

HEIDI KLUM TALKS WITH WCT

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Howard Brown may lose MACS

BY YASMIN NAIR

Windy City Times has learned that there are questions about whether or not the prestigious MACS (Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study) will remain at Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC).

In speaking to numerous sources on and off the record, it appears that there are tensions between HBHC and Northwestern University (NU), which administers the grant. The last few weeks have seen a flurry of correspondence sent to MACS participants from both HBHC and NU.

As WCT reported in 2010, the MACS was transferred to NU in the wake of reports that HBHC had used grant money to pay for operating costs, a violation of fed-

eral law. Since then, NU has subcontracted the grant to Howard Brown, meaning that tests were still being conducted at HBHC and MACS participants were still part of the study there, with HBHC administering the grant.

Earlier this year, following a nearly two-year investigation, HBHC announced that it would pay back \$715,000 to federal agencies as part of a settlement around claims of the misspending of federal money. This was, according to HBHC, a significantly reduced amount from the more than \$3.3 million it originally owed.

In the meantime, MACS appeared to be moving along as it has since 1984, when it began as what is now the longest-running natural history study of HIV/AIDS. It has, according to many researchers and the National

Institutes of Health (NIH), resulted in some groundbreaking scientific discoveries regarding the disease.

According to the MACS website, the study has generated more than 1,100 publications and "significant contributions to understanding the science of HIV, the AIDS epidemic and the effects of therapy." These results include, in the early years, understanding how the virus works, as in the "[r]esistance to infection in high-risk seronegative men," as well as a "[d]escription of incidence of KS [Kaposi's sarcoma]."

The MACS derives "behavioral and biological data and specimens from men who have sex with men, before and after they became infected with HIV, before and

Turn to page 8

Couples in the spotlight

Lambda Legal represents 16 Illinois couples in the fight for marriage equality. See profiles on all 16 couples in a special spread on pgs. 12-13. Also, see another spread of photos from Lambda Legal's Family Day Out at Wrigley (pictured) on pgs. 14-15. Photo by Hal Baim

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Photos on cover (left, from top): Photo from Heidi Klum and Tim Gunn by Robert Erdmann; photo of Chicago Force's Melissa Smith by Hal Baim; photo of Matthew Mitcham by William Cheung; photo of Anne Hathaway in The Dark Knight Rises by Ron Phillips

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'ICE' TO MEET YOU

WCT talks with actor James Thomas, who has played gay in the film Ice Men and was a character named "Hunkalicious" in Queer As Folk.

Press photo



See pics and a read a review of Nicki Minaj's concert at the Chicago Theatre.

Photo by Jerry Nunn



Read Debra Chasoff's galvanizing piece on bullying.

Photo from Cathy Renna

COMPUTER LOVE

Financial expert Phil Sitar talks about Social Security recipients having to take payments electronically.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Read additional local and national news items, including the Idaho bar taking an anti-gay stance.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

Read entertainment news about Martha Stewart, Downton Abbey and Rosie O'Donnell.

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AIDS 2012

In search of the AIDS boson

ANALYSIS BY DAVID ERNESTO MUNAR

Like tweens at a Justin Bieber concert, scientists wildly cheered new experimental research findings earlier this month in the obscure field of theoretical physics. The hoopla resulted from observations made possible by the Large Hadron Collider—the biggest particle accelerator ever built—of the existence of a long-sought subatomic particle known as the Higgs boson.

Here's a brief summary, if you missed it: Scientists hope the Higgs boson will help explain the essential characteristics of all matter and energy in the universe. Scientists have long sought a single unifying model to explain why astronomical observations suggest a mystery energy source is rapidly expanding the universe. Other measurements suggest the universe comprises heavy matter that nonetheless cannot be observed. The mysterious forces (known as dark matter and dark energy) amount to 96 percent of known mass-energy in the universe.

AIDS researchers and activists from around the world are on the hunt for their own Higgs boson. In fact, 25,000 participants from all corners of the globe assemble in Washington, D.C. this week for the 19th International AIDS Conference to help determine how to turn the tide against one of human history's worst epidemics.

How and why does the HIV/AIDS epidemic expand? What forces drive the epidemic and can these forces be accurately predicted, measured and reliably interrupted? What societal characteristics make the epidemic controllable in some settings and populations, and fail to do so in others?

We need a boson of AIDS or its equivalent to make needed progress for public health and humanity.

In my wildest dreams, I image elegant formulas as transformational as Einstein's theory of special relativity that would apply to every HIV/AIDS scenario and predict with astonishing accuracy paths to better outcomes. The magic potion of my dreams might be something like: $AIDSFreeGeneration = Human\ Rights * Universal(EdCareHouse) - poverty + stigma/leadership100$.

We already know some of the core ingredients of an effective response. The Washington, D.C. Declaration—launched by conference organizers as a grassroots organizing tool to garner greater political and financial commitments—names nine essential elements of an effective response (see the full declaration at www.2endaids.org):

1. Increase targeted new investments.
2. Ensure evidence-based HIV prevention, treatment and care in accord with the human rights of those at greatest risk and in greatest need. No one can be excluded if we are to reach our goal.
3. End stigma, discrimination, legal sanctions and human rights abuses against people living with HIV and those at risk. Stigma and discrimination hamper all our efforts and prevent delivery of essential services.
4. Markedly increase HIV testing, counseling and linkages to prevention, care and support services. Every person has a right to know her/his HIV status and get the treatment, care and support they need.
5. Provide treatment for all pregnant and nursing women living with HIV and end perinatal transmission: We can support women to stay alive and healthy and to end pediatric HIV infections
6. Expand access to antiretroviral treatment to all in need. We cannot end AIDS until the promise of universal access is realized.
7. Identify, diagnose and treat tuberculosis (TB). Implement TB prevention programs through integrated HIV and TB services. No more living with HIV but dying of TB.

8. Accelerate research on new HIV prevention and treatment tools, including novel approaches such as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and microbicides, and on optimal delivery of what we know works, from condoms to treatment as prevention. Expand research for a vaccine and a cure.

9. Mobilization and meaningful involvement of affected communities must be at the core of collective responses. The leadership of those directly affected is paramount to an effective HIV/AIDS response.

We know unequivocally that these and other proven strategies make a substantial difference achieving better outcomes in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Yet the field still struggles to precisely describe the subtle nuances that make all the difference achieving better outcomes.

We still question what scale, combination, sequence and dose (delivered by whom, in what settings, and with what approaches and supports) are optimal and necessary. How best can we harmonize education for the masses in tandem with targeted efforts for those dispro-

tionately affected? How do we secure the needed financial and political support to sustain the work that must occur epidemiologically among a minority of the population, particularly among those most vulnerable and isolated?

As quixotic as it may be, the hunt to explain a universal method is inescapable among conference delegates and presenters. Everyone is engaged in unraveling the riddles to explain why some communities thrive as others flounder in controlling new infections and supporting care access for people with HIV/AIDS.

Maybe passion and commitment are the bosons that power creativity. Or maybe it's a combination of passion with enlightened governmental leadership, adequate infrastructure and a compassion populace.

Or maybe it's not simple at all and the AIDS boson includes: workforce capacity; engaged and educated community stakeholders; a stable national economy; integrity in government; negligible income stratification; strong accountability mechanisms; pioneering academic, media, and cultural institutions; and supportive, non-prudish social and community norms.

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NATIONAL NEWS



—Louisville, Ky., lesbian attacked

—Jane Lynch (left) named most influential LGBT individual

—L.A. gay chorus finds new home

We're unlikely to find definitive answers this week but the discourse and advocacy can move us one step closer to celebrating as rambunctiously as those particle physicists.

An AIDS boson? Never say never—wait, isn't that a Justin Bieber song.

AIDS 2012

Optimism drives XIX International AIDS Conference

BY BOB ROEHR

"Turning the tide together" is the audacious slogan of the XIX International AIDS Conference that officially opened in Washington, D.C., July 22.

"We're talking about ending AIDS," said conference co-chair Diane Havlir, a researcher at the University of California San Francisco.



Anthony Fauci. Photo by Bob Roehr

Two powerful forces are driving that optimism. One is the huge scientific strides made in understanding the human immunodeficiency virus, and a belief that with time and money the remaining questions will be answered.

The other is success not just in creating therapies that can save the lives of persons in the wealthy nations of the world, but in generating the political and economic will to make those same treatments available to 8 million people in sub-Saharan Africa.

"The scientific building blocks" of treatment and prevention "have brought us to the point where we can be bold enough to consider the

possibility of an AIDS-free generation," said Anthony Fauci. The director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) has been a leading figure in the fight against AIDS from the start of the epidemic.

"Now that we have the scientific capability, there are no excuses to not do it," Fauci said. However, he also acknowledged ongoing "challenges" in the areas of creating a vaccine and a cure.

Carl Dieffenbach, Fauci's deputy, was a bit more reserved in reviewing scientific questions that remain to be answered in searching for a cure that goes beyond treatments available today. When asked if the cure glass is half full or half empty, his response was, "We have a glass."

Money is the big issue in Washington and agencies are struggling to avoid making real cuts. NIH is no exception. The budget has been essentially flat for a decade, said NIH Director Francis Collins, "inflation has eaten away; we are about 20 percent down in terms of purchasing power."

Rally

"Presidents are not born; they are made. They have to be pushed into their greatness. They must be held accountable," said television host Tavis Smiley. He was speaking a few

blocks away at a rally near the Washington Monument, organized by the AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) under the theme "Keep the Promise."

"I just heard that Obama flew over us in his helicopter. I can't understand why he's not here with us," said the master of ceremony for the event, comedian Margaret Cho.

"The news that President Obama has elected to skip the International AIDS Conference speaks volumes," AHF President Michael Weinstein said earlier in the week when the White House made it official that Obama would not attend.

In his place at the opening ceremony for the Conference was Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. She announced what the Department news release called "a series of innovative public-private partnerships in the fight against the HIV/AIDS epidemic."

They were: "(1) using text messaging to improve patient management of disease; (2) partnering with a national pharmacy chain to develop an innovative medication therapy management; (3) creating a common, easy to use form for HIV patient assistance program applicants; and (4) launching online education modules to better train providers to treat people living with HIV/AIDS."

AIDS 2012

AIDS Quilt on display

The AIDS Memorial Quilt is being shown during part of the International AIDS Conference in Washington, D.C. The quilt—which was on display through July 25—measures 1.3 million square feet and weighs 54 tons. Photo by Patsy Lynch



FDA greenlights Truvada for PrEP

BY KATE SOSIN

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved the use of Truvada, an HIV drug, for preventing new infections, after several months of heated debate over the readiness of that strategy.

While some have argued that the approval of the drug came prematurely, others have hailed the news as landmark in the fight against AIDS.

"This is an enormous turning point, a real game changer, in the fight against HIV," said Jim Pickett, AFC's director of prevention advocacy and gay men's health, in a press statement. "The toolbox we have been working for decades to expand now has Truvada as PrEP."

Truvada is an HIV medication that combines two virus-fighting drugs, tenofovir disoproxil fumarate and emtricitabine. The medication was approved for HIV treatment in 2004 and is typically taken in the form of a daily pill, in combination with other HIV therapies.

Over the past two years, separate studies have shown Truvada can significantly reduce the chances of infection in people who are HIV-negative.

That method is known as Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, or PrEP for short, and it is the same method used to prevent malaria in travelers. An at-

not receiving a full HIV treatment, those who become infected while on PrEP are at risk of building a resistance to Truvada.

Dr. James Kublin, executive director of the HIV Vaccine Trials Network, stressed that PrEP should be used as part of a comprehensive approach to preventing HIV that includes condom use and regular HIV testing.

"PrEP should not be seen as a 'silver bullet,'" he said. "It comes with its own challenges, which include cost, possible long-term side effects and adherence... but can play a role in key, high-risk populations when used as part of a comprehensive, harm-reduction package."

David Ostrow, a Chicago-based veteran AIDS researcher, also has mixed feelings about PrEP.

"My reaction is that properly implemented, the use of PrEP will be a very important new way of preventing HIV, but I haven't seen much in the way of how that is going to be accomplished," said Ostrow.

Ostrow worried that not enough research has

been done to identify who exactly is at highest risk for contracting the virus, and he said the cost of Truvada, which might be more than \$1,000 a month for PrEP, is so steep that it may not be a viable option for curbing new infections. Moreover, Ostrow said he is concerned about resistance. He said more studies on Truvada for PrEP are needed.

"I just don't know why [the FDA] didn't want to wait a little longer," he said.

But the real test, said Ostrow, will be in if PrEP is implemented in a way that is safe.

Side effects for Truvada can include nausea, diarrhea, abdominal pain, weight loss and headaches, according to the FDA. More serious side effects in trials were uncommon, the FDA said, but included bone toxicity and kidney problems.

But despite possible drawbacks, many service providers say the approval of Truvada for PrEP marks a new day in HIV prevention.

"I think it's a monumental decision, really," said Jeff Berry, director of publications at Chicago's Test Positive Aware Network. "It's the first drug approved for prevention of HIV... It's just one more tool, I think, in the prevention tool kit."

Berry notes that while more research might help identify at-risk populations better, service providers already know generally who may be at-

risk, and he notes that while the cost of Truvada can be steep, the cost of infection is far steeper.

"I think it's absolutely cost-effective when you look at it that way," he said.

Federal anti-bullying summit Aug. 6-7

The U.S. Department of Education will host the third annual Federal Partners in Bullying Prevention Summit Monday-Tuesday, Aug. 6-7 in Washington, D.C., according to a press release.

The summit will focus on ensuring that anti-bullying efforts are coordinated and based on the best available research. Panels will highlight the connection between bullying and suicide, and ways to help students who bully others.

Keynote speakers will include U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and the First Lady of Maryland Katie O'Malley. In addition, there will be a special discussion between White House Senior Advisor Valerie Jarrett and Cynthia Germanotta, mother of musician and staunch LGBT ally Lady Gaga.



Jim Pickett.

risk patient takes the drug before being exposed to a disease or virus.

Those who might benefit from PrEP could be sex partners where one person is HIV-positive and the other is negative, people engaging in high-risk sex and HIV negative people who may not always have a choice about condom use.

"We can make a huge dent in new infections if we incorporate this tool into our prevention programming, and provide people more methods to avoid HIV," said Pickett in a statement. "We can look forward to more sex acts being protected, especially among individuals who have already chosen, for whatever reason, to not use condoms consistently."

But experts stress that Truvada should be used with condoms, providing an extra layer of protection against the virus, rather than circumventing safer-sex practices. And some experts worry that those on PrEP will now be less likely to use condoms.

Further, experts worry that the use of Truvada for PrEP could create a resistance to the drug if the user becomes infected with HIV while taking it. Because those taking Truvada for PrEP are

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Chick-fil-A officer: The company is anti-gay

BY ANDREW DAVIS AND KATE SOSIN

Chick-fil-A Chief Operating Officer Dan Cathy has confirmed what many have said about the fast-food chain all along: that the company is anti-gay.

Cathy's statements have set off a firestorm of bad press and drawn the scorn of everyone from politicians to The Muppets.

In a new interview, Cathy told Christian news publication the Baptist Press his goal is to operate the fast-food chain "on Biblical principles." When asked if his company had an established position against marriage equality, Cathy replied, "guilty as charged." He added, "We know that it might not be popular with everyone, but thank the Lord, we live in a country where we can share our values and operate on biblical principles."



LGBT groups have long criticized the restaurant chain for its donations to anti-gay groups. A recent report from Media Matters asserted that Chick-fil-A donated more than \$1.9 million to anti-gay causes in 2010 alone. Equality Matters also reported that Chick-fil-A donated \$1.7 million to anti-gay groups in 2009, including Focus on the Family and Exodus International.

Still, Cathy had previously insisted that he and Chick-fil-A were not anti-gay, and that his company has "no agenda against anyone."

Cathy's latest comments have become the source of intense scrutiny across social media platforms, with many people stating they were giving up the company's famous chicken sandwich. Facebook users took to the company's page to express their outrage or support after the company released a public statement on the controversy.

The company wrote that it was committed to treating every person with respect regardless of their sexual orientation, among other things.

"Going forward, our intent is to leave the policy debate over same-sex marriage to the

government and political arena," said the chain in a statement. "Chick-fil-A is a family-owned and family-led company serving the communities in which it operates. From the day Truett Cathy started the company, he began applying biblically-based principles to managing his business. For example, we believe that closing on Sundays, operating debt-free and devoting a percentage of our profits back to our communities are what make us a stronger company and Chick-fil-A family."

Asked to comment on Cathy's statement and past political contributions, the company declined to comment further than the statement.

However, the statement did not quell thousands of Facebook users who called the company homophobic.

Wrote one person: "We treat all people with honor, dignity, and respect. While simultane-

ously denying their equality and the worth of their feelings and relationships. Condescending, much?"

The statement did not appease The Jim Henson Company, either. According to the Examiner, The Jim Henson Company had sold Muppet toys to Chick-fil-A for its kids meals, but pulled the toys over Cathy's anti-gay comments. The company announced that CEO Lisa Henson supports gay marriage and would put invest profits from its past partnership with Chick-fil-A into the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation.

"The Jim Henson Company has celebrated and embraced diversity and inclusiveness for over fifty years and we have notified Chick-Fil-A that we do not wish to partner with them on any future endeavors," the company wrote on its Facebook page.

Boston Mayor Thomas Menino vowed to keep the fast-food chain out of his city, according to the Boston Herald.

"Chick-fil-A doesn't belong in Boston," Menino told the Herald. "You can't have a business in the city of Boston that discriminates against

a population. We're an open city, we're a city that's at the forefront of inclusion."

Not all politicians admonished the chain for its anti-gay stance.

According to Politico, Pennsylvania Rep. Joe Pitts said that Cathy's comments showed that "in America, you can be religious and also run a business according to your conscience."

The restaurant has been a source of contro-

versy among LGBT Chicagoans since it landed downtown last year. Last May, LGBT activists protested the Chicago restaurant before it even opened at 30 E. Chicago Ave.

Activists with LGBT Change passed out mock coupons that read "Bigot-fil-A" with a list of the company's contributions to anti-gay causes. The demonstration was part of a national effort opposing the chain organized by GetEQUAL.

Space pioneer Sally Ride dies

Physicist Sally Ride, 61, a pioneering woman in space, died of pancreatic cancer at age 61 on July 23. She is survived by her partner of 27 years, Tam O'Shaughnessy.

NASA chose Ride as an astronaut candidate in January 1978, and was a mission specialist on her historic ride on STS-7, which launched June 18, 1983—when she was 32 years old. (Two Soviet women beat her to space.)

She continued to work at NASA until 1987, when she left to work for Stanford University. She briefly married Steve Hawley in 1982, but divorced in 1987. Obituaries listed O'Shaughnessy as her surviving partner—they had been girlhood friends.

O'Shaughnessy is the COO and executive vice president of Sally Ride Science and a professor emerita of school psychology at San Diego State University, according to SallyRideScience.com.

Ride said of her historic flight: "The thing that I'll remember most about the flight is that it was fun. In fact, I'm sure it was the most fun I'll ever have in my life."

The Website stated: "She had the rare ability to understand the essence of things and to inspire those around her to join her pursuits.

"Sally's historic flight into space captured the nation's imagination and made her a household name. She became a symbol of the ability of women to break barriers and a hero to generations of adventurous young girls. After retiring from NASA, Sally used her high profile to champion a cause she believed in passionately—inspiring young people, especially girls, to stick with their interest in science, to become scientifically literate, and to consider pursuing careers in science and engineering."

Ride wrote seven science books for children: To Space and Back (with Sue Oakie); and Voyager; The Third Planet; The Mystery of Mars; Exploring Our Solar System; Mission Planet Earth; and Mission Save the Planet (all with O'Shaughnessy). She also "initiated and directed NASA-funded education projects designed to fuel middle school students' fascination with science, including EarthKAM and GRAIL MoonKAM," the Website said.

According to SallyRideScience.com, Ride is

also survived by her mother, Joyce; her sister, Bear; her niece, Caitlin; and nephew, Whitney; her staff of 40 at Sally Ride Science; and friends and colleagues around the country.

Gay Colorado Congressman on mass shooting

Openly gay Congressman Jared Polis, D-Colo., released a statement about the movie-theater shooting that occurred in Aurora, Colo., in the early morning hours of July 20.

Polis said, "The thoughts and prayers of all Coloradans are with the victims of this horrific act of violence in Aurora. I know that all of our neighbors will reach out to offer assistance and condolences to their families and loved ones in this difficult time. I appreciate the work of local law enforcement officials who have acted swiftly to protect Coloradans from further violence."

Alleged gunman James Holmes appeared in court July 23 regarding the shooting. Twelve people were killed and 58 others were injured as Holmes allegedly opened fire during a screening of the Batman movie The Dark Knight Rises.

Office Depot teams with Gaga's foundation

Office Depot has announced a partnership with the Lady Gaga Born This Way Foundation.

On its website, Office Depot is asking people to do at least one of three things: "Be Kind," "Be Brave" and/or "Be Yourself." With "Be Kind," people can purchase limited-edition items such as signature gift cards, custom Sharpie markers, bracelets, collectors clips and Post-It Notes—with 25 percent of the sales price supporting the foundation.

Products feature the Born This Way Foundation logo as well as one of several messages: "Be Brave," "Be Amazing," "Be Yourself," "Be Kind," "Be Accepting" and "Be Involved."

"Be Brave" asks people to share personal messages of support. "Be Yourself" urges people to create a "#BeYourself"-themed Pin-board on Pinterest that shares what makes them brave and inspiring.

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Hyatt boycott goes global, LGBT groups join

BY KATE SOSIN

The union that represents hotel workers has launched a global boycott against Chicago-based Hyatt Hotels after three years of failed negotiations that have occasionally embroiled Chicago's LGBT community in controversy.

UNITE HERE has been leading a boycott against Chicago Hyatt hotels since August 2010, when the union and hotel chain came to a standstill in contract negotiations. Union leaders say the global launch of the boycott is largest escalation against Hyatt since that time.

UNITE HERE says that the biggest sticking point remains work conditions for its housekeepers.

"What we're asking for is Hyatt to end the abuse of housekeepers," said Carly Karmel, a spokesperson for UNITE HERE Local 1 in Chicago.

The union has alleged that Hyatt forces its housekeepers to clean double the recommended number of rooms in a shift, while denying them tools that would make the job less strenuous.

However, Hyatt says the boycott is a stunt to boost union membership and argues that the union has accepted contracts with the same wage and benefits proposals from other hotels as offered by Hyatt.

"While UNITE HERE leaders are pursuing more dues-paying members, and raising dues on Chicago members an astonishing 10 percent, Hyatt has been putting its associates first by protecting their right to a fair choice and standing ready to pay the raises they should have had three years ago," said Doug Patrick, senior vice president of human resources at Hyatt, in a statement.

The boycott has been a sore spot for Chicago's



A protester at the July 2011 picket against Hyatt in Chicago. Photo by Kate Sosin

International Mr. Leather Competition, which was held at the Hyatt Regency the last two years despite the boycott. UNITE HERE had accused IML of crossing the boycott. IML countered that it was bound by an expensive contract and that no other hotel could accommodate its crowds on such short notice. IML will be held at the Marriott Chicago next year.

A major supporter of the Hyatt boycott has been renowned LGBT activist Cleve Jones, whose "Sleep with the Right People" campaign discourages LGBT people from crossing hotel boycotts.

Now Jones is joined by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Feminist Majority Foundation, Pride at Work, National Women's Health Network and National Stonewall Democrats in support of the boycott. The union has also announced support from the NFL Players Association, the National Organization of Women, Netroots Nation and Interfaith Worker Justice.

Karmel said the global boycott gives voice to workers in Chicago who have been boycotting their local hotels for three years.

However, some union Hyatt hotels around the country are under contract, said Karmel. Those hotels are exempt from the boycott.

Hotel workers have been protesting in Chicago regularly since 2010. Last July, the Park Hyatt turned its winter heat lamps on more than 60 workers who were protesting in the middle of a heat wave. The hotel shut off the lamps before temperatures peaked in the afternoon.

OPM covering children of same-sex domestic partners

The United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has issued a proposed rule to amend Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB) regulations regarding coverage for children up to age 26 and for children of the same-sex domestic partners of FEHB enrollees, according to FederalRegister.gov.

The regulations also allow children of same-sex domestic partners to be covered under the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program.

In one part of the revised FEHB program, it is stated that "a child is considered to be a family member eligible to be covered ... if he or she is (i) A child born within marriage; (ii) A recognized natural child; (iii) An adopted child; (iv) A stepchild; or (v) A foster child who lives with the enrollee in a regular parent-child relationship." "Stepchild" is defined as "the child of an enrollee's spouse or domestic partner."

Family Equality Council Executive Director Jennifer Chrisler said in a statement, "This rule change means that federal workers can

now be assured that a high fever, broken arm or debilitating illness won't jeopardize their child's health or their family's finances.

"We look forward to the day when marriage equality and the full implementation of the Affordable Care Act guarantee that all of our families have the same health care protections as their friends and neighbors."

The Human Rights Campaign, in a separate statement, asked "OPM to take this important step as part of its Blueprint for Positive Change, a series of recommendations to the Obama administration for regulatory and policy changes that would improve the lives of LGBT Americans, without the need for Congress to act."

OPM must receive comments about the proposal on or before Tuesday, Sept. 18. People may send written comments to Marguerite Martel, Senior Policy Analyst, Planning and Policy Analysis, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Room 3415, 1900 E Street NW., Washington, D.C.; or fax to 202-606-4640, Attn: Marguerite Martel.

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HBHC from cover

after they were diagnosed with AIDS, and before and after they began highly active antiretroviral therapy—along with data from a control group of same-aged, HIV-free men who have sex with men. Comparing these before-and-after specimens and data from HIV-infected and uninfected individuals has yielded numerous seminal discoveries,” according to the NIH website.

In later years, the MACS has also meant significant data about the effects of specific medications and drug regimens. In the early years of the AIDS epidemic, a diagnosis meant a severely reduced life span. However, in recent years, with advanced pharmaceuticals and advances in the care of patients, the MACS has become instrumental in determining the needs of an aging population whose lives have been considerably extended. MACS research has also had a significant effect upon public health policy, according to the Website.

Over the years, a total of 6,972 men have been enrolled in the study, approximately half of whom are HIV-negative and half are HIV-positive. The study is going on in four cities across the country: Baltimore, Chicago, Pittsburgh and Los Angeles. In Chicago, it has been going on in three different sites, NU, Howard Brown, and the CORE Center. For years, HBHC's prestige as a research organization grew from the fact that it has been the only community organization that housed the MACS: the other sites are all academic or research centers.

Dr. David Ostrow, founding principal investigator of the MACS at Howard Brown, in speaking to WCT about the grant two years ago, said that the budget for the total MACS grant (including other sites) is 10 percent of the total NIH budget for AIDS research. The budget for NIH's AIDS research for the fiscal year 2012 was projected at \$3,159,531,000. AIDS research also means significant amounts of research and pharmaceutical money in a highly profitable medical field.

Under the transfer to NU, patient records and confidentiality were still being handled and maintained at HBHC. There was, however, a reported breach of confidentiality, as reported in WCT. Kathleen Lindsay (who has since married and is now Kathleen Kitchen) was terminated from her position as the MACS project coordinator at HBHC on Jan. 23, 2012. HBHC has not yet discussed the matter in public, citing confidentiality in personnel matters, but Kitchen told WCT that her termination came about because she had forwarded two patients' emails to her mother.

Margaret Pajak, health information management director and privacy officer at the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Medicine, speaking as an expert to WCT, noted that the punishment in this case seemed “harsh.” But she also confirmed that Kitchen's action was definitely a violation of privacy and security rules, which have been growing tighter in recent years, under the department of Health and Human Services.

It now appears that the matter had serious repercussions. A letter, on HBHC letterhead and dated March 28, 2012, and forwarded to WCT was signed by John Phair, principal investigator (PI) of the MACS study at Howard Brown. It referred, presumably, to the incident as “some issues related to the administration of this project” and that “[W]e sent out notices regarding those issues and are working carefully to improve our processes.”

The letter went on to state: “At this time, the Howard Brown Health Center Institutional Review Board [IRB], the committee that watches over the safety and rights of research participants, thought it best to delay the start of our next wave of study visits to get all of our administrative processes and documentation back in line here at Howard Brown Health Center. Therefore, we are not scheduling appointments at this time. Our hope is that all will resume in a timely fashion within the upcoming month.”

On June 26, 2012, Steven Wolinsky, principal investigator of the MACS at NU (the two institutions have separate PIs), wrote to participants, citing a Feb. 2 letter from HBHC and stating the fall-out in stronger terms: “Howard Brown's ethics panel called an institutional review board [and] suspended the MACS work there, thereby prohibiting Howard Brown Health Center from scheduling MACS participant visits.”

The letter went on to make a direct appeal to MACS participants at HBHC: “To continue your participation in the MACS, we ask you to schedule your next study visit at the Northwestern University Infectious Diseases Clinic. ... Because this clinic is new for you, we will ask you to sign a new consent form. ... The change to where you schedule your visits will not affect where you receive your medical care or loss of any medical benefits to which you are entitled.” The letter went on to give participants a number to call, 312-908-MACS, should they have any further questions.

In the midst of all this, NU also sent a letter to members of the Community Advisory Board (CAB) of the HBHC MACS study June 29. A CAB is a group of volunteers, drawn from a community of research subjects of any study, intended to serve as a link between the community and researchers. These volunteers are non-scientists, and their input is generally in the form of review and monitoring. CAB's recommendations are non-binding and the nature of each CAB can shift dramatically based on the specific institutions, research, and volunteers involved.

In the letter to the HBHC CAB, Steven Wolinsky referenced the general letter to HBHC MACS participants and addressed CAB members specifically, “As a key stakeholder in the community served by Howard Brown Health Center and a valued advisor for and participant in the MACS, I ask that you meet with me to discuss the proposed change to the clinic visits.” The meeting was July 9.

WCT was able to speak to some of the CAB members who were present at that meeting, where approximately half a dozen showed up. The full contingent of the CAB is reported to be around a dozen people.

Jim Briggs has been with the MACS for 27 years and is also a member of the CAB. According to him, Steven Wolinsky communicated to the CAB that the NIH had “stopped Howard Brown from seeing patients.” Briggs made his appointment with NU, with the understanding that a consent form signed by him would allow for his records to be transferred from HBHC.

Ron Fritsch, has also been with the MACS almost from the beginning, for 27 years. He confirmed that there had not been any appointments with HBHC in the last wave of the study, which requires participants to come in for blood drawing and an array of tests every six months.

Terry Tatum, in MACS since 1984, confirmed that Wolinsky had indeed said that the MACS was closed at HBHC and that the NU spoke of hoping that participants would get the word out about transferring to NU. He also confirmed the report, from Wolinsky, that HBHC was not transferring records over to NU.

Tatum spoke of the importance of the study to him on two different levels, giving a sense of why the MACS has been such an integral part of so many men for so long: “The MACS study is an important study in terms of the health of many people including but not limited to gay men. It's an important research study to understand how HIV operates. At the personal level, this was and has been for almost 30 years a way that I could personally do something to fight the disease especially in the early days when there didn't seem to be anything anybody could do; it was one thing that I could do. And so, personally, it's an important study and it's important that as many of us that have been participating keep participating.”

Vincent Samar, also one of the earliest participants, expressed concern that since the current wave ends in September, people should not lose



Dr. David Ostrow. Photo by Kate Sosin

continuity in the information made available to them.

Danny Kopelson has been a MACS participant from its beginning and is also a CAB member; he was not able to attend the July 9 meeting but expressed frustration with what he saw as the lack of communication from HBHC. Detailing the many calls he had made to HBHC, Kopelson said, “If you've been doing this for 28 years, you have an obligation to test subjects [to provide updates].”

Harlan Fleming, a long-time participant, had already expressed his frustration over MACS in a letter to WCT, and had transferred himself to NU. He spoke warmly of the staff at NU where, he said, he had his results within a week whereas HBHC had always taken a couple of months to give results. He said that a transfer to NU would be good for the MACS but bad for HBHC. With regard to the persistent report about the transfer of records, Fleming confirmed that this was indeed the case: his own records had yet to be transferred even though he himself had moved his participation, despite numerous requests from him.

Shortly after WCT spoke to these participants, they all received a letter from HBHC, dated July 10 and signed by HBHC CEO Jamal Edwards. Edwards referenced recent correspondence from NU to MACS participants, and went on to write that the concerns about the MACS in the early part of the year “led to the termination of certain HBHC research personnel and a delay in the next wave of study visits. In response to these concerns, HBHC prepared a comprehensive corrective action plan that was approved by our IRB, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the U.S. Office of Human Research Protection (OHRP). We are now and have been executing the corrective action plan.”

He then wrote, “Because our efforts are not complete and we want to ensure that all issues are fully resolved, we regrettably cannot discuss this matter in any further detail at this time, nor can we recommend that any HBHC MACS participant receive their study visits at any other location. Rest assured that your study information remains secure and confidential at HBHC. As always, we will continue to maintain all of your study records at this location, unless you direct otherwise.” The letter provided the HBHC MACS line, 773-388-8899, if subjects wanted more information.

The letter took Fleming by surprise. In forwarding it to WCT, he wrote, “... it just shows how unaware they are at HBHC. I transferred my participation to Northwestern last fall!”

NU, in the meantime, responded to WCT's request for information after several calls and emails. Spokesperson Alan Cabbage would not respond to the July 10 HBHC letter, saying the center was “not aware of that” and that, in any case, “we would not comment on that. We're

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moving forward. The important thing now is how can we ensure that the study continue."

With regard to the status of the MACS at HBHC, Cabbage said that NU's communications and attempts to get people to transfer were based on problems with how the grant was administered. He said, "What happened is that, effective July 2, NU stopped using Howard Brown Health Center as a site for this research. Northwestern will use either our site or the CORE Center in order to continue it; we will no longer have the study visits at the HBHC."

According to Cabbage, "This is a decision made in conjunction with the NIH after a breach of patient confidentiality." Confirming the decision of the IRB, he went on to say that this move was to "preserve the integrity of the research" and "was not in any way a Northwestern vs. Howard Brown rivalry. This is a study that has been going on for many years and benefited patients and doctors around the world. We're trying to work with Howard Brown and with NIH to ensure as best as we can a smooth transition."

Since the funds come from the NIH and HBHC is the subcontractor, NU is the "official institution on the ground," said Cabbage, adding, "we made the decision who to use as a subcontractor."

With regard to the matter of HBHC's apparent refusal to turn over records, Cabbage said, "We are working with the NIH on this. Howard Brown has not yet provided the research records or contact information to Northwestern in accordance with federal guidelines on how you cancel a contract. What we're trying to do is get the word out as much as we can. We have some data but we don't believe we have it all and we're reaching out to make sure people know whom to contact."

Cabbage would not be specific about the harm to the study; in a follow-up email, after more questions, he responded, "If we don't get the research records, it would have an adverse impact on the study, which is why we're now reaching out to participants and others to encourage them to continue."

In the meantime, Howard Brown responded to WCT's request for information with a statement saying, "HBHC has maintained communication with MACS participants and will continue to provide status updates regarding the study as more information becomes available. ... HBHC's MACS team remains intact and we are proactively endeavoring to find the best solution to resume MACS visits at HBHC, working with the NIH and NWU and other stakeholders and authorities. We look forward to resuming study visits at HBHC soon."

The NIH responded to questions from WCT: "On March 23, 2012, the Howard Brown Institutional Review Board notified NIAID [National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which oversees the MACS] that they were temporarily suspending all human subjects research activities for the MACS study at HBHC as of April 2 due to aspects of the study's conduct. Northwestern is the primary awardee, and Howard Brown is a sub to Northwestern, so NIAID notified Northwestern of this suspension. NIAID considers HB suspended as a MACS site pending resolution of all issues to the satisfaction of both Northwestern and Howard Brown, and pending a site audit to be conducted by NIAID. ... MACS participants who had been seen at the HB site have the option to be seen at Northwestern or an alternative site. We are working with Northwestern, the lead for this study, to notify the participants accordingly and thus maintain continuity for the study."

When asked if there was a specific deadline for HBHC to hand over records, Cabbage said there was none and that it would be a continuing process. Asked about any effects on patients' health, he said that this was not a medical testing and so would not have an impact on their health. Cabbage expanded on why NU felt it was important for it to gain patient information: "We are a major research university. Northwest-

ern does more than \$500 million annually in research funding, and much of that is biomedical research. We are used to this sort of thing [complex research] and we feel that it is best for us to be the ones to be the ones doing this."

Several sometimes-contradictory stories have arisen during this investigation.

At this point, pending further responses from the NIH and other parties, the exact legal and financial issues remain somewhat unclear. It is unclear what, if any, punitive role NIH might take with regard to HBHC or if there is yet any legal ground to do so, and if the suspension will be temporary or permanent.

On July 16, an email from the MACS email account at NU sent a draft of a letter, apparently signed by the HBHC CAB; it is unclear why a HBHC CAB letter would originate from NU. The letter restated matters up to this point and said, "... we are contacting you directly and asking your assistance in ensuring that the study continue."

At this point, this appears to be a question of two institutions attempting to gain control over one of the most well-funded and significant research projects in HIV/AIDS.

Windy City Times will continue to cover this story.

Neb. woman attacked in alleged hate crime

In an alleged hate crime that took place in Lincoln, Neb., three masked men attacked a woman by breaking into her home, binding her with zip ties, carving anti-gay slurs into her skin, pouring gas on her floor and lighting it, according to a Huffington Post item.

Erin Thompson, a friend of the unnamed victim, confirmed that the woman who was attacked is lesbian. Thompson also said that three anti-gay epithets (such as the word "dyke") were carved on the woman's arms and stomach.

Investigators said it was too early to determine if the attack was a hate crime.

In a statement, Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Vice President of Communications Fred Sainz said, "The accounts of the violence inflicted upon this woman are truly horrific. We have confidence that the Lincoln Police Department will thoroughly investigate this crime and take swift and appropriate action to bring the perpetrators to justice." HRC planned to alert the Department of Justice and the FBI about the crime.

In a separate statement, One Iowa Executive Director Donna Red Wing said, "We grieve for this woman, a survivor of senseless violence, and we grieve for our community. While we continue to move forward, as equality becomes more of a reality, we sadly realize that there are those who will respond with violence and intolerance. And this unthinkable and cruel tragedy is a very painful reminder of how much work we have ahead of us in the fight for full equality."

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.creamcity-foundation.org.



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Gary Chichester talks life of activism at 'Fireside Chat'

BY KATE SOSIN

According to Gary Chichester, Chicago's first Pride parade permit allowed for circus animals. Chichester would know—the permit bore his signature. Never having organized the parade before, organizers played it safe by asking the city for everything, horses and elephants included.

Chichester revisited that story and others from his decades of activism in a "Fireside Chat" with leatherman author Douglas O'Keeffe at Center on Halsted July 16.

Chichester grew up in Chicago and later the suburb of Niles, the son of a Dixieland drummer father and a mother who worked for a fire equipment company, an unprecedented career for a woman at the time.

Chichester attended high school with current Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and the two, both interested in politics, served on the class council together. Chichester described the young Clinton as "dorky."

"She had these coke-bottle glasses," said Chichester. "She was a brainiac."

When he was 16, Chichester's family took a vacation to Los Angeles. It was there he first noticed gay men.

"I thought, 'Hmm, who are all these boys walking around in these tight white Levis?'" he said.

Chichester decided he had to explore on his own, so shortly after his family returned, he moved to L.A. by himself. By the time his plane landed, he said, he was an out gay man.

In L.A., Chichester got to know actors, writers and others in Hollywood, including Henry Wilson, the gay talent agent that shaped Rock Hudson's career.

"He was going to discover me, which never came through," said Chichester with a laugh.

It was not long, however, before police busted the 17-year-old as an underage transient and shipped him back to Chicago.

In Chicago, Chichester watched history unfold from the start of the post-Stonewall gay rights movement to the political turmoil of the time. He watched as busloads of police cracked down on protesters and media at the infamous '68 Democratic National Convention.

Chichester's connection to LGBT life only grew over the next few years. He was involved in the early movement at local universities through Gay Liberation Front. But Chichester and others wanted to organize beyond universities.

In 1971, they formed the Chicago Gay Alliance.

Around the same time, Chichester and oth-



Gary Chichester during the "Fireside Chat." Photo by Kate Sosin

ers were working on putting together the city's gay pride parade. A march of 100 to 150 people had been held in 1970, but in 1971, organizers wanted to create a joyous event. Still, they didn't know how many people would attend a parade or what they would march with. Planning for all possibilities, they asked for a permit that included everything, said Chichester, including horses and elephants. The city approved the permit.

Chichester found early employment managing Man's Country, the North Side bathhouse owned by legendary leathermen Chuck Renslow and Dom Orejudos. Working for Renslow and Orejudos, Chichester had a hand in planning the first Mr. Gold Coast Contest, named after the couple's leather bar. The contest was the precursor to International Mr. Leather, which Chichester still helps organize today.

Chichester remained active through LGBT organizations and causes through the AIDS crisis. He raised funds for AIDS advocacy as a clown with Circus Vargas.

One day, former Windy City Times Publisher Jeff McCourt told Chichester that he would donate \$5,000 if he performed on the trapeze. The follow year, Chichester made good on the bet. He and longtime friend R.J. Chaffin dubbed themselves "The Flying Rotundas" and took to the air.

Chichester's skills in event planning and production would eventually lead him to a career with AgencyEA, a Chicago-based marketing agency. Since, Chichester has helped plan events for Oprah Winfrey.

But his commitment to LGBT community has remained steadfast. Asked if he would change

anything about his life if he could go back in time, Chichester said he would not. He has no regrets, even if the gains made by LGBT activists during his time changed what being gay meant to Chichester personally.

"I actually had more fun being gay when it was naughty," he said with smile.



Festival organizer Maria Hernandez. Photo by Sean Pyles

Deaf Lesbian Festival draws global attendees

BY SEAN PYLES

Nearly 70 people attended this year's Deaf Lesbian Festival (DLF) held at Center on Halsted July 18-21.

Attendees came from across the country and abroad for a weekend of workshops, entertainment and social gathering.

This is the first year that the festival, now in its seventh year, has been held in the Midwest. The festival, which meets every two years in a new location, typically gathers between 50 and 200 attendees. This year was the first DLF had an international presence as it partnered with the International Deaf Lesbian Festival, which was founded last year.

Over the four-day festival, attendees partook in events ranging from speed-dating to bus tours to a silent auction. The weekend focused on the promotion of leadership skills and empowerment in the workplace. At the closing ceremony, attendees gathered for a speech by Dr. Eileen Forestal, director of interpreters at Union County College, who spoke about the deaf lesbian history. The weekend ended with a trip to Montrose Beach and a Dyke Ball in the evening.

'One Queer Roof' event stirs controversy

BY ERICA DEMAREST

An alleged racist incident at last month's "One Queer Roof" event has sparked controversy in the community.

Several Chicago-based LGBT groups, including Chances Dances, Queerer Park and Stardust/CULT, hosted the 18+ Pride gathering June 16 at Lincoln Hall, 2424 N. Lincoln Ave.

On June 18, the curator of the blog "Fuck Yeah Fat Dykes" posted a statement claiming that she and two friends had been racially profiled and banned from the event.

The blogger, who did not provide her name, explained that two of the three individuals (two women and one man) are undocumented immigrants who presented Mexican consulate IDs at the door. Lincoln Hall's bouncer allegedly questioned the IDs' validity.

He eventually let the three pass; as they did so, they said to one another, "That's so fucking racist." According to the blog post, an altercation involving the bouncer, manager and the three patrons ensued. The bouncer and manager allegedly cornered the patrons before banning them from the event for using the word "racist."

On June 27, Affinity—a social-justice organization that works with Black LGBT communities—tipped off an online discussion by issuing a press release condemning Lincoln Hall's staffers' behavior. The organization argued that Mexican consulate IDs were valid and described the incident as full of "unacceptable distrust and xenophobia."

No members of Affinity were present at "One Queer Roof." Board President Kelly Saulsberry said the nonprofit merely hoped to foster an ongoing dialogue about racism in the queer community.

Event co-organizer Jenae Williams posted on the "One Queer Roof" Facebook page: "There is a lot of anger and fire and passion in these posts ... but there are also a lot of distorted facts. I am a queer womyn of color. I was at the door when this exchange occurred. Mediation was almost impossible on both sides."

In an interview with Windy City Times, Williams characterized the exchange as an isolated incident. She explained that the bouncer had been interrogating all guests, including those who are white and U.S. citizens. The three patrons reacted defensively to the line of questioning, which is standard at clubs where alcohol is served.

"The bouncer was, like, 'Look, it's not about your IDs. I'm supposed to ask questions,'" Williams said. "The women started yelling at him and calling him a racist, and he very calmly listened. ... He didn't corner them. That's false, completely."

Williams added, "I don't want to dismiss anyone's experience. I'm sorry they felt threatened, but [One Queer Roof] was such an amazing, positive event. It was so cute to see all these baby gays dancing around. I heard from many people that there was no problem inside, and it's sad that one incident is getting all the focus."

Lincoln Hall staffers did not wish to comment. The blogger did not respond to Windy City Times' outreach.

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Lambda Legal, ACLU talk marriage suits at forum

BY SEAN PYLES

Lambda Legal and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) hosted a panel discussion July 17 at Center on Halsted to update the public on progress of the organizations' separate but coordinated lawsuits for marriage equality.

On the panel were attorneys representing both organizations as well as plaintiff couple Mercedes Santos and Theresa Volpe, and Carlos Briones, whose husband, Richard Rykhus, could not be in attendance.

The attorneys talked courtroom strategy and legal precedent while the plaintiffs discussed the importance of marriage—rather than civil unions—in the lives of their families.

The lawsuits, which represent 25 families, are directed by Cook County Clerk David Orr under the Equal Rights Amendment of the Illinois Constitution, declaring the ban on same-sex marriage unconstitutional. Orr supports same-sex marriage and the lawsuits, as does Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez and Attorney General Lisa Madigan. But two downstate clerks represented by a conservative law firm have been granted the right to intervene in the case and

fight the lawsuits.

At the forum, attorney Jordan Hynes of Lambda Legal said the plaintiff couples will talk about their families. He believes this will counter the argument that same sex couples are harmful to children and communities.

Briones said marriage accurately defines his relationship. The couple held a ceremony in 2005 and struggled with the words to describe the event. It was not until Briones and Rykhus adopted their son that a real need to find a proper title for their relationship arose.

"Suddenly it became more important," said Briones. "We wanted our son to be proud. We wanted him to believe he was a part of a family as valuable as any other."

Although Briones and Rykhus are married in Canada, the couple sees an official marriage in the United States as a crucial step in the development of their family.

Hynes said the plaintiffs' stories recall the "separate but equal" doctrine. He also cited the legal precedent of *Loving v. Virginia*, which declared Virginia's ban on interracial marriages unconstitutional. Hynes believes this legal precedent of marriage as a basic civil right will

strengthen the argument for the constitutionality of same-sex marriage.

Santos said that she and Volpe struggle to communicate the importance of their civil union.

"Two of my siblings decided [the civil union] wasn't important enough [to attend]," said Santos. "If it was a marriage it would have been fine, but the civil union was different."

Karen Sheley of the ACLU argued that people don't understand what civil unions are.

"People have had the situation where they have their legal papers in order, but are still denied the same respect those with a marriage have without needing to show any papers at all," Sheley said.

Sheley also noted recent progress with the cases. Representing two downstate Clerks, the Thomas More Society law firm was granted inter-

venor status two weeks ago to defend Illinois' current ban on same-sex marriage, after Cook County officials refused to.

Volpe said she was happy the case was being challenged. It means she can finally stand up for her right to marriage equality. "If people are speaking up against what makes a family and that differences aren't good...I would love them to see our family because I believe our story deserves to be heard," she said.

A number of the more than 40 attendees asked the panel how a victory would impact their relationships in terms of when they could marry and what that change would mean for tax laws.

The lawyers anticipate the litigation process could take between nine months to a year and a half. The losing party is expected to appeal the case, eventually landing it in the Illinois Supreme Court.

Black gay caucus talks spirituality and sexuality

BY ELYSSA CZYNSKI

The Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus discussed the intersections of Black and gay identities at a special event held at the Chicago Department of Public Health recently.

Rev. Kevin Tindell facilitated "An Intimate Conversation, Spiritually Speaking: 'Will I Go To Heaven?—The Black Gay Spiritual Dilemma.'"

The talk featured author and activist Rev. Tuan N'Gai, creator of the website Operation-Rebirth.com, which, according to its website, works to end "the religious and spiritual abuse against black gays and lesbians inflicted by Black churches."

N'Gai discussed his desire to learn more about his own spirituality and religiousness in conjunction with his sexuality. N'Gai came from a tiny town in Texas where his family was Missionary Baptist and very religious. N'Gai talked about his struggles with his sexual orientation and religion. He said that a man younger than he was at the time asked him if

God would accept him even though he is gay, and N'Gai did not have a precise answer. After writing a ten-page letter explaining why he could not answer the question, the idea for his book "Will I Go To Heaven?" was born.

Attendees discussed at length the question of if scriptures from the Bible actually condemn homosexuality (N'Gai concluded they did not), the spread of HIV in the African American MSM community, how religion can coexist with sexuality, the similarities between different religions and how society is progressing in terms of spirituality.

Center receives nonprofit award

Center on Halsted recently received top honors from North Park University when it was named the winner of the 2012 Alford-Axelson Award for Nonprofit Managerial Excellence.

This is the eleventh year the award, named for Nils G. Axelson, a devoted community healthcare leader and visionary, and Jimmie R. Alford, a contemporary leading thinker and practitioner in the nonprofit arena.

This year's award was accompanied by a \$7,500 grant.



Carlos Briones (left) answers a question from panelists. Photo by Sean Pyles



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Lambda Legal represents Illinois couples in marriage fight

On May 30, 2012, 16 same-sex couples from across Illinois filed a lawsuit seeking the freedom to marry in their home state. Represented by Lambda Legal, their stories illustrate the many ways same-sex couples are harmed when forced to choose civil unions, a second-class status.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Illinois is representing nine additional couples whose profiles will be shown in next week's issue of Windy City Times. Lambda Legal and the ACLU of Illinois have filed two separate but coordinated lawsuits against Cook County aimed at winning marriage equality in Illinois.

Names are listed left to right, corresponding to each individual's position in the photos. All photos courtesy of Lambda Legal



Jim Darby & Patrick Bova (Chicago)

James Darby, 80, and Patrick Bova, 73, have been together for 48 years and live together in Hyde Park, Chicago. James, a proud veteran, was born on the south side of Chicago, where he worked in the stockyards before enlisting in the Navy to serve in the Korean War. He served 4 years before receiving an honorable discharge. James and Patrick who have been together for 49 years wish to marry to better protect each other as they advance in life.

Lynne Burnett & Robyne O'Mara (Godfrey)

Lynne Burnett, 55, and Robyne O'Mara, 56, of Godfrey have been together nearly 32 years. When Robyne experienced chest pains the couple raced to the emergency room. The registrar who admitted Robyne asked Lynne who she was and after a lengthy series of questions the hospital staff still didn't know what a civil union was or understand the couple's relationship.



Patricia Garcia & Julie Barton (Evanston)

Patricia Garcia, 54, and Julie Barton, 50, of Evanston have been together 20 years. Their daughter Olivia, 15, has often questioned the couples about why they aren't married. She was crushed to learn that her government bars her parents from marrying.



Daphne Scott-Henderson & Ryan Cannon (Bloomington)

Daphne Scott-Henderson, 41, and Ryan Cannon, 34, of Bloomington have been together for 6 years and are raising three children, Sonnet, 15, Autumn 11 and Sebastian, 4. When Ryan gave birth to Sebastian the hospital initially barred Daphne from visiting her son and refused to acknowledge Sonnet and Autumn as half-sisters. Ryan and Daphne want to marry to better protect their family.



Michelle Chappell & Michelle Franke (Champaign)

Michelle Chappell, 45, and Michelle Franke, 46, of Champaign have been together 21 years. Together they are raising their daughter Rose who is 9. They want to marry to better protect their family.



Bert Morton & Lee Korty (Springfield)

Bert Morton, 64, and Lee Korty, 53, of Springfield have been together 30 years. When Bert had a heart attack six years ago both men were frantic to be together during this stressful time and tried to explain their relationship to the hospital staff who barred Lee from Bert's bedside. All the staff wanted to know was if Bert was married, and after 24 years together it pained him to say no.

Daryl Rizzo & Jaime Garcia (Chicago)

Daryl Rizzo, 47, and Jaime Garcia, 50, have been together for 11 years and live in Rogers Park, Chicago, with their daughter Siena, 4. When Garcia needed an emergency appendectomy at 3 a.m., he and Daryl had to wait for Jaime's brother to arrive at the hospital to sign various forms because the hospital didn't recognize Daryl as Jaime's family. Daryl and Jaime want to marry to protect their daughter and themselves in case of an emergency.



Theresa Volpe & Mercedes Santos (Chicago)

Theresa Volpe, 41, and Mercedes Santos, 46, have been together 20 years and live in Rogers Park, Chicago, with their two children, Ava, 7, and Jaidon, 4. When Jaidon was hospitalized near death for kidney failure, hospital administrators barred Theresa from entering unless she identified herself as a "stepmother," telling her Mercedes was already inside and Jaidon could only have one "real" mother. Theresa and Mercedes have been together for 21 years and wish to marry so that everyone knows they are both their children's real mothers.



Robert Hickok & Brian Fletcher (Oak Park)

Robert Hickok, 42, and Brian Fletcher, 52, have been together 12 years and live in Oak Park with their three children, Jack, 6, Hank, 3, and Ellie, 2. Despite their civil union, Brian and Robert carry numerous legal documents with them wherever they go, including powers of attorney and confidential adoption decrees, for fear that they and their children will not be recognized as a family. Brian and Robert wish to marry to secure their children's future and to demonstrate, both to each other and to their children, the depth of their commitment to each other.



Peggy Burton & Donna O'Crowly (Bloomington)

Peggy Burton, 65, and Donna O'Crowly, 66, of Bloomington have been together 36 years. The couple, now retired, want to better protect each other as they grow older and worry that they are vulnerable because so many people do not understand what a civil union is.

LaKeesha Harris & Janean Watkins (Chicago)

LaKeesha Harris, 37, and Janean Watkins, 38, have been together 11 years and are raising six children in their Rogers Park, Chicago home. When LaKeesha lost her full-time job and a roof collapse depleted their savings, she and Janean applied for housing assistance but faced repeated misunderstanding by administrators who didn't know what a civil union was and were unsure if they could apply as a family. Janean and LaKeesha wish to marry to better represent themselves as a family.



Angelica Lopez & Claudia Mercado (Chicago)

Angelica Lopez, 36, and Claudia Mercado, 36, have been together for 14 years and live in Logan Square, Chicago with their children Isabel, 3, and Indigo, 6 months. Although Angelica and Claudia were happy to receive some degree of state recognition for their commitment to each other through a civil union, they yearn to be able to say that they are married, which evokes a legal, cultural, and symbolic meaning that is not encompassed in any other term.



Tim Rice & Don Julian (Alto Pass)

Tim Rice, 50, and Don Julian, 51, of Alto Pass, have been together 18 years. The couple celebrated a holy union in their church in 1996 and 15 years later the same pastor united them in a civil union. The couple enjoyed a celebration attended by 150 guests including the village mayor and many family and friends. Even with a supportive community and family network they struggle to explain what a civil union is and it does not signify what Tim and Don mean to each other.



Laura Hartman & Anne Dickey (Rock Island)

Laura Hartman, 34, and Anne Dickey, 37, of Rock Island have been together for 7 years and are raising a son, Theodore, 2. Although the couple entered into a civil union they knew in their hearts that it wasn't "the real thing." Laura and Anne belong to St. John's Lutheran Church and are waiting to rejoice with a church celebration on the day they can marry.



Brandon & Kevin Bowersox-Johnson (Urbana)

Brandon, 31, and Kevin, 40, Bowersox-Johnson of Urbana have been together 10 years. Together they are raising their son Garrett who is 5. Before they adopted their son they celebrated a commitment ceremony to signal to their family and friends that their child was entering a loving and stable family. After they adopted Garrett, Kevin requested time off from work to which administrators replied, "but you're the man—why are you asking for so much time off?" The couple want to marry so that others will better understand their family.



Bob Proctor & Hector Martinez (Peoria)

Bob Proctor, 49, and Hector Martinez, 49, of Peoria have been together 19 years. The couple could not bring themselves to enter into a civil union because it would not reflect the depth of feelings they have for each other.



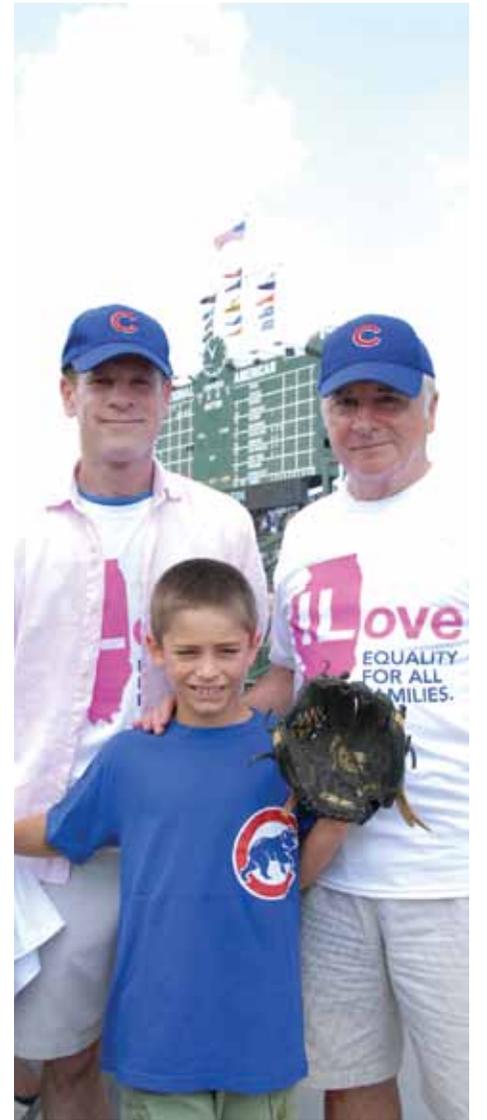
LGBT families and Lambda Legal have a ball

Celebrating LGBT family fun, Lambda Legal hosted "Family Day Out at Wrigley Field" July 15 as the Chicago Cubs defeated the Arizona Diamondbacks 3-1. Couples Laura Ricketts and Heidi Grathouse, Tracy Katz Muhl and Charlie Muhl, and Ray Koenig and Johnny Song served as co-chairs of the event. Attendees were able to meet some of the plaintiffs' families in Lambda Legal's pending suit for Illinois marriage.



Photos by Hal Baim





Local deacon leaves church over marriage stance

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Earlier this month Deacon Regan Burke of the Fourth Presbyterian Church, located downtown just off of Michigan Avenue, resigned from her position as deacon and member of the church in response to the Presbyterian Church's (USA) stance regarding same-sex marriage. Burke is a straight ally to the LGBT community.

During the 220th General Assembly (GA) of the Presbyterian Church (USA) meeting earlier this month in Pittsburgh, Pa.—the GA meets every two years to discuss matters pertaining to the Presbyterian Church—tit chose not to change the definition of marriage in the church's Book of Order to include people of the same gender. The vote was 338-308 to keep the definition of marriage as a union between a man and a woman. The GA, however, did approve a two-

year study on the issue of same-sex marriage and is inviting the entire church to engage in serious, deliberate conversation on the issue.

The recent decision to keep the definition of marriage as a union between a man and a woman comes on the heels of a 2011 amendment that opened ordination of candidates for the ministry to include partnered gay and lesbian candidates. Prior to this change, gay and lesbian ministers had to remain single and celibate. When this amendment took effect a new denomination—the Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians—was formed among congregations who disagreed with the new policy.

Prior to the recent GA meeting of the Presbyterian Church, according to the Presbyterian News Service, at least 100 congregations defected due to the church's decisions to embrace a more liberal view on LGBT issues.

Burke is pleased that Fourth Presbyterian was a leader in advocating for gay marriage at the recent GA meeting and loves everyone who was involved for their perseverance and commitment to changing the Presbyterian church in the United States.

She noted that although there is no specific LGBT group at the Fourth Presbyterian Church there is a large population of openly gay men who hold leadership positions at the church and they are encouraged and supported by church staff and ministers.

"Since the meeting and the vote generated a lot of press, I had friends outside the church ask me about it," said Burke. "I suddenly found that as a person who has been an advocate for gay rights my whole life, I am embarrassed to call myself a Presbyterian. I don't want to spend the rest of my life saying 'I'm a Presbyterian, but...'"

Raised as a Catholic in Chicago's northern suburbs and later in New Jersey, Burke left the Catholic Church at 17 because she "couldn't buy that only Catholics get to go to heaven." Burke spent a number of years searching for spiritual solace and then became a member of Fourth Presbyterian in the early 1980s after attending the church one day to hear Elam Davis—a Welsh preacher. During Davis' sermon he gave her the impression that God did love her, Burke explained. It was at



Deacon Regan Burke. Photo courtesy of Maggie Galloway

Fourth Presbyterian that "my spiritual life was enlarged by John Buchanan's preaching about the inclusivity of God's love," said Burke.

She became a deacon two years ago following a nominating process, an election by the congregation and a four-week course on Presbyterianism. "I was thrilled at the time because I had been a member for a long time and was an active volunteer on the advocacy committee and supervised the weekly supper for the homeless," said Burke.

Burke explained that deacons volunteer at the church in a variety of capacities. They help at the weekly supper for the poor, conduct church tours for the public, lead intercessory prayers after Sunday services, serve communion, answer questions and sign people up as volunteers.

An activist her entire life, Burke worked in politics and was a special assistant to Secretary Richard Riley at the Department of Education during Bill Clinton's presidency. She is also board chair of the Rape and Incest National Network—an online 24-hour hotline for rape and incest victims.

"I am a 66-year-old straight woman who has seen the savage discrimination of the LGBT community, including the and especially during the early AIDS epidemic," said Burke. "I have no personal story other than my love for my gay friends. I am thrilled that the hard work of all gay rights advocates is finally paying off and yet, I'm perplexed about why we were ever in this conversation in the first place. I am confident in my belief that this fight is not how God intended his dear children to live out their lives."

Since announcing her resignation, Burke noted that she has not received a response from the leadership of Fourth Presbyterian Church. She has, however, gotten support from other parishioners at the church as well as the church's support staff.

When reached for comment, the leadership at Fourth Presbyterian Church did not respond to queries about Burke's resignation or the GA's vote on marriage.

'Chefs and the City' July 27 at Ritz-Carlton

Vital Bridges Center on Chronic Care is hosting the eighth annual "Chefs and the City" Friday, July 27, at The Ritz-Carlton Chicago Grand Ballroom, 160 E. Pearson St., 7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.

Guests will sample fare prepared by chefs from 26 Chicago restaurants, including RL, RPM Italian, Green Zebra, Antepima, Tavernita, Sprout, Piccolo Sogno and Mercadito.

Tickets are \$50-\$250; see www.VitalBridges.org or call 773-271-9161.

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GAY *in the* **LIFE**
Joey Luna
 TEXT AND PHOTOS BY ROSS FORMAN



Age
29

Originally from
Houston

Job title
Front of house manager, Taverna 750; and DJ at Scarlet

Relationship status
Single

Hobbies
Music production, video games and movies

Favorite TV show
Girls (HBO)

Favorite movie
Scream

Least favorite song to play when DJing
"Call Me Maybe"

Joey Luna isn't sure exactly what his 30th birthday will include on Oct. 27, but it definitely will be a wild party—although it probably won't be in Chicago.

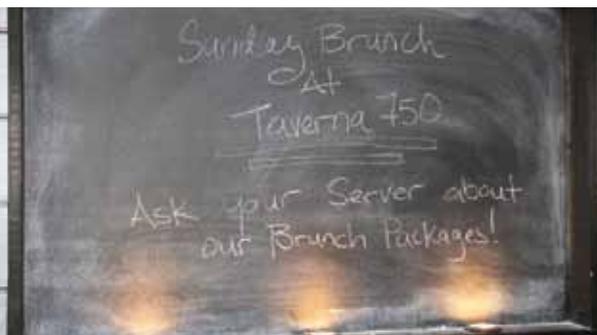
"I kind of want to go crazy, yet not embarrass myself" in my hometown, Luna said, laughing. "I definitely am looking forward to it. It will be an awesome milestone."

Luna has called Chicago home for about four years and said he "absolutely loves" the Windy City. "Chicago has a great mix—people, places to go, things to do."

That's true ven in the winter. "More people seem to go out to drink in the winter; they don't hide out at home," said Luna, who is often spotted behind the bar at Taverna 750 in Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood. "The city really comes together in the winter, it seems. Perhaps just for warmth. Nothing warms you up like shot of Rumpel Minze."

Luna also has a key behind-the-scenes role at the restaurant/bar that involves hiring, ordering and more. He handles many of the details, major and minor, that most people don't even know goes into running a successful business.

"The best part of my job is the people I work with," Luna said. "It's a very eclectic and diverse staff, people from all over country. There definitely are some interesting characters in the service industry in Chicago."



Luna said he's been hooked on the service industry because he's always wanted to be a part of the party, particularly throwing and hosting major events. "And this [industry] is an easy link to throwing a party, a natural fit," he said.

"I have fun letting others have fun; it's like I am the facilitator for others to have fun—and I really enjoy that. I enjoy throwing a party," Luna added.

So it's no surprise his long-term goal is to own a restaurant/bar, or a nightclub that also serves food.



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T *in the* **LIFE**
 COMPILED BY KATE SOSIN



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

Jackie McKethen

Pronouns
She, her

Identifies as
Female

Careers
 "In addition to having been in three branches of the military, I have worked for Standard Oil of Indiana (now BP), Nelson Brothers Furniture as assistant comptroller, Public Finance as a loan company branch manager, Wieboldt Stores, Charles A. Stevens as collection manager, a collection agency, two banks and Walmart. I was also a volunteer fireman. I am currently retired on social security."

"I think I am actually enjoying my dreams of my youth now, since I have done some acting and modeling. I got started in 2009 when, while working at Walmart, I got a phone call from a casting agency I had sent some photos to, asking if I wanted to be in an episode of Patrick Swayze's "The Beast" as a featured extra playing a waitress. I said 'absolutely.'"

Life's work
 "I still do plays and films, but I now devote most of my time to my Internet show on FenMark.net, which is both video and audio... The show's mission is to assist, support and inform the transgender and the transgender community, as well as our allies in the LGB community. We do this by having guests that can discuss concerns of transgender people concerning everything from coming out to sexual reassignment surgery, socializing, support groups or organiza-

tions, therapists, surgeons, events, news from all over the world and politics."

Hobbies
 "I collect Barbie and ceramic dolls, coins, baseball cards and some antiques."

Do you consider yourself an activist?
 "I do see myself as an activist, using the medium of video and audio as my 'soapbox.' My passion has become trying to change and improve the way the LGBT community is treated and seen. I see this as a very important mission, to bring something to a community that has existed for three thousand years, but has always been mistreated, disrespected, ridiculed and even killed for no reason, except for someone else's ignorance and lack of tolerance or compassion ... even amongst purported leaders."

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

"I tell them that it is about how you see yourself, feel about yourself and love yourself. I try to explain that self (gender) identification is not sexual orientation; although many transgender people are attracted to same sex persons, not all do."

What do you think is the most pressing issues facing trans people?

"The most important issue is getting lawmakers, civil servants and politicians to wake up and understand. The lawmakers, civil servants and politicians are supposed to be acting on the behalf of all citizens, not just who they choose."

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WINDY CITY
TIMES

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 Community Marketing, Inc.

ALEXANDRA
BILLINGS

On suicide

I didn't see a way out. I couldn't think of any other way. I was tired of hearing things in my head, and tired of feeling weighed down from the top of me to the bottom, and mostly tired of this constant, numb sadness that found its way into every moment of my life.

I was 16 years old, and I wanted to die.

I had tried twice before but failed. I was found both times, once by my best friend, the other by my mother. I knew, as I sat on the brown chair in the corner of my bedroom, that this time needed to work. I couldn't put my friends or my family through this one more time. This time had to work. There was no way around it.

I had been dressing in my mother's clothes for as long as I could remember, and because this was the late '60s, there was no word for what I was or what I felt. I knew there was this thing called "homosexuality," and in school, in Mr. Jameson's sixth-grade health class, we were shown a film about "the homosexual." All I remember is this grainy, black-and-white, flickering image of a stout, bald, lecherous, middle-aged man convincing an unsuspecting teenage boy to get into his car. I remember them driving off, and then this deep, resonant, male voiceover warned us, with eerie conviction, to "stay away from the homosexual. If you feel at all suspect, tell a neighbor, tell your parents, or report them to the authorities." Whatever this thing was, it was bad enough to get you thrown in jail, or, apparently, grounded really badly.

By the time I'd made the decision to end my life, though, I'd already had sex with men. For some reason, I'd never thought of myself as a homosexual. I'd never made love to a man as another man. In my spirit, in what was true for me, in the world in which I lived, I was a woman making love to a man. It took some imagination, believe me. It took me believing that what I felt was true in my heart was also true in his. I never asked my sexual partners how they saw me, or what they thought of me; I simply believed what I believed. And there was no reason for me to go on. I didn't have any role models, or any political allies, or any protection from what I assumed was clinical insanity. All I had was what I was born with: my curiosity.

I sat in my chair, and I went through a list: gun, pills, rope. These were either too messy, too involved, or not foolproof. And honestly,

where did I think I was going to get a gun in Schaumburg, Ill.? No one in Schaumburg carried guns. The closest thing was perhaps those nerf water guns, but that could only cause temporary water blindness. So I sat. It was a Friday afternoon, and both my parents were working, so the house was mine until 3:30, when my mother would get home from school. The day was going, and I wasn't any closer to a solution. I decided to walk.

I remember the day being extraordinarily bright. We lived in the suburbs of Chicago, and in the 1970s the suburbs were still living in the days of unlocked doors and next-door neighbors watching each other's kids for the weekend. Moments from my life then began to play out in my head, like the time I was in full makeup and dressed in my mother's favorite red skirt and white blouse when she suddenly came home, unexpectedly early. I ducked into her bedroom closet and had to stay there through two lengthy phone calls with her bridge ladies. Then I remembered the time I'd forgotten I'd made up my face the night before and woke up with red lipstick smeared all over my pillowcase. I told my mother I'd been in a fight with a basketball player. I'd never seen her so proud. And then there was the time I was in my room dancing to ABBA in a long, pink night shirt I'd stolen from Marshall Fields and had stuffed with a pair of tube socks to simulate breasts, and as I was doing my finale spin, my brother burst through the door to tell me dinner was ready. I'd never hit the dirt so hard and so fast in my entire life. I told him I was playing army and that I had just been fatally wounded.

I came up to the busiest intersection in our neighborhood, and watched the midday traffic zoom by. One car. Another car. I was standing on the corner, and as the sun got just a bit lower in the sky, I knew that whatever I was, whatever this terrible thing was that haunted me, I wanted it gone. I didn't want it anymore. I didn't understand it, and I didn't want it. It sickened me, and I was ashamed of who I was. I stepped off the curb, and as each car stopped at each light, I walked a little closer to the center of the intersection. My mouth was sewn shut. There was no sound anymore. The sky started to blacken, and I closed my eyes. With a gulp of air in my chest, I ran as fast as I could out into the middle of traffic.

I remember hearing a huge crash that sounded like someone had just rolled two full garbage cans down a cobble stone street. And then I heard a muffled scream, and I opened my eyes. I was standing in the center of nothing. There wasn't a car in sight. The crash I'd heard had happened in the parking lot only feet away from me, and there I was, with my eyes wide open, in the middle of the day, standing in the center of nothing.

were open to the public. And there was a revolving chair to head the committee. With Rich Pfeiffer at the helm, the committee and, hence, the parade have morphed into an instrument of the Northalsted Area Merchants Association and the liquor interests.

What business would want the planning of the parade and related events in the hands of the public, anyway? In earlier years there was a post-parade rally in Lincoln Park with a staging area for the purpose of giving voice to various non-bar community groups. There were accompanying tables with literature. All that has been swept aside. And by whom? Who made the decision? It wasn't the public.

We, the concerned citizens, must be at future (early 2013) Pride Committee meetings to put the committee back on track—from a business monopoly-one-man-show to an open, community-run organization.

And everything.

The cars that should have hit me had swerved and hit each other. The traffic that should have collided with me had ceased completely. And the day, which had turned grey and dark, instantaneously brightened up and poured sunlight on the top of my head. I had survived what I wasn't supposed to have survived. I had been dreaming for weeks about ways to end my life, because when I looked in the mirror I was repulsed, and when I tried to fix it, other people were repulsed. But my plan failed. And when I came up with this idea, this way out that I discovered by pure accident, something intervened.

I don't know about God. I don't know one way or the other. I do know that if it were up to me, solely up to me, I would have died that day, in the center of nothing. But my life has been rich and filled with me going forward into the next thing, and sometimes the cars have missed me, and sometimes they haven't. I don't know why. I don't know why not. So I don't think it was solely up to me. But I can't say that I know.

What I do know is I couldn't be happier than I am right now. And that has very little to do with me being transgender. It has everything to do with me being true. I don't waste any more time trying to figure out how to fool anyone. I don't try to fool myself, and I don't try to fool other people. I'm not honest every, single second of every single day, but I'm not necessarily talking about being honest. I'm talking about being true. I've found out that I like to live in both the sunlight and the darkness, and that sometimes, when I think nothing is happening, everything is happening. And that secrets live in the loudness of life. And that not everything in the world that happens to me happens for a reason; sometimes cars just crash in the parking lot and I get lucky. But I'm still curious, and I'm still asking why. And that's who I am. That's what keeps me true.

And whatever the reason, whether there is or isn't one, I'm eternally grateful that I walked out into the middle of that particular piece of chaos. I'm not recommending it—I don't think we all need to take that kind of a chance—but if it hadn't been for that day, if I hadn't been at the end of something, then nothing bigger would have ever started. I have to remind myself every so often that I am messy. I am not just one thing. My voice is colored and varied, and I don't believe in positive or negative experiences. I just believe that everything happens.

And I want to be in the middle of that. I don't want anything to pass me by anymore. No matter what people warn me the end result might be, I want to sometimes walk out blindly into the center of everything... and pray.

Alexandra Billings is a transgender actress, singer, author, teacher and activist.

Sincerely,
 Craig Teichen
 Chicago

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Letters to
the editor:

Lack of openness

Dear Editor:

Thank you, Joe Murry of Rainbow Sash, for the excellent letter (as published recently in *Windy City Times*) critical of the Pride Parade Planning committee. The letter hit home personally for me as someone critical of the way the Pride Committee has been operating for years. The matter of secret meetings, no public disclosure (posting of committee meeting schedule), lack of community input and prioritizing the entries to favor big-name politicians are important talking points.

The parade was originally conceived of as a march and in years past (early 1970s), meetings

GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



Photo by
Ron
Phillips

'KNIGHT' MOVES

Tom Hardy, as the villainous Bane, faces off against Christian Bale's Batman in *The Dark Knight Rises*. See page 28.

THEATER

'Rain' men.
Page 24.

Photo from *A Steady Rain*
by Anthony Robert La Penna



AUTOS

Regal-eyed.
Page 32.

Photo of 2012 Buick Regal GS
from Gaywheels.com



SPORTS

Natural election.
Page 38.

Photo of Veronica Hernandez
at CMSA elections by Ross Forman



SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Riverfront hosts
'La Soiree'

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Vermont native and out performer Bret Pfister is so happy that the internationally acclaimed London burlesque/cabaret/big top show *La Soirée* is making its U.S. debut at the Riverfront Theatre in Chicago.

"I have quite a few friends living here so I was very excited," said Pfister, who is one of only two Americans cast in the show. "I would also say that Chicago is probably my favorite American city."

That the Riverfront Theater was able to book *La Soirée* is something of a coup for the 22,000-square-foot tented auditorium, which is located along the Chicago River near the Chicago Tribune Freedom Center printing plants. *La Soirée's* only U.S. dates for 2012 are in Chicago, following stints in Hamburg, Germany and Montreal before the show tours back again to Australia.

La Soirée also marks a distinct change in programming for the Riverfront Theatre, which debuted last summer with a successful 16-week run of a high-tech version of *Peter Pan* that debuted in London's Kensington Park in 2009. Family audiences were the norm last summer, but with *La Soirée*, adults are specifically sought to imbibe from the on-site bars and to enjoy the racy nature of the show.

"It's not like anything you've ever seen before," said Pfister describing *La Soirée*. "It's more like a party and a great night out with elements of circus, cabaret, burlesque, comedy, clowning and all of that is done with really strong undertones of sexuality."

Pfister's contribution to the show is his aerial hoop act, which is typically the domain of women in most circus-influenced shows.

"It is a very woman-dominated discipline, but I think that's part of what makes it special or something different when I do it," Pfister said. "I have an aesthetic that would be considered quite feminine normally, in a more flexible way—I play on that vibe, for sure."

Pfister is also proud to boast that other artists in *La Soirée* serve as paeans to athletic and muscular male beauty. In particular, there's Denis Lock and Hamish McCann who appear as "The English Gents," two acrobatic comedic chaps who bear nearly all as they do complicated balancing stunts while wearing bowler hats. There's also the former Berliner gymnast David O'Mer, whose "Bath Boy" acrobatic routine involving a pair of wet jeans and a bathtub is another example of what Pfister calls a "beautiful topless man in the show."

The producers at the Riverfront Theatre also hope that *La Soirée* will mark the arrival of a higher-caliber of shows playing the venue. Admittedly, there have been some teething troubles for the venue this summer as the Riverfront Theatre aimed to present a variety of touring shows rather than just one production like *Peter Pan* last summer.

Some of the Riverfront Theater's originally scheduled shows this summer like *Spirit of the Dance*, *Rocket Man* and *Man in the Mirror* have been postponed indefinitely (*Spirit of the Dance* and *Rocket Man* have already respectively played this year at the Lumber Center for the Performing Arts in Grayslake and the Paramount Theatre



English Gents Denis Lock and Hamish McCann in *La Soiree*. Photo by Prudence Upton

in Aurora). The theater also switched public relations agencies mid-season, promising a schedule of more soon-to-be-announced shows.

"What I think we've learned this year really that it is the uniqueness of the show that really engages the Chicago public, so we're looking to program a much broader slate of programming," said Riverfront Theater executive producer Robert Butters. "The Riverfront is hopefully going to run through the end of the year and we're already thinking about programming for the next year."

In the meantime, the Riverfront Theater hopes Chicago audiences will respond to *La Soirée*, while the performers of *La Soirée* are wondering how the response of Chicago audiences will compare to audiences from other cities around the world.

"Different audiences by the nature of being in different countries will express themselves in different ways. When we played London, the people weren't shy about telling you what they really feel," Pfister said. "Whereas in Paris, while we had spectacular audiences and a fun crowd,

they weren't so vocal."

La Soirée continues at the Riverfront Theater, 650 W. Chicago Ave., through 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.riverfront-theater.com.

You saw them here first

The off-Broadway venue 59E59 Theaters in New York has announced even more shows with Chicago-area ties for its upcoming season. The revised version of the Studs Terkel-inspired musical *Working* (previously seen at Chicago's Broadway Playhouse at Water Tower Place) will play from Dec. 1-30, while Bruce Graham's *The Outgoing Tide* (which had its world premiere at Skokie's Northlight Theatre) will play Nov. 7-Dec. 16. These two shows join the previously announced run of Route 66 Theatre Company's *A Twist of Water* by playwright Caitlin Montanye Parrish, which plays Nov. 1-25.



What's the T? Photo courtesy of About Face Youth Theatre

THEATER REVIEW

What's the T?

Playwrights: Sara Kerastas and the About Face Youth Theatre Ensemble

At: About Face Youth Theatre at Red Tape Theatre at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 621 W. Belmont Ave.

Tickets: 866-811-4111;

www.aboutfacetheatre.com; \$15

Runs through: July 29

Also at: National Museum of Mexican Art, 1852 W. 19th St. on Aug. 3 and 4

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

After its disappointing Queertopia two years ago, About Face Youth Theatre is back in top form with its world premiere of *What's the T?*, now at Red Tape Theatre through July 29 before touring to the National Museum of Mexican Art on Aug. 3 and 4. But be sure to wear summery clothing if you catch *What's the T?* in Boystown, since it's a non-air-conditioned time out if you do (even with provided paper fans.)

Created by playwright Sara Kerastas with members of the About Face Youth Theatre Ensemble, *What's the T?* was developed in summer workshops last year to look at transgender issues and identity. But along the way, the youthful cast wanted to bring up issues affecting them that summer, when many LGBT youths of color were accused of increasing crime in the Boystown neighborhood.

The result is a show that feels vital and up-to-date in every way. Rather than focus on the whys when it comes to transgender identity, *What's the T?* includes trans-identified characters as part of a larger mix of people dealing with ageism, racism and economic class conflicts within Chicago's Boystown neighborhood.

What's the T? also showcases how technology can be a lifesaver and equalizer for the LGBT community by offering up a virtual "safe space." It's this online connection that ties male-identified Shaman (Sukari Stone), who has just been thrown out of his home and school on the South Side, with the flamboyantly female-identified Ms. Ma (Mikkhal Holt) who offers advice and a welcoming sense of community via her much-followed online video postings.

But Ms. Ma has her own problems, as her friends AJ (Leo St. Leo) and Blush (Christian Gorostieta) debate what to do with a smartphone video they possess showing the celebrated transgender online video personality arrested by the police on suspicion of solicitation.

Kerastas and her cast have a great time lampooning many types of characters who live and

hang out in Boystown. Much comic relief comes from the accessorizing fag hags who love their gays to ever-annoying drunken Cubs fans who rowdily crowd Red Line CTA trains.

However, Kerastas and her cast also aren't afraid to show how Boystown isn't as all-welcoming as it should be to all members of the LGBTQ community, particularly when the young lesbian Jude (the intense Jade Ryin) is treated differently from her non-Black friends Riley (Anna Rangos) and Brit (the hilarious Irene Tu).

Director Eric Hoff creates a fun and kinetic production, which is greatly enhanced by the multimedia video designs of Liviu Pasare. True, not all of the performances are fully polished, but the cast's youthful enthusiasm at dramatizing recent Boystown controversies is certainly fresh and extremely timely.

CRITICS' PICKS

Oedipus El Rey, Victory Gardens Theatre, through July 29. In the squalid barrios of the Los Angeles gangs, an orphaned boy searches for his parents in Luis Alfaro's update of Sophocles' tragedy, rendered with panoramic pageantry by Chay Yew's kinetically breathtaking direction. 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 and disturbing throughout. 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

Moment, Steep Theatre, through Aug. 18. A modern-day Irish is still dealing with the fallout of a rash teenage moment years ago in the U.S. premiere of Deirdre Kinahan's powerful drama examining family dynamics and resentments. SCM

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

THEATER REVIEW

A Steady Rain

Playwright: Keith Huff

At: Chicago Commercial Collective at Chicago Dramatists, 1105 W. Chicago Ave.

Tickets: 312-633-0630;

www.asteadyrainchicago.com; \$40

Runs through: Sept. 4

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The prototype for Keith Huff's fable of cops-gone-wrong is the 1949 drama, *Detective Story*, Sidney Kingsley's caveat against self-mythologizing. In this classic drama, a well-meaning public servant has grown so unbending in his morality that he forgets the distinction between heroism and hubris. "Humble yourself, Shamus," the precinct's beat reporter warns the overzealous officer in danger of losing his humanity.

Huff has pared this noiresque tragedy down to two uniformed patrolmen seated in a police interrogation room, recounting the events leading up to the bloodbath under investigation. They are Denny Lombardi and Joey Doyle, whose occupational relationship continues the dynamic forged during their blue-collar childhoods. It soon becomes apparent that Denny has always fancied himself a protector of the innocent and weak—a role permitting him privileges beyond those of lesser men—while flawed Joey readily admits to his own need for the improving influence offered by his partner's idyllic family life.

The world of crime is an ugly and violent one,

THEATER REVIEW

A Scent of Flowers

Playwright: James Saunders

At: BackStage Theatre Company

at the Building Stage, 412 N. Carpenter St.

Tickets: 312-491-1369;

www.backstagetheatrecompany.org; \$25

Runs through: Aug. 26

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The old-fashioned casket in the lobby is our first warning that the play's title will not herald a romp in a summer garden, but not until after the burial box is brought onstage and the mourners arrive does it occur to us that the young woman napping on the sofa is not one of them. Is it her sunny orange mini-dress—a stark contrast to the somber black and gray attire of the assemblage—or is it the curious ebullience with which some of the attendees greet her, while others ignore her as if she were invisible? Gradually, we come to realize that she is the purpose of this gathering.

Would you want to be a spectator at your own funeral? Like it or not, 14-year-old Zoe must endure the response of her surviving kin to her suicide, following an abortive love affair with a married teacher at her posh private school. As the bereaved make their observations, each according to his/her individual personalities, we are apprised, via flashbacks, of the counsel they afforded her in her moment of crisis. It soon becomes apparent that all of these people—indifferent papa David, spartan stepmother Agnes, jocular Uncle Edgar, cheerful stepbrother Godfrey, assorted clergymen and elders—ultimately failed, as they continue to fail, this romantic waif in search of affection. Ironically, a pair of strangers—the two undertaker's assistants—are the only ones able and willing to ease the departed to a comfortable rest.

James Saunders' 1966 play is a distinctly British brand of drama, but while its dialogue sometimes exhibits the reiteration characteristic of internal-consciousness narration, Matthew Reeder's direction keeps the emotional subtexts as immediate as their progress

but more destructive than this is its fundamental disorder. In subcultures where the small assurances born of communal accord break down utterly, the uncertainty inherent to all life on this planet is magnified hundredfold. A lone mortal professing to uphold the law to the extreme of thinking that he OWNS it becomes, himself, a proponent of the chaos encroaching on the peace that he struggles so mightily to preserve. When, inevitably, his efforts prove futile, his failure cannot help but brand him, in his own eyes, a villain—like those he is sworn to destroy.

In a film, our play's action would be fragmented by locating shots of the many pinpoint-specific geographical sites referenced in the script, and in a bigger theater, such as that housing its profitable and ill-conceived transfer to New York's Broadway, Huff's vivid portrait of his city's mean streets would be diluted by sheer physical distance. The newly formed Chicago Commercial Collective, however, has reassembled the 2008 premiere production, under Russ Tutterow's direction, in the elbow-to-elbow quarters of Chicago Dramatists, where a visibly weathered Randy Steinmeyer and Peter DeFaria look us right in the eyes as they make their grimy, foul-mouthed, heartbreaking confession—asking not forgiveness, but only compassion for those who love their job not wisely, but too well. If you see this play—and the news headlines would indicate that this is the time to do so—then this is the place to do it.

is unhurried over the two and a half hours (with two intermissions) necessary to fully delineate every step in this final, untimely journey—too swift a pace could easily reduce Saunders' delicate repartee to sentimental precocity. Jess Berry (recently seen in Griffin Theatre's *Punk Rock*) conveys the pain and terror of adolescence with never a trace of mockery, though ably supported by a cast invoking compassion for flawed human beings whose neglect is based not in malice, but ignorance.

The cooling equipment in the warehouse-loft Building Stage renders this BackStage Theatre Company production's inside temperature somewhat balmy for a summer performance space (albeit not sweltering). The rewards for contemplative theatergoers, however, are well worth the trek to the up-and-coming Near West Side.



A Scent of Flowers. Photo by Heath Hayes

THEATER REVIEW

The Merchant of Venice

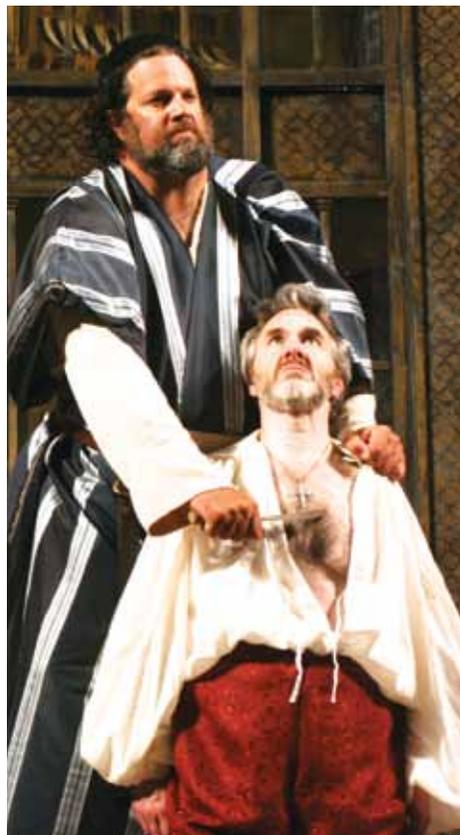
Playwright: William Shakespeare
 At: First Folio Theatre, Mayslake Forest Preserve, Oak Brook
 Tickets: 1-630-986-8067;
 www.firstfolio.org; \$26-\$37
 Runs through: Aug. 19

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

It's cooler near the lake by day, but cooler away from the lake at night, which is why I was enjoying *The Merchant of Venice* outdoors at Oak Brook's Mayslake Forest Preserve. The breeze and lovely surroundings made for a humid-but-comfortable 80 degrees. But just as Bassanio arrived to woo Portia at Belmont (the fictional Italian city, not the street), the show was suspended due to rapidly approaching violent storms. It's Act III as Shakespeare wrote it. Had it been the storm on the heath in *King Lear*, the First Folio folks could have kept going. As it was, I was robbed of the wooing scene, the climactic trial scene and the romantic conclusion to what is, technically, a comedy.

Based on the half-performance I saw, this is a handsome and entertaining production of Shakespeare's ever-popular play, staged by director Alison C. Vesely without high concept or directorial re-imagining. It's Shakespeare straight (as in whiskey straight), set in Renaissance Venice as written and acted by a large ensemble (19) with clarity and vigor as required in an outdoors setting, even with amplification (sound design and period-flavored original music by Christopher Kriz). More and more, this is how I like my classics served.

If you've ever visited Venice, you'll be taken immediately by Angela Weber Miller's Canaletto-inspired stage setting, with its richly evocative background painting of the Rialto bridge, and by Rachel Lambert's reflective costumes (some



The Merchant of Venice. Photo courtesy of Noreen Heron & Associates, Inc.

saucy and some solemn), complimented by Michael McNamara's lighting. The gardens and tall grasses of the Mayslake Forest Preserve hint at the orchards behind high walls of Renaissance palazzos, and the grassy spaces of the farther-out islands of the Venetian lagoon. Smartly, Vesely's ensemble stage business never lets you forget that Venice was a mercantile town.

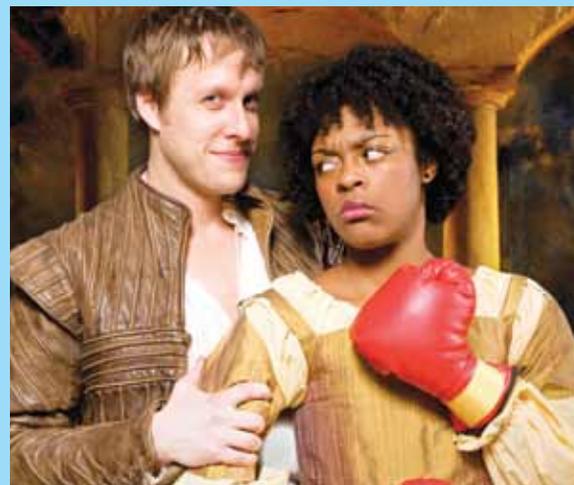
Under Vesely's direction, the titular merchant, Anthonio (Michael Joseph Mitchell), is a two-faced piece of work (indeed, Janus is one of the play's classical allusions) with his hatred

of Shylock undisguised in their initial confrontation. Michael Goldberg's Shylock is less confrontational but equally open in expressing his hatred of Anthonio and all Christians, which is more Shakespeare's historical anti-Semitism than anything Goldberg and Vesely bring to the plate. Regrettably, I couldn't see how their antagonisms played out in the trial scene.

The women—Melanie Keller as Portia and Cassidy Shea Stirtz as Jessica—are attractive and capable in their early scenes but have much more to do in the play's second half. Vesely offers plenty of comic counterpoint in Portia's

Spanish (Lane Flores) and Moroccan (Stephan Collins-Stepney) wooers and through various secondary characters such as Gratiano (Luke Daigle) and Lancelot Gobbo (Nate Santana). By all indications, this *Merchant* is worth the journey to Oak Brook, where cooler climes are a bonus.

SPOTLIGHT



Thanks to a new partnership with the Chicago Park District and The Boeing Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre is taking its recent Short Shakespeare production of *The Taming of the Shrew* (adapted and directed by award-winning director Rachel Rockwell) to 11 different local park locations. First up is a July 29 show at 4 p.m. the South Shore Cultural Center, 7059 S. South Shore Dr., concluding Aug. 18-19 at Frank J. Wilson Park, 4630 N. Milwaukee Ave. Admission is free. Visit www.chicagoshakes.com/parks for more information. Photo by Michael Brosilow.



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The Stage Door Johnnies, with Bakuza Joe (Ken Gasch) on the right. Photo courtesy of the troupe

PERFORMANCE: NEW YORK

All-male burlesque group takes off with Liza Minnelli

BY ALEX LUBISCHER

All-Male Burlesque group The Stage Door Johnnies have been heating up Chicago stages since 2009. Come August, members Bazuka Joe, Ray Gunn and Jett Adore will be taking it off for their biggest gig yet: a one-night-only show at Fire Island's Ice Palace nightclub in New York alongside gay icons Alan Cumming and Liza Minnelli.

Windy City Times sat down with Bazuka Joe (also known as former Chicagoan and Windy City Times 30 Under 30 honoree Ken Gasch) to get the skinny on The Stage Door Johnnies' high-profile gig.

Windy City Times: What was the very first show that Ray Gunn, Jett Adore and you performed in together?

Bazuka Joe: Well, there were two very first milestones. The very first time we ever did a group act it was for the Grabby Awards—which is like the porn awards, you know—it's the same weekend as IML [International Mr. Leather] every year.

But the very first time we ever performed our solo acts was at this bar called The Waterhouse in Lincoln Park. It was for a Bacardi promotion and people were really confused. The girls were really into it, but there were a lot of people who were really confused about the idea of male striptease—[especially with] it not being, like, the standard kind of male striptease. But, overall, it went really well and, coincidentally, my mom was in the audience because she just happened to be in town that weekend.

WCT: Oh my God! What was it like having your mom in the audience?

BJ: It was so bizarre. She was really into it. This is particularly weird because I grew up Mormon and she had been Mormon for 30 years and just sort of stopped going—stopped attending church. And so for her to be in the front row taking pictures as we're getting naked—it blows my mind to this day! And it's one of the funniest stories. She got upset, but the only reason is that the battery in her camera ran out halfway through Ray's act and she couldn't take pictures and she was really disappointed. Actually, she and my sister were there. They sat right up at the front table and they were all for it.

WCT: What would you say separates cabaret from the strip club?

BJ: Mainly the intention. Burlesque definitely goes for more theatricality, lots of storytelling, lots of very character-based acts—and it's always sort of an endeavor for burlesque performers to find new and unique ways to make the strip happen. So it really is more about the tease than the flesh or the sex part of it. Obviously,

there are some very sexy performers and stuff, but it's almost less integral than the whole art of it.

It's definitely more about connecting with the audience. Typical acts are four, five, maybe six minutes long and you have to get the audience to understand who your character is, what the scenario is and then get to the end by the time you're more or less naked. [Laughs]

WCT: Is the audience at your shows predominantly gay men, or is there a surplus of straight women who attend?

BJ: It kind of fluctuates depending on where we go, obviously. Lately, the crowds have been really, really, really mixed. ... Actually, some of our best compliments from straight guys—like, "Oh man, that took a lot of balls to get up there and do that!" Sort of the same way the guy in the fraternity who goes streaking is like the campus hero. That kind of thing where it's like, "That took a lot of guts to get up there and do something that crazy."

The show we're about to do on Fire Island is definitely gay-focused, but if I had to generalize I'd say it's pretty well mixed as far as straights, gays—and guys and girls, for that matter.

WCT: You're performing with musical theater legends Alan Cumming and Liza Minnelli at Fire Island's Ice Palace in New York Aug. 4. How did you book this sweet gig?

BJ: It was purely by accident. This really well-known producer out in New York, Daniel Nardicio, had seen us. We had been to New York a few times and he was like, "Hey, I'd really like to bring you guys out." And none of us had ever been to Fire Island. So over the course of talking the dates got bumped around a bunch and then the contracts weren't right and it was kind of this long process and finally we landed on a date: Aug. 4.

Then months later we got a call and he [said], "You know, I really hate to do this but there's a performer coming to town who I've been dying to get, and the same day you guys are performing is the only night she can do it." And, of course, we thought, "Oh, man. He's gonna bump us back again or cancel the whole show altogether." And so I was like, "Okay, lay it on me. Who is the performer?" And when he said Liza Minnelli, literally, my jaw dropped. I was silent for at least a good minute, I was like, "You've gotta be shitting me!" You do not have to ask our permission. Just go ahead! Yeah! Absolutely!

So we kind of hit the jackpot with that one. The producer thought it would be really nice to mix the genres: the musical theater style with burlesque. We were completely floored and, actually, when I talked to Ray and Jett they didn't

believe me, so I had to send them a copy of our contract to prove that their [Minnelli's and Cumming's] names were on it!

WCT: What's the first thing you're going to say to Liza when you meet her?

BJ: [Laughs] We [The Johnnies] joke around because we're huge fans of a show called Arrested Development. And so we joke around that we're going to say "We're really excited to meet you, Lucille Two"—just to see what she does. I'm like, "Maybe that's not the best way to introduce ourselves." The only thing you can say is that it's an honor to meet her. Obviously, she's

a legend in and out of the gay community. She's an icon.

The Stage Door Johnnies are performing Aug. 4 at the Ice Palace, 181 Bayview Walk, in the heart of Cherry Grove on Fire Island, NY. The show is currently sold out.

If tickets become available, an announcement will be made on www.danielnardicio.com.

For more information on The Stage Door Johnnies, visit www.thestagedoorjohnnies.com.

Museum to honor TV legend Mary Hartline

BY THOMAS BATEMAN

At the dawn of the television broadcast era, Mary Hartline dazzled the nation as the star of the children's show Super Circus. With her vivacious, effervescent personality and blonde good looks, Hartline quickly became a network star; many would go so far as to contend that she was America's first female television star. Hailing from Illinois, Hartline was especially dear to Chicagoans, who were pleased to see one of their own succeeding on such a national stage.

More than 50 years later, Chicago's Museum of Broadcast Communications (MBC) will be hosting an event Saturday, July 28, to celebrate Hartline's career and achievements. As one of the first female television personalities, as well as one of the first television stars to hail from Chicago, museum president Bruce DuMont told Windy City Times that Hartline has a special place in the museum and that Chicago is very proud of her iconic status.

Hartline herself will appear at the event. DuMont (perhaps most familiar to Chicagoans for his "Beyond the Beltway" radio show) will be conducting an interview where he promises "she'll talk about her career, about what she's doing now, and how her career was transformed through her early television stardom."

DuMont said, "We were delighted to reconnect with Mary." Not only did the museum reconnect with Hartline, but Hartline will be donating one of her iconic sequined dresses to the museum, where it will be displayed with other Super Circus-related items. According to DuMont, the museum has two collectible Mary Hartline dolls, several cut-out dolls and a pair of the boots she wore in costume.

The dolls, in particular, are also notable because Hartline attracted so much attention that she was one of the first network stars to have an entire line of merchandise modeled after her. DuMont said that "as one of the first network stars, she was one of the first stars to be merchandised, with the Mary Hartline dresses, dolls and cutouts."

The dolls, especially, are highly collectible today. Hartline fondly recalled that, "Marshall Field's used to carry my whole line, and they were completely sold out, at that time." The museum is fortunate to have amassed a collection of Mary Hartline artifacts, but DuMont said that the museum would love to have a Mary Hartline baton, which her character twirled on the show. He mentioned that if any Windy City Times readers have one to donate to the museum, the museum would be happy to have the addition for the Mary Hartline display.

Hartline said that she's greatly looking forward to the event and that some of her fans have already reached out to let her know they'll be coming. At 84, she stays in touch with her fans primarily through letters. DuMont said that Hartline was quite the gay icon in her time, and that a couple of pre-

vious Mary Hartline appearances at the MBC have resulted in many gay fans appearing.

According to DuMont, Hartline "was a diva before most people knew what a diva was," which some might say would make her an obvious candidate for gay-icon status. "She



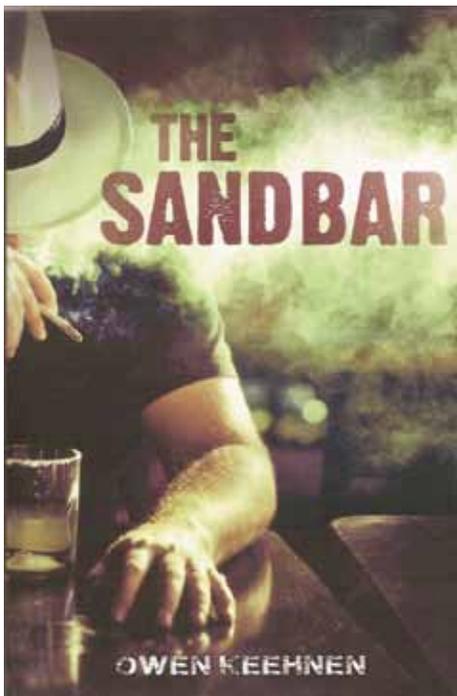
Mary Hartline in her sequined dress worn on "Super Circus" more than 50 years ago. Image from Marc Glick

was an American princess who fell in love with a wealthy man, who whisked her away," DuMont said, speaking of Hartline's marriage to Woolworth store heir Woolworth Donahue and her subsequent move to Palm Beach, Fla. He also mentioned that once she left Chicago for Palm Beach, "she had a well-documented, high-profile, very flamboyant lifestyle as a queen of the social circuit there."

Tickets for the event "Meet Mary Hartline: TV's First Woman Superstar" are available online at www.museum.tv for \$12 each.

Tickets will also be available the day of the event, provided that they do not sell out online. The event will take place at 12 p.m. Saturday, July 28, at the Museum of Broadcast Communications at 360 N. State St.

Windy City Media Group is one of the sponsors of the event.



BOOK REVIEW

The Sand Bar

by Owen Keehnen

\$18; Lethe Press; 251 pages

BY SALLY PARSONS

We pick up a novel and enter a world we don't know. Will we like these people? Will we care what happens to them? If we're lucky, when we reach the final page, we'll have gained some knowledge, a dash of wisdom, and a tinge of sadness at leaving new-found friends.

In *The Sand Bar*, set in the 1980s in Bayetteville, a small Southern town, we find some new friends and a bunch of scraggly folks as well. They're a bunch of gay boozers, many of them frisky, who inhabit a rundown bar.

Arguably, the steadiest character in this engaging novel is the Frear River, which moves through the town inexorably from season to season, picking up its detritus, both human and other. However, the character whose life has the biggest arc in the span of this work is Fred, whom we first meet as a bottle-cap collector lost in his own little world—and to whom we say goodbye at the end as he begins a new adventure.

Folks we meet in this rich novel include Leo, the crusty owner of *The Sand Bar*; Sister, his friend and barfly; the drag queen Bruschetta ("I've only added to me. I enhance."); Cody, the stud who turns everyone's eye; and the lowlife Del, whom we grow to wish gets his comeuppance.

There are plenty of detailed male sexual encounters for those so inclined. But the heart of the book is the community of bar customers—some drifting in, others being permanent fixtures. We come to love some—indeed crying over the fate of a few—and to hate others.

Keehnen is a gifted writer, in equal parts due

to his skills in creating rich characters, planting them in a colorful milieu and unfolding touching and complex stories about their lives. His prose is sparkling (e.g., "He looked like a bow-tied housefly with one eye cocked for the swatter"). He frequently weaves the events of his novel into companion chapters, so we first see the happenings from one character's perspective, then another's. This literary device works well, as we come to anticipate what other Sand Bar denizens will have to say about events as they unfold.

Author of several novels, Keehnen is currently working on *Young Digby Swank*. With co-author Tracy Baim, he also has written biographies of Chuck Renslow and Jim Flint, and has penned many other notable works. Keehnen serves as board secretary for The Legacy Project. He was inducted in the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame in 2011. Keehnen lives in Chicago with his partner, Carl, and their dogs, Flannery and Fitzgerald.



Owen Keehnen.

Event with Cee Lo, Martinez postponed

The "Voices for Children Benefit" concert featuring musician Cee Lo Green as well as lesbian singer and former *The Voice* contestant Vicci Martinez has been postponed.

The event had been scheduled for Friday, July 27, at Excalibur, 632 N. Dearborn St., 8 p.m.-12 a.m.

Storytelling tackles queer homeless-youth issues

BY KATE SOSIN

A spoken-word event at Town Hall Pub in Lakeview tackled issues related to queer homeless youth July 17, including the recent temporary closure of LGBT-friendly youth shelter *The Crib*.

Approximately 20 people attended the evening event, which was marred by controversy after some people commented on Facebook that the event was inaccessible to the youth themselves.

Adam Guerino, who coordinates the monthly series "Word is Out," talked about his experiences being homeless during his late teens and early 20s. Guerino said he often went home from Boystown bars with strangers so that he would have a place to sleep.

Local writer and activist Mar Curran discussed his process of creating "Our Youth Belong in Boystown," a documentary that featured a youth response to last year's controversies about crime in Lakeview.

Patrick Gill, co-founder of the "In Our Words" blog, performed a piece about youth in Boystown from the perspective of someone living in the neighborhood.

Josh Stark recalled his journey navigating social services as a formerly homeless youth.

Much of the evening, however, focused on *The Crib*, the Night Ministry's youth shelter, which has been closed until October due to lack of funds. The shelter, largely seen as one of the only LGBT-affirming shelters in the city, has been funded as a seasonal shelter by the City of Chicago. The Night Ministry had hoped to keep the shelter open through the summer by supplementing that funding with private funds, but that money came up short.

Nate Metrick, coordinator at *The Crib*, explained how *The Crib* functions and what the temporary closure could mean for youth.

"We have a new mix of 20 people each night, a large chunk of which have spent the day getting harassed by cops," said Metrick.

Among the challenges, said Metrick, has been creating a fair system for admitting youth into the shelter nightly, which has limited space. According to Metrick, the youth are selected each night through a lottery system. The process often leaves youth who are turned away feeling left out.

"The thing to say about this is that the lottery is horrible," said Metrick, adding that the process of turning anyone away is extremely difficult for staff.

Metrick said that private funders often look for quantifiable outcomes when deciding where to donate money. The reliance on those



Adam Guerino at the event. Photo by Kate Sosin

numbers can sometimes present a challenge for the small shelter that sees different faces each night.

"But we are in this for the long haul with each other," said Metrick.

A question-and-answer session with Metrick concluded the evening.

In the days leading up to the event, some expressed concerns on Facebook that the event excluded the youth themselves. One commenter noted that because the event was held in a bar, people under age 21 would not be allowed in. That commenter also said that the \$5 entrance fee would block many homeless young people from attending.

Guerino rebutted that the event was one of many that his production series *OutLoud* was coordinating, and he encouraged those with concerns to put on their own events. Guerino is also hosting a fundraiser for *The Crib* on July 25 at Sidetrack called "We are Halsted: Opening the Doors." More information is available at www.adamguerino.com.

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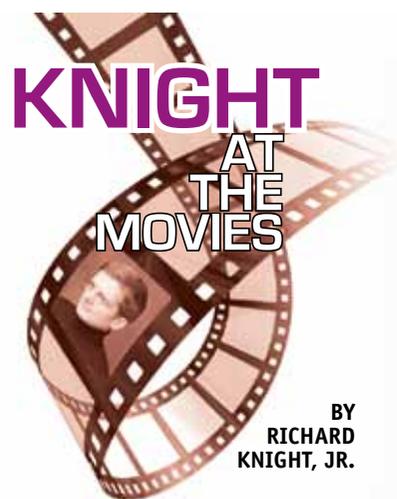
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BY
RICHARD
KNIGHT, JR.

The Dark Knight Rises; DVD notes

Four years ago I touted *The Dark Knight* as the best, the most enthralling blockbuster of all time. But with that excessive praise I also doled out a warning because the movie came at a price and so does *The Dark Knight Rises*, director Christopher Nolan's third and final installment in his take on the Batman mythology.

It, too, is as pitch-black as its title. It, too, is a film that works on you psychologically at the same time as it's ramping up your senses. But unlike its predecessor—which managed to straddle a perfect balance between a thrill ride and a heavygoing downer—Nolan's new movie tilts so far toward the latter that the emotional pummeling dilutes his triumphant, grandiose set pieces.

We pick up eight years after the previous installment. Christian Bale's zillionaire Bruce Wayne has become a hermit, physically and emotionally falling apart and fixating on what butler/caretaker Alfred (Michael Caine) reminds him on a daily basis is a really unhealthy death wish. Batman has been relegated to the Batcave, declared a murderer by the public after the superhero took the rap for the crimes of Harvey Dent/Two Face—a man that the residents of Gotham City believe was a hero and not a killer. But Commissioner Gordon (Gary Oldman) knows better and, though the city is peaceful thanks to a tough crime policy called the Dent Act, the guilt is eating him alive.

Bad boy Bane (Tom Hardy)—a supersized supervillain who is fitted, Darth Vader-like, with a mask over his face—has been busy building a terrorist network down in the city's sewers while the city sleeps. Bane, who is a front for the wealthy business leaders of Gotham, has plans to hold the city hostage and enact the terrible retribution he and that mysterious group of assassins led by Liam Neeson (portraying Ra's Al Ghul) think the city deserves. With Batman out of the way, there's nothing to stop him.

But the Caped Crusader, as it turns out, hasn't quite left the scene. Intrigued by warnings of imminent danger in Gotham from Selena Kyle—aka Catwoman (Anne Hathaway), a pretty jewel thief he catches red-handed—Bruce finds himself unable to keep his mitts off that rubber bat-suit. Eventually, his long projected mano a mano with Bane will occur, and order will be restored to the once again beleaguered city.

Nolan adopts the same tragic mood and sweeping scale of grand opera that he used in the two previous outings, emphasizing this with the Wagner-like score of Hans Zimmer (whose music is so omnipresent that the movie is unthinkable without it). Nolan's script, co-written with brother Jonathan, is filled equally with melancholy monologues that are placed between the jaw-dropping set pieces. These serve to deepen involvement in the characters, which is, to the good. Also fine are Hathaway, who is fast and funny (though not sexy in the least), a return-



Anne Hathaway as Selena Kyle/Catwoman in *The Dark Knight Rises*. Photo by Ron Phillips

ing Morgan Freeman, Joseph Gordon-Levitt as an eager young cop, and Caine as worrywart Alfred.

However, the relentless gloom of the movie; the socialist agenda of the hulking Bane (Karl Marx would've embraced his vision); the unexciting addition of Marion Cotillard, whose character seems wedged into the proceedings; and, mostly, the absence of Bale, whose Bruce Wayne seems shunted into the background, tamp down these gains.

Also, Bane's Hardy can't hold a candle to Heath Ledger's Joker. Where Ledger was gleefully insane, shooting for the fences in every scene, Hardy's character is literally fitted with that muzzle so that when he talks in his high-pitched accent he's doubly hard to understand. (Like a lot of these baddies, he also loves to talk and talk.) The most impressive thing about Bane is his thick-as-a-brick wall body. (Like Nolan's previous Batman outings, there's more than a hint of the homoerotic swirling about the proceedings).

When first encountered, we are invited to take a good, long look at his imposing, naked upper torso and, like the "Humungous" character in *Road Warrior*, we are cued to find it both a turn-on and turn-off. Bale, who also impresses in the physical department is, as usual, technically proficient but distant. He's not a leading man who invites warmth or familiarity—which, ironically, is oddly perfect for the duality of Batman/Bruce Wayne with his death wish; however, there's also an underlying something (creepiness? iciness?) about Bale that permeates everything he does on screen. He's not easy to love, making it hard to root for the characters he plays.

Those caveats aside, filmmaking on this scale is admittedly awe-inspiring. And not unlike the moment in *Inception* when Ellen Page flipped Paris on its side, Nolan's eye-popping spectacle is certainly breathtaking. But it's a joyless, bitter epic without a hint of exhilaration. *The Dark Knight Rises* is the kind of doom-and-gloom blockbuster that Ingmar Bergman would have made—given the budget or inclination.

DVD notes:

—Director Sheldon Larry's fictional modern-day take on the L.A. drag-ball culture, *Leave It on the Floor*, is now available via VOD. The movie, which had its local debut at the Chicago International Film Festival last year, is an exuberant, sassy and, at rare moments, heartwarming peek inside the rigid construct of the ethnic gay drag ball world. A DVD edition follows early next month.

—Let's be kind and just say that the attempt to reboot the slapstick antics of *The Three Stooges* was less than thrilling from either a financial or creative standpoint. So why bother to note that the movie has just been released

on home video? It's merely to point out that a couple of the stars are prominent members of *Our People*. One of the Stooges (Larry) is played by gay actor Sean Hayes and red-hot lesbian actor Jane Lynch is the other, expertly playing (as usual) the supporting role of a mother superior.

Emmy nods announced

The nominations for the 64th Primetime Emmy Awards were announced July 19—and, as usual, there were surprises.

No drama on any of the big four networks was nominated for best drama. AMC's *Mad Men* (which garnered 17 nods this time around) is in the mix in this category, along with PBS's *Downton Abbey*; Showtime's *Homeland*; AMC's *Breaking Bad*; and HBO's *Boardwalk Empire* and *Game of Thrones*. Best comedy nominees include two new HBO shows, *Girls* and *Veep*, along with HBO vet *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, ABC's *Modern Family* (which received 14 nominations total), 30 *Rock* on NBC and *The Big Bang Theory* on CBS.

American Horror Story—the FX project co-heralded by Ryan Murphy, the out gay man behind *Glee*—received 17 nods, tying *Mad Men* for the most nominations.

In other LGBT-related news, out actor Jim Parsons of "Big Bang" was again nominated for best actor in a comedy. He'll be competing against Jon Cryer (*Two and a Half Men*), Larry David (*Curb Your Enthusiasm*), Louis C.K. (Louie), Don Cheadle (*House of Lies*) and Alec Baldwin (*30 Rock*).

Out actor Jesse Tyler Ferguson was one of four men nominated from *Modern Family* for best supporting actor in a comedy series. Archie Panjabi, who plays a bisexual character on *The Good Wife*, was nominated for that role. Openly gay actor Denis O'Hare was nominated for his role in Murphy's "Horror Story."

Deadline.com listed what it considered to be snubs. Some of those included only three nominations for *Glee* (including Dot Marie Jones in the guest-acting category) and no nods for co-stars Jane Lynch and Chris Colfer. There were also no nominations for *Sons of Anarchy*; *Mad Men*'s John Slattery and Jessica Pare; *The Big C*'s Laura Linney; and *Boss*' Kelsey Grammer (despite his Golden Globes win). In addition, the website noted no best series/acting nods for the NBC show *Community*, among other items.

The awards will be handed out Sunday, Sept. 23, on ABC. Jimmy Kimmel—whose show was nominated for best variety series—will host the telecast.

—From the ridiculous to the sublime: Considered by many to be the greatest film musical of all time, 1952's *Singin' in the Rain* is celebrating 60 years with an ultimate collection gift set. Gene Kelly stars, choreographs and co-directed (with Stanley Donen) this hilarious, thrillingly paced musical centered on the transition from silent to talking pictures during the tail end of the Roaring Twenties.

Darling Debbie Reynolds (just 19 at the time), Donald O'Connor and the brash, comically horrible Jean Hagen co-star. For freshness, vitality, humor and sheer visual spectacle, few movies can hold a candle to this fizzy classic that Warner Home Entertainment is releasing in a lavish Blu-ray gift set that includes everything from the usual goodies to an umbrella (!), and as a standalone disc as well. This is one of the rare films—musical or otherwise—that rewards as much during the 19th viewing as the first.

—Out director Terence Davies' carefully appointed, tremendously acted and gorgeously photographed film adaptation of Terence Rattigan's *The Deep Blue Sea* is also coming to home video July 24. The story of an ill-fated romance set in England during the difficult rationing period just after WWII is emotionally dense and slow-moving—but ultimately rewarding.

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



J. Lo. releasing greatest hits

Jennifer Lopez is releasing her first-ever greatest-hits package, *Dance Again...The Hits* on Epic Records.

New tracks include "Goin' In" (featuring Flo Rida) and "Dance Again" (featuring Pitbull). The latter has sold more than 1.4 million copies worldwide since its March debut.

The deluxe edition of *Dance Again...The Hits* includes the bonus tracks "All I Have," "Que Hiciste" (from Lopez's first full-length Spanish-language album, 2007's *Como ama una Mujer*) and "Let's Get Loud," plus a DVD with all the videos from the album.

Both versions of "...The Hits" feature her May 1999 chart debut, "If You Had My Love" and Lopez's trademark "Jenny From The Block" as well as collaborations and remixes with Fabolous, Ja Rule, Fat Joe and others.

'Kiss Kiss Cabaret' Fridays at Greenhouse

Chicago's only weekly burlesque/comedy show, "The Kiss Kiss Cabaret" is entering its second year.

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NUNN ON ONE: TELEVISION

Klum with a view: 'Runway' host on dramatic season



BY JERRY NUNN

German supermodel Heidi Klum has made the fashion television show Project Runway a hit for 10 seasons.

After winning a modeling contest on a fluke by entering on the suggestion of friend, Klum quickly rose to stardom, flying away with a Victoria's Secret's Angel campaign and gracing many magazine covers such as Elle and Vogue.

She has hosted Germany's Next Top Model, as has even sung on several musicians' singles and voiced several characters for movies. Her success has certainly resulted in financial fortune, as she has come out on top of Forbes' list of the top-earning supermodels.

Project Runway, which Klum co-created, originally aired on Bravo in 2004 before moving to

Lifetime in 2009.

Fashion designers are encouraged to "make it work," facing challenges and an elimination each episode at Parsons The New School for Design before the final three compete with their collections at New York Fashion Week in Bryant Park. Judges Klum, designer Michael Kors and Marie Claire Fashion Director Nina Garcia (along with a guest judge) give critical feedback to each competitor after his or her piece walks the runway.

Faster than you can say "auf wiedersehen," we had a little chat before the new season started.

Windy City Times: Hello, Heidi. What has it been like being on Project Runway for the 10th season?

Heidi Klum: It's been amazing. It's been 10 years and we all would've never thought that we would make it this far. Michael always says that we're on longer than I Love Lucy, which we always laugh about; I can't believe it. Ten seasons is a milestone. It's a long time.

And I have to tell you even though we've been doing it for 10 seasons I still love coming to work every season. I love being with Michael and I love being with Nina and Tim. They're all so much fun, and we have become a family.

WCT: How do you keep things fresh after all this time?

HK: It is always exciting to see these new designers, to see their story. They all have a different story to tell and they're all passionate. They're young people that come here with green



Heidi Klum. Photo by Lifetime

eyes and not really knowing 100 percent what this business is about and they're not jaded. It's always fun to have these people that are so hungry for it all. I don't know; we love it. We still laugh and we sit there and have a great time.

So it's exciting and we're proud, you know? We're very proud. I started Project Runway from the very beginning. Going around New York City trying to sell the show to networks and trying to explain what the show was all about—I'm very proud of it. It's like it's one of my babies.

WCT: What do you think of this group of designers as compared to past seasons?

HK: It's always hard to compare because I never like to say that this season we have more talented designers than previous seasons because they were all always talented. And each year fashion evolves and fashion becomes different and so do our designers. I think we have some on this season that are not that talented and we quickly see that. We have some that are really amazing; [they] come up with new things where we sit there and we're like, "Wow, we haven't seen anything like that" or "You have a different technique."

So it's always mixed. There are always some designers there that aren't that great that we're hoping to be better and they just aren't. And then there are some that blow us away and they do beautiful work in the time that they have. So it's always both, good and bad.

WCT: Some seasons are more dramatic than others. Is this one more dramatic or more low-key?

HK: It's also mixed. Our show is based on talent. It's not based on having characters on. I feel like there are so many shows out there that just put people on because they look a certain way or they talk in a certain way or they're goofy and funny or they do a lot for show or they do a lot for TV.

WCT: Rumor has it that several designers leave the show early.

HK: Yes, you will definitely see it on the show. This has never happened to us before. They just could not make it work, and in the morning they were gone. They literally packed up their bags and ran off in the middle of the night when everyone was sleeping. We just couldn't believe it, either.

You would think that a grown-up would say, "Thanks, but I can't make it work. I've got to go early or something." This is something that a kid would do, but we were all very surprised. But if people can't make it work, then leave the spot for someone else that wants to make it work.

WCT: I noticed lots of gay designers on this season as well as lesbian Alicia in the group. Can you talk about openly gay Gunnar, who didn't make the final cut last season, and your decision to bring him back?

HK: Gunnar came last year and he didn't make it. He had this dress that confused us. It was kind of this prom-looking gown that he had and it was just not very on trend or fashion-forward. It was very Cinderella, old-school, and we just did not believe in him that much.

I think he grew in that year and he showed us a lot of great things. He showed us that he evolved as a designer so we wanted to give him a shot. Last year we didn't give him a shot and this year we wanted to give him a shot. So he made it on the show; he's a good designer. We like it when we're wrong. We like it when they prove us that we're wrong, that they're better than expected. He's a fun guy and he deserves to be here.

WCT: Who can we expect as guest judges?

HK: Obviously, I can never give too many guest judges away, but [one person] I was allowed to mention was Patricia Field. She has been a stylist. She has a store here in New York City. She's very well-known for doing Sex in the City, The Devil Wears Prada. She does a lot of full movies and television.

She's actually been one of our very first judges ever on Project Runway. She did our very first challenge on our very first season. So we thought it would be fun to bring her back. I love her very much.

[Actress] Hayden Panettiere has been one of our guest judges. Also [actress] Krysten Ritter, and I think I'm not allowed to give any more away.

WCT: Well, who has been your favorite guest judge so far?

HK: Favorite guest, it's hard. We've had some great people on. I, for example, personally love Bob Mackie. I'm a huge Barbie collector and I have all of Bob Mackie's Barbies and all the special Barbies. So when I met him for the first time I was really like, "I love you, Bob Mackie."

For some of the designers maybe it was more like Christina Aguilera or, like, a Victoria Beckham. I don't know. Everyone has a different kind of excitement for a certain person. For some people, the bigger the star the more excited they are.

Some actresses that have been here that I'm personally friendly with; I obviously love having them here. Debra Messing is a friend of mine. She's been here in the past. I love having people who I spend personal time with.

WCT: If you had to pick a past designer to make you a red-carpet dress who would it be?

HK: I have to say Christian Siriano because we've become friendly over the years. He's a little Jack Russell. He does not give up. He's the kind of person that jumps up and down on you and then makes it happen.

So last year for the Emmys I wore a Christian Siriano, and I'm proud to wear his clothes. He worked to the last second to make it special and I love that about him. So I would pick him; I've worn many of his outfits over the years.

WCT: What has been your most awkward moment when filming Project Runway?

HK: Well, a lot of the time I would make my outfits too short and then I have to sit in the director's chairs and I literally have to tell the cameraman to please keep me from the waist up, because no matter how I cross my legs it's always too short. Michael is like, "Put your cards on your lap."

WCT: You are doing a Project Runway book-signing in New York. Would you ever do one in Chicago?

HK: It is not my book. I wrote a little bit for it and there are definitely some of my stories in there, but it's not my personal book. It's the show's book and someone else wrote the book. I was very excited that they asked me if I would go to Barnes & Noble and sign a little bit, but I'm not going to go on a book tour.

Watch every Thursday as the new contestants are one step closer to walking down the runway in Bryant Park. Visit www.mylifetime.com for listings and details.

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TIMES**

At least 20 out athletes in 2012 Olympics

BY ROSS FORMAN

When the Olympic cauldron is lit Friday, July 27, to kick off the Summer Olympics in London, the LGBT community will be represented on the fields of play—with more than double the number who participated in the 2004 Games in Athens or the 2008 Games in Beijing.

There are at least 20 openly gay athletes, plus one prominent U.S. coach and U.S. diving team mentor Greg Louganis, among the near 12,000 athletes competing in the quadrennial event, according to Outsports.com.

The Federation of Gay Games (FGG) lists the tally at 25, though the FGG lists includes Louganis, U.S. Women's Soccer coach Pia Sundhage, and two paralympic athletes.

There were 11 out athletes in Athens, 10 in Beijing.

Megan Rapinoe, a soccer player who played for the Chicago Red Stars in 2009-2010, came out in early-July and she'll be wearing red, white and blue in the Games. Her coach, Sundhage, a lesbian was profiled in the Windy City Times in 2011. Sundhage came out in 2010 on Swedish TV. Hope Powell, coach of the British women's soccer team, also is a lesbian.

Rapinoe told Out Magazine in her coming-out interview that she's in a long-term relationship with an Australian soccer player.

The out U.S. Olympians also include tennis player Lisa Raymond and basketball star Seimone Augustus.

Raymond has won six Grand Slam titles in doubles and five in mixed doubles, and is currently a part of the top-ranked pair (with Liezel Huber) in the world, according to the Women's Tennis Association.

Augustus has gone from WNBA Rookie of the



Matthew Mitcham. Photo by William Cheung

Year (in 2006) to WNBA Champion (2011) with the Minnesota Lynx, even being named the 2011 Finals MVP. The Advocate reported earlier this year that Augustus is engaged to marry her girlfriend, LaTaya Varner.

Matthew Mitcham, a gold medal winner at the 2008 Olympics, is back in the pool.

"The number of publicly out Olympians this year is about double what it was just four years



Megan Rapinoe playing for the Chicago Red Stars in 2009. Credit: Chicago Red Stars/David Durochik

ago. That's indicative of the changing face of sports where sexual orientation is becoming just another part of athletes," said Cyd Zeigler, co-founder of Outsports.com. "But we can't get too excited, because it's still represents just 0.2 percent of the athletes. And if Grindr is crashing as soon as Olympic teams arrive in London, we know there are more. It's still very difficult to be openly gay in many countries represented at the Olympic Games, and there are still laws banning our legal relationships in almost every country at the Games. While some might like to pass this off as a problem for Africa and South America, European athletes and coaches have expressed homophobic sentiments recently.

"So while 20 out Olympians is great, I'd like to see a lot more of them come out publicly. The impact they can have as out athletes, with the whole world watching for the next two weeks, can be powerful."

The Outsports' out Olympian list also includes Edward Gal (Netherlands, equestrian), Judith Arndt (Germany, cycling), Imke Duplitzer (Germany, fencing), Marilyn Agliotti (Netherlands, field hockey), Carl Hester (Britain, equestrian), Carlien Dirkse van den Heuvel (Netherlands, field hockey), Mayssa Pessoa (Brazil, handball), Rikke Skov (Denmark, handball), Maartje Paumen (Netherlands, field hockey), Natalie Cook (Australia, beach volleyball), Alexandra Lacrabère (France, handball), Jessica Landström (Sweden, soccer), Hedvig Lindahl (Sweden, soccer), Lisa Dahlkvist (Sweden, soccer) and Carole Péon (France, triathlon) and Jessica Harrison (France, triathlon).

FGG also includes Claire Harvey (UK, paralympic volleyball) and Lee Pearson (UK, paralympic equestrian).

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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.

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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



VEHICLE REVIEW

2012 Buick Regal GS: Paint It Black

BY JEFF STORK, GAYWHEELS.COM

I joined Buick during the glory days of the turbo 3.8-litre. (The Grand National was announced the year I started.) Every male under 30 and quite a few of the women at Home Office bought one—myself included—and proceeded to spend a Michigan winter going diagonally, coping with the awesome power and serious lack of traction that black beauty provided. We loved it dearly, but it was hardly a balanced automobile. The motoring press loved it as much as we did. Tony Assenza from Car and Driver Magazine road-tested the legendary GNX in April of 1987 and wrote of it, “In a world of sleek shapes and refined manners, the GNX is an ax-wielding barbarian laying waste to everything in its path.”

Fast forward 25 years to 2012. In my driveway is the 2012 Buick Regal GS. It's the single most powerful car Buick has produced since the Grand National—but instead of a monster, it's a sleek shape with highly refined manners. Will I still like it?

Let's start with some background. I went to the press launch for the Regal back in 2010 and drove both the 2.4 conventionally aspirated 182 hp and the 2.0 turbocharged 220 hp versions. I described the Epsilon-based mid-sized sedans as

“well tailored and well mannered” and thought they were an excellent addition to the Buick line up. I found the 2.4 to be a bit sluggish and the 2.0 turbo to have a very pleasing power band, but didn't think of either as an “ax-wielding barbarian.”

The GS version is highly modified from the base model. The 2.0-litre turbo in the GS is the High Output Ecotec 2.0L turbo. Its 270 hp exceeds the '87 Grand National's 245 rated hp and falls just short of the GNX's 274, but since both those engines were underrated, its probably about on par with the Intercooled Grand National. It is offered with six-speed manual and six-speed automatic transmissions.

There are lots of unique touches. It has a deep skirted front fascia flanked by Bi-Xenon HIS headlamps and a unique rear one with dual exhaust ports. There are special rocker panels, a rear spoiler, and 19-inch twin spoke alloy wheels with Pirelli tires. Peek through the spokes and note the big Brembo calipers. Pirellis and Brembos—is this heaven? No, this is Buick.

The interior is offered in ebony leather only, with special touches such as a leather-wrapped F1-style steering wheel, piano-black dash trim and leather-trimmed sport seats. A Special GS Interactive Drive Control system offers standard,

sport and GS settings for the suspension. GM's IntelliLink is standard, along with a killer 336-watt Harmon Kardon Audio system with nine speakers and XM Satellite radio.

Options are few, and colors are limited: 20-inch polished wheels and performance tires, power sliding sunroof, GPS navigation and three extra-cost colors out of the five available. Quicksilver and Smoky Gray are standard, White Diamond, Carbon Black Metallic and Crystal Red Tintcoat are optional.

My test car was finished in the Crystal Red Tintcoat and features the meaty 20-inch wheel package. I found it to be quite a handsome and purposeful looking car, and others seemed to agree. I found neighbors in the driveway admiring it, and found it to be a topic of conversation from the couple at the table next to mine when I parked it at an outdoor cafe. All good signs as far as I am concerned.

But enough looking—it's time to see what happens when the rubber meets the road. Touch the starter button and the 2.0 turbo comes to life. It's smooth—Buick V8 smooth—and the exhaust note is quiet. Shift into drive and the car feels powerful, but doesn't play all of its cards. In fact, you could drive the GS and find it a smooth, well-balanced sport sedan with a poised ride, excellent handling, and crazy good brakes. You'd praise the engine torque, and would probably be a bit at odds with the six-speed automatic—which seems to default at least one gear too high for the sporting driver—and no sport setting. That should be an easy enough fix for such a sporting ride.

To transform the GS, the driver need do three things: select “GS” suspension mode, turn off traction control, and shift over to manual stick mode. The well balanced GS is now one crazy mother. Steering and ride are both tightened, and the turbo soars up to redline without the slightest hesitation. I wish the manual stick was the tiniest bit quicker, and with all due respect to the six-speed automatic, I'd go for the six-

speed manual in a heartbeat. But the car is now crazy fun, and sticks like glue to the tarmac. The Brembo brakes are killer and bring the GS down out of harm's way in no time flat.

I have to say that the Regal GS is the most fun I've had behind the wheel of a Buick since the Grand National. And that becomes my challenge to Buick: as much as I like the GS and think it's a great sport sedan choice, how about giving us one to boost your street cred? Tweak the power up to 300 hp and paint it black. Not Metallic Black, not Nocture Firefrost. Paint it black. Black out all the trim and give us a Regal Grand National. It'll be more sophisticated than the old girl, for sure, with superior ride quality and superb handling, but it'll be a Grand National. And we both need one.

See www.Gaywheels.com.

Auto news

—**Audi duty:** Trump International Hotel & Tower Chicago has added intriguing additions to its list of luxury guest services: two custom-ordered 2012 Audi house cars, according to a press release. Audi's flagship sedan, the A8, and its full-size seven-passenger luxury SUV, the Q7, are available as a complimentary amenity for travelers residing in suite accommodations. For more info on Trump Chicago's new house cars or to reserve suite accommodations, call 312-588-8000 or 877-479-TRUMP, or visit www.trumpchicagohotel.com.

—**Flag time:** In Fort Wayne, Ind., General Motors flew a Pride flag for a week in June, Towleroad reported. In a statement, the company said, “It's our hope that ongoing support of our employees will foster constructive dialogue on the importance of diversity at GM.”

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WINDY CITY TIMES



Homestead

BY MEGHAN STREIT

"Farm-to-table" has become quite the buzz phrase in the restaurant industry over the last few years. It's gotten to the point that if a restaurant doesn't bill itself as "farm-to-table," then I start to worry that they'll be serving Spam and canned green beans. Typically, you have to take restaurant's "farm-to-table" claims with a grain of (coarse Mediterranean sea) salt.

That's not the case at Homestead, a new rooftop eatery in Wicker Park. Homestead's "farm" is situated right where you can see it: on the patio. Depending on which table you're seated at, you could literally reach out and grab some fresh basil or lavender and add it to your cocktail or entrée. (Don't do that, though. I am sure the friendly staff will happily bring you all the herbs you can eat).

The "farm" at Homestead is more of very large herb and vegetable garden. But, considering it is located in the center of a major urban area, I'd say that's pretty darn impressive. Plus, the restaurant has a larger garden nearby and source as many ingredients as possible from nearby farms.

Homestead is co-owned by Greg Mohr and Scott Weiner, the guys who brought us The Fifty/50 and Roots Handmade Pizza. I'm happy to report that they churn out elevated farm-to-table cuisine as well as they do burgers and pizza.

First things first: Start with one of the expertly crafted cocktails. Many of them are made with fresh fruit and herbs, which, in my book, make them health food. I loved the No. 5, a refreshing concoction of tequila, lime juice and cherry bark

vanilla bitters. It's one of the easiest-to-drink tequila cocktails I've tasted (trust me—I've done my research) and the glass is rimmed with sweet vanilla lavender salt, making it a kind of softer, gentler margarita.

The food menu is made of a couple of dozen small plates made for sharing. You'll want to order four to six dishes for two people, and the many seriously appetizing offerings make it difficult to choose. One of my favorites was simply called "bread basket dip." Don't be deceived by the unassuming name. The bread is irresistibly fresh and comes with a mason jar filled with olive oil sprinkled with just-picked mint, fennel, cumin, coriander and applewood-smoked sea salt. Sitting in the flavorful olive oil are four scoops of homemade yogurt cheese that you swirl in the oil mixture and then smear all over your warm crusty bread. I'll never be able to enjoy plain old bread and butter in quite the same way.

Another ridiculously delicious vegetarian dish is the two-way potato. Fresh potatoes are hand cut into shoestrings and then deep-fried around a filling of mashed potatoes, goat cheese and herbs. Um, why did someone not think of this sooner? Oh, and there are truffles shaved on top. No description I can write will do the two-way potato justice. Just go to Homestead and eat it.

The menu isn't limited to carbs. There are a bunch of fish and meat dishes to round out your meal. Aside from being thoughtfully created and carefully prepared, they are all presented beautifully—as in they look like edible flower arrangements, thanks to all of the fresh herbs and vegetables arranged on the plates.

The beer-braised beef was incredibly tender and cooked in a sticky sweet sauce of bourbon and maple syrup. At first, it tasted just a tad too sweet, but if you pair each bite of meat with some of the fresh kale and greens that accompanies it, then it's just right.

I also enjoyed the scallops, which were seared

crisp outside but juicy on the inside. They sit atop a flavorful sunchoke puree and are topped with Kentucky paddlefish caviar. One of the most inventive dishes was the crunchy pork. The Berkshire belly is fried and then drizzled with a tangy sauce made from kalamansi, a Chinese orange. It's served with papaya and house-made pickles. When combined, the ingredients taste like a very upscale version of sweet and sour pork.

Homestead's desserts are crafted with the same creativity, fresh ingredients and attention to detail as the cocktails and the food. The beer, bacon, bourbon, coffee, caramel and chocolate cake is a sight to behold. An upside-down chocolate cupcake sits on one end of the plate and a scoop of salted caramel gelato is placed on the other. They are connected by a thick strip of bourbon maple candied bacon. There's a whole lot to love about this dessert. My only teensy, tiny complaint was that the chocolate cake was a bit on the dry side.

As dazzling as the bacon/chocolate/bourbon extravaganza was, I actually preferred a simpler dessert that was offered as a special on the night I visited—a super-moist vanilla cake layered with a delicate orange-flavored cream. My waiter said the chef was considering adding it to the menu on a permanent basis. He's got my vote.

Homestead offers what I believe is the most authentic "farm-to-table" experience you'll find within the city limits. Go before the summer ends so you can dine al fresco among leafy, fragrant herbs and tomatoes climbing a brick wall.

Homestead is located at 1924 W. Chicago Ave. (enter through Roots Handmade Pizza); call 773-645-4949 or visit www.homesteadontheroof.com.

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



Pinky has been trained in both Obedience and Agility. She is a very sweet, loving, affectionate girl, with the cutest ears! She loves to cuddle and would be the perfect companion. She would prefer a home with older children and is good with most dogs. She needs a loving owner to keep her engaged as she is very smart. Pinky is about 2 years old, weighs approximately 45 pounds, and will give someone a lifetime of fun and loyalty!

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Age: Adult
Sex: Female
Size: Medium



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Breed: Border Collie Mix
Age: Young
Sex: Female
Size: Medium

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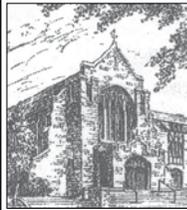
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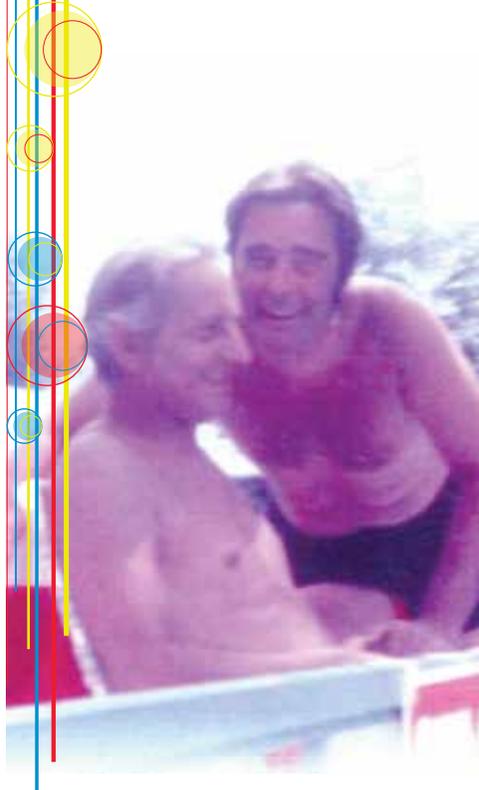
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Celebrations



ANNIVERSARY Nikas/Waters

Paul Nikas (left) and Edward Waters celebrated their 50th anniversary July 12. Nikas is the day manager at Jackhammer.

Photo of the couple in the '80s courtesy of Nikas

Share your special moments with the community in Windy City Times' new announcement section!

WEDDING Lewis/Perysian

Family and friends came from all over the United States on July 7, 2012, to witness a very important day for Michael Perysian and Tony Lewis at the Mayne Stage Theater in Rogers Park. The grooms' nephews proceeded down the aisle armed with bubble guns, followed quickly by the most lovely ring bearer a wedding could dream of, the Lewis' niece Mary Alice Fike. Soon followed the best man and matron of honor of Michael, Mike Damian and Donna Perysian Ekl. Next came Tony's best man and matron of honor, Kary Markey and Tricia Lewis Fike. The last to come down the aisle were the grooms themselves, accompanied by their gorgeous mothers, who joined the grooms' fathers at the front row. With readings by Joe Schenck and Deadra Crowel, songs sung and vows written by the grooms themselves, there were few dry eyes in the theater. After this beautiful profession of love and promise to each other, the grooms kicked off the party by singing a duet of their own (a re-written version of P!nk's "F#cking Perfect).

By the end of the day, Michael Allen Lewis Perysian and Anthony William Perysian Lewis had become husbands, and now continue their amazing future together. In this age of fighting for marriage equality, let us toast these men as they choose to make a life-long commitment to each other. Cheers!

Text and photo by Anthony Meade



ANNIVERSARY Kelley/Ooi

William B. Kelley and Chen Ooi marked their 33d anniversary July 7 during the same week as Chen's 60th and Bill's 70th birthdays.

Photo courtesy of Kelley

calendar

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nightspots

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Wed., July 25

Toast the Town and Light the City Pink Roka Akor's chic Sake and Shochu Lounge serves as the stunning backdrop. Guests will sip on the evening's summery signature "Pink Ribbon" cocktail. The event 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.lynnstage.org

Wet Boxer/T-shirt Contest Let's get soakin' wet with this male and female contest. \$1 wells and drafts. DJ Theresa Dawn. No cover. 8pm, Club Krave, 13126 S. Western Ave., Blue Island; www.clubkrave.com

Curtains Up! Showtune Video Night Come and enjoy the music of the Great White Way and the Silver Screen, 9pm, The Call (Chicago), 1547 W. Bryn Mawr Ave.

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, Mercedes Andrews, Kelly Lauren, Erica Andrews and special guests each week! 10pm, Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted St., www.hydratechicago.com

Thursday, July 26

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.navypier.com

My Best Friend is Straight An evening of frivolity and food for gay and straight friends, Cream City Foundation's summer

SWEET SUCCESS Friday, July 27

Vital Bridges Center on Chronic Care's Chefs and the City will take place at the Ritz-Carlton, 160 E. Pearson St.

Photo by Andrew Davis



party. \$50, at the door \$75. Low income and students, \$25. 5:30pm, 414-225-0244, Location North Point Lighthouse, 2650 N. Wahl Ave., Milwaukee, Wis., www.creamcityfoundation.org

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

Columbia College Chicago hosts benefit concert Columbia College Chicago's Dance/Movement Therapy and Counseling Department will dance as therapy with Anixter Center's New Focus Program, serving adults with brain injury; Hubbard Street's Parkinson's Program; and Keshe's GADOL Program, serving adults with developmental disabilities. 7pm-11pm, 312.369.7697, The Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago, www.colum.edu/dancecenter/dmt

Crew Karaoke Crew's Thursday night karaoke is back. Hosted by Bill, with Chris manning the controls, it is always a fun time! 10pm, Crew Bar & Grill, 4804 N Broadway, www.worldsgreatestbar.com

Friday, July 27

Youth Speak Out Center on Halsted and After School Matters collaborate to a ten-week spokenword apprenticeship for Chicago Public high school youth (ages 14-19), who receive a stipend while learning elements of spokenword focused on LGBTQIA identity, gender expression, race, ethnicity and class. At the end, youth perform cumulative work on stage. Apply at lkarlic@centeronhalsted.org. 3:30pm-7pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., www.centeronhalsted.org

Chefs and the City Vital Bridges Center on Chronic Care is hosting the eighth annual "Chefs and the City" Friday, July 27, at The Ritz-Carlton Chicago Grand Ballroom, 160 E. Pearson St., 7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. Tickets are \$50-\$250; see www.VitalBridges.org or call 773-271-9161.

London 2012 Olympic Kickoff with an exciting Opening Ceremony (Paul McCartney is scheduled to perform on TV). Kit Kat will show the festive event on all seven of its state-of-the-art HD screens starting at 6:30pm. The featured martini for the evening will be the "Go USA" martini (\$6) and a British-themed entree, Shepherd's Pie, made with Allen Brothers ground beef (\$18). 6:30pm-10:30pm, Kit Kat Lounge, 3700 N Halsted St., www.kitkatchicago.com

Theater 47 Presents The Color Purple Theater 47 and Director John Ruffin presents The Color Purple Friday July 27 and July 28, 2012 and Sunday July 29, 2012 at 5p. General Admission \$30, VIP \$45. Opening Night includes a VIP reception and red carpet, 5:30p; 7pm-10:30pm, 312-607-5662, Harold Washington Cultural Center, 4701 S. King Dr., www.johnruffin.com

Scrooge & Marley movie Christmas in July party OPALGA hosts screening of the trailer of the modern-day gay variation on Charles Dickens classic, behind the scenes photos. The creative team for the film will discuss the making of the film. Win merchandise and learn how to show up in the credits. RSVP to editor@windycitymediagroup.com or call 773-387-2394; 7:30pm, Private residence, River Forest, http://gopride.com/z798

Bad Romance Show Bad Romance Show is a large-scale, live concert theatrical musical production that pays tribute to the music of Lady Gaga; 8pm-11pm, 312-923-2000, House of Blues, 329 N. Dearborn St., www.badromanceshow.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. As our hero makes his way through the labyrinth of the bathhouse, he meets a host of fun, sexy and antagonizing characters. 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 28

Annual two-day used-book sale Fundraiser for the Women's Voices Fund and the bookstore. Volunteers appreciated. wcf-books@gmail.com. 11am, Women & Children First Books, 5233 N. Clark St., www.womenandchildrenfirst.com

HIV+ support group For anyone living with HIV regardless of length of diagnosis. Ten-week cycles, age-specific groups are facilitated by a mental health professional with extensive training in HIV and STDs and are a safe, confidential space to share experiences, learn from each other, and find support. Contact Gregory Gross, Clinical Manager of the HIV Testing & Prevention Program at 773-472-6469, x478, or ggross@centeronhalsted.org. 12pm-1:30pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., www.centeronhalsted.org

Mary Hartline Meet TV's superstar in person. RSVP online. 12pm-12:45pm, Museum of Broadcast Communications, 360 N. State St., www.museum.tv

Making Prostate Cancer Awareness a Priority Survivor, singer, songwriter, producer Charlie Wilson, Janssen Biotech, Inc. and Real Men Charities, Inc. are teaming up for a program to raise awareness about prostate cancer's disproportionate impact on African-American men. Registration 9:30 am. MAP info email lvaga@its.jnj.com; 12pm, 908-218-7316, Trinity United Church of Christ, 400 W. 95th St.

Linda Eder Acclaimed contemporary vocalist Linda Eder brings her "Songbirds" show to Viper Alley, Lincolnshire for two performances on Saturday, July 28 at 6:30 and 10:30 pm. Doors open at 4:30 pm for the 6:30 pm show and at 8:45 pm for the 10:30 pm show; the restaurant opens at 5 pm. Tickets \$30. 6:30pm-9:30pm, 847-499-5000, Viper Alley, 275 Parkway Dr., www.viper-alley.com

Equality Illinois Celebrity Pie-Lympics This year, in honor of the upcoming London Olympic games, EQIL is taking our Celebrity Pie Toss to the next level by renaming it the Pielympics. The throws will be faster, higher, and stronger. Free and open to the public. We are still recruiting celebrities for the Pie Toss but we already have state Rep. Sara Feigenholtz, Ald. James Cappleman, Chicago Force Women's Tackle Football Team, representatives from the Chicago Fire and the Chicago gay hockey team confirmed. 2pm-5pm, 773-477-7173, Sidetrack, 3349 N Halsted St., www.eqil.org

Sunday, July 29

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

Cowboys & Cocktails with the Windy City Cowboys. A fun afternoon with plenty of cowboys. Raffle for a brand new iPad. 2pm-5pm, Marty's, 1511 W Balmoral

Urban Village Church: Wicker Park evening service Wicker Park is a neighborhood full of passion, art, diversity, and



GOING GAGA

Friday, July 27

The Bad Romance Show will pay tribute to the music of Lady Gaga at House of Blues, 329 N. Dearborn St.

PR photo

eclectic energy, all which make Urban Village Church thrilled to be in the community! 5pm-7pm, 1502 N. Hoyne (At LeMoyne), www.newchicagochurch.com

Monday, July 30

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.

5 Lesbians Eating a Quiche It's 1956 and the Susan B. Anthony Society for the Sisters of Gertrude Stein is meeting for their annual quiche breakfast. However, this year there is an unexpected agenda item—the dropping of atom bombs on their city. \$20-\$25; 8:45pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., www.thenewcolony.org

Tuesday, July 31

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

Tuesdays at POW-WOW LGBTQ poets and open mic. \$5. powwowinc@gmail.com. Door opens 7:30 pm; 8:30pm, Jeffery Pub, 7041 S Jeffery Blvd.

Wed., Aug. 1

Gay Liberation Network meeting Chicago's multi-issue, LGBT direct action group calling attention to equality and liberation for LGBTs, against America's wars, supporting labor and immigrant rights, and more. Chicago's multi-issue, LGBT direct action group; 7pm-9pm, 773-209-1187, Berger Park Cultural Center, 6205 N. Sheridan Rd., www.gayliberation.net

Unite: For the Love of Fashion J. Toor, Shah Riaz fashions will be available for sale at event. Benefits. EdgeAlliance. \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door; 8pm-10pm, Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St., www.edgealliance.org/pages/core_values/125.php; Tickets: www.bit.ly/edgefashion

Saturday, Aug. 4

Kate Bornstein: On Men, Women and the Rest of Us Entertaining introduction to the notion of sex and gender beyond the binary—as well as a affirmation of spirit for sex and gender outlaws. 6:30pm: Doors open and Trans Community Resources available. 7 pm. Kate Bornstein takes the stage. \$10 at the door. Space is limited. RSVP or learn more from culture@centeronhalsted.org or 773-472-6469;



MOVIE KIND OF LOVE

Thursday-Friday, July 26-27

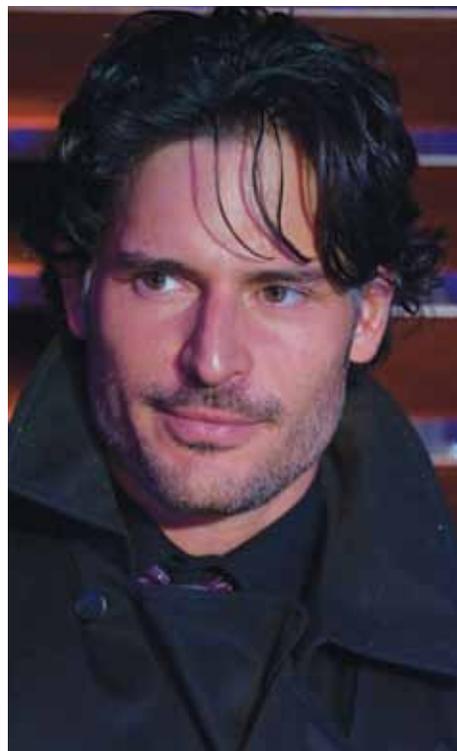
There will be a couple of Christmas in July parties that focus on the gay movie Scrooge & Marley (starring Bruce Vilanch, above, among others). NOTE: Mr. Vilanch will not be at the parties.

PR photo

BILLY MASTERS

"You were half past gone on the floor. The first thing I thought was, 'Yup, he's his momma's son!'"—Lucy Ewing, having lunch with her cousin John Ross, recalls how she found him drunk as a teen. In addition to giving Charlene Tilton an on-screen credit on the reboot of Dallas that allows her to continue receiving health insurance, this scene accomplished two things—it got to refer to Sue Ellen's drunken past, and it got Tilton to eat a salad!

I'm in the midst of chaos as I am packing for what promises to be a very lengthy trip abroad. You'd think with all the traveling I do, this would become easier. But, alas, the longer I go away, the more I need to bring with me. After all, I never take a vacation from writing to you. Just when I felt prepared for any situation, I read about actor Jonah Falcon—who happens to be in possession of the largest penis in the world (which I have seen in person). While traveling out of San Francisco International Airport,



Joe Manganiello will experience some sexual healing on True Blood, Billy says.

Jonah was stopped by TSA for possessing what was described as a "suspicious-looking bulge"—which I'd consider a compliment, especially in San Francisco. The agents seemed perplexed when they asked Jonah to empty his pockets and he said, "They are empty." He endured a vigorous pat-down that, apparently, satisfied everyone.

One of the first places I'll be stopping abroad is lovely Lake Como in Italy. Not the first time I've been to Como, and I'm sure not the last. Someone who is there for the first time is Channing Tatum, who went with his wife Jenna Dewan. And where are they staying? Where do you think? With George Clooney, of course. Why? It turns out Jenna is very close with Stacy Keibler, Clooney's current paramour. And since George is best buddies with Steven Soderbergh, I'm sure he has some connection to Channing. Could Clooney be taking an interest in Tatum like he did with previous up-and-comers Matt Damon, Mark Wahlberg, etc? Well, he does seem to have a type.

Since the success of Magic Mike, there's talk of an inevitable sequel. If that happens, maybe they'll hire Jason Biggs. There's a video circulating in Hollywood that shows Biggs auditioning for Magic Mike March 29, 2011. He was allegedly trying out for the role of Dallas, which ended up going to Matthew McConaughey. For his audi-

tion, Jason attempts a Southern drawl, has on a cheesy mustache and does a stripping routine that ... well, must be seen to be believed. As I watch this video—which is said to have been leaked by an assistant—I keep thinking that it can't be real (like that Chris Klein "Mamma Mia" audition tape that I can't get enough of). I think this must be a spoof staged by Biggs. But who knows? I'll post it on BillyMasters.com and you can judge for yourself.

Joe Manganiello might have played a stripper in Magic Mike, but we've seen far more of his sizzling skin on True Blood. And, happily, that's a trend that's going to be continuing. At Comic-Con, executive producer Alan Ball said, "There are definitely some very hot sex scenes" and Joe himself said, "I sexually eviscerate another cast member in one of the episodes coming up." I'm not even sure what that means, but I'll definitely be watching.

All sorts of changes are happening at American Idol. One of the reasons Lopez wanted to leave "Idol" was to focus on other projects. And she's got an interesting one in the works. It's a one-hour drama about a lesbian couple with three children (one biological son and adopted twins). Reportedly, the harmonious household is upended when a wayward teenage girl moves in. I'm sure you won't be shocked to hear that this show is being developed for ABC Family. The network actually put a rush on it once Jennifer said she'd guest-star. Far more interesting to me is that the show was created and written by Brad Bredweg and Peter Paige—yes, the same Peter Paige from Queer as Folk. They will stay on as producers.

Watch how I effortlessly weave Queer as Folk and American Idol together before your very eyes. I bet some of you have been going through Randy Harrison withdrawal since "QaF" went off the air. If that's you, then get your ass to NYC because Randy is joining the hit off-Broadway musical Silence!, a spoof of Silence of the Lambs. He's playing Dr. Chilton, the man who Hannibal refers to at the end of the film when he says, "I'm having an old friend for dinner."

Speaking of theater blondes, "AI" alum Anthony Fedorov just joined the off-Broadway production of Rent in the role of Roger. If you wanna see him, you better hurry—the show is closing Sept. 9.

I've got one more story and it's my favorite item of the week: Anderson Cooper has been offered \$1 million to masturbate on camera. Now look, I love the dashing silver fox as much as the next gay, but I don't want to see that. It just all seems too ... icky. The offer came from Treasure Island Media, those people who make loads of money producing bareback films that no one admits to buying. Head honcho Paul Morris calls the offer "a career-defining opportunity that cannot be passed up." For whom? Anderson? So, let me get this straight—rescuing that little boy after the earthquake in Haiti will pale in comparison to doing a jerk-off video? I think not.

When we could find out what comes between Coop and his Vanderbilt Jeans, we've definitely come to the end of yet another column. Frankly, I think this is all a publicity stunt. If they want to get a CNN anchor playing with himself on a futon, why doesn't anyone call Don Lemon? Or Wolf Blitzer? I bet he'd be popular with the bears! For more scintillating stories like this, head to www.BillyMasters.com, the site that doesn't aim so high. If you need answers (and who doesn't?), send a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before someone in Como notices my suspicious bulge! Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

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Contentious CMSA elections held

BY ROSS FORMAN

Brian Kupersmit was named the new president of the predominantly gay Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA) July 18 after a two-and-a-half-hour election held at the Margate Fieldhouse for three open seats on the board of directors.

Jessica Andrasko and Michael O. Rice II also were elected to the Board, joining carry-over Board members Mark Sakalares and Matt Simpson. Six directors (for one-year terms) will be added to the Board at the end of the month for its 11-person team.

The annual elections, attended by what many long-time CMSA members said was a record 300 members, were emotional, with debates often split along gender lines. The voting went six rounds before the three were chosen.

Comments from some female candidates and many of the female attendees focused on what they perceived to be a lack of female presence on the Board and lack of transparent CMSA issues/topics/rules/procedures.

Sakalares and Andrasko were named vice presidents; Simpson is the secretary; Rice is the treasurer. Andrasko is the lone female of the current five Board members, though the six appointed Director positions, to be filled July 30, can come from any of CMSA's near-3,800 members.

"It's a tremendous honor to be the president of this organization that has given me so much in terms of sports, social outlet, the ability to meet people," said Kupersmit, 37, who lives in Chicago's Uptown neighborhood and has been playing sports in CMSA since 2005. "I'm excited and energized about the opportunity to continue the work that this Board has been doing over



CMSA's new president Brian Kupersmit. Photo by Ross Forman

the last several years and take CMSA into the next wave of its existence."

Kupersmit, who moved to Chicago in 2004 from New Jersey, plays softball, football and tennis.

"I think one of the big opportunities here is to work to bring the community together again," Kupersmit said. "As you heard from many of the candidates, myself included, we are one CMSA, and we need to ensure that we are serving all of our members' needs—and that will be a real commitment of this Board, to bring everyone together."

Kupersmit said he also plans to improve the CMSA website, one of the biggest sources of complaints that CMSA receives. He added that growing CMSA's membership is important, as is retaining the players who are now members. Plus, he highlighted, "being more involved socially in the community including the youth program, and making sure all sports have by-laws, policies and procedures in place to make sure

that all of our leagues run smoothly.

"There are a lot of things on our plate, but I think this Board is ready to take that challenge." Kupersmit replaces Shawn Albritton.

Others who unsuccessfully ran for election to the board were four women and one man: Veronica Hernandez, Yvonne Lopez, Kristen Polich, Steve Whitley and C.J. Winke.



Force down Militia, now in championship game

BY ROSS FORMAN

Melissa Smith scored four rushing touchdowns July 21, leading the Chicago Force to a win in the Women's Football Alliance (WFA) national conference championship game, played in Evanston.

But it was one near-30-yard run with fewer than two minutes remaining to play that she remembers most.

It was that run that iced the 35-34 win for the Force over two-time defending national champion Boston Militia.

The Force had a 35-21 lead heading into the fourth quarter before the Militia answered with a pair of touchdowns, cutting the Force lead to one point—with Ashley Snyder waiting to attempt the point-after touchdown kick to tie the game at 35. But her kick failed and the Force took over on downs.

Chicago then just needed to make one first down, and the team could run the clock out—and then officially punch its pick to the national championship game Aug. 4 in Pittsburgh. Smith broke free and scampered for about 30 yards before being brought down, and the Chicago celebration officially was underway.

"That [30-yard run] charged me up that much more," Smith said.

Smith, 32, playing in her fifth season for the Force, scored on rushing touchdowns of 3, 4, 14 and 4 yards—all in the first half as the Force carried 35-14 edge at halftime.

Quarterback Sami Grisafe connected with Trish Harper on a 6-yard pass in the first quarter for Chicago's only other touchdown.

"We knew it was going to be a dog fight. We knew it was going to be a tough game. Coach [John Konecki] repeatedly told us that they were not going to hand us [the victory], that we'd have to take it—and that's what we did," Smith said. Beating Boston "puts a big smile on my face.

"This is so excited. This is history; that's what's most exciting."

After all, the WFA national championship game, against the 11-0 San Diego Surge, reportedly will be the first women's game ever played in an NFL stadium. Heinz Field is the NFL home of the Pittsburgh Steelers.

"I knew, no matter what, that we were going to win tonight," Albi Zhubi said among the celebrating fans and players. "Coach [Konecki] kept saying that it was our destiny, and I felt it.

"If I could trade in the last four [successful] seasons to be playing in Heinz Field, and to be playing on the 10th anniversary of the [founding of the] Chicago Force and on the 40th anniversary of Title IX, I definitely would do it. It's going to be a magical life experience, one that all of us will remember and think back on for the rest of our lives."

Boston struck first, grabbing a 7-0 lead with 11:23 left in the first quarter. The Force answered with three consecutive scores to build a 21-7 lead.

Chicago was not able to score in the second half.

"We clearly didn't play our best game in the second half. The offense played at a low level," Zhubi said. "The difference was, we came out and we knew. We trusted our training, we trusted our coaches, we trusted our teammates.

"This is what we've been preparing for since 2008—to get back to the national championship game, and now we're back."

Zhubi admitted that she expected Snyder to convert the point-after kick "I couldn't believe for a second that she missed the [point-after] kick."

Boston attempted an onside kick in the final moments, but Chicago's Ashley Berggren recovered the kick. It was after that recovery that Smith made her game-clinching run.



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REAL ESTATE TRANSFERS TAX PUTS THE BITE ON THE BUYER

Q. I am buying a condominium in a new building in the City and just learned I have to pay a large transfer tax to the City of Chicago. What are my options?

A. The real estate market is struggling with the fallout from bad loans, foreclosures and skittish buyers. To add to the woe, the City of Chicago has a real estate transfer tax of \$10.50 per \$1,000 of sales value, divided between the seller and buyer of the real estate. This means that the buyer of a \$300,000 single-family home or condo would pay a transfer tax of \$2,250 and the seller would pay \$900 for a total transfer tax of \$3,150.

If you are going to be a purchaser of real estate this spring here are some tips:

* If you will be making an offer to purchase have your realtor submit your offer with a provision that the City transfer tax and all other transfer taxes, including State of Illinois and Cook County (they total a combined \$1.50 per thousand of sales price) be split 50/50 by the Seller and Purchaser. This way some of the pain can be shared with the Seller.

* If you are 65 or over you can obtain a refund if you purchase property valued at \$250,000 or less and live in the premises for at least one year.

Know that if you are purchasing a new condominium, the Illinois Condominium Property Act provides that a "detailed accounting" is to be provided by every developer within 60 days after election of the first unit owner board of managers. The issue that comes up is whether the developer has properly paid assessments. The law requires that the developer pay assessments on unsold units beginning with the first conveyance and to collect assessments from owners of sold units during the period from the first sale until turnover to the unit-owner controlled board.

Also, be aware of the Illinois Home Repair and Remodeling Act, 815 ILCS 513/1. This law requires every contractor who performs home repair, improvement, or remodeling on residential real estate for a sum in excess of \$1,000, to obtain a written contract signed by the home owner, and to give them a copy of the pamphlet "Home Repair: Know Your Consumer Rights," prior to the beginning of the work.

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Left: QB Sami Grisafe hands off to Brandy Hatcher.

Above: Melissa Smith (#87) has a big running game.

Photos by Hal Baim

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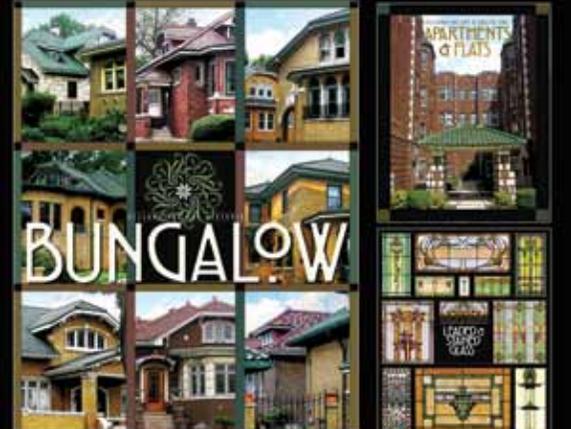
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Ray J. Koenig III and Clark Hill PLC



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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