trend of other choruses looking back at their own histories, like the Twin Cities Gay Chorus' concert "Out of My Range" and Portland Gay Men's Chorus' "The Young Person's Guide to the Gay Men's Chorus."

"I also saw a focus on youth with the number of youth choruses that were there, the big performance that they gave [called Youth Invasion] and that they were included in the Big Gay Sing sing-along concerts," Sinozich said.

Indeed, one of the most touching moments of the whole GALA festival occurred at the Youth Invasion concert when six young members of Kansas City-based PerformOUTKC started singing "We Shall Overcome" and were instantly joined by the entire Caulkins Opera House audience as it sang support.

Another touching performance came with GALA's first-ever HIV-positive chorus, which was made up of members from various GALA choruses performing the number "Give Us a Death Undiminished" from the 1992 work *Hidden Legacies* as part of the Our Legacy = Our Song concert, which touched upon how AIDS affected so many members of GALA choruses.

Robert Basile, a charter member of Windy City Gay Chorus since its founding in 1979, said he participated in GALA's HIV-positive chorus because "it's important to tell our story."

"I wanted to be part of it because I am HIV-positive and I stand up to that fact," Basile said. "I've lived through the crisis and I want to be a mentor for other people who can hopefully learn from what I've experienced."

Now for all the positives of a GALA festival in terms of sharing artistic ideas among LGBTQA choruses, there are some drawbacks. No one person can experience all the choruses since upwards of three or four might be scheduled to perform at the exact same time. And if one decides to solely focus on seeing choruses, it leaves very little time to do outside sight-seeing (which was a quibble of Chicago Gay Men's Chorus member Larry Olson, who was seen meticulously taking notes in his thick GALA program book at each chorus performance he attended).

"There was definitely so much going on that I couldn't see all of it and you do get kind of burnt out after seeing so many choruses in a row," said Aria member Anna Rose Epstein, who made her first-time GALA festival visit into a summer vacation alongside her wife, Hannah Michaelson.

"One of the things that I enjoyed most was the bonding experience," Epstein said. "Even though we all sing together as choruses, we don't necessarily get a lot of time to hang out and talk together—so we all really bonded and we all want to sing together even more."

For more information on GALA, visit www.galachoruses.org.



Electra. Photo by Pete Guither

DOUBLE REVIEW

Oedipus El Rey

Playwright: Luis Alfaro

At: Victory Gardens Theatre at the Biograph, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.

Tickets: 773-871-3000;

www.victorygardens.org; \$20-\$50

Runs through: July 29

Electra

Playwright: adapted by Sonya

Moser from the play by Euripides

At: Mary-Arrchie Theatre Company at Angel Island, 735 W. Sheridan Rd.

Tickets: 773-871-0442;

www.maryarrchie.com; \$20

Runs through: July 29

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

What elevates mere stories to the status of myths is the degree to which they transcend time, place and culture to address the universal human condition. Sophocles' tragedy of Oedipus Rex asked whether defying the destiny mapped by the gods represented blasphemy inviting divine punishment, while Luis Alfaro's modern retelling of the fable argues the odds of a *vato* boy raised in the criminal underworld escaping a fate as inexorable as those decreed by the deities of old.

Our storytellers are prison inmates speaking Spanglish—the spawn of a savage universe ruled by Christian and pagan rites merging into a social code as insular as it is unquestioned. We hear how a drug kingpin, fearful of relinquishing his power, ordered his own son executed after mutilating the infant's feet to prevent pursuit from the grave—a plan foiled by the designated hit man sparing the child he names “Oedipus” (“swollen foot”). Our hero, instead of making a fresh start in Las Vegas following his release on parole, seeks his fortune in the Los Angeles barrio. Almost upon his arrival, he finds himself embroiled in a fight to the death. Later the orphaned lad is drawn to a young widow, the daughter of immigrant parents, their yearning for a peaceful home and family uniting them.

Even if you don't buy into Alfaro's sociological subtext, his transposition of classical rhetoric to modern idiom is as impressive in its dictional accuracy as it is spellbinding in its polyglot eloquence. However, if your fancy doesn't run toward scholarly analyses of any kind, there is still the blood-stirring viscerality of Chay Yew's

high-voltage direction, incorporating orchestrated speech and Ryan Bourque's riveting kinetic panoramas. (The conjuring of the riddling sphinx from a trio of shape-shifting curanderos is a sight to terrify the most skeptical playgoer.)

No less visceral is the Electra currently occupying the Angel Island loft, presented by Mary-Arrchie Theatre in collaboration with Illinois State University. This adaptation by Sonya Moser from the tragedy by Euripides features Appalachian string bands, Ry Cooder-style *a cappella* blues, intrusive academic footnotes, bloody post-mortem spectacle and—for its Central Visual Metaphor—lots of squeeze-through-your-fingers, smear-on-your-face, hurl-at-the-wall mud.

CRITICS' PICKS

Common Hatred, Ruckus Theatre at the Side Project, through July 22. Family problems don't change much from one culture to the next, but the Ruckus ensemble's smart medley of Chekhovian themes updated to 21st-century America captures all the despair of genteel-class torpor with a glimmer of good old Yankee hope, too. MSB

The Gacy Play, Sideshow Theatre at Theater Wit, through July 29. Calamity West's stage drama (based upon the notorious 1970s mass murderer John Wayne Gacy, Jr.) is by no means perfect, but director Jonathan L. Green creates a compelling staging that is appropriately ominous. SCM

Hero, Marriott Theatre (Lincolnshire), through Aug. 19. A new musical has a crackerjack cast, sharp jokes and clever lyrics to elevate a commonplace love story and comic second story into a fast and funny show with lots of potential. It's a plus if you're a superhero or graphic-novel fan. JA

My First Time, Broken Nose Theatre at Greenhouse Theater Center, through July 28. This is a hilarious and sometimes harrowing look at a variety of people's first sexual experiences. It's also astutely localized with Chicago-area storytellers as warm-up acts and survey responses from each individual audience worked into the flow of the show. SCM

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

THEATER REVIEW

Butley

Playwright: Simon Gray

At: Hubris Productions at the Greenhouse, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave.

Tickets: 773-404-7336;

www.hubrisproductions.com; \$25

Runs through: Aug. 11

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Is this what the poetry of T.S. Eliot does to scholars? Professor Ben Butley, whose special field of study is the author of *The Hollow Men* and *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*, has absorbed the puckish solipsism of his subject to now exhibit the maturity of a 2-year-old, swilling whiskey from a bottle in his office, neglecting his teaching responsibilities (not to mention his personal grooming) and flinging his refuse at whomever dares approach him. Both his wife and his boyfriend, we are not surprised to learn, have announced that they are leaving him—news that Ben is not taking quietly.

Every large organization usually harbors somebody like this (though the species seems to gravitate towards university English departments). In real life, those forced to keep company with such annoying personalities find ways to circumvent the toxic dynamic engendered thereby. Aaaaaw, but where's the fun in *that*? So asks Simon Gray, who dictates that Ben's colleagues, students and companions acquiesce to

the repellent academic's schemes and harangues with the unwavering civility of gullible strangers. Is this simply British manners? Or are we to assume that Butley is some sort of Doctor House-like genius and thus licensed to bully?

More puzzling than the question of why Ben's acquaintances put up with him is why we should tolerate nearly two hours of his tantrums. Director Michael D. Graham could have caricatured the victims as broadly as he does their abuser, thus inviting us to share in the latter's contempt for them. (Gray insists that his female characters, no matter how composed initially, eventually dissolve into tears—thus hinting at his sentiments.) This Hubris Production rejects easy laughs, instead allowing Ben's comforters to come off as pretty decent folks, all said, even to delivering their persecutor his comeuppance with a wholly-undeserved humanity and restraint.

Faced with playing the most charmless hero since Richard III, Jacob Christopher Green gives it his all, spewing forth vitriol and doggerel (Eliot buffs may recognize some of both) with an calculation designed to assure us that his infantile actions are carefully premeditated. What distinguishes protagonists from mannequins, however, is their ability to make *choices*. The brief moment when our splenetic man-child rejects an opportunity to continue in his selfish misanthropy may seem small redemption for a pilgrim who strayed so far from the right path, but it opens the door—if only a tiny bit—to hopes of a change for the better.

THEATER REVIEW

Three Sisters

Playwright: Anton Chekhov,

adapted by Tracy Letts

At: Steppenwolf Theatre

Company, 1650 N. Halsted St.

Tickets: 1-312-335-1650;

www.steppenwolf.org; \$20-\$75

Runs through: Aug. 26

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

People complain that “nothing happens” in a Chekhov play, yet by the end each character's life has changed forever. “Life is what happens while you're making other plans,” as John Lennon wrote. If audiences think nothing happens, it's because Chekhov (1860-1904) was the pioneer of subtext; the unspoken thoughts and feelings conveyed through body language, attitude, behavior and pause and silence. So-called psychological realism became—and remains—the dominant acting method in English-speaking theater.

Chekhov's 1901 masterpiece, *Three Sisters*, concerns siblings in a provincial city where their late father was the commanding military officer, putting them at the center of social and intellectual life. Now they talk and dream of returning to the glittering life of Moscow, where they were born. They never go, although there's no obvious barrier to their leaving. Youngest sister, Irina, just 18 as the play begins, longs the most for Moscow although she was a small girl when the family moved away. Eventually all must accommodate themselves to the disappointments of life and passing time, constant themes in Chekhov's major plays.

In this new adaptation, award-winning playwright Tracy Letts (*Killer Joe* and *August: Osage County*) sweeps away arcane Slavic details of the Russian original, thereby making the play more accessible. Irina celebrates her birthday instead of her “name day” and multisyllabic patronymic names (say, Natasha Alexandrovna or Nicolai Mikhailovich) are reduced to a single first or last name. Letts occasionally jars with contemporary slang which nonetheless remains true to character, as when bitter middle sister Masha declares, “More wine, please! Life sucks so let's live it up!”

And being true to character is what Chekhov requires in order to nail the subtext. This lavish production isn't fully realized in that sense, although it's heartfelt and handsome, as directed by Anna D. Shapiro (Tony-winning director of *August: Osage County*), with bril-



Three Sisters. Photo by Michael Brosilow

liantly authentic period costumes and furnishings by designers Jess Goldstein (costumes), Todd Rosenthal (scenic), Emily Guthrie and Maria DeFabo (props assistants) and Donald Holder (lighting). The director and the large, congenial ensemble cast also appreciate the play's many comic moments, to their credit.

However, the visceral emotions of the first three acts aren't entirely there. Some longings, desires, fears and disappointments are discussed but others are neither discussed nor indicated. For example, there's no physical proximity or body language between sullen Capt. Solyony and pretty Irina to indicate his desire for her. His jealous love declaration in Act III is a surprise to Irina, but shouldn't be to the audience. The fourth and final act achieves tension and critical mass, but without the emotional gut punch I've felt in a few great productions. Still, you won't say nothing happens. Deeper feelings may develop as the cast spends more time with Chekhov's characters, whom he loves dearly but allows to behave foolishly.

THEATER REVIEW

Moment

Playwright: Deirdre Kinahan
 At: Steep Theatre, 1115 W. Berwyn Ave.
 Tickets: 866-811-4111 or
 www.steeptheatre.com; \$20-\$22
 Runs through: Aug. 18

Gruesome Playground Injuries

Playwright: Rajiv Joseph
 At: Rasaka Theatre Company at
 Chopin Theatre, 1543 W. Division St.
 Tickets: 312-777-1070 or
 www.rasakatheatre.org; \$20-\$25
 Runs through: Aug. 5

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

"Two local play premieres, one new to Chicago and the other new to the U.S., offer compelling contrasts when it comes to playwriting structure.

Steep Theatre's U.S. debut of Irish playwright Deirdre Kinahan's Moment is presented in a straightforward chronological fashion (with a few memory flashbacks worked into the second act), while Rasaka Theatre Company's Midwest premiere of Rajiv Joseph's Gruesome Playground Injuries jumps back and forth in time to show key episodes in the lives of two friends.

The first act of Moment is a classic build-up as we get introduced to the Lynch family in modern-day Ireland. Aging matriarch Teresa (Maggie Cain) is having mental health issues, while her grown daughters, Niamh (Cynthia Marker) and Ciara (Julia Siple), prepare for a showdown with their returning ex-con brother Nial (Josh Odor), who has found fame as an abstract artist.

The exact dark secret of Nial's crime is eventually revealed, pulling in his new English wife, Ruth Pigeon (Carey Lee Burton); Ciara's husband, Dave (James Allen); and Niamh's new boyfriend,



Gruesome Playground Injuries. Photo by Tyler Core

Fin (Alex Gillmor), into the long-festering trauma that changed the lives of the entire Lynch family in just a single moment.

Dramatically, Moment isn't that convincing when it comes to the explanation of why Nial committed his crime against teenager Hillary Kelly (a very amusing Grace Melon). Rather, Moment works better as a drama where we see the resentments and other family dynamics play out as we learn why the whole Lynch clan behaves as it does nowadays.

Director Jonathan Berry has cast Moment very well, with his performers giving genuine performances with Irish and British dialects that mostly stay in place. Although Moment is very traditional in its structure, its relatable characters and strong performers definitely pull you in.

Gruesome Playground Injuries, by its very nature, is more fragmented with its time-jumping structure, which doesn't allow you the chance to entirely connect with its two unrequited lovers who first meet as 8-year-old kids in the school nurse's office.

Kayleen (Mouzam Makkar) becomes the obsessive object of desire for Doug (Tim Martin), even though she doesn't return his affections. Sometimes Doug pulls dangerous stunts to get Kayleen's attention (with horrific results), while she reveals a disturbing self-harming habit.

Director Lavina Jadhvani creates a chilly and

clinical production of Gruesome Playground Injuries in the basement of the Chopin Theatre, allowing audiences to gaze at her acting duo from three sides as they change costume (and stage injury makeup) in full view between scenes. There's some good dialogue and situations for the actors to work with, but the play itself just doesn't add up into a fully satisfying reason to care about these self-destructing friends.

SPOTLIGHT



Described as a mix of cabaret, burlesque, circus sideshow and contemporary variety, La Soirée makes its U.S. debut in Chicago at the Riverfront Theater following stints in Montreal, London, Paris, Sydney and other cities around the world. The fact that La Soirée comes with the disclaimer "recommended for ages 16 and older" gives a clue that this is one sexy circus spectacular that is aimed at adults rather than kids. La Soirée plays at the Riverfront Theater, 650 W. Chicago Ave., Wed., July 18-Sunday, Aug. 5. Performances are 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays through Thursdays, 8 p.m. Fridays, 5 and 8 p.m. Saturdays and 2 and 6 p.m. Sundays. Tickets are \$39-\$85; call 888-556-9484 or visit www.riverfronttheater.com. Photo courtesy of Riverfront Theatre/Cathy Taylor PR

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NUNN ON ONE: THEATER

Gay dancer helps bring tribute to Michael Jackson



BY JERRY NUNN

Michael Jackson may be gone but he's not forgotten. Cirque du Soleil brings The Immortal World Tour at the United Center for two dates this week. This dazzling show centers around the choreography and music of the late great pop icon.

Openly gay Puerto Rican dancer/choreographer Leo Moctezuma is performing in this production coming from a strong background of working with big named concert acts from Christina Aguilera to Ricky Martin. Dance Track Magazine awarded him Best Choreography on a Touring Show for Pink's Funhouse Tour. Look for his current video, "2 Da Left," combining his singing and dancing with a Glee star and a Pussycat Doll.

Get ready for a "Thriller" of a show and read below to get to know a little more about this talented artist.

Windy City Times: Hola, Leo. Are you a New Yorker or a Hawaiian? I couldn't figure that out.

Leo Moctezuma: [Laughs] I am a born New Yorker. I'm Nuyorican. I went to high school in Hawaii.

WCT: Not a bad place to study...

LM: Not at all; it was kind of amazing.

WCT: What part of Puerto Rico is your family from?

LM: From Yabucoa, about 45 minutes south of San Juan.

WCT: How did you start choreographing and dancing?

LM: I started dancing when I was young in Puerto Rico. My cousin and I used to do little talent shows when we were younger at the festivals in Puerto Rico. I didn't start seriously until I was in high school in Hawaii. I did musical theater. My dream was to be an actor and I danced around but found my love for it in high school and got serious about the arts.

WCT: How did that lead to you touring with major acts like the Spice Girls and Britney Spears?

LM: After I graduated from high school, Disney Orlando offered me a job. My choices were to go to L.A., start from scratch and struggle—or go to Florida and make some money. Orlando was like my college year. I got hands-on performance experience. I wouldn't change it for the world.

While in Orlando I did so many shows and wound up working with Jamie King, who directed a lot of the shows I did as well as Michael Jackson's Immortal. It has come full circle!

WCT: It really has. I saw the Pink Funhouse tour. How did you start working with her?

Did you choreograph her spinning in the air? Because that is very Cirque, too.

LM: Me and my choreographing partner, Alison Faulk, assisted the Talauega Brothers on [Pink's] I'm Not Dead Tour. The Brothers also danced for Michael and choreographed some number in this Immortal tour as well. Again, this is full circle. For the Funhouse tour Pink—Alecia herself—contacted Alison and I to choreograph that tour.

Dreya Weber choreographed the stuff in the air but she was in cahoots with us.

WCT: Chicago is the 67th stop on the Im-



Leo Moctezuma (with red collar) in the Immortal World Tour. Photo by Elizabeth Neukirch

mortal tour. How is it going?

LM: It is going amazing. We started touring in October. I have always been a Michael fan since I was a little kid, dancing the moves and watching the videos. It is a blessing to be able to be in the show. Of course, I would have liked to have danced for him and with him but I feel



Leo Moctezuma.

like we are continuing his legacy.

WCT: Can you describe the show?

LM: It is basically a montage of a celebration of his life. We bring many of his music videos to reality onstage, the iconic moves and choreography. It is a must-see show!

WCT: Has the Jackson family seen it?

LM: Yes. The estate is part of show so they are heavily involved. His mom and all of the brothers have come to see the show many times, for many of the premieres and when the show opened in Montreal. They have come to Los Angeles and Vegas. The family loves it.

WCT: Do you have a favorite number from the show that you like?

LM: I actually have a favorite section. It is the hotel section. It opens up with "Smooth Criminal," then moves to "Dangerous." That section is awesome. We have a lot of original choreography. It is a very iconic style that Michael used to bring in his video shoots, like the moonwalk.

WCT: "Thriller" looked good from the preview as well.

LM: I am not in "Thriller" because I am in the number before it. I am a bat creature with big wings so I introduce the scary section. When we go offstage, "Thriller" starts. The good thing about not being in it is that I get to watch it from back stage.

WCT: Did I see a one-legged dancer in the preview online?

LM: Yes; we have b-boy, Jean Sok. He is amazing. He has one leg and it is unbelievable and inspiring what he can do on his crutches and hands. He is the definition of an artist. He is someone Michael would be inspired by and have in the show. It shows anything is possible.

WCT: Has the show been to Puerto Rico?

LM: No, it has not. As of now, there aren't any plans to go there. Puerto Rico is a small island so it is a lot of money to bring the whole production there. I have only been on two tours that have gone there, one of which was Ricky Martin. It is kind of obvious that he would go to his hometown.

WCT: Did you see Evita [the Broadway show that stars Martin]?

LM: I actually did. I saw it the night before opening. I wanted to go support him. I thought he was fantastic. I must confess I didn't love the show but he was the best thing in it. He did a great job. His voice sounded great and his acting was on point. I was really proud of him.

WCT: You have your own music as well. I have been watching the videos.

LM: I have been recording the past couple of years. I am trying to get serious about the music and doing it all by myself. I am trying to do club

shows around the country promoting my music and separate from the show because I am my own identity. It is so nice to have the support of the cast of the show.

WCT: How did you get to be friends with Glee's Heather Morris, who is in the video?

LM: She and I have done dance gigs together. My second performance that I ever sang she danced for me. It was an LGBTQ fundraiser called "We Are Golden." We have been friends for a while. I have worked on the show Glee as well, so when I am on set it is great to see her. She is fantastic and deserves her success. She is so talented and so humble. I just called her up and she said, "Hell, yeah. I will be in your video!"

WCT: Where does the Immortal Tour head next after Chicago?

LM: We leave for Ottawa the next day. We have been all over the world now!

See Leo and the gang perform "Smooth Criminal," among other acts, at the United Center, 1901 W. Madison St., at 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, July 20-21. For tickets, visit www.cirquedusoleil.com/michaeljackson and for more Moctezuma, see www.LeoMoctezuma.com.





Anthony Wayne stars as Sylvester in "Fabulous, One More Time." Photo courtesy of Wayne

PERFORMANCE: NEW YORK

Performer brings gay icon Sylvester to life in 'Fabulous'

BY KELSIE CHAUVIN

In today's queer world, the title "fabulous" is one that should be used sparingly, about people and things that can justify its implicit splendor. Applying it to the disco drag legend Sylvester (1947-1988), therefore, is wholly acceptable.

"Fabulous, One More Time: A Sylvester Concert" is the upcoming tour de force of Anthony Wayne, himself a powerful presence straddling the masculine and feminine divide. Like the late, great Sylvester, Wayne's graceful body speaks to his years of dance training and high-octane performance, while his soothing charm and elegantly high cheekbones reveal his more delicate side.

A Norfolk, Va., native, Wayne developed his own stage prowess in part by playing the friendly Aboriginal gent Jimmy in Broadway's "Priscilla Queen of the Desert" for five months last year. His stints alongside Joel Grey and Sutton Foster in Broadway's "Anything Goes" helped too, as did touring nationally with the companies of "Fame," "A Chorus Line" and "The Color Purple."

For "Fabulous," Wayne devoted the past year researching and writing the story of Sylvester to create his upcoming biography-musical, which he classifies as an "experience" more than a concert. Its one-night premiere heads to New York City's versatile West Village club Le Poisson Rouge Sunday, July 29, on its way to a national or even international tour.

The show "tells the life story of Sylvester through his music, his way," reads Wayne's thoughtful description. "Beyond all the trials, tribulations, glitz and glamour of his lifestyle, he was a symbol for being fabulous, but also, a symbol for unapologetically being who he was."

A gay icon since he splashed onto the San Francisco scene in the 1970s, Sylvester quickly became a musical trendsetter who hobnobbed with gay community leaders and their friends—from Harvey Milk to Patti LaBelle. His gospel and blues roots influenced his music, especially once he recruited the power backup vocalists Izora Rhodes and Martha Wash, whom he dubbed Two Tons o' Fun.

With the ladies at his flamboyant side, in 1978

Sylvester opened the door to a pop-disco career that would deliver timeless dance anthems like "You Make Me Feel (Mighty Real)," "Dance (Disco Heat)" and others that would land him repeat visits to American Bandstand and other TV shows. Three years later, he released his third big hit, "Do Ya Wanna Funk," featured in Eddie Murphy's 1983 comedy Trading Places.

Rhodes and Wash would go on to form the duo The Weather Girls and release the gay classic "It's Raining Men" in 1982.

By the mid-1980s, however, Sylvester's story took a turn with the onslaught of AIDS. Wayne told Windy City Times that the singer performed regularly until about 1986, even releasing a new record with Warner Brothers that year. But he was diagnosed as HIV-positive in 1987, the same year partner Rick Crenmer died of the virus. Sylvester worked to raise awareness about the disease until he died late the next year, at age 41.

For Wayne, the goal of "Fabulous" is to both celebrate and honor this singular performer, who lived out and proud, aiming to "make sure it's truthful and honest," he said. "The show is structured to tell his story," adding that it also aims to carry forth Sylvester's awareness-boosting efforts about HIV/AIDS for today's world.

But ultimately, Wayne's goal is to embody the essence of Sylvester, with all his talent and charisma, as well as his gravitas.

"Whenever people are down or having a hard time, they have to come up from somewhere, and [Sylvester] knew that more than anyone. It can't just be happy happy joy joy all the time," said Wayne. "All those complexities and hard issues that he dealt with are going to be brought to the forefront, and hopefully show how they kept him driven. And the music drives that too."

The show's creative director and head costume designer, as well as Wayne's partner, Kendrell Bowman, said that in rehearsals, Wayne is clearly channeling the so-called "Queen of Disco" because he impersonates Sylvester precisely.

That on-stage dynamism will serve up an intoxicating night of disco fun, balanced with the true story of one of the queer community's musical legends.

Ravinia gala with LuPone, Racette July 21

Ravinia's 2012 gala benefit evening—entitled "Leading Ladies" and featuring celebrated stars Patti LuPone and Patricia Racette—honors the 50th anniversary of the festival's women's board at 7 p.m. on Saturday, July 21.

Ravinia Festival Music Director James Conlon will lead the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in the concert, which also includes guest conductor Rob Fisher and pianist Joseph Thalcken in his Ravinia debut.

The annual gala is the only performance fundraiser benefiting the not-for-profit festival's mission, especially its efforts to bring music back to the schools through its REACH*TEACH*PLAY education programs.

For more info or to purchase tickets to the benefit dinner, call 847-266-5045 or visit gala@ravinia.org. Concert-only tickets are available for purchase exclusively at www.ravinia.org.

Gay film being made with 'Designing' producer

For the movie *Bridegroom: An American Love Story*, Shane Bitney Crone is working with producers Linda Bloodworth-Thomason (TV's *Designing Women*) and Linda Burstyn (Emmy award-winning writer/producer for *Nightline* with Ted Koppel).

Recently, Crone posted a YouTube video entitled "It Could Happen to You," about the accidental death of his life partner, Tom Bridegroom, and what happened in the aftermath because they weren't married. (It's at <http://youtu.be/pR9gyloyOjM>.) Almost 3 million people have seen it.

Crone, Bloodworth-Thomason and Burstyn

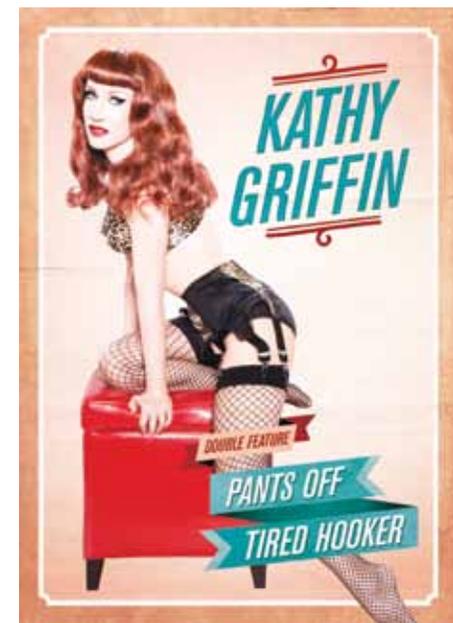
have launched a Kickstarter campaign to raise funds for the film, which Crone said in a release "will represent every single person who has ever been ostracized and condemned for being who they are and loving who they love." See <http://kck.st/Ky24tE>.

Kathy Griffin double feature out Aug. 7

Three-time Grammy nominee and two-time Emmy® Award-winning comedian Kathy Griffin is back with a double scoop of salacious celebrity gossip in *Kathy Griffin: Pants Off* and *Tired Hooker*.

This uncensored double feature of Griffin's latest Bravo comedy specials will be released for the first time on DVD Tuesday, Aug. 7, from Shout! Factory.

Segments in the two specials include "Letters from Prison," "Hugh Jackman Is Straight" and "Weekend At Anderson Cooper's House," among many others.



Wayne said that nine Sylvester songs will be featured in his production, which is about 50-50 music and storytelling. A live six-piece band will join him, along with two backup singers, Anastacia McCleskey and Jaqueline Arnold, both of whom also performed in Broadway's *Priscilla: Queen of the Desert*.

"I hope the audience walks away having a good time, with his songs in their hearts," said Wayne. "And that they know that there was somebody before them who was dealing with things that were so difficult—but no matter what, he did what he wanted to do, and he was who he wanted to be."

"**Fabulous, One More Time: A Sylvester Concert** will premiere Sunday, July 29, at 6 p.m. at Le Poisson Rouge. Call 212-505-FISH or visit www.lepoissonrouge.com. For more details, visit www.awayne.com.



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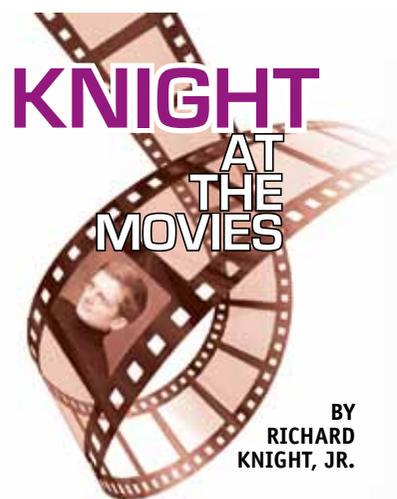
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Vito; Me @ the Zoo; film notes

Throughout July, HBO is running two fascinating queer-themed documentaries that, on the surface, have nothing in common. Nor could the subjects of these two films—provocative Internet sensation Chris Crocker and legendary gay and cultural activist Vito Russo—be more different. Yet both documentaries illuminate the impact that one individual can have on society at large and taken together, both movies have an odd but compelling symbiosis.

The Russo film, simply titled *Vito*, gives us a portrait of a defiantly, openly gay man who had a tremendous influence on shaping today's queer culture while the Crocker film, named *Me @ the Zoo*, shows a gay individual who—by embracing his innate queerness—has shown his own brand of ferocious bravery. Crocker has experienced both the positive aspects of Russo's legacy and the backlash against all things queer that is still endemic in large parts of American society Russo rallied against.

We know the importance of the history of gays in cinema thanks to *The Celluloid Closet*, illuminated so beautifully in Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman's 1995 documentary. Now at last in *Vito*, out director Jeffrey Schwarz's new documentary, we meet the visionary responsible for the groundbreaking 1980s bestseller that was the basis for that film. But Russo, as Schwarz's documentary quickly reveals, was much more than a gay cultural visionary—here was a man who literally was also a gay cultural Zelig. From the 1969 Stonewall Riots to co-forming ACT UP in the mid-'80s, Russo was in the thick of the action. More importantly, each step of Russo's thought-provoking and unapologetic evolution became part of his rallying cry for gay men everywhere.

Schwarz's movie (which premieres July 23 on HBO and screens throughout the month) is basically told in three acts: that of a personal gay-rights pioneer; a film and cultural groundbreaker; and finally, an AIDS activist fighting up to his own untimely death from the plague in 1990. Through archival footage—much of it of Russo himself—and interviews with family members and close friends, many of them well-known queer celebrities (Lily Tomlin, Armistead Maupin, Larry Kramer, *et al*), Schwarz builds a portrait of a man who refused to accept societal constraints in any aspect of his life.

Although I appreciate the profound impact Russo had on the lives of queer culture through his activism and personal passions, it is as a film writer via the seminal *Celluloid Closet*—a 10-year labor of love—where Russo has most resonated for me (it's the reason I became a film critic) and the sections of Schwarz's movie detailing Russo's struggle in creating the book and reveling in its triumph once it was published were highlights.



Chris Crocker in *Me @ the Zoo*. Image courtesy of HBO

Vito is a no-brainer for queer audiences to embrace as an important addition to the queer film canon. This is also true of Schwarz's last movie, the documentary portrait of '70s gay-porn star Jack Wrangler. In both films Schwarz discovers men who just happened to be queer and whose indomitable spirits simply overrode anything in their respective paths. This affirming spirit, if given the chance, will surely resonate with straight audiences as well.

The young Chris Crocker—the gay man who is the subject of HBO's *Me @ the Zoo*, helmed by Chris Moukarbel and Valerie Veatch—apparently shares with Russo and Wrangler the same refusal to curtail or hide his innate queer sensibility. Crocker, who lives in tiny Bristol, Tenn., with his grandparents, became an Internet sensation in 2007 when his impassioned, tearful "Leave Britney alone!" video plea defending criticisms being flogged at his idol, teen sensation Britney Spears, went viral.

Crocker, who identified at the time as female, already had a large Internet following after years of posting videos of herself online in performance while espousing various pop-culture enthusiasms and displaying her wacky and distinctly girly-girl personality. While detailing the interesting and phenomenal popularity of YouTube (the film is named after the first video uploaded to the site by one of its co-founders) and its cultural omnipresence (Warhol was right—everyone is famous for 15 minutes) Moukarbel and Veatch flesh out Crocker's bittersweet background.

Home-schooled after being subjected to years of anti-gay bullying and being the product of a teenage pregnancy, Crocker resorted to the Internet for entertainment and fantasy release—a behavior deeply inculcated in the disenfranchised segments of gay culture. At times, the film is reminiscent of Jonathan Caouette's 2003 *Tarnation*—another portrait of a lonely, emotionally fraught gay youth who utilized a camera as a shield and an act of self-defense.

The fallout and bitter backlash that accompanied Crocker's Britney video—a development the filmmakers detail—is one of the more disturbing aspects of the movie, along with Crocker's apparent isolation. (The homophobia that greeted the video is shown to be front and center, without apology or remorse.) However, there is also a toughness of spirit here, a hardened determination to be true to self at any cost no matter how many disappointments and dashed dreams abound. The sudden fame—and its even more sudden withdrawal—that Crocker has endured is very winning. By the film's end, Crocker seems

adrift without real direction but his determination to not tamp down his queer persona or be bullied is tremendously admirable—and are things one suspects both Jack Wrangler and Vito Russo would have been very happy to see.

Film notes:

—With *Farewell, My Queen*, director Benoit Jacquot gives us an intimate look at the final days of the reign of Marie Antoinette through the adoring eyes of one of her ladies-in-waiting. The film, which opens exclusively at the Landmark Century Centre Cinema, 2828 N. Clark St., on Friday, July 20, goes a step further than previous examinations of this notorious historical period by adding a lesbian undertone to the proceedings. The film is subtitled. www.landmark-theatres.com

—*The Dark Knight Rises*, the final installment in director Chris Nolan's Batman trilogy, also opens this Friday but wasn't screened in time for Windy City Times' deadline. However, with hunky Christian Bale back in the title role joined by Tom Hardy as the evil Bane and Anne Hathaway suiting up as Catwoman, gay men and action enthusiasts of all stripes will most likely want to check out what promises to be one of the summer's biggest blockbusters.

—For alternative fare on Friday, July 20, the More for Gay Men LGBT group is hosting a screening of the queer-themed 2007 romantic drama (surfers in love!) *Shelter* as part of the

Center on Halsted's ongoing CENTERscreen series. The 5:30 p.m. event includes a social hour, post-screening discussion and light refreshments, and takes place in the Michael J. Leppen Theatre at the Center, 3656 N. Halsted St. www.moreforgaymen.com

—The Music Box, 3733 N. Southport Ave., is bringing back its enormously popular *Sing-A-Long Mary Poppins* 2 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, July 21-22. This event allows both the young and young at heart to enjoy Disney's 1964 supercalifragilisticexpialidocious musical classic that won Julie Andrews the Best Actress Oscar as the magical nanny and brought Dick Van Dyke screen immortality for his "so-bad-it's-good" cockney accent as Bert the chimney sweep. www.musicboxtheatre.com

—Personal PAC presents a free, educational screening of *Iron Jawed Angels*, the 2004 HBO film that stars Hilary Swank and Anjelica Huston and details the struggle for women's voting rights at the turn of the 20th century. The screening will take place Monday, July 23, at Facets Multimedia, 1517 W. Fullerton Ave., at 7 p.m. Emmy-nominated screenwriter/author Jennifer Friedes will be present at a post-screening discussion. Seating can be reserved by emailing kinzlee@personalpac.org.

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

KNIGHT AT THE MOVIES

Jeffrey Schwarz on 'Vito,' his AIDS documentary

BY RICHARD KNIGHT, JR.

Writing for the Windy City Times "AIDS at 30" series last year I introduced an interview with Michael Schiavi, author of *The Celluloid Activist*, the first biography of Vito Russo, by noting that any discussion of pivotal figures at the forefront of 20th-century gay activism, gay history and gay culture would be unthinkable without including him.

Russo, whose landmark book *The Celluloid Closet*—published in the 1980s and never out of print since—died in 1990 from the disease he fought so passionately against both publicly and privately. However, his legacy continues to influence queer culture on a daily basis.

Now, out filmmaker Jeffrey Schwarz continues to hold a torch for Russo with his new, enthralling documentary portrait of the man, the writer, the queer visionary and, most definitely, the activist. Simply titled *Vito*, the movie premieres Monday, July 23, on HBO.

Windy City Times: I love that you've gone from a documentary on gay-porn icon Jack Wrangler to Vito Russo, and now have *Divine* next on your agenda. Aside from the entertainment factor in these films—which is very high—they also fill in missing pieces of our queer history.

Jeffrey Schwarz: Thank you for saying that. As well as being fascinated with gay and lesbian history, I'm also attracted to these larger-than-life characters and people who are iconoclasts and rebels who sort of make their own way in the world. If you get a sense of the historical context along the way, then that's just gravy for me. It's really about telling the story of these individuals that made their mark on the world.

WCT: Referring to Vito as a cultural Zelig, as Michael Schiavi did in his biography, seems spot-on. I don't know that people from our community, let alone those in the mainstream, have any idea of the impact of this one individual. Can you talk about this?

JS: It really is incredible. I read a lot of the books on gay history but, surprisingly, when I look in the index a lot of times I don't see his name there. So, at a certain point I started to get worried that his [legacy] was going to be forgotten and because he's played such a huge role in our movement from the very, very beginning and some of the institutions that he helped to found or inspire are still very much cornerstones of our community today, I thought it was important to reintroduce people to this incredibly charismatic, passionate guy.

Telling Vito's story was a way to tell the story of our community—from pre-Stonewall during the dark days through the gay-liberation movement, through the writing of *The Celluloid Closet*, attention being paid to how we were being portrayed culturally and, final-

Turn to page 19



Jeffrey Schwarz. Photo courtesy of Schwarz

SCHWARZ from page 18

ly, through the AIDS epidemic and the formation of ACT UP and GLAAD. All of these things we take for granted these days and the fact that younger gay people can wake up in the morning and sort of be who they are without having as much difficulty as they would have had 40 years ago is, in large part, because of things Vito was a part of.

WCT: Twenty years ago.

JS: Yes, 20 years ago. Absolutely. There was just sort of no such thing as being openly gay before Stonewall. It was extremely rare and avant-garde to be openly gay, and Vito had a vision that the world could be different. He and his gay-liberation brothers and sisters laid the groundwork for a world in which you could be openly gay and not be persecuted and harassed and condemned. It's still extremely difficult for a lot of people but there has also been a sea change in that area.

WCT: There's a lovely moment in the film that speaks to the impact that both he and Larry Kramer have had on queer culture. It's that story about he and Kramer—near the end of Vito's life—watching the gay pride parade from a balcony and all the participants calling up to Vito and Larry turning to him and saying, "Those are our children down there." I think this sums up his impact in a nutshell.

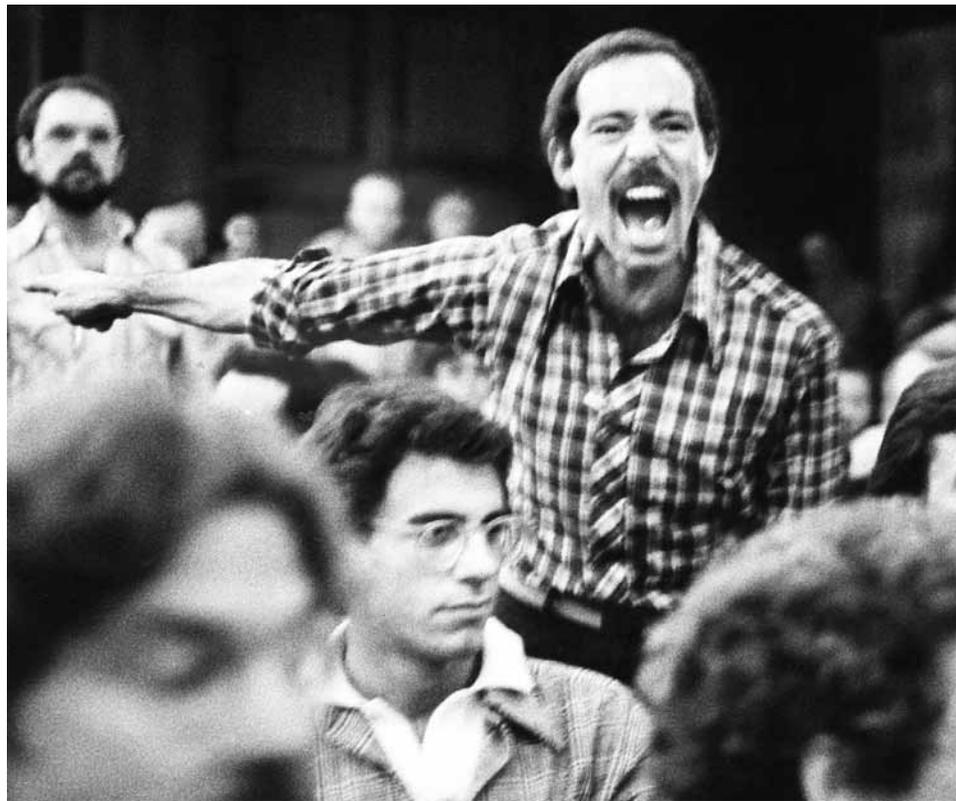
JS: Yes, yes.

WCT: The movie also gets into his close friendships with some very talented women. [For example, there was] Bette Midler, who he met when she was working at the baths. Then, he was instrumental in including her in early gay-pride celebrations and so forth—the footage of her performing in 1973 is riveting, by the by.

JS: It is.

WCT: It's also lovely to see Lily Tomlin talking about Vito.

JS: We approached Bette as well but she



Vito Russo. Photo by Bettye Lane/HBO

was busy doing her Vegas show at the time and couldn't participate. But I'm obviously so thrilled to have Lily in the movie because they were very close for a very long time and even collaborated once in a while.

She did an early Advocate interview with him, which was a very bold thing to do at that time and although she wasn't publicly, openly lesbian until the last few years, she was always dropping hints along the way if you were paying attention—including the interview she did with Vito. But he protected her privacy and they adored each other.

Remember, Vito was a journalist and it was very rare for celebrities to talk to a gay publica-

tion at all because then it was perceived that you were gay. It's completely turned around but it wasn't the case then. He tried to get a lot of people to talk to him for The Celluloid Closet and they just wouldn't.

WCT: He was also a cultural visionary in many ways. I love the very simple idea he had of gathering gay people together to watch films and the power of the community that springs from that. There's still, in my book, nothing like it.

JS: He certainly knew what he was doing. I mean this was years before there was such a thing as gay and lesbian film festivals. He was able to connect his political activism with his

interest in movies and how we're represented culturally. He saw the movies as a way to bring people into the movement that might not necessarily want to go to a demonstration or a march but that they would love to go to a movie or a dance. And he knew the power of the movies and the special relationship that gay people have with movies.

We'd never been given the opportunity to celebrate this communally so at the firehouse in the early '70s [at] the headquarters of the Gay Activists Alliance—when he started these movie nights—they were an immediate hit. This power remains today; that's how you feel when you walk out of a movie screened at a gay-film festival, for example. He instinctively knew that.

When we screened Vito at Frameline a few weeks ago a 17-year-old kid in the audience stood up at the Q&A and said, "Last week I had no idea who Vito Russo was and today I think I have a new hero." He was in the process of coming out and that was his first time at a gay-film festival and he was brought there by his mother. That's just incredible.

WCT: I remember a similar experience happening when my Queer Film Society co-sponsored the screening here at Reeling last fall. A young man with his mother came up to you after the screening, saying essentially the same thing. As a filmmaker and as an individual, this must be emotionally very satisfying to see your movie speaking to this new generation of queers.

JS: I remember that, and I certainly hope so. I feel like Vito's story is our story, and this information needs to be passed down for anybody coming out and for anyone interested in our gay history. People certainly won't learn about this in schools, obviously. This is the only way we're going to access this. To do it in the form of a movie about this incredibly charismatic, dynamic guy is giving people a history lesson without them even noticing it.

See www.vitorussomovie.com.

CHRISTMAS IN JULY PARTIES

to benefit the finishing of
the Chicago-made independent film

SCROOGE & MARLEY

Scrooge & Marley is a modern-day variation on Charles Dickens' classic story of the holidays, *A Christmas Carol*. Recounted from a gay sensibility, with heart, comedy and music, the magic of Dickens' timeless tale of a man's redemption at the holidays—thanks to the help of three ghostly spirits—comes alive from a fresh perspective that will appeal to audiences of every persuasion.

**Sunday,
July 22,
2-5 p.m.
near Montrose
and Clark**

**Thursday,
July 26,
6-9 p.m.
3160 bar at
3160 N. Clark**
Special songs performed by
Becca Kaufman and Richard
Knight Jr.

**Friday,
July 27,
7:30 p.m.**
Hosted at David &
Lee Neubecker's home
in River Forest
as a co-event with OPALGA
RSVP to 708-557-3003

Among the stars are:

David Pevsner
Tim Kazurinsky
Rusty Schwimmer
Bruce Vilanch
Megan Cavanagh
Ronnie Kroell
David Moretti
Richard Ganoung
Drew Anderson
Christopher Allen

Becca Kaufman
Nicholas Bailey
Allison Torem
Fawzia Mirza
Peter Mohawk
Scott Duff
PJ Powers
JoJo Baby
Amy Matheny
and many more.

Some of the local actors for the film, plus directors, writers and other crew, will attend the parties.

What to expect?

See the trailer plus exclusive behind the scenes photos from the film, win merchandise, and find out how to see your name in the credits!

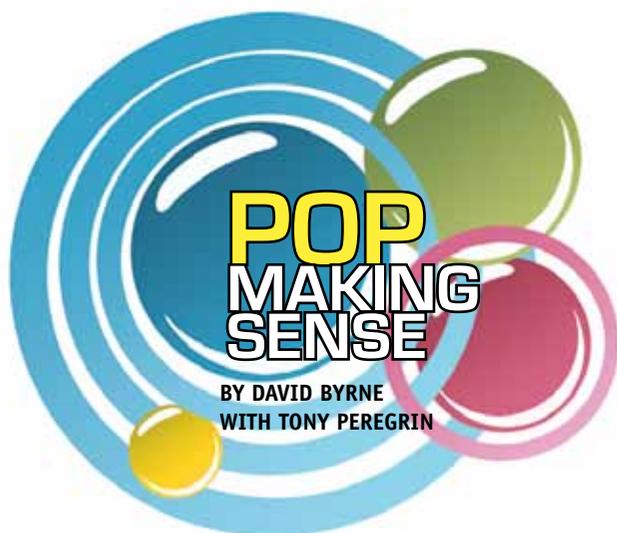
Scrooge & Marley will be out this holiday season.

RSVP to:

editor@windycitymediagroup.com
or call 773-387-2394

Scrooge & Marley, an independent film, was shot in Chicago May 2012. The film is based on an original script by Ellen Stoneking, Richard Knight, Jr. and the late Timothy Imse. It was directed by Knight and Peter Neville.

www.scroogeandmarleymovie.com



ing me all the time." Succumbing to life's rut and missing the more carefree yesteryear are captured on the title track with the poignant lyric, "We all fell into the same hysteria." This echoes the "Reality Bites" feeling from "Where Have I Been All My Life" from the group's debut EP. The stunning closing track, "Carry Your Weight," is worthy of Pink Floyd. The self-released *The Grey Area* is out now and fuels anticipation for a proper full-length album, or at least a slot at Lollapalooza or Pitchfork.

Michael Jackson's music is being celebrated in *The Immortal World Tour* by Cirque du Soleil. Here, friends "ease on down the road" in hopes of finding Neverland Ranch. En route, they encounter mysterious individuals and dance to Jackson's treasured classics like "Wanna Be Startin' Somethin'" and "Smooth Criminal." Often-overlooked gems like "This Place Hotel" and "Workin' Day and Night" are included in the production. Numbers like "Earth Song" recall what was intended for Jackson's concert run in London during *This Is It*. The companion soundtrack is available via Epic. *The Immortal World Tour* by Cirque du Soleil will be at United Center, 1901 W. Madison St., on Friday, July 20 and Saturday, July 21. Starting early next year, the show is expected to have a residency in Las Vegas at Mandalay Bay.

Jackson's 1987 album *Bad* is being reissued Sept. 18 as *Bad 25*, with previously unreleased



Elephant will be at Queer Fest America. Press photo

Although it has been 20 years since her last solo album, **Nona Hendryx** magnificently blends current themes into her latest, *Mutatis Mutandis*. The funky "The Tea Party" tackles self-serving misconceptions, as she proclaims, "They think we're going to paint the White House Black." "Oil in the Water" has a soulful rock vibe to it and focuses on the BP oil spill. On "Ballad of Rush Limbaugh," the "Busting Out" singer croons about the outspoken radio personality: "He feels he's above the law." "Stranger Fruit" is a modernization of Billie Holiday's piece on lynching. Throughout the set, a bassline serves a backbone, most notably heard on "Temple of Heaven" and "Black on Black."

The bisexual beauty appeared on an episode of *The L Word* as herself. Hendryx reunited with the other members *Labelle* for the 2008 album *Back to Now* and a reunion tour. Hendryx has a fundraising campaign through PledgeMusic to

"I'll Be There." The brothers' last studio album is 1989's forgettable *2300 Jackson Street*. Instead, reach for 1984's *Victory*, which has the goodies "State of Shock" and "Torture."

Queer Fest America is having a fundraiser for El Rescate Independent Transitional Living for Homeless and HIV/AIDS Youth Sunday, July 22, at Reggie's Rock Club, 2105 S. State St. On the bill are comedians Thomas Bottoms, Marc Peurye, Kate Cullen and Darren Marshall as well as local musicians When Flying Feels Like Falling and Spherical Banana. Headliners Jonny McGovern and Elephant will be appearing and interacting via Skype. McGovern, a veteran of *Logo's Big Gay Sketch Comedy Show*, keeps his sense of humor in tracks like "Dickmatized," "Blanche

Devereaux" and "Soccer Practice." Patty Vaccarella and Lair Scott will host the event. For more information, contact queerfestamerica@gmail.com.

Jay Brannan and eclectic violinist **Bitch** are touring together again with a stop at Lincoln Hall, 2424 N. Lincoln Ave., on Thursday, July 26. Both of these queer artists made a splash in the 2006 film *Shortbus*. Brannan's latest, *Rob Me Blind*, is highlighted by the romantic title track. On *Live at Eddie's Attic*, he gives Adele's "Someone Like You" and Nicki Minaj's "Super Bass" a folk-driven makeover. Bitch currently is working on a successor to her 2010 album *Blasted!*, and has begun a documentary on the legendary Canadian folk singer Ferron.



Nona Hendryx. Photo by Sheila L. Jackson

help finance her current tour. Sponsors can get perks like updates from the road, video footage, a chance to win an iPad and an opportunity to meet the icon. A portion of the amount raised will benefit the Chicago alternative learning institution Little Black Pearl. *Mutatis Mutandis* is out now digitally and physical copies will be available July 31 on Righteous Babe Records.

In 2010, I became spellbound by **Friend Slash Lover's** debut EP, *As American As Ones and Zeros*. The Los Angeles-based outfit returns in fine form with the new EP, *The Grey Area*. The exciting spirit of the alternative scene of the late '80s and early '90s is alive and well, as witnessed on "S2PD HMN" and the superb cover of XTC's "Dear God." Songwriter and lead singer Josh Mintz is witty in his observations on the opener "As Seen on TV," as he sings, "Have you seen me on TV every night? I'm the actor play-

demos and remixes on a bonus disc. A limited edition will feature an additional CD and DVD from the gloved one's performance at Wembley Stadium before Prince Charles and Princess Diana. However, don't expect to find the chart-topper "Dirty Diana" on the set list; Jackson did not want to be disrespectful and sing it in front of the Princess of Wales. But look closely: That is a young **Sheryl Crow** singing back-up vocals and on the smash duet "I Just Can't Stop Loving You."

Katy Perry's CD *Teenage Dream* recently tied *Bad* for spawning five number-one pop singles. *Thriller* marked Jackson's first solo album to be reissued on its 25th anniversary.

This summer four of the surviving Jackson brothers are hitting the road for *The Unity Tour*. The Jacksons scored a slew of hits when signed to Motown such as "I Want You Back," "ABC" and

Manilow appears on local show, performs at Chicago Theatre

Barry Manilow was featured on *Windy City LIVE* television July 13. He talked about growing up in Brooklyn and his ascent to fame; he also accompanied himself on piano as he sang his hits and walked into the audience singing for adoring fans. He also played segments of jingles he wrote for well-known television commercials.

Audience members brought used instruments to donate, as Manilow helped to collect instruments for the Chicago Public Schools as part of his "Manilow Music Project." Manilow performed July 12-14 at the Chicago Theatre. Photos by Susan Mattes

See Jerry Nunn's photos of Manilow in concert and more of his *Windy City LIVE* appearance at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.



NUNN ON ONE: MUSIC

Marina and the Diamonds on her name and 'Primadonna'

BY JERRY NUNN

Marina and the Diamonds (real name: Marina Lambrini Diamandis) is breaking hearts and taking names with her brand-new album, *Electra Heart*. Studio producers for the record have already worked with top-10 hitmakers including Dr. Luke (Nicki Minaj), Greg Kurstin (Kelly Clarkson) and Liam Howe (Adele). Her pop tunes combine all those artists to blend into a sound uniquely her own.

Despite (or possibly because of) awkward lyrics like "He says, Oh my god, you look just like Shakira/no, no, you're Catherine Zeta/actually, my name's Marina," people have grown to love her.

The Greek singer is opening for Coldplay and is headlining her own tour. Windy City Times talked with her late one evening about her Diamond life.

Windy City Times: Hi, Marina. I have been trying to track you down since your last album, *The Family Jewels*.

Marina Diamandis: Well, here I am!

WCT: So you are Greek. I didn't realize that until I read it.

MD: I am. [Laughs] I don't know why you are making me laugh already but I can tell you are a lovely person.

WCT: Thanks. Did you grow up in Greece?

MD: I was raised mainly in Wales by my mum. I lived there for about 14 years. I lived in Greece when I was 2 to 4 years old, then 16 to 18 years old.

WCT: Do you currently live in America?

MD: I'm living in London but I am hardly there, so I guess I am living in a tour bus.

WCT: You are a gypsy now.

MD: I am. I'm a gypsy!

WCT: From what I have read, it seems like you always wanted to be in the world of music.

MD: Yes. I kind of knew it was going to hap-

pen. I know it sounds cocky but when you have a really strong instinct about something you have to pursue it until it happens. I didn't have anything else I was interested in, so I am really happy that it worked out and I wasn't just deluded. It was something I was good at. I kind of love being away from home so I think I am suited for the job!

WCT: From your name, many people think there is a back-up band called the Diamonds.

MD: No, I am a genius and I just create everything so... [Laughs]

WCT: It is your last name translated in English.

MD: It is all me. I have a lovely touring band who comes everywhere with me though. [With] some of the songs I write with these producers, I need a 100-pound keyboard with me.

WCT: I originally heard about you from your gay fans. You have a lot of them.

MD: I know. It's fantastic.

WCT: Berlin Nightclub is having a release party tonight for you. They were playing a remix of "Primadonna" the other night.

MD: Oh, I love it!

WCT: Did you come up with that video?

MD: Yeah, anything you create is a collaboration between you and the people you have worked with. I like to come up with treatments for what we are doing. Sometimes it changes if the director has a better idea or sometimes it doesn't. "Primadonna" pretty much was on key to what I was headed toward.

WCT: Why did you name the album *Electra Heart*?

MD: I have a great skill for making up pornstar or drag-queen names. *Electra Heart* was one of many. At the time, I was really heartbroken. I was in love with a guy that didn't love me back so it was very fitting. I decided to write with this name, a fictional character. It was like a soap opera, like a Mexican soap opera. I wanted that kind of high drama.



Marina and the Diamonds. Photo by Caspar Balslev

WCT: Like a novela...

MD: Yeah, a telenovela. So that was a way of writing and where that character had begun really. I wanted to make an album about heart-break, but in a dark humorous way. Not like "Baby please come back"—more like "Screw you!"

WCT: Go get 'em, Marina! The videos are very dramatic from what I have seen.

MD: They are. I like melodrama. I like the humor of it.

WCT: What has your live show been like so far? Do you dress in crazy costumes?

MD: It is based on a dirty honeymoon-suite theme. It has a television onstage and a chaise lounge. It has a really nice hat stand where I have all of my costumes so I do lots of costume changes onstage. It is very camp and kitschy. It is kind of like a play. It is almost like a living room.

WCT: You opened for Katy Perry?

MD: I did two weeks with Katy Perry last June.

WCT: She does a lot of costume changes.

MD: A lot? In one song she did 10! For "Hot N Cold" she does this trick where she walks through a screen. There is a wire mechanism in the dresses where one just pulls off and the next one appears.

WCT: It was like a magic act when I saw it. MD: It was insanely good.

WCT: What is this Marilyn Dog on your website?

MD: Okay, Marilyn is my slightly druggie toy dog who rose to fame on the "Primadonna" video. I don't know why I created it. For some reason it just works, but I don't know why.

My record label said I could not go on live TV like that and I said, "Yes, I am." People will look back at it and say, "Did you know Marina was followed around by this half-drunk toy dog named Marilyn and got paid for it?" So Marilyn is becoming quite iconic on the tour now. It works.

WCT: So there is no real dog?

MD: No, it's fake.

WCT: Well, you are never at home so it wouldn't be good to have a dog anyway.

MD: I just feed her batteries and that is it. It is much easier.

Marina brings her *Lonely Hearts Club* tour to the Park West, 322 W. Armitage Ave., on Saturday, July 21, and then returns to our town Tuesday-Wed., Aug. 7-8, to open for Coldplay at the United Center. Buy tickets at www.jamusa.com. For more Marina, visit www.marinaandthediamonds.com.

MOM

A Tribute to Mothers of LGBTs

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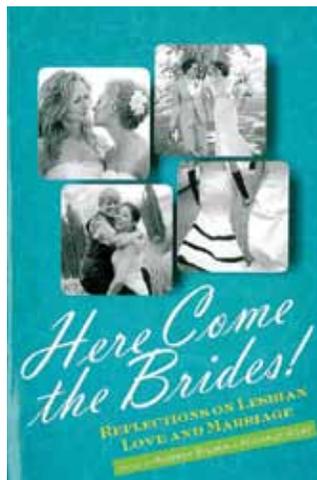
BOOKS

Summer Book Treats

I have three Jenga-worthy stacks of books to review, and that's just from the past few weeks of reviewer proofs and purchased books. There is, as usual, a smorgasbord of words, from LGBT fiction to non-fiction, mainstream photo books to queer history.

Please support independent bookstores by purchasing your books through them. Stores we recommend include Women & Children First, Unabridged Books, The Book Cellar, After Words, the Book Table, 57th Street Books, Quimby's and Powell's.

Non-Fiction



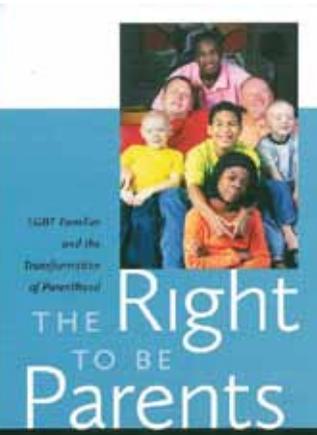
Marriage is much on the minds of the community this year, as battles rage in the courts and the court of public opinion. **Here Come the Brides! Reflections on Lesbian Love and Marriage** is a collection of essays edited by **Audrey Bilger and Michele Kort** for Seal Press. This is a much-needed analysis of both the personal and political issues behind the marriage movement, an especially needed look at the diversity of opinions on this complex emotional issue. Among the highlights: National Center for Lesbian Rights Executive Director Kate Kendell interviews longtime lesbian activist Phyllis Lyon about her marriage to longtime partner Del Martin. Joan Lipkin, Leslea Newman, Jennifer Camper ("Six Reasons Lesbians Should Not Get Married"), M.V. Lee Badgett, Holly Hughes, Susan Goldberg and many others give their take on the institution of marriage.

reviled sexual minorities today," the press release for the book states. This isn't just one man's venting, however. Cobb looks at the topic through the writings of Plato, Freud, Ralph Ellison, Melville, Woolf, Obama, Dickson, Morrissey, Beyonce, Georgia O'Keeffe, Hannah Arendt and the Bible. How is that for literary diversity?

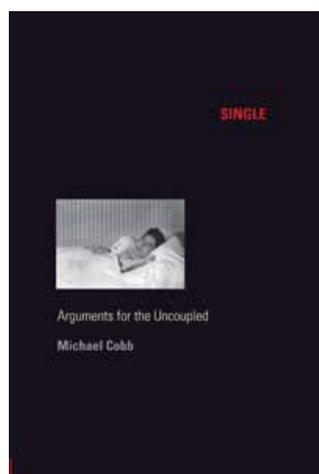


And now ... back to marriage. **Melanie Heath** looks at the fight to hang on to the hetero-only past in **One Marriage Under God: The Campaign to Promote Marriage in America**. Heath's analysis is about the projects that have been created to reinstitutionalize heterosexual marriages, no matter the cost, literally and figuratively. She provides a researched, detailed analysis of such efforts in Oklahoma, but much of what she finds is reflected elsewhere in the U.S.

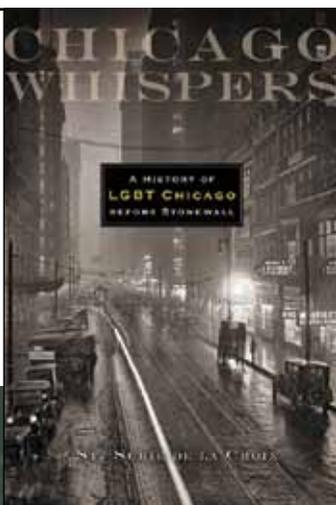
The Right to be Parents:



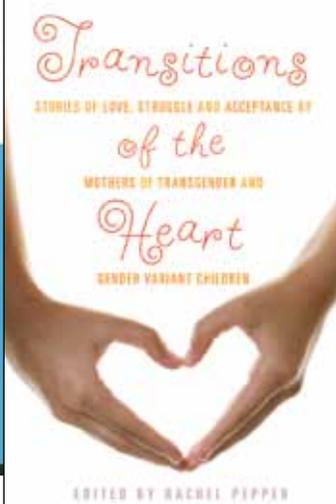
LGBT Families and the Transformation of Parenthood by **Carlos A. Ball** provides a detailed history of court decisions on LGBT parenting rights going back to the 1970s. Courts today are still mixed in their rulings about LGBT parents, so this book is unfortunately timely for those who care about this important issue facing millions of LGBT families. It is also an important document of previous cases fought by courageous parents.



For more analysis of the couples issue, from a mostly different perspective, there is **Single: Arguments for the Uncoupled**, by **Michael Cobb**. Cobb (author of *God Hates Fags: The Rhetoric of Religious Violence*) tackles head-on the rush to couplehood in society—including within the LGBT community. "Singles might just be the single most



Chicago Whispers by **St. Sukie de la Croix** is an in-depth look at pre-1970 Chicago gays, the culmination of years of research by former Windy City Times writer de la Croix. Windy City Times did an in-depth interview with him a few weeks back, but I wanted to mention and recommend the book for our readers. De la Croix has managed to uncover some new documents and stories from Chicago's rich gay past, so even the most credentialed historians will find new information to add to the collective knowledge of our community. The gay universe never revolved solely around the East and West coasts, and this book is an important addition to the dialogue about our community's roots. It is so very frustrating to read gay histories that ignore our Midwest work, and coast-biased historians now have another tool to turn to for reference.



Transitions of the Heart: Stories of Love, Struggle and Acceptance by Mothers of Transgender and Gender Variant Children, edited by **Rachel Pepper**, is a welcome collection of stories about the mothers who go through a parallel emotional process when their children are transitioning. The moms represent a diversity of backgrounds, and also have children of different age groups, from 6 to 60.

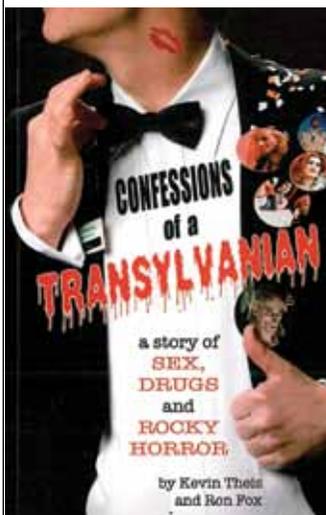
Straight

The Surprisingly Short History of Heterosexuality



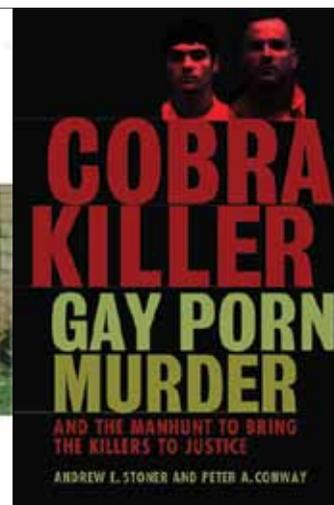
Hanne Blank

Straight: The Surprisingly Short History of Heterosexuality, by **Hanne Blank**, came out late last year. It traces the formation of the concepts of hetero and homosexuality to the 19th Century, and helps break down the false arguments that claim that heterosexuality is an inevitably or the only way. Blank writes that heterosexuality is "a particular configuration of sex and power in a particular historical moment."

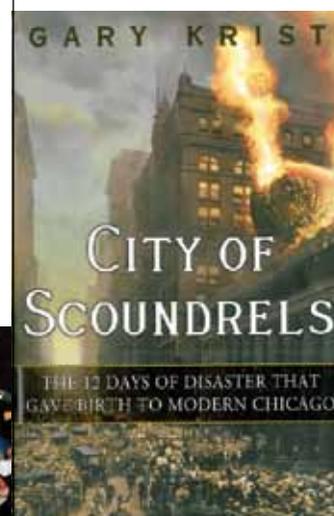


Who doesn't love the cult classic film *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, especially those raised in the 1970s and 1980s? Well, there are fans and there are FANS, and **Confessions of a Transylvanian** by Chicago theater veteran **Kevin Theis** and his writing partner **Ron Fox** documents the true hardcore fans of this cross-dressing phenomenon—the cast of the live version of the *Rocky Horror Picture Show*. Theis was a boy who became "a man in fishnets" in this story of the cast friendships, loves and losses. The only thing missing is photos, but the juicy details are still worth the read.

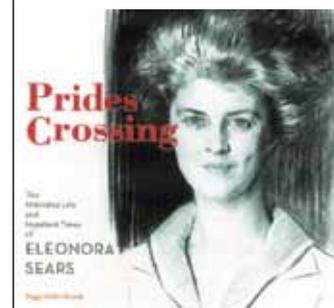
Cobra Killer: Gay Porn, Murder, and the Manhunt to Bring the Killers to Justice, chronicles the 2007 murder of 44-year-old gay porn entrepreneur Brian Kocis. Written by **Peter A. Conway** and **Andrew E. Stoner**, the book looks at the underworld of gay



porn, and ultimately the investigation leads to the arrest of former military men turned porn producers.



City of Scoundrels: The 12 Days of Disaster that Gave Birth to Modern Chicago, by **Gary Krist**, is not a gay book, but it is a great exploration of a period of Chicago's history that I was not familiar with. This includes the crashing of a blimp, Wingfoot Express, in downtown Chicago, killing 13 people. This tragedy—the first major aviation disaster in American history—was just the start of a very difficult time in the Windy City. Dive into this very detailed look at a moment of time, including a race riot, a transit strike and a child murder. The legendary characters of Chicago's past, including Big Bill Thompson, Jane Addams, Carl Sandburg and Clarence Darrow, are all there.



Any fan of sports, and lesbian history, should read this excellent book by **Peggy**

Miller Franck: Prides Crossing: The Unbridled Life and Impatient Times of Eleanor Sears. We reviewed this book in the Feb. 2 Windy City Times, but I wanted to recommend it again as we celebrate the 40th anniversary of Title IX this summer, and with the pending Olympics in London. Sears was entwined with some of the legends of lesbian American history, and she was also a very accomplished athlete in multiple sports. There are photos and great tales from her life. Highly recommended.

Fiction



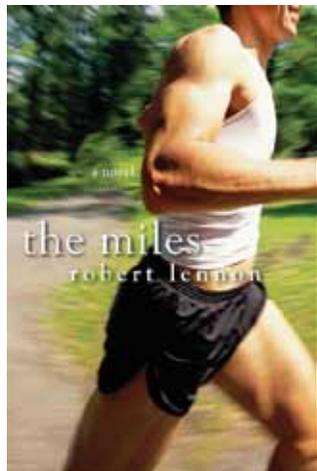
Chicago author **Anne Laughlin** gives us another treat with her newest novel, **Runaway**. Private investigator Jan Roberts investigates a survivalist camp as part of tracking down a teen runaway, and while she looks into the girl's disappearance, her own hidden—and terrifying—past comes more clearly into focus. This is a fun page-turner that gives insight into the survivalist movement, while also providing a hot lesbian investigator with some fun liaisons along the way.

Every Time I Think of You

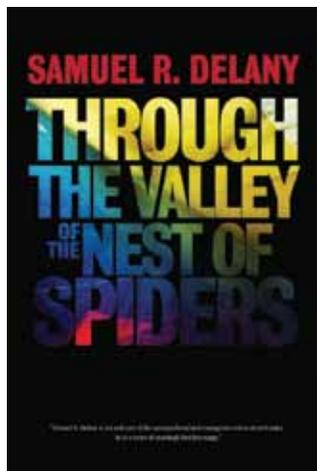


Jim Provenzano takes us back to 1970s Pennsylvania in his novel **Every Time I Think of You**. It is a wonderful summer read about teenage love and angst, told from the perspective of an inexperienced

gay high school distance runner. Reid is charmed by Everett, a wealthy neighbor he meets in a chance and sexy encounter in the winter woods near their homes. The story takes unusual twists and turns, and is a terrific coming-of-age story that really puts you deep into the mind of a young gay man trying to find his way in the world.

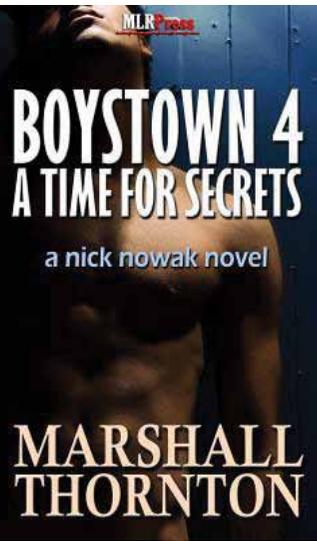


And in the running vein, in the tradition of Patricia Nell Warren's *The Front Runner*, **Robert Lennon** tells the story of love and friendships in the running communities inspired by Warren's book, in his debut novel *The Miles*. Lennon was a president of the gay running group Front Runners in New York, so his novel is clearly informed by his personal experience with the club and its runners.

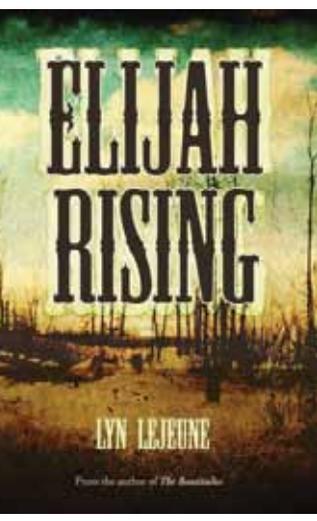


Samuel Delany is one of the most esteemed and award-winning gay sci-fi writers, but he has also written in other

genres. The prolific 70-year-old professor is out with an 804-page futuristic novel, **Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders**, that looks at a rural network of gay men supported in the early 1980s by a Black multi-millionaire, operating outside the urban sphere. Delany traces their relationships for decades, imagining a fascinating future.

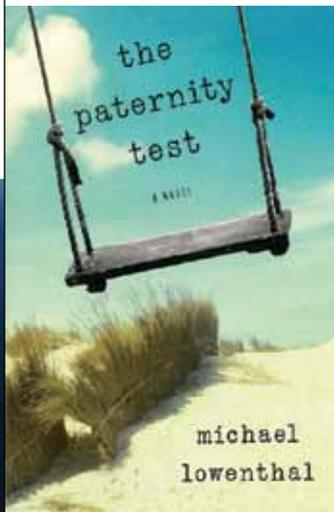


Marshall Thornton's Nick Nowak series continues with **Boystown 4: A Time for Secrets**. This is the first full-length version of detective Nowak's character, and it is set the summer of 1982 when he finds himself investigating an old murder with ties to a candidate for Chicago mayor.

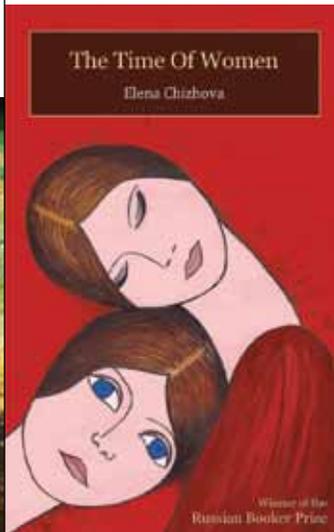


Elijah Rising by **Lyn Lejeune** is the story of the friendship between two men: a wealthy white New Yorker, Michael Cooke Holt, and a Black

tent-fundamentalist preacher, Elijah Broom, during World War I. The men are physically drawn to one another, but will outside pressures be too much to handle?

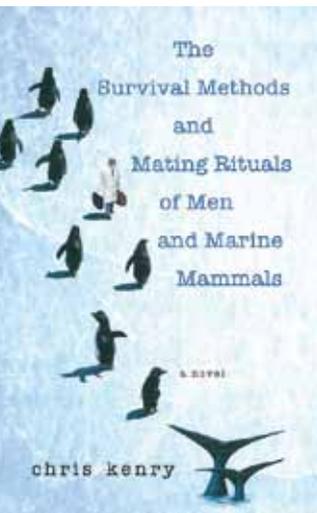


Michael Lowenthal's *The Paternity Test* is a nice twist on an old story—having a baby to save a relationship. The relationship here is between two men, and one of them wants a baby as a way to create a stronger glue with his partner. We all know how that can turn out, but Lowenthal provides interesting views on how surrogacy can impact a gay couple with an already complicated partnership.



The Time of Women by **Elena Chizhova** is one of those novels that transports you to entirely different time and place, a book that forces you (in a good way) to imagine the lives of people far removed

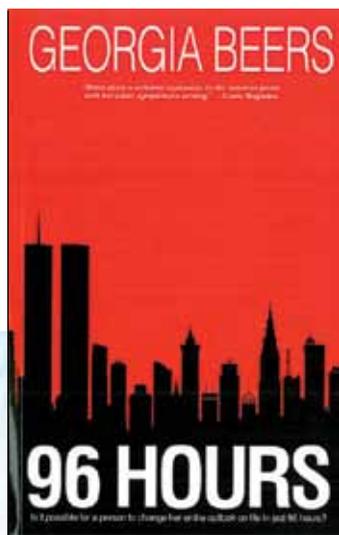
from your daily life, allowing you to escape in its pages. It is the story of three older women raising a small mute girl in a communal apartment in 1960s Soviet Union. A factory worker becomes an unwed mother, and the communal apartment is the best choice for her in raising her little girl.



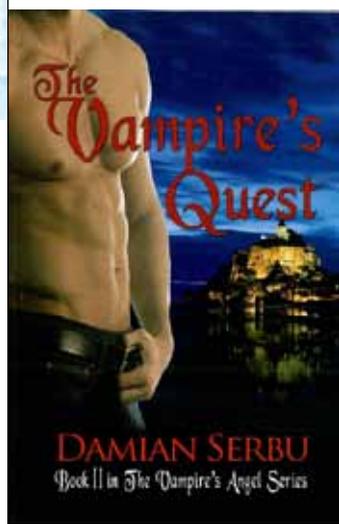
The Survival Methods and Mating Rituals of Men and Marine Animals by **Chris Kenry** may sound like a non-fiction book, but it's all novel. Davis has been dumped by his boyfriend and sent on a research vessel to Antarctica as a technical writer. The odd characters he meets help challenge, and reinforce, his beliefs.



Well, let's just make it clear from the title: **Give It To Me** is **Sean Wolfe's** new novel, and it's a collection of 12 erotic stories sure to inspire some fantasies for gay men.

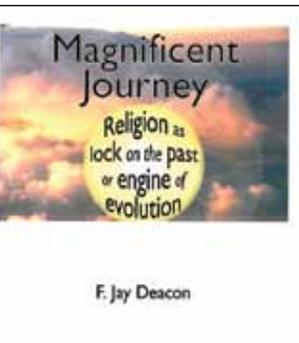


Lesbian romance writer **Georgia Beers'** newest book is **96 Hours**. She tackles the 9/11 terrorist attacks through the lens of a lesbian romance.

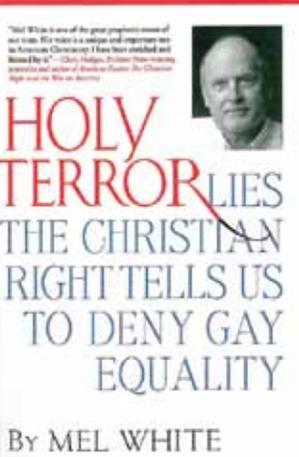


The **Vampire's Quest** by **Damian Serbu** is book two of this series. Gay vampire lovers Xavier and Thomas return for this story. If the straights can have *Twilight*, why can't there a gay vampire romance?

Religion and Spirituality



Former Chicagoan **F. Jay Deacon**, a leader in the gay spirituality movement, is out with a book that examines the complexity of religion and sexuality. **Magnificent Journey: Religion as Lock on the Past, or Engine of Evolution** tells Deacon's journey from fundamentalist Christianity through his process of coming out as a gay man. Deacon served a decade as minister at Unity Temple Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Oak Park, Ill., and prior to that was pastor of Good Shepherd Parish Metropolitan Community Church in Chicago. He holds a Doctor of Ministry from McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago. Deacon now lives in Massachusetts and is a part-time minister in the UU Church. Deacon is among the subjects I interviewed for ChicagoGay-History.org, see <http://www.chicagogayhistory.com/biography.html?id=794>.



Mel White is a legend in the gay religious world, having come out late in life after a

Turn to page 24

BUY ME SOME PEANUTS AND PAPER BACKS

Okay we don't technically have peanuts, but we do have books and wine. Swing on over.
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Facebook: Dave Ouano Photography
daveouano@me.com

BOOK REVIEW

2312: A Novel

by Kim Stanley Robinson
\$25.99; Orbit Books; 561 pages

BY TRACY BAIM

While I love science fiction, I am not an expert on the genre, so I can't speak to the past, award-winning work of Kim Stanley Robinson, but I can give a huge shout-out to his newest book, 2312.

I felt transported to new worlds in 2312, a book set around that era on Earth as well as Mercury, Venus, Mars, Saturn, Jupiter and beyond. This is a wonderfully imagined future, part love story and part scientific voyage.

Robinson knows how to blend the knowledge of today with a potential of tomorrow, but in a way a layperson can appreciate. The city of Terminator on Mercury rolls on tracks to keep ahead of the burning sun; Venus is protected by huge sun shields; Mars was terraformed using the chemicals of other planets; and thousands of space objects have been transformed into terrariums. These terrariums are custom-made to mimic all kinds of environments, from New England towns to vast farms and jungles, ice villages and sexual free-for-alls.

A wonderful twist in this book is the future of gender, so all our queer and transgender folks have something to relish in these pages. Robinson goes all-out in creating this future where people actually live longer (and perhaps forever) by becoming "bisexual"—which

in this case means having the physicality of both genders. Swan, our hero of the book, is among those thus treated, and she is now more than 130 years old. Some Earth-bound minds are, of course, against such a "perversity," so there are moral battles to be fought. It doesn't stop there—some humans also experiment with splicing animal genes into their brains as well.

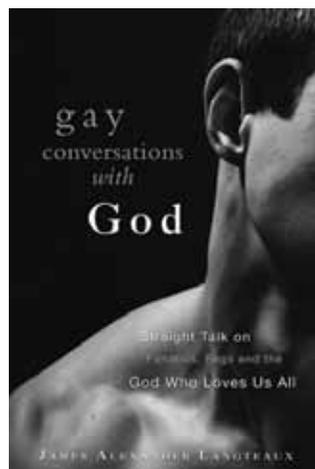
In creative "extracts" throughout the book, the author gives us snippets of discussions, often ending mid-sentence: "it is not a case of 'there is no gender,' but rather a complex and ambiguous efflorescence, sometimes called a fully ursuline humanity, other times just a mess" Plus this: "gatherings composed entirely of gender-indeterminate people are a

Turn to page 25

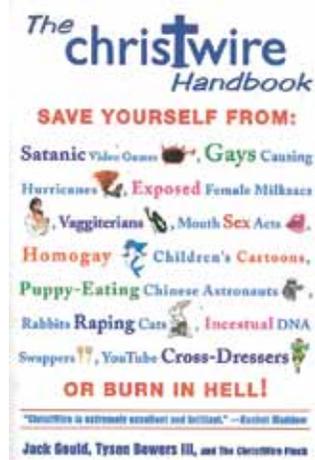


BOOKS from page 23

career serving the evangelical Christian community, including as pastor and ghostwriter to some powerful anti-gay leaders. But his most recent decades have been spent trying to make up for that as an openly gay religious man. His newest book is **Holy Terror: Lies the Christian Right Tells Us to Deny Gay Equality**. Well, the title says it all. In the book, White traces the links between the old Moral Majority to the Christian Coalition and today's Tea Party movement. He says the Tea Party presents a clear and present danger to gays and all Americans. A timely book in this highly divided election year.



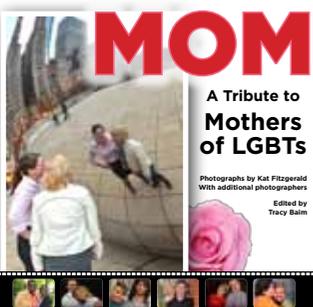
Gay Conversations with God: Straight Talk on the Fanatics, Fags and the God Who Loves Us All, by James Alexander Langteaux, is an in-your-face approach to the topic of being gay and Christian.



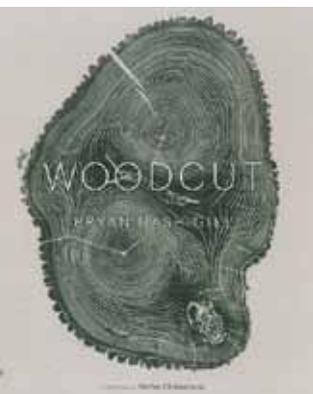
Looking for humor to handle homophobic religious attitudes? Check out **The Christ-**

wire Handbook, by Kirwin Watson, Bryan Butvidas and The Christwire Flock. This is the Onion for the spiritual, and they have often fooled their right-wing targets. Even liberals have taken them too seriously at times. Rachel Maddow calls them brilliant, so that may be the only endorsement you need. These folks take on righteousness head on, including attacks on gays. They have some very fun LGBT stuff, including a description of house mom lesbians, model lesbians, lesbros, butt bloggers, BFFs and much more. No sacred cows, indeed!

Photo Books



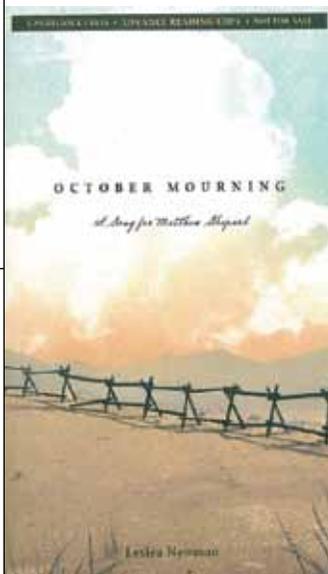
Moms: A Tribute to Mothers of LGBTs, with photos by Kat Fitzgerald, and edited by me, is a book created by the Windy City Times team as a salute to the mothers who don't kick us out, don't hate us, don't shame us, and don't shut the door on love. It is now available as print-on-demand from Amazon, and there will be copies at Women & Children First soon. The focus is on Chicago-connected moms, and there are also a few nationally known mothers, including Judy Shepard.



Woodcut by Bryan Nash Gill is a look at the beauty of nature through the cross sec-

tions of trees. There is a mystical power in these arboreal rings that reveal a tree's age but also an incredibly mesmerizing pleasure. Take time to stare into the lines and find some inner natural peace.

Poetry



Much-honored lesbian writer **Lesléa Newman** is out with a new book, this one a collection of poetry inspired by the murder of a gay man: **October Mourning: A Song for Matthew Shepard**. Newman shows a very personal and emotional response to the killing of 21-year-old Shepard in October 1998: "Their truck was the last thing he saw / Tears fell from his unblinking eyes / I cradled him just like a mother / I held him all night long." Newman was scheduled to be in Wyoming that week for gay awareness programs at the University of Wyoming. She spoke there shortly after the attack that would soon take Shepard's life, and change the gay community forever. This is powerful poetry to soothe the soul. "When I heard what happened / I told / the world / I'm gay and it could have been me."

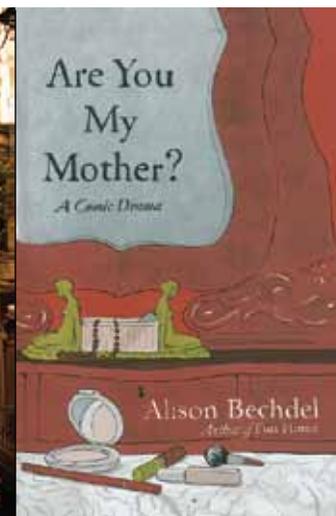
Autobiography

Award-winning writer **Sarah Schulman** is also an activist, and someone who helps us remember the dark days in the peak years of loss surrounding AIDS. As a lesbian, she marched alongside her gay brothers in ACT UP, and now

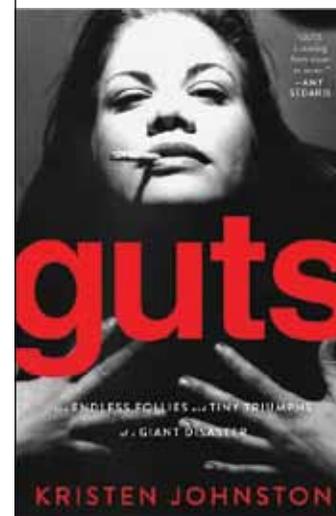


tells those stories in her new memoir **The Gentrification of the Mind: Witness to a Lost Imagination**. Schulman recounts how the deaths of more than 80,000 in New York City alone caused the vanishing of a vibrant downtown arts scene and queer culture, to be replaced by "gay conservative spokespeople and mainstream consumerism." She links this to the gentrification of NYC in the 1970s. Her personal stories are coupled with political analysis, and we learn about the deep anger Schulman feels because the work of women is so often ignored and dismissed by the mainstream culture. Schulman's use of the gentrification parallel for gays is fascinating; she says that the gay community, because of the trauma of AIDS, is responding in similar ways as the U.S. did after World War II: "We have been streamlining into a highly gendered, privatized family/marriage structure en masse." This is a complicated and important memoir, and recommended reading for those who care about LGBT and feminist politics and culture.

I am a huge fan of **Alison Bechdel** and her Dykes to Watch Out for comics and books. Her cartoon was a longstanding feature of Windy City Times and Outlines newspapers. Her Fun Home book was a groundbreaking graphic telling of her relationship with her father, and it was received to wide acclaim in the LGBT and mainstream communities. Her follow-up graphic book, **Are You My Mother? A Comic Drama**, is a similar story of family, but this time with a focus on her mom. This

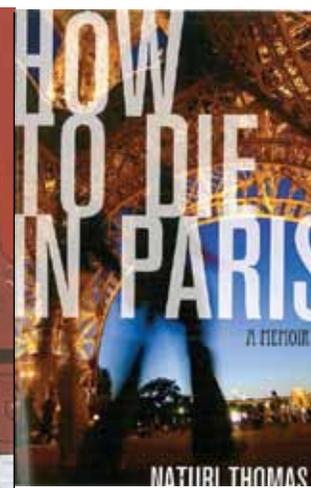


is a very different book from Fun Home—it is deeply about psychoanalysis and its impact on Bechdel's life and relationships. It is sometimes heavy with psychoanalytic language and terms, but I still love the detail Bechdel puts into her artwork.



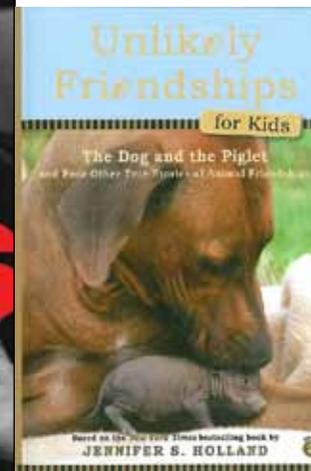
Kristen Johnston is best known for her very fun acting gig on TV's Third Rock from the Sun. She's a comic always ready to laugh, and one with a big gay following. But this strong towering diva was struck down from the inside, when her guts literally rebelled against years of alcohol and drug abuse. She almost died in London while there for a theatrical starring turn. The lessons she learned from this near-death experience are painful, but also very important. But most important for fans of Johnston, her humor is evident through this book, appropriately titled, **Guts**.

How to Die in Paris, by **Naturi Thomas**, is a dark true-life tale of Thomas, who went to Paris to commit suicide but



who survived to tell the stories of living without money on the streets. She finds a series of exploitive male suitors, but eventually learns important lessons that help her find beauty, enough to make her want to truly live.

Children's Books



Unlikely Friendships for Kids is a three-book series featuring the work of **Jennifer S. Holland**, adapted from her other work. She shows how unlikely animal friendships can inspire humans in their everyday lives. Take the dog and piglet, the orangutan and the cat, the monkey and the dove, the bear and the cat, the leopard and the cow, or the zebra and the gazelle. The books are great treats for the kids in your lives.

The Blonde Bomber: Classic Roller Derby remembered

BOOK REVIEW

The Blonde Bomber & The Last Hurrah of Ann Calvello and the Resurrection of a Unique American Sporting Event

by Andrew J. Epstein,
Spaghetibrains Press,
www.spaghetibrains.com

REVIEW BY TRACY BAIM

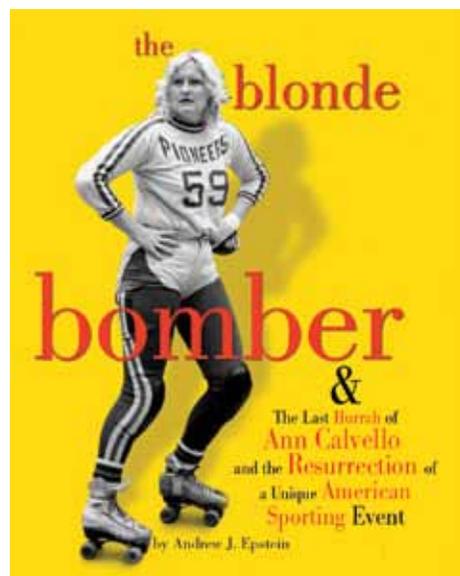
Fans of the modern era of roller derby women should not miss this book by former Chicagoan Andrew J. Epstein.

It is a fantastic photo and essay book of the original derby women (and men). But it is enjoyable even for those who never have been to a Roller Derby match, because it is filled with history, excellent photography, and the stories of some incredible women pioneers who fought against the odds to create a league, and a family. Plus, we learn about the new women's derby resurgence as well.

The Blonde Bomber of the title is Joan Westin, who Epstein covered frequently. She had more than 20 years in the business, and could pack audiences around the country from her Chicago-area base as a member of the Pioneers.

As Andrew writes: "Joan also owned a 'women's bar' [The Driftwood in Hayward, Calif.]. She held court there. ... Fans, skaters, gay men, and women were always welcome in the bar." While she married a man who was her "buddy," she kept that on the downlow, because she thought it would hurt her image as the Amazon Goddess—an ironic turn for a women's sports legend.

We also learn from Ann Calvello, the Demon of the Derby, a character bigger than life, captured in the film *Demon of the Derby*. Epstein also covers some of the men of the era, during a time when sexism was rampant and the women were just for show, even though they gave their



blood, sweat and tears just as much as the guys.

Epstein, who is well known as a photographer of Chicago's gay and urban scenes from the 1970s-1990s, brings the stories up to date, as we find out the tragic ends of athletes such as Joan, all the while getting a first-hand view of what it was really like in the decades of the women's roller derby circuit. The Blonde Bomber ruled the track for 20 years, but we also learn about so much more of this rich history, as told through Epstein's clever eyes and camera lens.

While the original derby closed in 1973, Epstein makes sure to document the re-birth of this classic American sport, with photos and profiles of some of the new women in town. This is simply a fantastic book for fans of women's sports, history and some very tough athletes.



Photos by Andrew J. Epstein, from *The Blonde Bomber*.



2312 from page 24

new social space that some find intensely uncomfortable, eliciting comments such as 'like a nakedness I hadn't thought could happen' or 'you're only yourself, it's terrifying.' And so on. Clearly, a new kind of psychic exposure." Indeed.

While the book is about the future, there are, of course, many lessons for 2012: "She often felt nostalgia for the present, aware that her life was passing by faster than she could properly take it in." It marinates grand ideas, such as the existence of evil. As one character states: "Sometimes I think it's only in post-scarcity that evil exists. Before that, it could always be put down to want or fear."

I could go into detail about Robinson's imaginative social and gender forays, but I will leave that to you to read how 2312 may shape up for humans. That is just part of the book's pleasure, as Robinson takes you on a journey to our planet neighbors, making for a great escape from the scorching temperatures on Earth, which can't hold a solar candle to the temperatures faced if you lived on Mercury or Venus—or the Earth of 2312.

One measuring stick I use to judge a book is how much separation anxiety I have once I have turned the last page. With 2312, I already miss the wonderful characters and worlds Robinson created, and hope he revisits them again.

BOOK REVIEW

Transitions of the Heart

by Rachel Pepper
\$16.59; Cleis Books; 203 pages
BY KATE SOSIN

There is a moment in Rachel Pepper's anthology, *Transitions of the Heart: stories of love, struggle and acceptance by mothers of transgender and gender variant children*, when Geraldine Boothe, unable to sleep, sits down and writes a letter to her transgender 8-year-old about her deepest fears.

Boothe, a lesbian, faults herself for having a transgender child, and she simultaneously worries she has suppressed her child's masculinity.

It is a heart-rending moment in a collection of 32 stories that largely focus on the sense of loss mothers experience when their children come out as trans.

Transitions of the Heart is an unprecedented success by virtue of existence; it is one of a handful of books that speak to parents of transgender and gender-nonconforming children. (Pepper co-authored another with Stephanie Brill, *The Transgender Child: A Handbook for Families and Professionals*.)

The book, which Cleis Press recently released, is a kind of Chicken Soup for the Soul for parents of trans kids. It is a collection of first-person essays about how mothers reacted when their

kids came out. Overwhelmingly, the stories are wrought with fear, anxiety and remorse.

Nancy Moore, mother of a transgender boy, writes about saving pictures and a voice recording of her child before he transitioned because she "doesn't want to lose evidence that Sean existed in another form." Ingrid Charbonneau admits that after two years, she still struggles with using correct pronouns for her transgender son. The author of an anonymous essay writes of the difficulty accepting her transgender child due to her Southern Baptist upbringing. Jennifer Kahler still questions if allowing her transgender daughter to live as a girl is the right thing for her.

For transgender and gender non-conforming people, this may be a difficult read. It is hard not to wonder if some of the children portrayed won't struggle with being described with old names and pronouns, to having their bodies and surgeries described publicly and to reading about the profound loss their mothers felt when they came out as trans. Transgender readers may also take personal exception here. While ultimately healing, some stories border on unintentionally injurious at times.

Still, such stories and feelings are commonplace in transgender circles, and books that speak to the experiences of parents of trans kids are not. "Transitions of the Heart" explores the reactions of mothers from many walks of life, with children that range from toddlers to older adults. Some of the writers are simply grappling

with how to give their transgender children as much freedom as possible, while others are still wishing away the burden.

Most of the stories, while poignant, are not particularly well-written. This is what makes them feel so relatable and candid. In this sense, the anthology feels like less a literary masterpiece than it does a series of coffee dates with other mothers of trans kids. It is essentially a support group condensed into a book, an important contribution, especially for parents who live in areas without relevant support groups or who have not yet worked up the nerve to attend them.

There are a few literary gems scattered throughout. Boothe's "To My Child" and Mary Doyle's "Hatch! Mister Sister" stand out.

A future anthology of this sort could benefit from more stories about non-binary children, as nearly all of the subjects seem to identify as male or female, bordering on a kind of essentialist overall image about what transgender is. Still, the diversity of experiences represented in the anthology makes for a relatively complicated look at families with trans kids.

Pepper and the mothers in this book have created what will certainly be an invaluable resource for countless parents and future parents. In that, perhaps they have made the world just a little bit better for transgender people themselves.

Disclaimer: Pepper occasionally contributes to *Windy City Times*.



WEEKLY DINING GUIDE IN WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR

Smith & Wollensky

BY ANDREW DAVIS

In Chicago, it can be tough for a steakhouse to carve out (pun intended) its own identity.

However, Smith & Wollensky (www.smithandwollensky.com; 318 N. State St.) has managed to do so—primarily through its top-notch service, excellent cuisine and the venue itself.

As for the cuisine itself, Executive Chef Mark Chmielewski has created a menu that, in many ways, is perfect for summer. Being from the Chesapeake Bay area I'm a bit of a crab-cake snob; however, the crab cake (with cognac mustard and ginger sauces) at Smith is very good and filled with meat (as opposed to breading). There's also the BBQ wild (also known as "angry") shrimp that made me nothing but happy.

However, Chmielewski offers so much more.

Just some of the starters include salmon three ways (gravlax, pastrami and ceviche), seared scallops and tuna crudo on Himalayan salt block, to name a few. Salads include one with spinach, peppered bacon and poached egg as well as a Cobb and the Wollensky (romaine, tear-drop tomatoes, potato croutons, bacon lardons and mushrooms with house vinaigrette). When temperatures become as high as they've been lately, these may be the perfect dishes for you.

But, of course, the essence of a steakhouse is its meats—and Smith & Wollensky's items are definitely top-tier. I dined on a filet rubbed with Gevalia coffee and cocoa that was topped with ancho chili butter and crispy angry onions. I was initially skeptical but the contrasting flavors worked perfectly. Patrons can also choose a filet mignon that Cajun-seasoned or crusted with Gorgonzola. However, there are also classic

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Five-cheese mac and cheese with watercress salad (left) and sous chef Timothy Michael (right) at Frontier. Photos by Ed Negron



The bar at Smith & Wollensky. PR photo



Frontier

BY ANDREW DAVIS

There's a movie on HBO premiering this month called "Me @ the Zoo." This was pretty much my feeling after dining at Frontier (www.the-frontierchicago.com; 1072 N. Milwaukee Ave.), where patrons really do feel like they're on the frontier—down to the stuffed bear and antler chandeliers in the restaurant.

Interestingly, the menu is divided into "snacks," "harvested," "hunted" and "fished." The first category has items such as deviled eggs, house pickles, peppadew peppers and cheese bites. Vegetarians will fare OK with the "harvested" portion of the menu; offerings include gazpacho, beet carpaccio, okra and white-bean hummus.

However, the more exotic items are those geared toward carnivores. Executive Chef Brian Jupiter and Sous Chef Timothy Michael have concocted an unbelievable mix of meat dishes. Under "hunted" there is everything from duck tacos and sliders to a venison cheesesteak (delicious) to smoked rabbit tostada to llama meatballs. Under "fished," patrons can snack on gator ribs with Georgia peach BBQ sauce (a winning combination), escargot, ahi tuna sandwich and smoked trout, among other items.

Also, if people are bringing large contingents, people can order whole smoked animals—including gators. Just be sure to order several days in advance. (When asked if there is anything he would not cook, Michael said without hesitation, "horse.")

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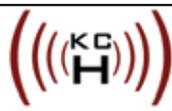
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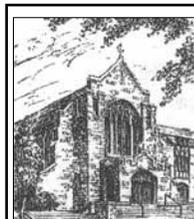
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DISH from page 26

cuts such as dry-aged sirloin, bone-in ribeye and marinated Cajin ribeye; free-range chicken; and even Atlantic swordfish steak au poivre (pan-seared line-caught, pepper-crusted swordfish).

If you manage to make it through these very filling items, stay for dessert. (In fact, desserts and wines are housed in a menu folder entitled "Excuses to Linger.") Among the indulgent sweets are warm apple tart, pecan pie, New York-style cheesecake, coconut layer cake and something called Wollensky's six-shooter (a collection of sorbets and ice creams).

As for libations, Smith & Wollensky impressed me with its wide selection. Yes, there are many wines (including the restaurant's own private reserve), but people can try cognac, bourbon and even grappa. (Those who may need to wake up from their food comas may also want to try one of a variety of coffees.)

Then, there's the very restaurant itself. It has an airy look and feel (with the wind actually whipping through the place when I was there), can comfortable seat hundreds and has an unparalleled view of the Chicago River. This is just another way that Smith & Wollensky successfully has made its own identity.



The salmon filet at Smith & Wollensky. PR photo

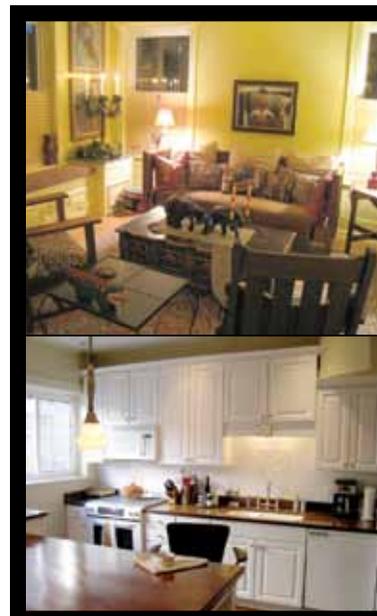
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Wed., July 18

7th biennial Deaf Lesbian Festival Workshops, entertainment, socializing, activities, dyke ball, sightseeing in Chicago. The first time DLF will be held in the Midwest. Through July 21. Julia Anderson at DLFChicago2012@gmail.com. 4pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., www.deaflesbianfestival.org

ATC's Youth Ensemble in The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later! In October of 1998, a gay student was found tied to a fence post and brutally beaten on the outskirts of Laramie, Wyo. This act of violence against Matthew Shepard launched a nationwide response to hate crimes and LG-BTQ rights and inspired Tectonic Theater Project to create the original production of The Laramie Project. Limited engagement through July 24; 7pm, 773-409-4125, American Theater Company, 1909 W Byron St., www.atcweb.org

Bar Rounds Game Show Taping Be on TV, be a contestant. Everyone that attends is eligible to play. Live taping of the game show "Bar Rounds" for Pride TV Chicago. With Bill Cruz, Mateo Lane & Michelle Molina. No cover. 7pm, Downtown Bar, 440 N State St., www.downtownbarandlounge.com

Seniors men's book club Join the Prime-time's Men's Book Club for stimulating book discussion and socializing. 7:30pm-9pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St.

Hydrag Revue Join Hydrate Nightclub for the world famous HYDRAG REVUE hosted by Tajma Hall, featuring the all star cast of DiDa Ritz, Sorraya Dash, Mercede Andrews, Kelly Lauren, Erica Andrews and special

CIRQUE ORDER Through Sept. 3

Cirque Shanghai is entertaining the masses at Navy Pier, 600 E. Grand Ave.

Photo by Jerry Nunn



guests each week! 10pm, Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted St., www.hydratechicago.com

Thursday, July 19

Cirque Shanghai: Year of the Dragon Running through Sept. 3, rain or shine, at the Pepsi Skyline Stage, the 1,500-seat, canopied, open-air theater on Navy Pier. 2pm-4pm, Navy Pier, 600 E. Grand Ave., www.navy pier.com

Dance in the Parks Free, professional dance performances to new audiences in the most accessible venues in the Chicago-land area—neighborhood parks. 6:30pm-8:30pm, 773-618-9114, Berger Park, 6205 N Sheridan Rd., between Granville Ave & Rosemont Ave., www.danceintheparks.org

T and GQ Out Mic T-OUT mic is pairing with GenderQueer Chicago to host an altogether awesome open mic and spoken word event open to all. Encouraging all gender-variant folks, their friends, and allies, to bring a song, talent, thought, or rant to share. Each performer gets five minutes to do their thing. Transport: L Red line to

Addison. Bus: #8 Halsted. Street parking. 7:30pm-9:30pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St.

On Screening the Modern Freak A discussion of disability in science fiction; 6:30pm-9:30pm, Access Living, 115 W. Chicago Ave.

After Work Karaoke You are the singing sensation at this night of Karaoke. Sing the secret song for a bar tab. 7pm-11:30pm, The Call (Chicago), 1547 W Bryn Mawr Ave.

Charlie's Angels Reloaded The ever-popular drag show is back every Thursday evening at 9 pm. This premiere show kicks off with an incredible list of entertainers: Regina Upright, Monique Greene, Patti Paige and your hostess every week Lauren Jacobs. \$3 U-Call-Its. 9pm, Charlie's, 3726 N Broadway, www.charlieschicago.com

Friday, July 20

More for Gay Men movie night: Shelter Great viewing, camaraderie and conversation, a different way to talk about the movies. By sharing from a deeper, more personal level participants enhance their intellectual understanding of film and learn how to create a more satisfying movie-going experience. 6:30pm-9pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., www.centeronhalsted.org

Trans Amor A peer-led, casual conversation group open to current partners of gender non-conforming/transgender identified individuals, as well as those considering entering a relationship with someone who is gender non-conforming/transgender. T-Amor is always open to individuals of any gender identity/sexual orientation. 6:30pm-9pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., www.centeronhalsted.org

Man cave A peer-led casual conversation group, for those 18 and older, who identify as female to male, transgender individuals, or are female-bodied and are questioning their gender. The conversation is lead by Paxton Neville; 6:30pm-8pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St.

Powder Room: EQIL Ladies' Night Third Friday of each month, meet some new friends and enjoy creative cocktails, and the raffle of a champagne party for 20! RSVP to info@eqil.org. 8pm-10pm, Parlour on Clark, 6341 N Clark, Chicago, http://www.eqil.org

Marina and the Diamonds album release party Release party for Electric Heart, the new album from Marina and the Diamonds, featuring the single "Primadonna." Giveaways while supplies last. DJ Greg Haus. 10pm, Berlin Nightclub, 954 W. Belmont Ave., www.berlinchicago.com

Mr. Midwest Rubber 2012 Welcome Party with Mr. International Rubber 2012 Sly Hands. Meet the contestants, win fun raffle prizes and see some rubber demos. 10pm, Touche, 6412 N. Clark St., www.touchechicago.com

Steamwerkz: The Musical Wide-eyed gay boy comes to Chicago looking for love in all the wrong places when he stumbles on a popular bathhouse, Steamwerkz. Shows every Friday through Aug. 31; no show Aug. 17. \$20, \$15 students and preview. 10pm, Annoyance Theatre, 4830 N Broadway, www.theannoyance.com

Saturday, July 21

Free Seminar - Adding On: Up, Over or Out Adding on pre-planning seminar gives needed extra space while allowing homeowners to stay in the neighborhoods they love. Session to explore three types of additions: UP with an extra level, OVER the garage, or OUT into the yard. 10:30am, 630-455-5600, Normandy Remodeling Showroom, www.normandyremodeling.com/seminars.aspx

Bi social network Come meet other bisexuals and discuss. 5pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., www.centeronhalsted.org

Deaf Lesbian Movie Festival Enjoy movies with other lesbians and bisexual women. 6pm-10pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St.

Sappho's Salon, A Provocative Night of Lesbian Diversions Popular monthly salon night for lesbian and their friends features Terry Wolverton and Yvonne Zipter, two top lesbian literary voices. 7:30pm-9:30pm, Women & Children, 5233 N. Clark St., www.womenandchildrenfirst.com

You're Being Ridiculous...The Break Up Show Comedy monologue show with rotating themes and performers, committed to the idea that everyone has a story worthy of being shared, that good stories are better than good times. Each show has six or more performers telling a 10 minute story. Doors at 7pm; 7:30pm, Mary's Attic, 5400 N Clark St., www.hamburgermarys.com/chicago

Sunday, July 22

Urban Village Church Spiritual worship is about coming together as community to make space for God to move in us. It's a place to receive God's grace and love and to give of ourselves, as well. 10am-11:15pm, Spertus Institute 610 S. Michigan Ave., www.urbanvillagechurch.org

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

Summer Dating for Queer Nerds Wanderlust much? Every day is a vacation day during a summer singles party inspired by exotic getaways through time and space. 4pm-7pm, 855-637-3568, Blue Bayou 3734 N. Southport Ave., http://nerdsatheart.com

Queer Fest America to Benefit LGBTQ Homeless Youth Queer Fest America, multimedia PG-13 showcase to benefit EL Rescate Independent Transitional Living for Homeless and HIV/AIDS Youth. Headlining live on Skype are national LG-BTQ musician/comedian Jonny McGovern, womb brothers Elephant, New York City dance-pop artist, Matt Ryanz and international LGBTQ activist also known as, Ziggy 2000, from Stardust. The David Bowie Tribute Band, Lair Scott, will host and perform. \$20. door admission. Under 21 with an adult guardian/parent. 4pm-9pm, 224-221-9213, Reggie's Rock Club, 2105 S. State St., www.queerfestamerica.com

Club Neon Club Neon at Chicago Sports Hub—a night geared toward the LGBTQ friendly and allies alike. Everyone's welcome. 9pm, 773-517-3993, The Chicago



'STEAM' SPIRIT

Mon. through Aug. 31

Steamwerkz: The Musical (with John Loos, above) is at the Annoyance Theatre, 4830 N. Broadway.

Photo from Loos

Hub Sportsbar, 3809 N. Harlem Ave., http://gopride.com/z6zb

Monday, July 23

LGBT Narcotics Anonymous LGBT meetings take place Mondays. For more info, call Anthony Oltean at 312-208-4021. 8pm-9pm, Haymarket Center, 20 N. Sangamon St.

Screening of the film Iron Jawed Angels When did women get the right to vote? How difficult was it? To register and reserve a seat: email your name to kinziee@personalpac.org; 7pm, Facets Multimedia, 1517 W. Fullerton Ave., www.personalpac.org

Charm school Charm School is hosted by Mamma Gloria and topics include transgender image, etiquette, and charm. This event is open to all young, transgender persons. 7:15pm-8:30pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., www.centeronhalsted.org

Tuesday, July 24

Anything Beau's A multimedia comedy satire about a country gay man and his big dreams in the face of harsh reality. With video and live sketches, commercial parodies, dance routines and audience participation, Anything Beau's is gay comedy accessible to everyone. Come check out the videos that bestgayblogs.com called; 7:30pm-8:30pm, 773-598-4549, Gorilla Tango Theatre, www.anythingbeaus.com

Wed., July 25

Toast the Town and Light the City Pink Roka Akor's chic Sake and Shochu Lounge serves as the backdrop, offering a stylish ambiance for guests to enjoy modern Japanese hors d'oeuvres and cocktails. Guests will sip on the evening's summery signature "Pink Ribbon" cocktail. Benefits breast-cancer research at Northwestern Memorial Hospital and the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University. \$75 in advance, \$80 at door. 6pm-8:30pm, 312-926-7133, Roka Akor, 456 N. Clark St., www.lynnnsage.org

Thursday, July 26

Scrooge & Marley Christmas in July parties See the trailer of the modern-day gay variation on Charles Dickens classic, see behind-the-scenes photos, win merchandise and learn how to show up in the credits. RSVP to editor@windycitymediagroup.com or call 773-387-2394; 6pm-9pm, 3160, 3160 N. Clark St., http://gopride.com/z798



HERE'S JONNY!

Sunday, July 22

Jonny McGovern (in black shirt, above) is one of the many musicians scheduled to appear at Queer Fest America at Reggie's Rock Club, 2105 S. State St.

Photo from Lair Scott

BILLY MASTERS

"The casting of Brooke Shields, lovely as always to look at, doesn't enhance the work's credibility, although I think she would be terrific in an alternative camp version directed by John Waters."—Charles McNulty reviews the world-premiere production of *The Exorcist* at the Geffen Playhouse for the Los Angeles Times. With reviews like this, the play may not transfer to Broadway. But it might inspire John Waters to tackle something on stage!

First things first—I must talk about Ted Casablanca. When I started this column in August of 1995, there was no path to follow and no such thing as syndication to gay papers. There were, however, a few notable gay men who were dishing dirt. Obviously, Michael Musto was and is the most renowned. And there was Ted Casablanca over at *Premiere* magazine. (Liz Smith comes close to making this list, but the genetic testing is still out on her.)

I look at Musto as an old-school type of columnist (although I'm not sure where that



Billy shows his reverence for longtime writers Michael Musto (above) and Ted Casablanca.

old school is—perhaps Mesopotamia). He's a straight shooter, he knows what he knows, he's campy and clever and doesn't care who he pisses off. Ted may only be five years younger than Musto, but he represented a new approach to gossip. Nothing was sacred to Ted—which was difficult since he would soon be working for a network that depended on the kindness of celebrities (or, at the very least, their publicists and agents). He was more biting than clever, targeted a younger audience and even made up words to fit a story. I didn't know him when I started, but it was clear we were cut from the same cloth. Over the years, we've met at various events, but we've never developed anything approaching a friendship. That said, I have an enormous amount of respect for what he does and how he does it.

So I was perplexed when his column was notably missing from the newly restructured *Eonline.com*. In his final column, dated July 5 (the notion that this is the day after Independence Day is not lost on *moi*), he objectively lists his pros and cons, talks about his days at *Premiere*

and how that led to an offer to bring his column online to *E!*—a decision he wrestled with. Everyone told him to not give up print for a speculative web offer. He passed on the job. The next day, he called to see if he could change his mind. He could, and he did. "So, that's what I'd like my last words to be: Always do what you're not supposed to do," he said. Nobody did it like Ted, and I'll miss him.

Eleven Bel Ami models/porn stars are suing RSVP Cruises for \$12 million. Apparently, the cruise organizers hired these models to "mix and mingle" with the passengers on a Mediterranean cruise last summer. In addition to a fee and a free cruise, Bel Ami also had the rights to film the boys onboard. However, RSVP insisted that if anyone asked, the guys should say that Bel Ami sent them on a cruise because of all the hard work they've done. Of course, once the translators got this information relayed to the various boys, no one was convinced this deal would stay private. Once onboard, beautiful Bel Ami boys were an immediate hit with the passengers.

Photos we've uncovered from the cruise show the boys frolicking in the pool in skimpy Speedos that I'm sure gave everyone hours of enjoyment. Alas, it was to be only hours before RSVP demanded that the group leave when the ship docked in Tunisia. They asked to stay at least one more day and leave when the ship got to Italy. RSVP insisted on Tunisia and that was that. Now RSVP and Holland America are being sued for breach of contract, fraud, intentional interference with contractual relationships, intentional infliction of emotional distress and negligent infliction of emotional distress.

In addition to the emotional distress of being stranded in Tunisia, we hear that prior to the boys being thrown off the ship, the other passengers got wind of their situation. Knowing the lads were desperate, some passengers dared to offer them cash for sex—GASP! Well, I'm sure that was traumatic, what with the devaluation of the Euro and all. BTW, the plaintiffs' names include some of your favorites—Rudko, Michal, Petr, Adrian, Lukas, Tamas, Igor and Attila. That's not a list of porn stars—that's the roster of the Czech Olympic water-polo team!

Our "Ask Billy" question comes from Jared in Toronto: "I saw that play that you recommended—*High* with Kathleen Turner. I loved it. Especially that hot boy, Evan. You said you had nudes, but you couldn't show them. Come on—please? He's SO hot (and HUGE)!?"

Well, yes, someone sent me not only photos but also a video from the infamous nude scene in *High* starring Kathleen Turner and Evan Jönigke, who is as talented as he is hot. I was asked to not share this material because certain people felt it could hurt the tour. I never agreed with that—if anything, I think the footage would have sold more tickets. But, what do I know? Anyway, the tour ended in Toronto and now I don't feel I need to keep it to myself any longer. So, you can now see every inch of the enormously talented Evan on *BillyMasters.com*. Enjoy!

When I've been holding onto a big dick for way too long, it's time to end yet another column. Let me say publicly that Mr. Casablanca is welcomed to join the Billy Masters Empire any time he'd like—and in any capacity (within reason, of course). Just think: He could soon be a part of *www.BillyMasters.com*, the site that can always use someone a bit more "versatile." And if you'd like to get a hold of me, send a note to *Billy@BillyMasters.com* and I promise to get back to you before the Bel Ami boys next cruise booking is Tom Cruise! So, until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

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Emotions fill successful Ride

BY ROSS FORMAN

Seventeen years ago, Tony Torres was in Mexico when he was diagnosed as HIV-positive. At the time, doctors gave him two years to live.

Now living in Chicago, Torres is healthy and happy, although a bit sore and extremely emotional. Torres completed the annual Ride For AIDS Chicago (RFAC), a two-day 200-mile bicycle ride held July 14-15, for the third time.

He also walked a bicycle into the closing ceremonies, held in Evanston, in honor of those unable to ride this year due to HIV/AIDS. In a weekend event filled with emotions, this near-

five-minute moment might have been the most emotional.

"The Ride was amazing this year; it keeps getting better and better every year," Torres said. "All I was thinking about [during the closing ceremony] was all of my friends who are gone, people who passed away from HIV/AIDS."

Torres also was emotional during the ride at multiple points, such as the time a fellow rider asked him if the orange flag that waved from his bike, to signify that he is HIV-positive, slowed him down. Torres replied, "No ... if HIV has not slowed me down, neither will this flag."

Richard Cordova, the director of athletic

events for the Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN), which produces the Ride, said his most memorable moment—and certainly most emotional—was the rider-less bike procession. "I didn't think I'd be as emotional as I was. It kind of caught me off guard. It was very emotional," he said.

The 2012 Ride featured about 240 riders and about 50 supporting crew members, and it raised just more than \$600,000—surpassing last year's former record, \$535,000.

"It was amazing, plus, there's still so much room to grow this event; I don't think we've hit our stride yet, nor our peak," Cordova said. "We keep adding more value to the event. We've created more infrastructure; we're investing in the sustainability of the event and its long-term growth.

"This year's Ride truly was a great one."

More than 25 openly HIV-positive people participated, as riders or crew, many wearing orange bandanas to signify their HIV status.

"The ride is all about erasing the shame and stigma that so many people with this disease live with, and this year's event was an absolute success," Cordova said. "The cause, the camaraderie, the challenge ... everything came together."

Jorge Partida, fighting back tears moments after the rider-less bike procession, said the event was "amazing." This was his third RFAC, "and it probably the best Ride to date [because of] the activities [organizers planned] for the riders, and all of the riders were amazing, all in good spirit. It definitely was the most emotional, seeing all of these people coming together for a cause."

Austin Baidas of Chicago also completed his third Ride.

"It was a great event, very well organized and it raised a ton of money. It was just a fantastic Ride," he said. "Everyone was so friendly, working so well together to complete it. It was just a lot of fun."

Baidas said the event gets better every year.

"I think it's good to have reminders because, often, we go about our daily lives and we forget about the affect HIV/AIDS has on people. The fundraising and the Ride itself brings a lot of

awareness; that's a good thing," Baidas said.

Robert Garofalo completed his first Ride and was the event's second largest fundraiser (about \$25,000).

"It was the most incredible experience. It was touching, emotional, exhausting. ... There was just so much love," Garofalo said. "One of my most memorable moments came while riding up a hill on day one. I was sucking wind when this woman on a motorcycle pulled up [next to me] and yelled, 'Nice ass ... now get your ass up the hill!'"

"It was the perfect timing [for that comment], the perfect motivation."

Garofalo was one of 16 riders on Team CUR.

"Raising needed funds for this cause and having fun ... this was one of the most inspirational events I've ever had the privilege to be a part of," he said. "The camaraderie, of everyone not just my teammates, was unbelievable."

Aaron DeWinter Williams has been a rider for two years, but opted to be part of the crew this year—and sported an orange bandana throughout the event, reflecting on the time about 10 years ago that he learned he was HIV-positive.

"I felt empowered to support the riders because, as a veteran rider, I knew what they needed, based on what I needed when I rode in the event. I wanted to be a part of the event to make it even better than when I did the Ride," Williams said. "I had a great time helping to support all of the riders. This is an incredibly hard thing to do, an incredibly long journey. There's so much that goes into this that people don't realize."

"For me, it was awesome, an honor. For me, it means that hopefully we will continue to treat people with dignity and respect, to help reduce the stigma of living with HIV/AIDS, further education and treatment for those who are living with the disease, and hopefully one day we'll eradicate it."

Williams said he was shocked 10 years ago to learn his HIV status, and quickly spiraled downhill—financially and emotionally. He was on the edge, he said.

"I chose to pick myself up [after learning of my HIV status], supported by so many others; that's why I want to be a part of this event, which has made a huge difference in my life," Williams said. "I'm very proud to participate in this event for others, and had an amazing time as a member of the Crew."



Scene at this year's Ride. Photo by Ross Forman; more online at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com

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A. The strongest asset protection tool for a civil union couple is to own their house as tenants by the entirety. With the passage of the Civil Union Act LGBT couples who enter into a civil union will have the right to hold title to real estate as tenants by the entirety. Tenancy by the entirety combines the survivorship attributes of joint tenancy with the bonus of limited protection against creditors. That is, a judgment creditor of just one of the homeowners cannot enforce its lien against the residence of the homeowners owned as tenants by the entirety.

The owner with the Judgment can also file bankruptcy and the Bankruptcy Trustee will be unable to sell the house, thus protecting the asset for the couple. But the couple actually needs to prepare and record a deed to create that tenancy.

This means that if you enter into a Civil Union and sign and record a new deed conveying the title of your house, which has to be your residence, to yourselves, as tenants by the entirety, the creditors of one of you cannot take away the house. This is asset protection in its greatest form. You should consult with your own attorney to see if this right for you.

Also, having a civil union does not remove the need to have current powers of attorney. Effective July 1, 2011, the new Illinois Power of Attorney Act went into effect. The new law makes wholesale changes with new forms and new legal obligations.

The new law says your old forms are valid, but sometimes banks, etc., refuse to accept them on their face if they are too old. An "old" power of attorney is more difficult to deal with than a fresh one because a question arises as to whether it is still good or whether it has been replaced. When a power of attorney may be considered "stale" is a policy decision by third parties that differs widely. It is not unusual to hear statements that a power of attorney is considered stale if it is older than 6 or 12 months. Consult with your attorney.

Also, consider the impact of the civil union may have on their public benefits.

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AIDS Run & Walk changes date

The date for the 2012 AIDS Run & Walk Chicago has been changed to **Sunday, Sept. 30**.

The event will still start from Soldier Field and offer 5K and 10K routes along the lakefront. The run/walk is a fundraiser for dozens of organizations that provide life-saving services for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Event registration is \$30 in advance and \$50 on-site. To register as a fundraising individual or as a team, visit www.aidsrunwalk.org or call 312-334-0946.

Chicago Fire partners with Equality Illinois

The pro-LGBT organization Equality Illinois is partnering with the Major League Soccer team the Chicago Fire at a number of events this summer, leading up to "Chicago Fire Pride Night" Aug. 4 at 7:30 p.m.

The partnership was launched during the Chicago Pride Parade June 24, when representatives of the Fire marched along with the Equality Illinois float, which had an "I Do' support marriage equality" theme.

"Chicago Fire Pride Night" will take place at Toyota Park in Bridgeview. A portion of ticket sale proceeds that night will go to benefit the work of the Equality Illinois Education Project.

See www.eqil.org for more information.

Chicago Force playoff game July 21

The Chicago Force women's football team is one step closer to the national championship—but a team from the East stands in its way.

The Force will take on the Boston Militia Saturday, July 21, at Evanston High School at 7 p.m. A win will put the Force in the national-championship game against the winner of the semifinal matching the Dallas Diamonds and the San Diego Surge.

Firefighter-themed obstacle race July 28

Hero Rush—a firefighter-themed obstacle race—will take place Saturday, July 28, at the Sandwich Fairgrounds, 1401 Suydam Rd., Sandwich, Ill.

The event is a 5K race with 15-plus obstacles, including Mazed and Confused, Dummy Draggin', Foam Adventure, Stayin' Alive: CPR Stop, Smoke Jumper and Basement Entrapped. There are also mini-courses for kids.

Registration is \$74, and includes full access to the course; a custom runners bib; an Inferno Tour 2012 T-shirt; and a heroic completion model, among other things. For kids 4-6, registration is free; for those

See www.HeroRush.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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