

ALANIS MORISSETTE

PAGE 26

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RUNNING FOR LIVES



BATTLE IN IOWA
PAGE 5



On Sept. 30, thousands of people took part in the annual AIDS Run & Walk Chicago, which featured appearances by celebrities such as Wanda Sykes and Michael Feinstein. Read about the event and see more photos on page 34 and online at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com. Photo by Ross Forman

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'KINKY BOOTS' STEPS INTO TOWN



HOWARD BROWN'S INTERIM CEO
PAGE 12

A press conference was held Sept. 28 for the upcoming Broadway in Chicago production Kinky Boots. Among those attending were (from left) Cyndi Lauper (the musical's composer), Jerry Mitchell (director/choreographer) and Harvey Fierstein (author). Find out more on page 24. Photo by Hal Baim

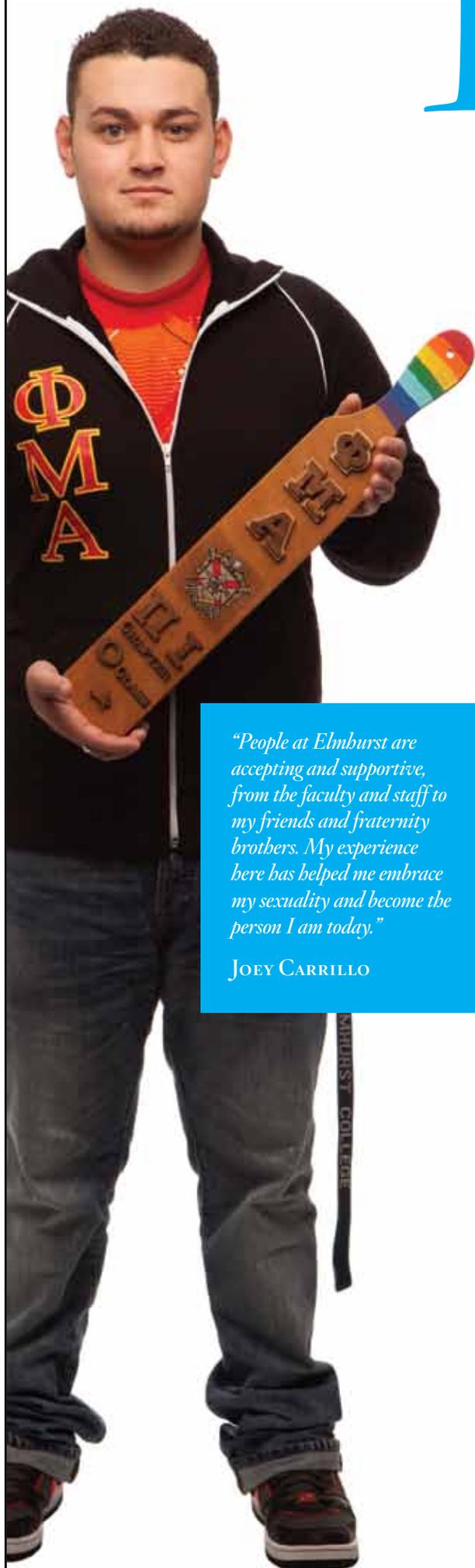


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MATT ALBER INTERVIEW
PAGE 27

You belong here



"People at Elmhurst are accepting and supportive, from the faculty and staff to my friends and fraternity brothers. My experience here has helped me embrace my sexuality and become the person I am today."

JOEY CARRILLO

At Elmhurst, you'll find an exceptionally welcoming campus community. We embrace individual expression. We see our differences as sources of strength. And we clearly, openly, emphatically want you here.

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We support our LGBT students through a variety of campus organizations and events. The student group EQUAL (Elmhurst Queers and Allies) promotes awareness through events and advocacy. SAFE (Staff, Administrators and Faculty for Equality) offers a support network for the LGBT community. An annual guestship and other special events focus on issues of concern to the LGBT community. Our faculty is adding courses in LGBT studies.

A step ahead of the rest

"In a small but meaningful step, Elmhurst College is now officially telling applicants that gay students are welcome on campus. The private liberal arts college is the first college in the U.S. to ask potential students about their sexual orientation or gender identity on its application....The question is meant to increase diversity at the school, which is affiliated with the United Church of Christ, and to direct incoming students toward services that might ease their transition into college life. It's also a strong signal that the school will embrace LGBT students and will do its best to support them."

—Chicago Sun-Times, August 26, 2011



"Elmhurst College does a great job of nurturing and supporting LGBT students. Coming out was hard for me, but I've been blessed to have an accepting community to come out to."

FELICIA DIAZ



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Photos on cover (left, from top): Publicity photo of Alanis Morissette; photo of Robert Vander Plaats by Tim Carroll; photo of Karma Israelsen courtesy of Marissa Ellenby; image of Matt Alber courtesy of Alber



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NEWS YOU CAN USE

Read more local news, such as goings-on concerning the Legacy Walk and IDPH head Lamar Hasbrouck (left) visiting the AIDS Foundation of Chicago.

Photo by Ed Negron



Read an interview with DJ Tristan Jaxx, whose HuffPo piece brought to light his other interesting career: adult films.

Photo by Andrew Davis



See photos from this weekend's Chicago Gourmet event.

Photo by Andrew Davis

SHIP AHOY

Read about taking a (very refined) voyage on the Queen Mary 2.

I'M COMING OUT

Read an interview with Wayne Dhesi, who's behind a British-based website that collects coming-out stories from around the world.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

Read entertainment news about John Travolta, Dolly Parton and George Michael.

plus **DAILY BREAKING NEWS**

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Supreme Court reschedules Proposition 8 decision

BY LISA KEEN
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

On its first official day of the 2012-13 session (Oct. 1), the U.S. Supreme Court did not include Proposition 8 on the list of cases it would or would not review.

This was the third list of cases released thus far by the Supreme Court for this session. The justices originally scheduled the case, *Hollingsworth v. Perry*, for discussion in their Sept. 24 meeting, prompting many to speculate that the court would announce on either Sept. 25 or Oct. 1 whether it would take up the appeal from those seeking to preserve the ban on same-sex marriages in California.

But on Sept. 26, a notice was posted in the press room at the Supreme Court indicating the case was being "rescheduled" for a later conference meeting. As of deadline this week, the docket did not indicate a new conference date for the highly watched case.

Ted Olson, a lead attorney on the American Foundation for Equal Rights legal team that has won court victories striking down Proposition 8, said he assumes the court wants to discuss the Prop 8 case in the same conference with the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) cases.

Therese Stewart, chief deputy city attorney for San Francisco, said the rescheduling of *Hollingsworth* may signal the high court is considering "whether it will take Perry and the DOMA cases together." Or they may want to ensure their handling of the marriage cases don't have "any impact on the election."

"But I think the former is the more likely reason it was put over," said Stewart.

The Supreme Court calendar indicates only three conference meeting dates for the justices this month—all Fridays—on Oct. 5, 12 and 26. Typically, if a case is discussed in conference, its disposition is announced the following Monday (or if Monday is a holiday, then Tuesday).

Regardless of what the court decides to do, the news will be significant.

If the court takes review, then both sides will brace themselves for a decision that could make statewide same-sex marriage bans more difficult or easier to defend.

If the court decides not to take the appeal, then same-sex couples in California will soon be able to obtain marriage licenses again. Such a development on its own would boost momentum for a growing acceptance of marriage equality around the country, and make California the eighth state, plus the District of Columbia, to provide for equal protection in marriage.

By not hearing the appeal of Prop 8 supporters, the court would be leaving as precedent the Ninth Circuit's decision that taking away the right to marry from an unpopular group, without a rational reason for doing so, violates the equal-protection guarantee of the Constitution.

"The immediate effect of [not taking review] would be to allow marriage in California," said Stewart, adding that, "once the Ninth Circuit issues its mandate, [that] should happen quickly."

Leaving the Ninth Circuit decision as precedent would apply only to the Ninth Circuit states: California, Arizona, Nevada, Oregon, Idaho, Washington, Montana, Alaska and Hawaii.

"The effect on other states would not be immediate," said Stewart, "but the reasoning of the Ninth Circuit might be used in other cases. The circumstances in California are somewhat unique, so whether another court or even another panel of the Ninth Circuit would apply all or some of the reasoning of the *Perry* panel to a different case probably depends on how similar or different the case is and who is on the panel deciding the case."

Having *Perry* preserved in the Ninth Circuit



may have some "persuasive effect" should Washington State voters reject a new marriage equality law there in November, prompting litigation, said Stewart, "especially because the situation would be closer to California's than most."

The Supreme Court announcements usually fall

into one of two categories — "cert granted" and "cert denied."

"Cert" is shorthand for "petition for writ of certiorari," a request that usually comes from a party who has lost litigation in a federal appeals court, asking the high court to review the lower-court decision and change it. If the court "grants cert," then at least four justices have voted to review the lower court decision and the case will be heard by the full bench. If the court "denies cert," then the Supreme Court will not hear the case and the lower appeals court decision stands as precedent for the states in that circuit. While these are the most frequent options, the high court can take other actions as well.

Stewart said that, if the Supreme Court decides not to review the Prop 8 decision, the Ninth Circuit would then issue its mandate requiring equal treatment of same-sex couples. Stewart said that typically takes about a week.

"But here I think the court would get the

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NATIONAL NEWS



—Cory Booker (left),
Sally Field part of
HRC dinner

—Gay men attacked
in Austin, Texas

—Ryan Idol gets
12 years in prison

mandate out very quickly, within a day," said Stewart. "I am told that the state department of public health is all over this, i.e., ready to act promptly once the mandate issues."

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LGBT HISTORY MONTH

Ruth Ellis: Age knew no bounds

BY SUSAN HOROWITZ

She was the matriarch of Detroit's LGBT community—and more than a decade after her passing, her memory lives on.

Ruth Charlotte Ellis lived to be 101 and was an active and much-beloved member of the community right up until the end. She danced her way—literally—into the hearts of many, impressed with her warmth and quiet dignity and inspired with her drive and frequent random acts of kindness.



Ruth Ellis.

Ellis was born July 23, 1899, in Springfield, Ill. She recalled hiding in her home during the Springfield race riots of 1908. Later, she fell in love with her white gym teacher, who held her hand to complete a class circle when other students wouldn't.

Encouraged by the promise of better wages, Ellis moved to Detroit in 1937, where she watched over a young boy in Highland Park for \$7 a week. Soon, however, she put the printing-press knowledge she had picked up in Springfield to work and secured a position with Waterfield and Heath, where she worked

until she opened her own press some years later.

Ellis ran her business out of the West Side home she shared with her partner, Ceciline "Babe" Franklin. The couple became known for their weekend house parties, a haven for young LGBTs who had nowhere else to go. She took several of them in, and even helped a few through college before she retired and moved to a downtown senior complex. Franklin moved to Southfield, but the two shared keys to one another's residences, and the relationship continued until 1975, when Franklin suffered a heart attack on her way to work.

"I don't think it was love," Ellis once said about her 30-year relationship with Franklin. "[But] she was good for me. She taught me how to take care of myself."

Ellis remained active after the loss, and took up photography and bowling. She traveled often and began helping out elderly neighbors, running errands for them and picking up their groceries.

In the late 1980s, Ellis was at a self-defense class when she met Jay Spiro, who she correctly identified as a fellow lesbian. The two had dinner and Spiro began introducing Ellis around. Soon, crowds were lining up to dance with Ellis at parties and social functions, where she developed a reputation for wearing out dance partners on the floor.

"I love good dance music and classical music," she told "Between The Lines" in 1999. "When I am dancing, people say, 'Miss Ruth, I have got to quit, I am too tired.' But I'm still dancing."

The awards and accolades began at about this time, as the public took notice of Ellis' remarkable life, her entrepreneurial skills and the assistance she provided to younger LGBTs for several decades. She was honored with lifetime-achievement awards, resolutions from the mayor and other officials and even an honorary doctorate.

But the greatest recognition came as her 100th birthday drew near. "Living With Pride: Ruth Ellis @ 100," the documentary-style telling of her life by Yvonne Welbon, won top

honors at several major film festivals. Ellis was written up in virtually every major LGBT publication across the country and profiled by mainstream African-American publications like *Essence* and feminist works like *Ms.*

Ellis eventually tired of the attention. Her failing health caused her to cut down her travel schedule, and she even turned down the chance to appear on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*.

"I'm getting to be too important," Ellis said at the time. "I never imagined all of this. I guess no one has ever seen a lesbian this old before."

Ellis was hospitalized in the summer of 2000—at age 101—dehydrated and exhausted. But she struggled to hold on until she made it back home, where she wanted to make her transition. She died in her sleep in the early morning hours of Oct. 5.

Often amazed at her own celebrity, Ellis frequently asked why everyone made such a "fuss" over her. Those who had the pleasure of knowing her, however, would never ask such a question.

"Ruth positively touched lives across North America," said Johnny Jenkins of Detroit Black Gay Pride. "Her spirit touched the essence of our humanity."

And her spirit continues to touch us today through the effort of the Ruth Ellis Center, the groundbreaking youth shelter, transitional living and outreach program founded in 1999. Ellis was on hand for the ribbon-cutting of the agency's first drop-in center in 2000.

Ruth's House, the center's transitional-living quarters, opened in 2004, and the agency continues to thrive as it provides short-term and long-term residential safe space and support services for runaway, homeless and at-risk LGBT youth in Detroit and Southeastern Michigan.

Comedian and Emmy-winning actor Wanda Sykes visited the center in 2010 and again in 2012. She was so impressed by what she saw that she Tweeted to her more than 100,000 followers about the center and went on to star in a public-service announcement for the agency. She also hosted a fundraising dinner for the agency and donated \$15,000.

If Ellis was surprised by how much attention she garnered in her lifetime, she would have been awestruck to know how her work has continued and her memory lives on.

Online: Read another LGBT History Month profile of Revolutionary War hero Baron Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.

Camps fight for and against Iowa judge

BY TIM CARROLL

It might be hard to imagine a group of lawyers and judges as the “David” in a David-and-Goliath tale, but that’s the position the Iowa State Bar Association (ISBA) found itself in last week.

The group Iowans for Freedom (IFF)—who successfully rallied support in 2010 to remove three of the Iowa Supreme Court justices who were part of the unanimous decision *Varnum v. Brien*, allowing gay marriage in the state—has now set its sights on a fourth, Justice David Wiggins. The ISBA is determined to keep IFF from being successful.

IFF Chairman Robert Vander Plaats and the big red “No Wiggins” bus was on a 17-stop rally tour

of Iowa. His fellow speakers were Co-Chairperson Tamera Scott, Executive Director Greg Baker, CatholicVote.org Executive Director Joshua Mercer and Patriot Voices spokeswoman Kim Lehman. Former U.S. Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa., and Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal made special guest-speaking appearances.

Past ISBA President Dan Moore and Christine Branstad, lawyer and niece of Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad, outfitted a small van with “Yes Iowa Judges” signs and are following the “No Wiggins” bus around the state, stopping at most of the same rally points, giving the other side of the story.

The “No Wiggins” speakers are telling the small crowds at their rallies that the seven jus-

tics who ruled in *Varnum v. Brien*—which struck down Iowa’s Defense of Marriage Act—were making law in the case and were amending the constitution. The Supreme Court is not allowed to do either.

“Yes Iowa Judges” says that the seven justices were not making law or amending the constitution; they were applying the Iowa Constitution, specifically Article 1, section 6, which states in part that “... the general assembly shall not grant to any citizen or class of citizens, privileges or immunities, which, upon the same terms

shall not equally belong to all citizens.”

“Yes Iowa Judges” Christine Branstad said last week that—according to the conservative U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s annual State Lawsuit Climates—Iowa’s judiciary is rated 10th in the nation while Santorum’s home state (Pennsylvania) is rated 40th and Jindal’s home state is rated 49th. Given their states’ rankings, she expressed her doubts that Santorum and Jindal are great spokespersons for upholding or affirming judicial integrity.

Calif. governor bans reparative therapy

California Gov. Jerry Brown made history Sept. 29 by signing legislation banning “reparative therapy”—psychological therapy aimed at turning gay and lesbian youth straight, according to LGBTQ Nation.

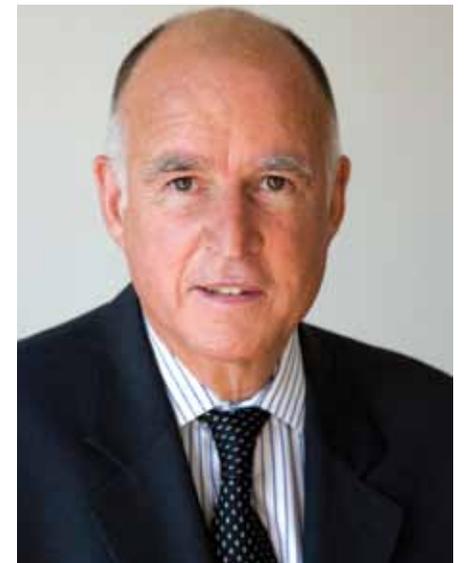
The state is now the first in the country to ban licensed mental-health professionals from trying to change the sexual orientation of minors, regardless of a parent’s desire.

State Sen. Ted Lieu authored the measure, while the National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR), Equality California, Gaylesta, Courage Campaign, Lambda Legal and Mental Health America of Northern California co-sponsored it.

Several LGBT-rights organizations issued statements praising Brown’s signing. NCLR Executive Director Kate Kendell (in a joint statement with Equality California) said, “Governor Brown has sent a powerful message of affirmation and support to LGBT youth and their families. This law will ensure that state-licensed therapists can no longer abuse their power to harm LGBT youth and propagate the dangerous and deadly lie that sexual orientation is an illness or disorder that can be ‘cured.’”

L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center Chief Executive

Officer Lorri L. Jean said, “Finally, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth in California will be protected from the dangerous and discredited quackery known as ‘reparative therapy.’ ... It’s my sincere hope, for the benefit of all American youth, that this new law will spark a wave of similar legislation in statehouses throughout the country.”



Calif. Gov. Jerry Brown. Official headshot



Former Iowa judges challenge Robert Vander Plaats (left). Image by Tim Carroll Photography

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Plaintiff in bullying case talks with Illinois students

BY KATE SOSIN

Jamie Nabozny, the student who won a landmark case against his school administrators for failing to stop his anti-gay bullies in 1996, addressed more than 100 Illinois students Sept. 29.

Nabozny spoke at a special screening of *Bullied*, the Southern Poverty Law Center's documentary about his case. Illinois Safe Schools Alliance hosted the screening at Waubesa Community College in Aurora.

Nabozny, who endured years of torture at the hands of his peers, talked to students and their parents about his experiences, the realities facing young people in schools today and why he thinks punishing bullies does not interrupt discrimination.

"The biggest problem is not intolerance and bigotry," said Nabozny. "It's not knowing what the right thing is."

Nabozny stressed the importance of teaching empathy to young people, especially bullies, who he sees as victims of a culture that teaches intolerance.

It is a lesson Nabozny learned first-hand after his own school administrators intentionally ignored the anti-gay name-calling and violence he experienced in his Ashland, Wis., high school. Nabozny's peers regularly taunted him, sexually harassed him, beat him up and even urinated on him. After one particularly brutal incident during which he was kicked in the stomach repeatedly, Nabozny was hospitalized for five days. When Nabozny and his parents reported the incidents to school administrators, they responded that Nabozny could only expect harassment if he continued to act gay.

After running away to Minneapolis to avoid going to school, Nabozny decided to sue his school administrators. With the help of Lambda Legal, Nabozny won the federal case on appeal, establishing that schools could be held accountable for failing to protect students from anti-gay harassment.

Today, Nabozny travels the country speaking at schools about bullying.

Nabozny advocates against punitive responses to bullying, arguing that punishment fails educate young people and fails to see discrimination as a symptom of society's biases.

Those biases include anti-religious and anti-Muslim sentiments, Nabozny said, adding that communities who may not unilaterally agree on LGBT issues can and should find common ground in a condemnation of violence against students.

Several students and parents at the event stood to thank Nabozny and seek his advice on issues they are facing locally.

One young person reported that when she told her mother she was bisexual, her mother threat-

ened to kick her out. Another parent vented her frustration with a local cyberbullying incident.

Nabozny said cyberbullying is increasingly common and exceedingly difficult for schools to control. But in some cases, he said, young people have crafted their own interventions, responding to negative comments about their peers on the internet.

"Right now, kids are so often not considered part of the solution when it comes to talking about bullying and harassment in schools," Nabozny said. "Kids will think of things that adults never ever would have."

Nabozny encouraged parents whose students face bullying to "climb the ladder" of school officials until someone takes the issue seriously. And he suggested that parents use words like "assaulted" instead of "bullied," which tends to be too vague to evoke a response.

For young people, he had another message: they have every right to feel safe in school.

"It shouldn't have to wait to get better," he said. "It should get better now."



Jamie Nabozny. Photo by Kate Sosin



Anita Hill at CFW luncheon

Anita Hill, the attorney and academic who famously stood up to workplace sexual harassment, was keynote speaker at the Sept. 27 Chicago Foundation for Women's luncheon, "Stand up and Speak Out," and entertained questions from the audience. The event took place at the Hilton Chicago.

Hill was thrust into the national spotlight in the 1990s when she testified against then-U.S. Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas, saying that he sexually harassed her at work. She currently works at Brandeis University as senior advisor to the provost and professor of social policy, law and women's studies. Her latest book is *Reimagining Equality: Stories of Gender, Race and Finding Home*, in which she explores issues of gender and race and how they connect to issues of equality, sexual harassment and the current housing crisis. Photos by Hal Baim



Anita Hill speaking (above) and with the CFW board (top). Photos by Hal Baim

Schools alliance holds annual brunch, honors individuals

BY MELISSA WASSERMAN

The Illinois Safe Schools Alliance (the Alliance) hosted its annual fundraiser The Alliance Brunch at the Chicago Cultural Center on Sept. 30.

In the spacious Sidney R. Yates Gallery, adults and youth ate, drank and celebrated the organization and its mission "to promote safety, support and healthy development for LGBTQ youth in Illinois schools and communities." Guests also had the opportunity to donate money as well as participate in a silent auction for various prizes.

This year's brunch honored Khadine Bennett with the Advocate of the Year Award for her work on House Bill 5290—legislation aimed at improving bullying prevention in Illinois schools—while serving as Legislative Counsel with the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois; high school students Abe Akande and Grace Gonia with the Activists of the Year Award; and Jamie Nabozny with the Trailblazer Award for standing up to school administrators after they repeatedly refused to intervene as classmates bullied him. With the help of Lambda Legal and Skadden Arps, he went on to win the federal case *Nabozny v. Podlesny*.

"I'm just really excited to be honored by a group that's doing such great work to make the Illinois schools safe places for all kids," said Nabozny. "I think the big thing that's changed, especially in the last couple of years, is a greater awareness of both bullying and its effects on kids. I think with that there are slow changes, but we've got a long ways to go because there are still kids taking their own lives because of what's happening to them in our schools."

Event Chair Rocco Claps also helped organize last year's brunch. (He chaired this year, along with Mary Morten.) He said the event grew significantly as people continue to be more en-

gaged and interested while the group matures.

"We have a lot of people involved from the educational community, from the LGBTQ community, from all over the city and suburbs and it gives a real face it gives real work to people that bullying is a really bad thing and we need to fight it," said Claps. "This is a way that really puts the rubber to the road."

Now a senior in high school, Gonia was picked on in middle school and as a result she joined her school's gay-straight alliance her freshman year. Since then, she has supported the cause and has a dream to one day be a high school counselor in order to help youth who feel unsafe in school.

"That's mainly what's motivated me to do this work is I want to make sure all youth can feel safe in their schools and not have to skip school just because someone is bullying them," she said. "I feel really almost gratified. The work I'm doing is actually making a difference and other people can see I'm really doing work that's helping people. It just felt like so good I was being recognized for the work I'm doing."

Alliance announces expansion

At the brunch, the alliance also announced that it is opening an office in Champaign, Ill.

The Champaign office will host two staff positions and will be located within Unit 4 district offices. An Illinois Department of Human Services grant, totaling \$128,000 per year, aims to help the alliance increase the capacity of school personnel and social-service providers throughout the state to prevent substance use and abuse in LGBTQ youth.

In addition, the Chicago-based staff has expanded to five with the recent addition of Lawrence Carter as the gay-straight alliance network coordinator.



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IFI argues for intervention in marriage lawsuits

BY KATE SOSIN

In the first oral arguments heard in two lawsuits that seek marriage equality in Illinois, an anti-gay organization made the case for its participation in the case.

Cook County Circuit Court Judge Sophia Hall heard arguments from the Illinois Family Institute (IFI) Sept. 27. The group is seeking to intervene in the case, which seeks to overturn the state's ban on same-sex marriage. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and Lambda Legal, which filed the lawsuits, oppose that intervention, noting that two downstate clerks are already defending the ban.

Hall declined to immediately rule on the proposed intervention.

IFI would be the second group permitted to intervene in the case, after 25 same-sex couples sued Cook County Clerk David Orr for the right to marry. Orr and Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez have refused to fight the lawsuits, calling the ban on same-sex marriage unconstitutional. Similarly positioned is Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan, who has filed in support of the lawsuits. As a result, the marriage ban was left undefended.

Two downstate county clerks have since been granted intervention to fight the lawsuit. They are represented by the Thomas More Society, the conservative law firm that represented Catholic Charities last year in its fight to maintain foster-care contracts while turning away same-sex foster parents.

IFI attorney Bryan Beauman argued that his group also has an interest in the case because the organization invested substantial money and energy in fighting same-sex marriage in Illinois. He said the organization has a greater interest in the case than that of the general public.

But Emily Nicklin, representing both the Lambda Legal and ACLU couples, countered that IFI's participation in the case would add little and slow the case.

"This would not be a proper case for these people to intervene in," Nicklin told the court, arguing that IFI would not be directly hurt by the allowance of same-sex marriage in the state and that their position would already be articulated by the intervening clerks.

Nicklin and other attorneys representing the plaintiff couples expressed a growing anxiousness to get the case moving as it has been stalled by the multiple interventions. In addition to the clerks and IFI, two Illinois churches—the Church of Christian Liberty and Grace Gospel Fellowship—will file a petition to intervene.

Those will set the case back another month. John Knight, an attorney with the ACLU, said

that allowing IFI and the churches intervention could open a flood gate of other parties claiming interest in the case. And until the parties in the lawsuits are established, he said, the case cannot continue.

"Figuring out who the parties are is a really crucial issue for us," he said.

Also awaiting argument is a motion from Thomas More Society that seeks to dismiss the lawsuits. That motion will not be argued until the parties in the lawsuit are finalized.

But Knight said that attorneys for the couples remain patient, trying not to rush Hall.

Hall declined to make a decision about IFI's participation in the case until the two churches make their arguments for intervention. She set that date for Wed., Nov. 7, at 10:30 a.m.

Equality Illinois expanding to Springfield, west suburbs

BY KATE SOSIN

LGBT-policy organization Equality Illinois is expanding to the state's capital and Chicago's western suburbs. The organization has announced that it will open two satellite offices in Springfield and in DuPage County.

Equality Illinois CEO Bernard Cherkasov said the new locations mark a major growth for the organization's presence beyond Chicago where its current office is located.

"The movement for equal and fair treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Illinoisans, by necessity, must be a statewide struggle," said Cherkasov, in a press statement. "The experiences and voices of residents outside of Chicago need to be heard and shared with their local and state officials."

Cherkasov said that Equality Illinois staff has traveled often to both Sangamon and DuPage counties, but that the new offices will allow the organization to be more present in its efforts outside the city. He added that those efforts will include educating and empowering communities around pre-existing LGBT protections in Illinois.

"By having offices in southern Illinois and western Illinois, we'll be able to do that work more regularly and more of it," he said.

Cherkasov said the offices will focus on field organizing—engaging with faith institutions, promoting LGBT-friendly workplace practices in local businesses and motivating allies. Equality Illinois already has two lobbyists based in Springfield, Cherkasov noted.



Bernard Cherkasov. Photo by Jerry Nunn

The locations could be open as soon as mid-October. Cherkasov said properties for both offices are still under negotiation and have yet to be announced.

Each office will be staffed with at least one full-time field organizer, while volunteers will likely staff reception and phones.

According to Cherkasov, the two offices have been in the works for at least nine months and had been discussed within the organization for two years.

Cherkasov declined to state how much mon-

ey was budgeted for the new offices but said that expansion was made possible by a growth of funds within the organization, a turnaround from recent years when the struggling economy hit nonprofits.

Gay employee suing sheriff's department

BY KATE SOSIN

A gay Cook County sheriff's deputy has filed suit against his department, alleging that supervisors failed to interrupt his anti-gay harassment, according to CBS news.

CBS reports that David Nardi alleges his fellow officers and sergeant tormented him with anti-gay slurs, lewd noises and homophobic comments since 1999. Nardi has filed complaints within the sheriff's office and the Illinois Department of Human Rights.

The Cook County sheriff's office released a statement saying that harassment is not tolerated and that the allegations are being investigated by their Office of Professional Review.

"Our policy clearly states that employees of the Cook County Sheriff's Office are expected to treat others with dignity and mutual respect at all times and it is the right of every CCSO employee to experience a non-hostile work environment free from discrimination and harassment," the statement reads.

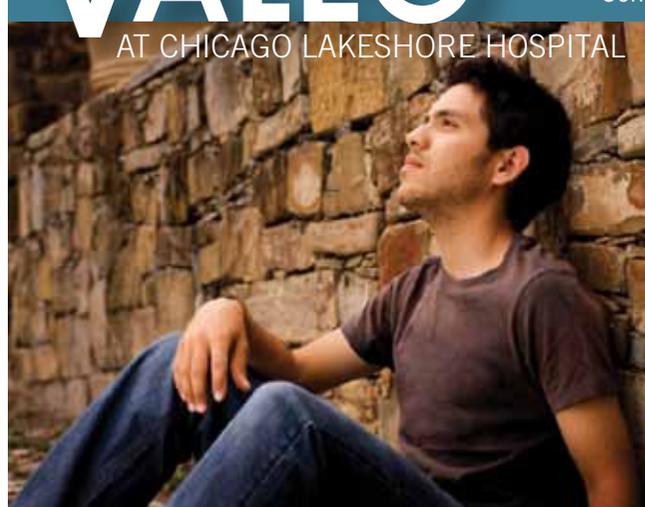
TPAN marking 25 years of service Oct. 4

HIV/AIDS agency Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN) will hold "The 25th Hour: Celebrating A Quarter-Century of Service" Thursday, Oct. 4, 5:30-8:30 p.m., at the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington St.

Tickets are \$75-\$150 each; see www.tpan.com/25hour.

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Open book:

Interim HBHC president Karma Israelsen talks with WCT

BY YASMIN NAIR

For the first time since she became board chair of Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC) in 2010, Karma Israelsen agreed to an interview with Windy City Times (WCT). Israelsen took over as interim president and CEO of Howard Brown when Jamal Edwards resigned unexpectedly several weeks ago.

During the course of the interview, WCT also asked for several facts and figures around HBHC's fundraising, grant funding, services provided, client and patient numbers, and salaries. The publication is currently fact-checking the material, and the next part of its ongoing coverage will focus on that information. WCT has also been assured of an interview with the current board chair, Duke Alden.

Israelsen's previous job was as vice president of regulatory operations and compliance for Career Education Corporation (CEC). The 36-year-old Israelsen's qualifications for her current job have been questioned in many quarters, particularly because Edwards also came to his position with no prior qualification in health care or experience in the non-profit world. Her current bio on the HBHC website cites her membership of the Leadership Council of the organization, which is not a service group but a branded donor recognition circle, designating those who give more than \$1,200 per year. In all other matters, Israelsen does not bring health care experience to the job. Her current position at Howard Brown will be an interim one, with an annual salary of \$180,000.

She spoke to us about these and other issues at the Sheridan Road location of Howard Brown. Alonzo Brown, senior director of communications at Howard Brown, was also present.

Yasmin Nair: Has there been a severance package for Jamal Edwards?

Karma Israelsen: That's not something I'm able to discuss right now. That's certainly something I'll talk about when the time is right. I just don't have the information.

YN: Have any organizations reached out to you to offer support at this time?

KI: Absolutely. One of the most amazing things is just the amazing outpouring [of support]. We reached out to our community partners and our community organizations and people have been just amazing. I had really good conversations with the Illinois Department of Health [and] Heartland Alliance, and we reached out to Chicago House, TPAN, Center on Halsted—so it's been a lot of work, and we've just had a lot of amazing offers of support.

YN: As you know, your predecessor at Howard Brown was criticized for the fact that he came in with no experience in the health care field and was yet given a very high salary: \$265,000. There are now questions about what, to many people, seems like the exact same thing going on right now, with your situation of stepping into the same position with no prior experience. Could you expand on your qualifications for the job? What is your experience in health care?

KI: It will probably be helpful to explain how I see my role as interim, because I don't have health care experience but I'm also not seeing patients. We have some really amazing, talented, qualified people working to see patients. So I think it makes sense to talk about how I see my role here as an interim ...

YN: What are your qualifications?

KI: I came out of a heavily regulated industry, so I'm used to dealing with a heavily regulated environment with multiple stakeholders and regulators. In my interim role here I [want

to] ensure that the patients are still getting the services they need and the providers are still meeting the mission of the organization. We have an amazing team here that's really, really talented and my role is to make sure they get the support and resources they need to continue to do their job. I don't have health care experience but I want to make sure that the people who do serve our patients every day have the tools and resources to continue to do their job. There are some strategic projects that have been kicked off prior to my starting here [and] I need to make sure we get through and execute all of them. First and foremost is our Triad move, which is happening in February 2013. We're kicking off strategic planning with the board, which will happen in October, which historically, you know, we haven't done a lot of strategic planning in recent years because of the crisis and what was going on and we're kicking that off we also have some exciting projects ...

YN: Let me stop you there [and] go back a little bit. How was the decision to have you step in as interim president and CEO made?

KI: It's not uncommon to have, when you have a leadership transition, someone from the board step in, in an interim role, since I had experience obviously at the board level for the two and a half years I've worked with this organization. There were a lot of discussions at the board level, about how to fill this role in the interim, particularly since the board feels strongly that we need to do a national search and put some time and diligence into who this new leader is going to be. Ironically, I'd actually left my previous job at the end of May and was taking six months off to do some traveling and decompress.

YN: Did you leave or were you let go?

KI: I left. I voluntarily resigned. It had been 10 years with the organization and it was just time for me to move on; it had been a rough two years with the organization and it was time for me to move on. So I actually had time to volunteer and contribute to the organization. I'm passionately committed to the mission of this organization. The board did discuss some other options about who to fill in [during] the interim and because I had the experience with the organization and at least a high-level understanding of what was going on, I agreed to step in and fill in.

YN: What exactly is your interim period going to be?

KI: My plan right now—I'm on a month-to-month contract right now. I want to be very clear that I have no intention of taking this role permanently. It's just not what my dream job is. It's an amazing organization: I'm so grateful that I have the opportunity to help out in the interim but this organization really needs to have the right leader for where we're at and where we need to go given the health care changes we're experiencing. So my contract is on a month-to-month basis. The board has started discussions with a couple of national firms to help with the executive recruiting process and I know there's a desire from the board to have community input into the search. There's some discussion going on about what that will look like and who will be included in that; I know there's a strong desire that the board take some time. Because even when Jamal had come in, it was so sudden how that had happened, with the investigation that was happening and it came about so quickly that there wasn't a lot of thought, I think, given at the time. I mean, the board doesn't want to repeat that, doesn't want to repeat that [sic].

YN: And what is your salary, if it's month-to-month?

KI: Month-to-month, I agreed to come on



Howard Brown Health Center board chair and interim president Karma Israelsen. Photo courtesy of Marissa Ellenby

to the organization for \$180,000 [annually]. I don't know where the salary range is going to end up for the new CEO. I think the board is doing some deep analysis and market research on what that range is going to look like. I don't know what that will be; we'll certainly keep you informed.

YN: I know that you've reversed one decision by the previous CEO—getting Windy City Times back into the building. Are there any other decisions made by Jamal Edwards that you are looking at changing, of course, of bigger import?

KI: I think that's important. I think our patients read Windy City Times, I think it's a great informational resource for the community, I think there's a lot of interest in Windy City Times. I think our patients need to have access to information, so I think it makes sense to have Windy City Times back at all of our locations. The other thing I'm looking into is: I know there was some discussion last year about changes in benefits for some of our Brown Elephant employees and some changes in their status moving from part-time to full-time status. That's something we're pulling together right now, to look into to get a resolution on.

YN: Okay, can you discuss that more fully? I understand that you went from about 40-50 full-time employees to about nine to 10 [at the Brown Elephant resale shops].

KI: There was a dramatic change.

YN: Right, very dramatic change. You were board chair at the time, and you oversaw a lot of decisions that were unpopular or seen as overly harsh. And this decision especially struck people because the Brown Elephant [brings in about \$3 million-\$4 million a year]. So [a store] that brings in that much money to an organization that is struggling, then gets its employee health care cut... What was your response when you heard that?

KI: We had a lot of discussion at the board level and so obviously there were a lot of decisions that were made in the two years of this organization. If I look at my role as board chair, there were a lot of things that I'm really proud of, that we accomplished and there are things that I would have done differently, absolutely. As a board chair at the time, I really relied on Jamal to make the best decisions for the organization at the time. As you know, there was a tremendous financial strain on this organization during that time and there were really tough decisions that had to be made. I think the great news now is that we can go back and look at

those since we are in a better financial position. ... We need to get some additional data on what it's going to look like as far as getting the health insurance back but that is something we'll need to get resolved here. [Editor's note: At the time, Edwards would not reveal exactly how much in savings the organization made by cutting the health care of Brown Elephant employees. WCT will be following up on this].

YN: There's a possibility or a strong possibility that Brown Elephant employees will be able to get their health care back?

KI: We're looking at that. And again, we've made some changes. I don't know if you knew that Bill Joue had joined the organization as [senior director of retail operations] and he's got some really, really innovative thought processes [about] Brown Elephant and I think has made some really great changes. I met with the Brown Elephant managers two weeks ago and I think there have been some really positive, innovative things that have been done there, and we certainly want to make sure that we're continuing to support our employees and making sure that we're equitable. I'll have some more information and we'll have to get some additional data but I'll have some more information in the next couple of weeks.

YN: There have been several issues around staff morale, and one of the key issues has been that staff members were not allowed to communicate with the board. You were board chair and you are now interim CEO and president. So you're in the opposite position. First of all, what did you think of that decision, which seems a little unusual? I'm assuming you knew of it.

KI: I did know that and, unfortunately, the intention around that was having structure so that there was a communication that was to the board. As you know, the board serves a very crucial governance with the organization and in making sure that the financial controls were in place, making sure that the compliance controls are in place ... and I certainly would love Alonzo [Brown] to jump in here on this.

It was never my intention that the staff would not be allowed to talk to the board; my intention was making sure that we had some sort of structure for that to happen in a consistent way. The one thing that has been, I think, really just so fulfilling for me in the three weeks I've been here has been getting to meet everyone on staff...

YN: And have you changed the policy?

KI: Yes, yes, we have. And the other thing

that's really exciting and has taken place before I got here: The organization is doing an internal cultural assessment and getting feedback from employees. We'll actually have the results of that done by the end of September and there's some really strategic things we're going to do, being able to incorporate, to get some kind of employee committee to get some visibility to have some face time with the board. We're actually going to do that as part of our larger culture assessment that's going on because that's ... I completely agree: The staff here, there's a lot of work we need to do here to make sure that employees are being utilized in the right ways, to make sure we're taking advantage of the talent we do have here.

Alonzo Brown: As it pertains to staff morale: We're also addressing the transparency with the staff and making sure we're communicating with them more up front, before they hear anything out on the streets. We'll be doing our due diligence and making sure we make the necessary changes.

YN: Under your tenure during these last two years, around 60 people have exited; there has been a lot of movement and departures.

AB: Keep in mind, she wasn't running the organization on a day-to-day basis.

YN: At the same time, a board chair also in some sense has some kind of authority.

KI: Our direct oversight was over Jamal, correct. And we relied on him in his position to manage the day-to-day operations.

YN: Right, so in that sense a number of people have left—like Joe Hollendoner and Robert Garofalo—to do the same things in different programs that are now doing the same things that Howard Brown was once doing. You've gone on record to say you didn't think that was a lot. Do you still feel that way? What if you saw that kind of number in the next two years, for instance?

KI: So there's a couple of things: I certainly don't want to comment on employees that left

the organization that I never had met or had awareness of. I think it would be unfair of me to do that and speculate. We did have some people like Joe that left [who] had an amazing new opportunity to pursue. Again, because I wasn't directly involved in some of these decisions, I don't want to speculate on their behalf.

One of the things that's going to be crucial for this organization long-term is going to be retaining top talent. So Lara Brooks, for example, is someone we've been able to re-engage and she's actually going to stay here at Howard Brown. She's an amazing leader, really talented, with great, innovative ideas and just serves a crucial role in the organization. So, moving forward, it's going to be crucial. ... There are some really great leaders here that it's crucial we're retaining as we move forward.

YN: You mentioned Lara Brooks. She was public about moving to Chicago House and has now decided to stay at Howard Brown. What did you offer her that was so attractive?

KI: We've had very good conversations about strategically where Broadway Youth [Center] should go with partnerships with other organizations like Center on Halsted, TPAN, Night Ministry—I think there are so many organizations doing really amazing work around youth and youth at risk for homelessness. It's crucial to me that we're retaining talent. She's going to take some time off and come back. She's taking a couple of weeks off to get a break. She works so hard over there. I hope that the strategic vision that we've talked about for BYC is the reason why she stayed.

YN: Did you reach out to her or did she reach out to you?

KI: I did reach out to her, actually, when I heard she was leaving. She's very well-respected in this organization—very respected in the community—and there's this overwhelming sense that it would be a loss to have her leave this organization.

YN: Is she getting a higher salary or a dif-

ferent position?

KI: Her position remains the same. I'm not going to talk about salary information for people that are not on our 990. Her position and title will stay the same.

YN: We hear that Alicia Ozier [vice president of operations] has left?

KI: Yes.

YN: Did she resign or was she let go?

KI: She is no longer with the organization. It's challenging when an organization goes through a period of crisis. The organization that I left [Career Education Corporation] had just gone through a dramatic period of crisis. The last two years of this organization have been tough. It's been a hard two years. I certainly hope that with some leadership stability and getting the right strategic leader in this for the long term, making sure that we continue to focus on our mission, address the changes in the health care environment that are happening: It's going to be crucial that we have the right talent in the right roles.

YN: What's your idea of the ideal CEO?

KI: That's probably a better question for the board. I think the board has direct oversight on that. My personal opinion: I think that with the changes in health care and the Affordable Care Act and some of the other changes that are coming, I think the new CEO needs to be a strategic thought-leader in, whether it's with strategic expertise in health care or with specific expertise in business change, I think [the CEO] needs to be a strategic thought-leader. I think there are two schools of thought on whether the CEO needs to have a health care background or whether they have a general business background in conjunction with Magda Houlberg, our chief medical officer. [Then the question becomes]: Do you have a strong COO that comes in that has health care operational experience? I think that's a balance that the board needs to find.

As you know, we're a medical organization;

they have to have some expertise in medical practice. There are so many changes in the regulatory and external environment right now that finding someone that can maneuver through that set the organization up to continue to provide the excellent care that we give every day would be really crucial.

YN: In that light, did you think that Jamal Edwards was qualified to lead the organization?

KI: I think that Jamal did an amazing job here, considering the crisis the organization went through. I don't want to speculate on ...

I think that whenever you have an organization in crisis ... again, as I said, there are absolutely things I would have done differently. ... I think the salary piece will be something that the board needs to put some thought into as they look at our sister organizations on a national basis to make sure the salary is commensurate with other organizations.

YN: What are you hearing as interim CEO that surprises you or changes your vision of how you saw Howard Brown functioning when you were the board chair?

KI: I don't know that there's anything dramatic that changes for me.

The one thing that has been gratifying for me is getting to meet every level of the organization, all the different leaders and teams we have here in the organization. That was one of my first priorities and will continue to be a priority while here, to make sure I'm getting to every site on a weekly basis, to make sure I'm able to spend time with the employees. So, for example, I go to Broadway Youth Center and Triad and research every Thursday. We're still working on a schedule for Brown Elephant, although I did meet with them two weeks ago. I think what's been not surprising but gratifying is to meet really, really committed people here who are passionately committed to the patients and the

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ISRAELSEN from pg. 13

organization that we serve. So, for me, it's been really gratifying to understand the breadth and depth and scope of experience.

YN: But given how public the discussions about Howard Brown have been, is there nothing there that makes you say, for instance, "Oh, I had no idea that X employees were going through this issue"? There's nothing there that surprises you?

KI: I think that there's sort of a sense—I think that my leadership style is quite different from Jamal's. I don't know that it's good or bad; I just think it's very different. So I think that employees here are still trying to figure me out. Obviously, Howard Brown has been a lightning rod in Chicago and it's been that way for decades before I lived in Chicago, as I found in talking to Tracy [Baim, the publisher of WCT].

YN: Were you not aware of that?

KI: I wasn't aware of some of the history of Howard Brown.

YN: But as board chair? I'm curious about the level of insulation you seem to have experienced. Howard Brown has been a contentious issue in the community for almost its entire 36-odd years, and you were not aware of the many, many issues?

KI: I'm not from Chicago, and when I moved to Chicago, I actually traveled and commuted.

YN: When did you move to Chicago?

KI: Only seven years ago. And for the first five years I lived here, I traveled almost every week so I was only in Chicago five days a month. And so, I wasn't aware and certainly recently, in taking control, I'm becoming aware of the history of the organization and the conflict around the organization—which is interesting that you'd have an organization that's almost 40 years old and is this lightning rod in the community. And culturally, I think, that's something that can change—through being more transparent and open and getting more community involvement, that can change. But I had no idea about the issues.

YN: What is your relationship with the board?

KI: I think our board has done an amazing job and continues to do an amazing job. I think Duke Alden is going to be great as board chair. We just brought on three new board members.

YN: The last time the board was formed, there was a committee to do so but that committee consisted of a number of people who had funding or financial ties to Howard Brown. Alicia Ozier was on the board formation committee and then became a staff member here till recently. What measures will you take to ensure there are no conflicts of interest next time?

KI: That's something Duke would be better able to answer. One of the issues will be to ensure more diversity of the board, to make it more representative of the patients we serve and obviously more representative of the dramatic changes in the health care environment. Again, this organization, for the last two years—with an entire board in transition, a lot of senior board members, when Jamal came in—I think that the committee process worked really well.

I think now that the board has been working together for a year and following bylaws—we have a board committee with our nominating process—I think that as the organization

gets a new leader in here, as we transition into changes in health care, I think that the board will continue to have better practice in place as far as board structure and board governance are concerned.

YN: So you agree that there were some issues that could be changed, that did need changing?

KI: Again, I don't want to speak historically since I wasn't here and involved with the organization: I think that the way the board was selected during that time of crisis was something that was sort of unorthodox and very different but I think it was the right thing to do. I think that we heard the community; there was an outcry that the entire board needed to be replaced as well. Also, I think the previous board chair made the right decision in making the board transition through that time frame. I think that the way we reconstituted the board worked really well for the time that the organization was in. I think that moving forward—now that we have a board that's worked together for over a year now—I think that will continue to move forward in a way that's probably more typical of what a board should be doing from a governance perspective.

YN: And how was Duke Alden chosen as board chair?

KI: He was the vice-chair of the board and when it was decided that I had the ability and the board agreed that it would be helpful for me to step in, the board voted to make him the board chair.

YN: How much did you receive in the lifetime appeal? Is it over?



Exterior of the Broadway location of Howard Brown Health. Photo by Andrew Davis

AB: [We received] \$777,000 but because people just kept giving, it netted out to just above over a million dollars.

YN: Was any of that allocated towards salaries?

AB: It was about the sustainability of the organization so, of course, it was part of salaries, part about programs, but it was all about where those funds ...

KI: ... keeping the organization going ...

YN: The question has been how much of that has gone to salaries and [especially the] unknown salaries of the leadership team.

AB: During that time, it was all about making sure the doors of this organization ...

KI: ... stayed open.

YN: We get that. But again, people are concerned about fairness and who gets paid what [and what the money raised goes towards].

KI: We can get you 990s. [A 990 is a tax form that provides the public with financials of an organization. Subsequently, Windy City Times only received the top five salaries. Howard Brown has not supplied salary figures for anyone else who is not on the 990.]

YN: In terms of research, the MACS [Multi-center AIDS Cohort Study, and HBHC's most prestigious grant that, after some concerns, has now been relocated to Northwestern University] is gone now. So how do you plan on rebuilding your research department?

KI: We're very sad that we weren't able to come to a negotiation with Northwestern University and the MACS subcontract was not renewed. As you know, that was the longest-running study at Howard Brown. It wasn't our only study, but the longest-running study, so it is fortunate. We do have 18 other studies we're doing with various others throughout the community here. We continue to look for other research opportunities.

YN: Were you aware of patient files not being transferred? [WCT received several complaints about this, as previously reported; the matter has since apparently been resolved but there had been concern about HBHC's lack of compliance.]

KI: There was never any issue with that. From a HIPAA [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act that was passed by Congress

novative ideas on what that looks like. I think the thing that will be crucial for Howard Brown, particularly for BYC, is to make sure that we're leveraging all the talent in the community and the community resources to really make it a coalition model [because] homeless youth and youth that experience homelessness is such a crucial issue.

YN: But where will it be located? Will it move away from Lakeview? There has been a lot of controversy around its location here.

KI: That hasn't been finalized.

YN: Do you know when?

KI: We are still working through the details with our current landlord. That's something I'll need to keep you posted on. The space is not conducive to the work, so the final decision is still being worked on.

YN: Will there be significant programmatic changes? It has a unique model.

KI: It does, it does.

YN: What are your visions for that?

KI: I think that's really going to have to come from the team at BYC. I'm certainly not the expert in what they do over there; their model is really amazing and their work is really amazing. I want to make sure we're taking the time to get their strategic feedback from them and what that looks like, particularly since I'm interim: It would not be fair to come in and make a dramatic change. That needs to be done by the team there.

YN: How long will you be interim?

KI: I think the timeline the board is looking at is four to six months.

YN: Will you be in the running at all?

KI: No, absolutely not.

YN: So will you move away from Howard Brown completely?

KI: I am passionate about this organization and the mission they serve. I think the role that I'll play here, we'll need to decide at a future date. I had left my previous organization and taken some time off. It was just personally important to me to take some time off. This interim role hasn't changed that for me.

YN: Is there anything you want to say about what has been a tumultuous period and where Howard Brown has been going? What your vision might be?

KI: I really want to make sure that the team here has the resources to really provide the excellent care that they provide. I think health care in this country is going to be interesting with the Affordable Care Act. [The Federal] Ryan White Care Act has been expanded to include women and children now. I think that health care in this country is going to look dramatically different in the next two years and, I think that it will be important for us to find the right leader who can really take advantage of some of those changes in the long-term.



in 1996; it regulates how confidential medical information is transferred and handled] compliance perspective, there's very strict protocol, and from the research study protocol, there's very strict protocol and we've done that. We've complied.

YN: All the patient files have been sent over?

KI: The contact information has been sent to Northwestern. The patients need to work directly with Northwestern.

YN: There seems to be some issue with Howard Brown not releasing that information.

AB: Well, just so you know, we never held any of the patient files hostage. There's a process in release of information and we are governed by NIH [National Institutes of Health] and HIPAA laws and the way that we transfer that information to protect that patient identity. As with the MACS study, that identity is very important so we have to make sure that we follow HIPAA compliance.

YN: We keep hearing that Broadway Youth Center is moving. Is that true?

KI: That is true. From a strategic perspective, we need to figure out the best fit for that and where that resides, which is why I'm really thrilled that Lara is staying: She has really in-

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48

Neighborhood
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Job title
Prevention HIV Counselor/MTI Project;
AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC)

Hobbies
Bicycling, hiking, swimming, snow skiing, roller blading and kayaking

Relationship status
Single

Favorite Chicago bar
Charlie's

Little-known fact
Loves to cook

Pedro Juan Rodriguez was a volunteer some 20-plus years ago at STOP AIDS Chicago, and one of the young, up-and-coming workers there at the time was none other than David Ernesto Munar.

Flash forward to today; they are again working side by side in the battle against HIV/AIDS.

Rodriguez, in May, accepted a position at the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC), anchored on his 11 years of experience in the field, including seven at Howard Brown Health Center.

Munar is AFC's president/CEO, and Rodriguez's desk is about 10 steps from his office.

"It's amazing, really amazing" that we're working together again, Rodriguez said.

Rodriguez's direct boss at AFC is Anthony Galloway, and those two also previously worked together at Howard Brown Health Center.

"AFC really is an awesome place to work, with all of the things that the organization does for, and in, the community," Rodriguez said. "One of the best parts of the job for me personally is just working downtown, which is the first time I've done that; I've always in the past worked on the North or West side. So this is new and exciting."

On his first day on the job at AFC, he was doing HIV testing at IML.

"It's interesting how everyone at AFC is willing and eager to work and assist other departments; it's really amazing and something I've never seen in other organizations where I've worked," Rodriguez said.



**Friday, Oct. 5 -
 Sunday, Oct. 7
 Andersonville Arts Weekend**

**Thursday, Oct. 11
 7:30 p.m.
 Margaret Hermes
 Relative Strangers**

**Wed., Oct. 17
 7:30 p.m.
 Sylvia Ewing
 Comfort & Joy:
 Stories of Hope,
 Meditations for Happiness**

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(Run &) Walk it out

Photos of this year's AIDS Run & Walk Chicago by Ross Forman. Turn to page 34 for more photos and Ross's write-up on the event, including the final fundraising tally.



VIEWPOINTS

WINDY CITY
TIMES

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Community Marketing, Inc.



BOB
KAZEL

Propping the closet door of depression wide open

When I recently saw an apartment ad boasting, "Closets everywhere," I thought: Life can be that way.

Most of us face decisions, regularly, about staying in or stepping out of the closet. But for some, choices of concealment or revelation are even more complicated. LGBT people who have psychiatric problems, such as clinical depression or bipolar disorder, must decide again and again to keep masks on or take them off. Even if we've come out heroically to friends, family and co-workers about our sexual orientation, this additional hurdle to being genuine remains in our path: To whom should we talk about our illness? At what point?

Thirty years ago, when I first got my bipolar diagnosis, the rule espoused by the doctors was "need-to-know basis." Their advice: Our psychiatric conditions were our business, to be discussed—like some state secret—with those few people we completely trusted.

For years, when I formed new friendships, I'd

try hard to present myself as having no unusual problems. I didn't talk about doctor appointments, the true reason my mood appeared up or down, or why I ordered 7-Up at bars instead of a cocktail. (Alcohol doesn't mix well with meds.) If I learned someone else had a mood disorder, I'd tentatively view him as a kindred spirit and talk about myself. But it hardly ever happened. Thus ensued the years of Bob, Man of Mystery. Almost none of the people I routinely saw knew much of substance about me.

The need-to-know strategy created an existence that stretched on like one big lie of omission. It felt like I had the right to remain silent about some of the most interesting aspects of my life. Worse, I felt isolated. Living one's life close to the vest, because of fear of rejection, can evolve into deceit. Before we came out as LGBT, many of us spun yarns for relatives, friends and colleagues to conjure quasi-fictional lives that they'd view as "normal" and non-threatening—another awkward situation avoided. The same sidestepping or stretching of truth easily happens when we try to hide illness.

Partly, I think, lack of candor is a reaction to the outrageous demands for supposed perfection that sometimes emanate from the gay and lesbian world. Online dating ads specify "no baggage." These ads seemingly travel across the cosmos, transmitted from a Bizarro Chicago where everyone leaps from his beds happy each morning, has never paid a therapist a dime and never has dishes pile up in the sink. Yet I find myself with more "baggage" than the United carousel at O'Hare. Thank you, SEXYEDDIE60657; maybe it's best if I pass.

Lucky for me, I found kinship a few years ago, when I learned through Windy City Times of a local organization called the Depression and Bi-

polar Support Alliance (DBSA). My chapter, DBSA GLBT Chicago, is designed for our community. Now in its seventh year, the group could best be described as an airy, sunlit space where strangers are met on arrival with friendliness instead of apprehension.

It's not a therapy group; there are no professional counselors or doctors. The rationale behind "peer power" is simple: Uninhibited conversation happens best when people are among others with similar issues and identities.

Our group is thriving and growing, with men and women who've attended for years plus new folks showing up nearly each week. I've stopped counting how many tell me it's been instrumental in staying healthy and stable and maintaining a positive self-image. It's a source of friendship for many. Plus, we've attracted attention: One of a very tiny number of LGBT-oriented DBSA chapters anywhere, we'll officially accept a "Leadership Award" at a national meeting in Portland, Ore., this fall—a recognition that we rate among the best of the hundreds of groups in the United States.

Of course, we're not serious all the time. What would any gay assemblage be without socializing? We've shared in holiday parties, movies, beach outings, countless lunches and a lot of laughter. But the marrow of the group remains 90 minutes of sincere self-disclosure each week—unashamed and as real as it gets.

It's called vulnerability, and it's underrated—need-to-know basis be damned.

Bob Kazel is a freelance writer and president of DBSA GLBT Chicago, which meets Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Howard Brown Health Center, 4025 N. Sheridan Rd. For further information, call 872-216-3272 or visit www.dbsa-glbtc-chicago.com.

LETTERS

Church and LGBT youths

To the Editor:

Salvatore Cordileone will be installed as the new leader of Archdiocese of San Francisco Oct. 4. The Vatican's appointment is perhaps the most symbolic act to date of its increasing isolation by its Episcopal leadership concerning the question of homosexuality.

Cordileone's appointment represents the attitudes of increasingly homophobic voices in both the Vatican and U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. While still a minority of the radical political right in the Church, they have bullied the moderate majority into silence.

Clearly, the Vatican is losing the argument on the question of homosexuality in the public square. However, the effect of the Vatican's teaching on the gay person is leaving some young people battling internal conflicts over the issue. The high level of bullying in our Catholic schools has only led to numbers of young LGBT individuals being at high risk for suicide.

Exposing young minds to the Church's teaching on the gay person is problematic and hazardous to their mental health.

Hearing words like "disorder" or "evil" used in relation to same-sex practice, teenagers are faced with an appalling internal encounter.

Hearing such hateful public pronouncements from the Episcopal leadership—which promotes attitudes from parents, uncles aunts or even friends—only drives these young people to depression and suicide.

The Rainbow Sash Movement believes with more debate and better research, the Roman Catholic Church is going to become increasingly isolated because of its attitude to homosexuality as well as LGBT and human rights.

Joe Murray, executive director of the Rainbow Sash Movement, said "only by challenging the 'omerta,' the code of silence on the issue, more and more young people will take their lives. Much like the clergy sexual abuse scandal silence only enables violence directed at innocent children in the name of God."

He went on to say, "We are joining with other LGBT organizations in San Francisco and calling for a public response to the installation of Archbishop Cordileone on Oct. 4. ... If Archbishop Cordileone cannot be a respectful neighbor than he should be treated as such."

Bill O'Connor
Rainbow Sash Movement

Sounding off on Chick-fil-A

To the Editor:

Perhaps in his haste to end a free-speech controversy he started and distance himself from the Chick-fil-A issue, Ald. Proco "Joe" Moreno and the Civil Rights Agenda (TCRA) declared victory, despite their failure to obtain a clear and unambiguous pro-gay commitment from the top management at Chick-fil-A. Nevertheless, what they were told reassured them sufficiently to give the green light to the chicken sandwich vendor to open a second Chicago outlet on Elston Avenue.

Now they're not so sure.

They apparently thought they had corporate change when Chick-fil-A claimed it pursues no "political agendas," but The Advocate reported that on the very day that Moreno and TCRA were declaring victory, Chick-fil-A COO Dan Cathy attended a charity event of his firm, saying the event's donations would be going to the "Marriage and Family Foundation," which happens to

be located at the same Atlanta address as his company's corporate headquarters and is clearly a front for the firm's attack on same-sex marriage.

This was followed by both Chick-fil-A and right-wing talk-show host Mike Huckabee, who had called for support of Chick-fil-A in the face of nationwide protests this summer against its anti-gay policies, issuing statements saying that, despite Moreno's and TCRA's claims to the contrary, essentially nothing had changed. The corporation still stood for "marriage," which, of course, means only heterosexual marriage.

Last summer, Gay Liberation Network (along with the Loyola Law School's National Lawyers Guild chapter) picketed the lone Chicago Chick-fil-A and called for a boycott of the Atlanta-based company. We demanded of Chick-fil-A an explicit policy of non-discrimination against women (including lesbians) as well as gays, bisexuals and transgender people, both in hiring and promotions, and that it publicly commit to stopping contributions to groups that oppose our equal civil rights and to coercive outfits like Exodus International that say it can "pray away the gay."

Shock of all shocks: A firm lies about LGBT people, then lies about changing its ways and then reassures bigots it's still on their side. Meanwhile, politicians and others acting on behalf of our community prematurely rush to declare victories before facts warrant them.

Our community is ill-served by this kind of thing.

So the boycott of Chick-fil-A continues. If the Elston Avenue store opens, we will be picketing there on opening day.

We hope Moreno and TCRA will join us.

Bob Schwartz
Gay Liberation Network

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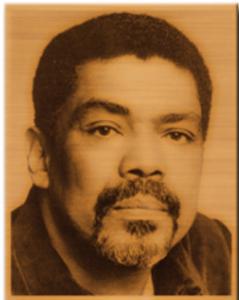
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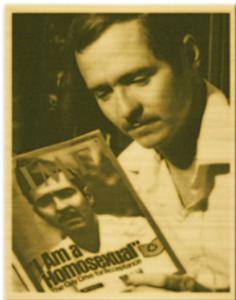
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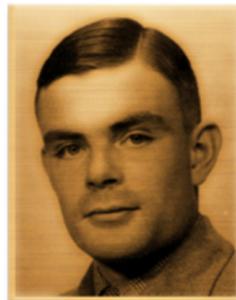
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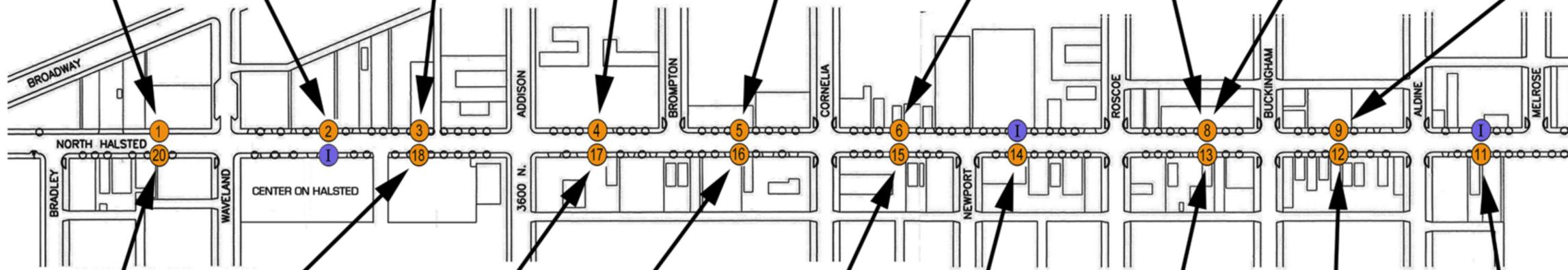
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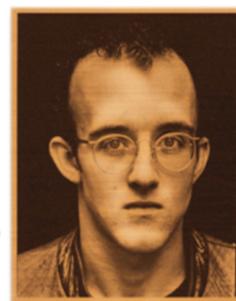
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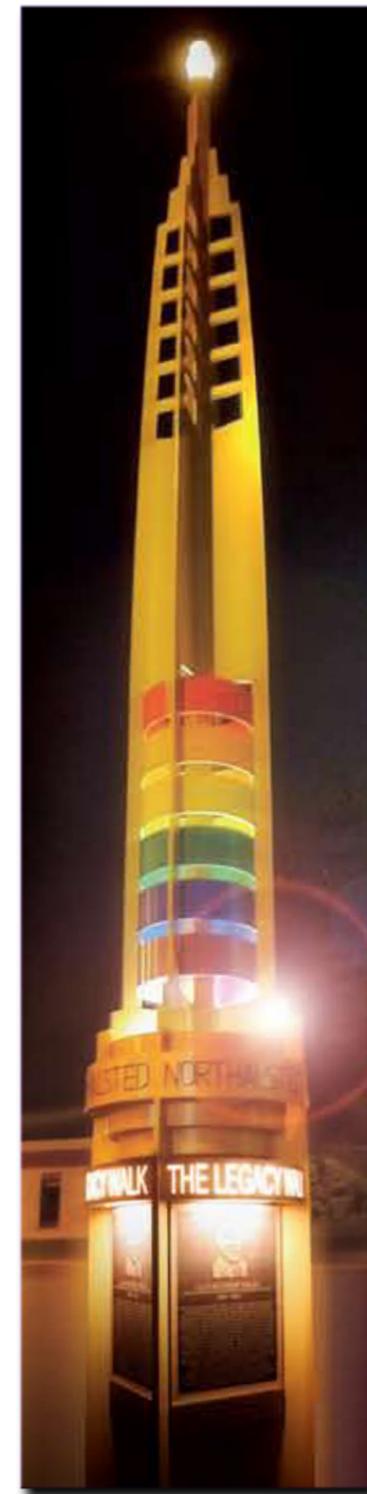
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JAMES BALDWIN

*"Not everything that is faced can be changed.
But nothing can be changed until it is faced."*

Pulitzer Prize-winning Gay African-American author of Go Tell It On The Mountain and Giovanni's Room.
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/James_Baldwin.html



HARVEY MILK

*"If a bullet should go through my head
let that bullet go through every closet door."*

Civil Rights icon who became the first openly Gay man elected to a public office in the U.S. before being assassinated.
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Harvey_Milk.html



JANE ADDAMS

*"The child becomes largely what he is taught; hence
we must watch what we teach, and how we live."*

Lesbian Nobel Prize-winning social justice pioneer, founder of the American Civil Liberties Union.
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Jane_Addams.html



BARBARA JORDAN

*"What the people want is very simple –
they want an America as good as its promise."*

Lesbian, first African-American woman elected to Congress from a southern state; awarded Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1997.
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Barbara_Jordan.html



CHRISTINE JORGENSEN

*"The answer to the problem must not lie in suicides that
look like accidents ... but rather in life and the freedom to
live it."*

First widely known Transgender person who was catapulted from obscurity into the unprecedented role of international spokesperson for people with "gender dysphoria."
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Christine_Jorgensen.html



OSCAR WILDE

*"A man who does not think for himself
does not think at all."*

His public trial for "the love that dare not speak its name" in Britain led to a nascent "Gay Consciousness" that would become the foundation of the early GLBT Rights Movement decades later.
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Oscar_Wilde.html



BARBARA GITTINGS

Lesbian activist who spearheaded the drive to overturn the classification of homosexuality as a mental illness in the 1970s.
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Barbara_Gittings.html

BAYARD RUSTIN

*"When an individual is protesting society's refusal to
acknowledge his dignity as a human being,
his very act of protest confers dignity on him."*

Gay African-American civil rights pioneer was Dr. Martin Luther King's mentor and architect of the 1963 March on Washington.
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Bayard_Rustin.html



DR. MARGARET CHUNG

Lesbian, first U.S. born Chinese woman to become a physician; founder of the Women's Naval Reserves (WAVES).
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Dr_Margaret_Chung.html



FRIDA KAHLO

*"I leave you my portrait so that you will have my presence
all the days and nights that I am away from you."*

Bisexual Mexican painter was the forerunner of the Neomexicanismo artistic movement; first Hispanic woman on a U.S. postage stamp.
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Frida_Kahlo.html



DR. ALFRED KINSEY

*"We are recorders and reporters of the facts –
not judges of the behavior we describe."*

Bisexual U.S. sex researcher whose study of American sexual proclivities during the 1950s continues to spark controversy.
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Alfred_Kinsey.html



TWO SPIRIT PEOPLE

U.S. and Canadian GLBT tribespeople who fulfill various mixed-gender roles and identities.
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Two_Spirit_People.html



ALAN TURING

*"We can only see a short distance ahead,
but we can see plenty there that needs to be done."*

Gay British mathematician, considered "The Father of Computer Science," broke the Nazis' "Enigma Code" to bring down Adolf Hitler.
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Alan_Turing.html



ALVIN AILEY

*"One of the processes of your life is to
constantly break down that inferiority,
to constantly reaffirm that 'I am somebody.'"*

Internationally acclaimed gay choreographer and dancer who pioneered African-American cultural expression through dance.
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Alvin_Ailey.html



KEITH HARING

*"My contribution to the world is my ability to draw.
I will draw as much as I can for as many
people as I can for as long as I can."*

Iconic Gay artist whose work came to define the aesthetic sensibilities of the 1980s.
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Keith_Haring.html



LEONARD MATLOVICH

*"They gave me a medal for killing two men,
and a discharge or loving one."*

Pioneering Gay serviceman whose declaration of his homosexuality in the 1970s prompted the decades-long struggle for the rights of GLBT people to serve openly in the U.S. military, culminating with the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell.
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Leonard_Matlovich.html



REINALDO ARENAS

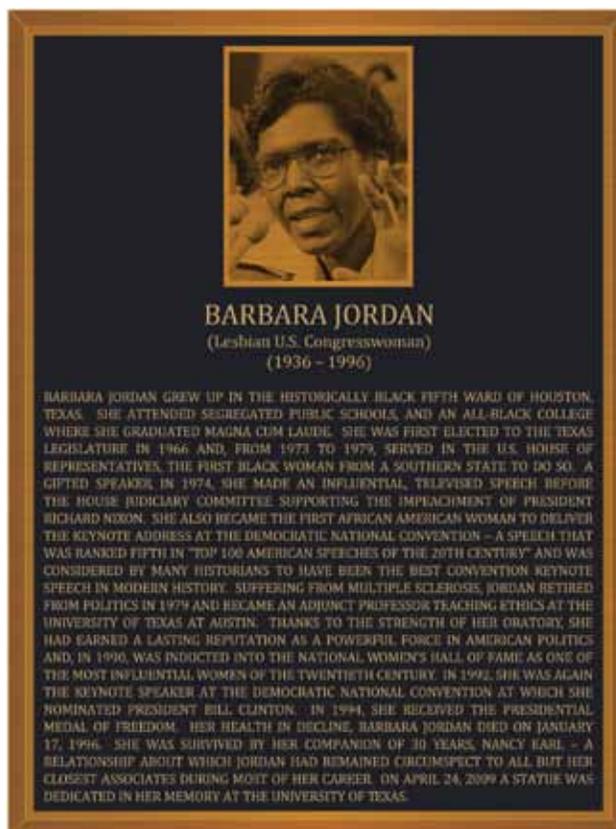
Gay Cuban author and social justice activist imprisoned for protesting Fidel Castro's criminalization of gay people.
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Reinaldo_Arenas.html



DR. ANTONIA PANTOJA

*"You cannot live a lukewarm life ...
you have to live a life with passion."*

Influential Puerto Rican Lesbian social justice advocate; awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1997.
www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Dr_Antonia_Pantoja.html



An visual example of the plaques which will be on display as part of the Legacy Walk project.

GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



Photo from Interrobang Theatre Project

'HOT' IN THE CITY

Two Chicago productions—Hot 'n' Throbbing (above) and Dirty—deal with porn. Read more below.

DISH

French twist.
Page 30.Photo of item at LM Bistro
by Martha Williams

THEATER

Brit hit.
Page 22.Photo from Equivocation
by Michael Brosilow

TV

'Flip' check.
Page 28.Photo of Jenni Pulos and Jeff Lewis
courtesy of Bravo

SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Playing with porn

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Can pornography be ethically and economically produced if it supports philanthropic endeavors and takes inspiration from a Whole Foods supermarket business model? And does pornography factor into causing domestic violence, or is that just an easy target to place blame and condemnation rather than seeing it as a safe outlet for exploring fantasies?

These are just a few questions explored in two ongoing productions in Chicago tied to largely heterosexual pornography. Although The Gift Theatre's world premiere of **Dirty** by Andrew Hinderaker (Suicide, Inc., I Am Going to change the World) and Interrobang Theatre Project's production of the 2005 revised edition of **Hot 'n' Throbbing** by lesbian playwright Paula Vogel (How I Learned to Drive, The Baltimore Waltz) are not officially connected, the issues the two shows bring up are certainly worth taking note.

Dirty focuses on young venture capitalist Matt (Michael Patrick Thornton), who teams with pregnant feminist wife Katie (Hillary Clemens) to create a pornography company that caters to ethically minded adults. Said adults are the kind who always buy organic food and wouldn't mind paying more knowing that the majority of porn proceeds go toward a foundation to aid women worldwide to escape from prostitution and other sex trafficking.

But in the drive to take on the existing porn companies and increase the philanthropic endowment, Matt and Katie make compromises that come back to bite them—particularly when their initial moralistic guidelines are tested when they happen upon a bisexual 21-year-old mixed-race law student named Mikayla (Mouzam

Makkar), whom they figure can become their company's main personality and meal ticket.

Dirty certainly works as a dark comic drama where an unconventional "what if" idea perks up audience interest as it is played out to a conflict-filled resolution. Clocking in at more than two and a half hours, **Dirty** could use some trimming, even if Hinderaker and director Jonathan Berry undeniably succeed at keeping the audience engrossed to see if everything will pan out or not for his characters producing "ethical pornography."

If Hinderaker's **Dirty** is a straightforward dramatic narrative, Vogel's **Hot 'n' Throbbing** is a much more complexly multilayered (or jumbled, if you prefer) affair.

Vogel wrote **Hot 'n' Throbbing** as a response to attacks on the National Endowment for the Arts in the 1990s over "pornographic" content. With her play, Vogel aims to point out that violence is much more destructive and insidious than pornography, but the dramatic situation she creates in **Hot 'n' Throbbing** to make that case doesn't fit so neatly together.

The main heroine of **Hot 'n' Throbbing** is Charlene (Christina Hall), a stressed-out mother with two teenage kids who supports her family by writing erotic feminist fiction. Just as Charlene is pushing up against an important deadline, she becomes seriously distracted.

First, there's plenty of sparring with her kids (petulantly played by Andrew Goetten and Stella Martin), while her fictional sexualized characters (played by Griffin Sharps and Casey Wortmann) become personified and slink about her living room. But most frightening is the arrival of Charlene's estranged and abusive husband, Clyde (Matthew David Gellin), who bursts into

Dirty.
Photo by Joshua Longbrake

the house and tries to sweet-talk her to letting him return home or have a much-needed sexual tryst.

Alas, Vogel doesn't tie her ideas neatly together in a fully coherent fashion for **Hot 'n' Throbbing** to make sense. An early act of violence that allows for Charlene to get the upper hand on Clyde feels like an unlikely device that allows for a negotiated back-and-forth conversation. This incident dials down the initial fear and terror drummed up by Clyde's forced-entry arrival.

Hence, the whole tenuous question of pornography's connection to domestic violence doesn't get satisfactorily explored in **Hot 'n' Throbbing**, even if Vogel's script does keep an audience on edge with its blend of heightened sexual theatricality and tense fear (which director Jeffry Stanton and the Interrobang Theatre Project cast and crew largely succeed at in their stark and moody physical production).

It's interesting to note that both **Dirty** and **Hot 'n' Throbbing** largely omit exploring LGBT

pornography, save for the hinted-at girl-on-girl action intended only to provide titillation for straight male audiences in Hinderaker's play. But it's also ironic that the only out-and-out nudity in one of the productions is that of a male. Both **Dirty** and **Hot 'n' Throbbing** deserve credit for attempting to dramatize questions about pornography, taking on moral notions of exploitation, freedom and objectification.

Andrew Hinderaker's **Dirty** continues through Nov. 18 at The Gift Theatre, 4802 N. Milwaukee Ave., Performances are 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays and 2:30 p.m. Sundays. Tickets are \$25; call 773-283-7071 or visit www.thegifttheatre.org for more information.

Interrobang Theatre Project's **Hot 'n' Throbbing** by Paula Vogel continues through Oct. 21 at the Raven Theatre Complex's West Stage, 6157 N. Clark St. Performances are at 8 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays and 3:30 p.m. Sundays. Tickets are \$25; visit www.interrobangtheatreproject.org.



Finn Wittrock and Diane Lane in *Sweet Bird of Youth*. Photo by Liz Lauren

THEATER REVIEW Sweet Bird of Youth

Playwright: Tennessee Williams
At: Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn
Tickets: 1-312-443-3800;
www.GoodmanTheatre.org; \$27-\$88
Runs through: Oct. 28

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Virtually every Tennessee Williams character is corrupt and hypocritical. His heroes and heroines—frequently social outsiders—acknowledge their corruption and attempt to redeem themselves, while insiders and power-holders do not acknowledge their moral degeneracy. Williams isn't really interested in corruption by money and power. Rather, it always comes down to sex and love in his plays. Sex corrupts, love transfigures and you rarely have both together.

Sweet Bird of Youth centers on sexually alluring Chance Wayne, a 29-year-old gigolo returning to his Gulf Coast home town with an aging movie star with Hollywood clout, Alexandra Del Lago. Chance antagonizes almost everyone and then sacrifices himself—in a literal physical sense—as a form of redemption when he realizes he has destroyed his one pure love, the aptly named Heavenly Finley, daughter of powerful political boss Tom Finley.

Chance Wayne, however, isn't easy to like. He's a self-destructive romantic who pours oil on the fires he lights, a man of ample worldly experience who nonetheless remains naive to common sense. But he *does* understand and accept his hypocrisies, unlike Boss Finley and his thuggish followers. (Set in the Deep South in 1959, Finley also represents hard-core racist views.)

The play also opens with an hour-long getting-to-know-you waltz between Chance and Del Lago, requiring audiences to focus intimately on two characters before you even know them or meet any other important figures. This is a good way to lose an audience.

Hot-button director David Cromer keeps his audience because he has real-life stars Finn Wittrock and Diane Lane as Chance and Del Lago, displaying their ample legit acting chops in sharp performances. Wittrock takes Chance's self-absorption and detached reality to scary-but-riveting heights, while Lane smartly underplays Del Lago without making her weak. In Del Lago, the manipulative Wayne has met his match and she knows it before he does. Lane need not act the diva to make the point as "monster meets monster," as Del Lago puts it.

Beyond his leads, Cromer tackles *Sweet Bird* in his usual singular manner. He moves a scene from Act II to Act III, uses non-realistic instantaneous lighting changes to isolate actors or turn day to night, and dwarfs characters in James Schuetz's massive, semi-realistic sets. The results are vivid but cold.

Adjusting the act structure allows Cromer to use intermissions to separate the outsider hypocrites (Chance and Del Lago) from the insiders (Boss Finley and gang) with great intellectual clarity. However, clarity ain't emotional warmth. Schuetz's mostly white scenery amplifies the chill. Although airy (no solid walls), the size and classical forms of doorways and windows, coupled with a sweeping metallic cyclorama, suggest sepulchral marble. These characters are entombed, which may be a proper judgment.

CRITICS' PICKS

A Class Act, Porchlight Music Theatre at Theater Wit, through Oct. 7. It has taken an unconscionably long time for this Broadway musical about the life of A Chorus Line lyricist Edward Kleban to reach Chicago. Luckily, Porchlight Music Theatre has found an amazing leading man in Bill Larkin and a super-talented cast to bring Kleban's little-known, but masterful, songs to life. SCM

Jitney, Court Theatre, through Oct. 14. Wonderful actors and splendid ensemble acting make for a vivid staging—alternately funny and tense—of August Wilson's 1970s drama of Pittsburgh jitney taxi drivers facing urban renewal and their life choices. Ron OJ Parsons directed. JA

Seascape, Remy Bumppo Theatre Company at the Greenhouse, through Oct. 14. Edward Albee's stunt-show symposium on evolution and the courage of the pioneering spirit has never been rendered more articulate—or poignant—than in this Nick Sandys-directed production. MSB

Wrens, Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, through Oct. 13. Author Anne McGravie was there and witnessed it firsthand, making for bunker-drama suspense and sorority in a Scottish barracks, when her squad of servicewomen are confronted with an injured comrade-in-arms needing their support during the final days of World War II. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

THEATER REVIEW

Good People

Playwright: David Lindsay-Abaire
At: Steppenwolf Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted St.
Tickets: 312-335-1650;
www.steppenwolf.org; \$20-\$86
Runs through: Nov. 11

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

"Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home"—and in that homily lies the key to what keeps generation after generation down on the farms, or imprisoned in the ghettos, never seeing Paree or anyplace more than a few blocks distant. The cult of "family values," bolstered by religious and ethnic parochialism, perpetuates a homebound and pregnant female populace, indentured to men chafing under restless inertia. It doesn't stop there, either—the girl or boy who escapes this defeatist environment will forever find their pride in accomplishment crippled by guilt over their filial impiety.

David Lindsay-Abaire, himself a product of Boston's predominantly Irish South Side district, doesn't sentimentalize this destructive irony. His protagonist, Margie Walsh, may retain a few residual scruples from before she dropped out of school to raise her mentally-impaired child, but when our middle-aged single-mom loses her minimum-wage job, despair spurs her to seek the aid of an old boyfriend from the 'hood. "Mikey" Dillon is now a doctor, married to a Georgetown-raised wife, and living "comfortably"—a condition Margie declares to be "better than rich"—but all it takes is an accusation of having gone "lace-curtain" to goad him into proclaiming his street cred (or a romanticized version thereof).

These are the kind of personalities usually relegated to peripheral roles in TV-sitcoms, their heavy regional dialects immediately branding them hicks, whether urban or rural. Director K. Todd Freeman and his actors reject cheap stereotypes, however, instead delivering a brutally candid portrait of an American subculture founded on an economy so precarious that an unplanned trip to the dentist is capable of toppling growth plans for decades. We may cluck over the necessity of meek store manager Steve firing his needy employees, but what if we were suddenly without income and our landlady demanding the rent? We may jeer, too, at Mike's

prosperity—the wealthy are easy targets, after all—but what dark secrets mark the route of our upward mobility?

Are these people good or bad, or are they simply hungry for the security that permits such moral judgments? Whatever level of sanctimony its audiences may have achieved—at whatever price—there is no hiding from the arguments raised by Mariann Mayberry's unflinching Margie (pronounced with a hard "g") leading an ensemble who cheerfully watches us squirm in reawakened recognition of our own social vulnerability.



Good People. Photo by Michael Brosilow

THEATER REVIEW

Equivocation

Playwright: Bill Cain
At: Victory Gardens Theatre at the Biograph, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.
Tickets: 773-871-3000;
www.victorygardens.org; \$20-\$50
Runs through: Oct. 14

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

A once-popular author, his career currently undergoing a lull, is suddenly offered a lucrative commission by a powerful patron to ghostwrite a docudrama. Research points to factual inaccuracies in the story providing the basis for the proposed play, but since our scribbler is the playwright who will someday be known as William Shakespeare and his sponsor is King James I, refusal to go along with the program carries with it the risk of not only arrest, but imprisonment and even execution.

Equivocation—the philosophical device called "diplomacy" in high places and "white lies" in low—was invented for just such occasions as these. The impasse this time arises from the alleged "Gunpowder Plot," in which a band of conspirators protesting anti-Catholic persecution attempted to assassinate its leaders by setting off a bomb in London's Houses of Parliament. Coming to the aid of the theater company forced to assist in a government whitewash are Jesuit priest Henry

Garnet's precepts for "telling the truth in difficult times." The solution? A play (declared by its creator to be naught but "politics and pornography") recounting the story of a Scottish king, not unlike the one currently on the English throne, who runs afoul of some double-dealing witches and comes to woe as a result—perhaps you've heard of it?

Bill Cain tends to overload his theses with a plethora of topical froufrou—in this case, abuse of civil rights, draconian criminal process, therapy for bereft parents and other issues all but non-existent in 1603. What speaks most clearly to audiences in 2012 is not yet another jeremiad on corrupt powers, however, but the cleverness of humble citizens whose resourceful stratagems enable them to fulfill their contract while keeping their consciences clear and heads intact.

Under the direction of Sean Graney (taking a wisely unaffected approach to Cain's densely wrought brain exercise), an agile six-person ensemble sprints deftly through their physical and verbal paces, switching locales, personae and levels of consciousness with split-second alacrity. As for playgoers confused by the juxtaposition of humor with scenes of gruesome menace, we have Fr. Garnet's observation regarding the mutually beneficial contrast of laughter with tragedy. Indeed, theater buffs may recall a classic scene of bloody murder, followed closely by a hungover doorman's monologue on the topic of—what else?—equivocation.



Woody Sez.
Photo from
Northlight
Theatre

THEATER REVIEW

Woody Sez—The Life and Music of Woody Guthrie

Devised by: David M. Lutken and Nick Corley
At: Northlight Theatre,
9501 Skokie Blvd., Skokie
Tickets: 847-673-6300 or
www.northlight.org; \$25-\$72
Runs through: Oct. 21

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Practically everyone in the United States knows Woody Guthrie's folk song "This Land is Your Land." But do they know the far-left-leaning protest verses that were originally part of the song that are not regularly taught to school kids nowadays?

These neglected verses are just one of a few illuminating tidbits about the pioneering folk songwriter and political activist revealed in story and song in Northlight Theatre's Chicago-

area premiere of Woody Sez—The Life and Music of Woody Guthrie. The show is a fitting tribute for the centenary of Guthrie's birth, although some may wish that Woody Sez was structured, narration-wise, to do more showing rather than telling.

Devised in 2007 by David M. Lutken (who also performs onstage) and Nick Corley (who also directs), Woody Sez is packed to the gills with Guthrie songs, many that prompt audiences to spontaneously sing along.

Woody Sez relies on four super-talented musician/actors (Darcie Deaville, David Finch, Helen Jean Russell and Lutken), who all amaze with their extremely versatility with musical instruments and taking on a bevy of different characters who confront, cajole or comfort Guthrie throughout his well-traveled life. As the performer who takes on the guise of Guthrie for much of the show, Lutken certainly gets the down-to-earth folksiness that we'd come to expect of an influential protestor and musician like Guthrie. (Just looking at Lutken's beaten-up guitar confirms this.)

Corley keeps the staging relatively simple, with

the actors taking up and setting down musical instruments on crates and benches throughout the show. Rather than revert to projections, lighting designer Chris Binder subtly highlights a series of ever-present Americana postcard tableaux that serve as a backdrop in Luke Hegel-Cantarella's folksy unit set.

While Woody Sez will certainly fill in some biographical gaps for many in the audience about Guthrie's persona and outlook, there were many times when it felt that the dramatic conflict in his life didn't get fully tapped in the storytelling (particularly the Guthrie family's struggle with the rare and inherited degenerative brain disorder Huntington's disease). And as an intermis-

sion-free show that comes in under 95 minutes, Woody Sez doesn't quite shake off the notion that it could have dug deeper dramatically, particularly with such talented actor/musicians already on hand.

So while you can be justified in suggesting that Woody Sez only skims the surface of Guthrie's complex life, the sheer simplicity and directness of the show is also fitting for a celebrated and dedicated American troubadour who was tirelessly dedicated to expressing the concerns of the common working man.

SPOTLIGHT



Lovers of operetta music by the likes of Johann Strauss, Franz Lehar, Sigmund Romberg and other light opera composers won't want to miss Light Opera Works' upcoming revue, **Operetta's Greatest Hits**. So pop open the champagne, don your masquerade masks and enjoy the numerous trills on display by an ensemble featuring Alicia Berneche, Natalie Ford, Matthew Giebel, James Rank, Colette Todd and George Andrew Wolff. Light Opera Works' Operetta's Greatest Hits plays Oct. 5-13 at Nichols Concert Hall at the Music Institute of Chicago, 1490 Chicago Ave., Evanston. Performances are at 8 p.m. Fridays, 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays and Oct. 10. Tickets are \$30-\$60 and half-off for audience members under the age of 21; call 847-920-5360 or visit www.lightoperaworks.com. Photo of Ford by Rich Foreman

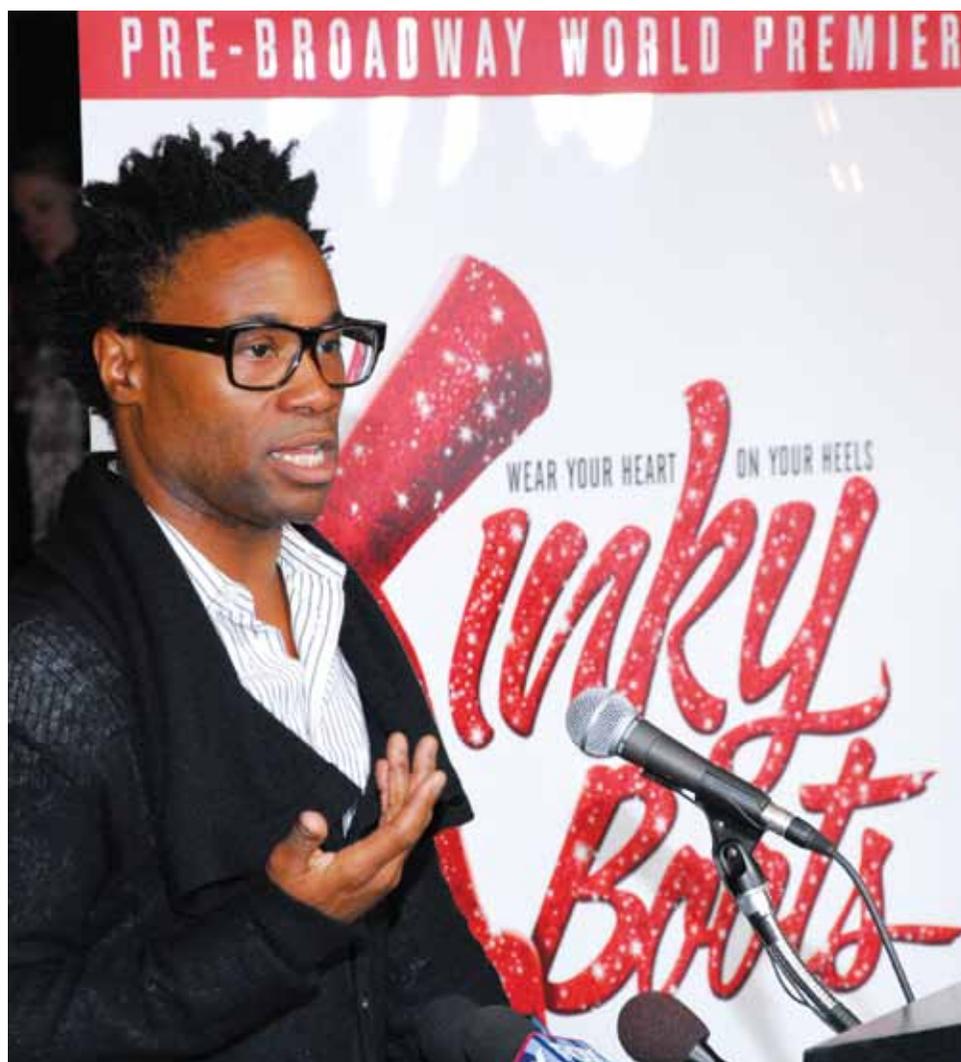
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At the Kinky Boots press conference, cast members such as Billy Porter (above) were introduced. Photo by Hal Baim

Creative team talks about Kinky Boots

BY MELISSA WASSERMAN

Broadway In Chicago held a press conference for the world premiere and pre-Broadway showing of Kinky Boots at The Oriental Theater Sept. 28.

The new musical, based on the 2005 comedic film, encompasses the talents of four-time Tony winner Harvey Fierstein authoring the book and Grammy and Emmy winner Cyndi Lauper composing the music and lyrics, with Tony winner Jerry Mitchell as the director and choreographer.

"We were brought in to do this show for all the right reasons," said Fierstein. "I think we all have the heart that this show needed to tell the story that we're telling. We're thrilled to be here in Chicago. I'm very excited. Kinky Boots—we have this great team we put together, like I said we're all friends."

Before hitting Broadway in New York City, the production will play the Bank of America Theatre, 18 W. Monroe St., Oct. 2- Nov. 4. The seasoned cast of 32 stars includes Stark Sands as shoe factory heir Charlie Price; Billy Porter as drag performer Lola, who helps Charlie revitalize the failing business; Annaleigh Ashford as Lauren; and Celina Carvajal as Nicola.

Creative team and cast members alike expressed connections to the various themes radiating from the show. Topics ranged from identity and family to the father-son relationship, acceptance and community. Producer Daryl Roth said the major themes drew her in upon viewing the film at Sundance Film Festival. She explained to Windy City Times that she and producer Hal Luftig recognized the piece had "musical DNA" and a hidden musical.

"The story has so many heartfelt themes," said Roth. "It's about people coming together to do something great in a community, it's about individuals finding out who they really are, finding

their strengths, it's about acceptance, it's about love, it's about so many things that are important to all of us that we need to think about and sometimes when you're in a theater you have that opportunity to leave your troubles behind and focus on someone else's story. I think the fact that we can relate to these characters and the fact we feel connected to the story is what truly drew us to it."

In a comment to Windy City Times, Luftig quoted a featured lyric by Lauper, "You've changed the world when you've changed your mind," as he explained how the show is not just relatable but timely as its themes are applicable to today's issues such as saving jobs and acceptance of identity.

"My fervent wish is that everybody who is struggling with...maybe their gay or not gay identity, or maybe they're transgender or not, but what it says to everybody when they come to see this is that we just need to accept people and you probably have more in common with that person that you think you don't than you do. If that message comes across the footlights, then we have done our job and I am confident it will."

More information about the production can be found at www.broadwayinchicago.com or www.kinkybootsthemusical.com.

ALCC benefit with Lauper

AIDS Legal Council of Chicago (ALCC) is presenting a special theater night event in conjunction with Broadway in Chicago that features Lauper. The event is slated for Thursday, Oct. 11, at the Bank of America Theatre with a cocktail reception featuring Lauper, followed by a pre-Broadway performance of Kinky Boots.

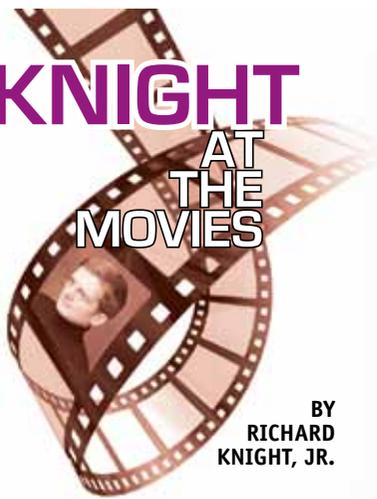
Tickets start at \$80 each; see www.aidslegal.com.

CULTURE CLUB



Jerry Mitchell introduces the cast of Kinky Boots (above); Daryl Roth (left). Photos by Hal Baim

KNIGHT AT THE MOVIES



BY
RICHARD
KNIGHT, JR.

The Paperboy; About Cherry; film note

It's sexy times in movie theaters this week with both the provocative **The Paperboy** and the erotically charged **About Cherry** opening this Friday in Chicago.

The former is a lopsided, deep-fried piece of Southern gothic that never finds its center yet gives us Nicole Kidman going for broke as a white-trash tart and copious shots of hunky Zac Efron in tighty whities. The latter, which follows the young blonde stunner of the title as she descends into the world of S&M porn, certainly doesn't skimp on the salaciousness—not to mention a nice turn by Heather Graham playing lesbian. Although neither film—which both have queer directors at the helm (Lee Daniels, following up his 2009 Oscar-nominated drama *Precious*, and Stephen Elliott making his feature debut, respectively)—quite lives up to its steamy plotlines, each has its own merits.

Lee Daniels is noted for his oddball casting, and he goes the same route in *The Paperboy*, which is based on Pete Dexter's novel. In addition to Kidman as a slutty sexpot whose passions can barely be contained within her capri pants and Efron as her ardent and openly horny admirer (hence the white underwear), Daniels casts Matthew McConaughey as Efron's older brother, Scott Glenn as their father, Macy Gray as the family maid (who narrates and is, to be kind, out of her element) and John Cusack, wildly over the top, as an incarcerated murderer. Set in the Florida bayou in the 1960s, the plot, such as it is, hinges on McConaughey as a journalist who, along with his Black partner (David Oyelowo), sets out to prove that Cusack was wrongly convicted years earlier of murdering the local sheriff. Kidman plays Cusack's hot-to-trot prison pen pal who arrives on the scene determined to help get her man out of prison.

Part lurid murder mystery, part civil-rights commentary, part tale of sibling rivalry between the two brothers and full-on melodrama, the movie is a misshapen mess in which none of the undeniably entertaining pieces seems to fit. Yet, between Kidman's trashy sexpot with her single-minded determination, series of peek-a-boo outfits, her teased blonde hair, spider eyelashes and white eye makeup; Efron dancing around his room, mostly out of his clothes; Cusack's wild-eyed, backwoods menace; and Roberto Schafer's spot-on cinematography (the movie looks like it was made to be shown at small-town drive-ins circa 1966), *The Paperboy*—with its mixture of noir and campish nods to Tennessee Williams—is one very diverting hybrid.

The film also has its share of thrill-seeking violence *a la* Quentin Tarantino (including a bizarre episode in which McConaughey's character is revealed to be a closeted homosexual with a taste for really, really rough, interracial sex) mixed with domestic scenes in which all the characters talk over one another (in the Altman tradition) that have an improvisatory feel



Matthew McConaughey (left) and Zac Efron in *The Paperboy*.

and the whole thing is overlaid with that sultry overtone.

All of this, however, is overshadowed by the jaw-dropping scene (that has already become infamous) in which Efron's character, stung by jellyfish during a visit to the beach, is saved by Kidman, who straddles the unconscious Efron and urinates on him. The scene adds nothing to the picture beyond queasy titillation but again offers proof of an ability that Daniels has shown in the past: getting his actors—especially his female ones—to throw emotional caution to the wind and take a leap of faith for him. Kidman's leap especially works, and it's not just the twisted logic of her character that holds you but the bravery of the actress as well. Not unlike Mo'Nique's work in *Precious*, Kidman's willingness to plumb the depths for her director elevates *The Paperboy* into something much more thrilling than the torrid settings from which it springs.

Surprisingly much less lurid is Elliott's *About Cherry*, which follows Ashley Hinshaw as the title character, a pretty blonde with a great figure who—quickly and without an ounce of guilt—moves into a prosperous career in the porn industry when opportunity comes a-knockin'. Cherry, all of 18, lives with her drunken mother (Lili Taylor, playing with her usual finesse), a younger sister (that one instinctively feels will end up in porn as well) and mom's latest violent paramour.

Working at a dead end job in a laundry, it doesn't take much of a push for Cherry to talk her good friend, Andrew (Dev Patel), into moving to San Francisco with her. A waitress job at a strip club leads to nude pictures and porn, where Cherry is soon the rising star. Dilemma comes in the form of a tug of war—between Cherry's stockbroker, drug-addled boyfriend (James Franco in a nothing role) and the obvious interest of her porn director (Heather Graham), who's about to break up with her girlfriend of eight years thanks to her infatuation with Cherry.

Elliott, an acclaimed author and onetime sex worker himself, wrote the screenplay with Lorelei Lee, a porn vet, and one would think with all this on-the-job expertise that the movie would have something fresh to show us about the world of porn and its effect—good and/or bad—on those who make their living within its environs. But Elliott—who shows real ability in his pacing—has better luck with the earlier sequences before the typical drug/sex/liquor-slicked road-to-ruin scenes kick in. Hinshaw has, naturally enough, a sensational body but the porn sex scenes are almost laughably unsexy (perhaps that was Elliott's point) while a bout of rough sex between Graham and her soon-to-be-jealous ex fares better. (Its combo of violence

and desire is ably captured.) Observing Cherry and her mom and sister and their humdrum lives is where Elliott's real abilities lie.

About Cherry plays exclusively in Chicago at the Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport Ave. Elliott will be present Friday, Oct. 5 (opening night) for an 8:30 p.m. book-signing and after the 9:20 p.m. screening for a Q&A with New City film critic Ray Pride. www.musicboxtheatre.com

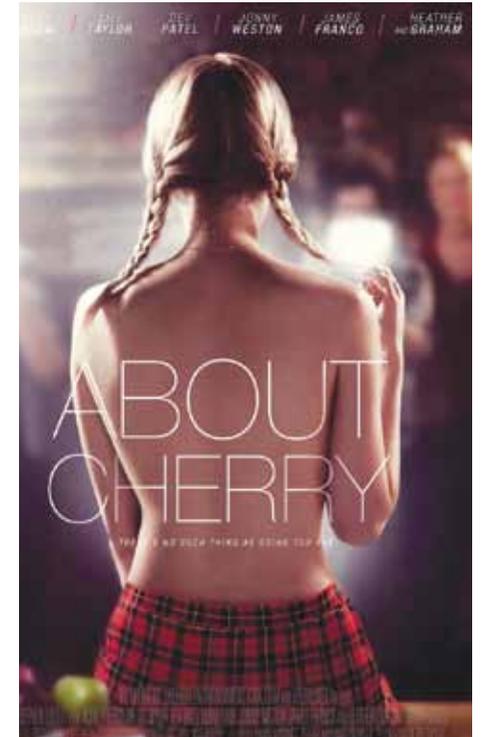
Film note:

—On Friday, Oct. 5, Chicago Filmmakers presents **Expressions of Self: New Films** by Doug Ischar. The evening, which kicks off at 7:30 p.m.

in Hokin Hall at Columbia College, 623 S. Wabash Ave., will feature four short experimental films by the openly gay Ischar, an artist and photographer who teaches photography at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Ischar's photographs usually center on the male figure, often photographed within gay culture social settings while his films are assemblages that combine vintage footage, graphics and recordings. His work focuses on gay identity, desire and loss. The line-up for the evening includes the world premiere of Ischar's latest work, *Tristes Tarzan*. Ischar will be present. www.chicagofilmakers.org

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



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NUNN ON ONE: MUSIC

Alanis Morissette: 'Jagged' edge



BY JERRY NUNN

It was all the way back in 1995 when Alanis Morissette released her classic album *Jagged Little Pill*. Leaving her earlier teen pop roots behind, this strong-willed record explored Morissette's angrier side while expanding her following to the masses.

Although the commercial successes of subse-

quent music have been up and down, her artistic integrity has remained constant, earning her 12 Juno Awards and seven Grammy Awards. *Havoc and Bright Lights* is her eighth studio album, and it keeps right in line with her previous personal lyrics and powerful vocals, beginning with the first single "Guardian."



Alanis Morissette. Publicity shot

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With Morissette heading to Chicago soon, *Windy City Times* spoke with her at the beginning of her tour.

Windy City Times: Hi, Alanis.

Alanis Morissette: How are you doing?

WCT: Good. I have been listening to the new album *Havoc and Bright Lights*. What does it represent in your personal life?

AM: I think it speaks to how much braver I am

to delve into a deeper intimacy in my relationships with my son, my husband—even to the point where I'd be ready to get married. Intimacy was always terrifying for me. So, yes, it's a relationship record even more so than before.

WCT: I read that you wrote a ton of songs with Guy Sigsworth, who produced your previous album, *Flavors of Entanglement*, and Joe Chiccarelli.

AM: Yes; I wrote 31 songs with Guy, and we made a makeshift studio in my living room here at our house, because Ever, my son, was just born; he was about five and a half months old and I was dying to write. I am very committed to the attachment stage of development going as well as possible, so we built a studio in the house. Guy came over from London, and we just wrote in some fits and starts over the period of that year.

I listened to a lot of hip-hop as a kid, so I like the blend of both sonic styles and genres. So Guy working with Joe wound up being the perfect blend, because Guy's a savant—he's a

WCT: In the past, you have written about men who have done you wrong. But a song like "Woman Down" feels like you are speaking on behalf of all women who have been wronged. What has changed for you?

her charity. I gave a song to David Lynch that I had been sitting on for five years that I adored, that I hadn't shared but was dying to. So I'll be sitting on some of these songs for a while, but I hope they all see the light of day at some point.

WCT: Speaking of movies, has acting influenced your music?

AM: I actually think portraying another character is way more terrifying for me, for what might be obvious reasons. I think it just feels more like I'm on edge when I'm portraying someone in Shakespeare or I'm doing a character on *Weeds*; I feel like I'm more responsible to the director and I'm more responsible to the big picture of the team putting on the show.

WCT: Was there a role that was easier for you?

AM: Please don't interpret this the wrong way, but portraying God in *Dogma* was really easy. It was easy because Kevin Smith just said to me, "Oh, just do whatever you think God is." Well, God definitely has to have a sense of humor, has to be whimsical, very present, very filled with wonder and awe, and very sweet. Improv is awesome for me, and whenever there's self-deprecating humor in the play I'm very happy.

WCT: Why do most of the songs have one-word titles on *Havoc*?

AM: I have no idea—maybe brevity, simplicity, and get to the point, girl! It actually wound up working quite well. I would have been happy to have them be more than one word but it worked out to be that way.

WCT: In the past, you have written about men who have done you wrong. But a song like "Woman Down" feels like you are speaking on behalf of all women who have been wronged. What has changed for you?

AM: Well, "Woman Down" is one of my favorite songs because there really is, for me anyway, no better time to be alive as a woman than 2012. The days of old were such that women were owned, were property and were less than; [they] are over. We went through the women's movement, which was an important movement; we became empowered, but in an individualistic, autonomous kind of way. Neither style nor approach afforded any kind of connection or intimacy.

Now we're slowly segueing into this gorgeous era where we're empowered but we also have the knowledge that interdependence can afford this connection within and connection with other people, so the women's movement is moving in such a much better way. So I have to comment on that in my music.

WCT: A song that I love, like "Woman Down," just goes hand in hand with your LGBT following.

AM: Thanks. Well, in keeping with what I just said a second ago, I think the divine feminine is emerging back into her rightful seat, for lack of a better term, so this means the divine feminine within men and women—regardless of what our

lifestyles are and our sexual preferences are or whatever choices we make—it's the divine feminine that has been squelched in the past and outright abused, shamed and ridiculed.

It's just such a gorgeous part of humanity and of life and of spirit. So for this feminine part to re-emerge portends for a very positive change in politics in our day-to-day choices. So, for me, it's less about women—although it quite obviously shows up more in women because of the feminine—but it's more about the feminine that is arising within human beings in general. So that's really the movement, as I see it.

WCT: What will your live show be like? Are there songs that you never want to play live again?

AM: The cringe factor is very nonexistent. Basically, by the end of the show I just feel really neutral because we run the whole gamut of every emotion known to humankind for me with the songs from the last 17 years. We changed the set list a lot because we have the luxury of being able to do that. My bandmates and I want to keep our own selves on our toes—tons of songs from *Havoc* and *Bright Lights*, and we do a little bit of an acoustic set near the end of the show. We did the first show last night, and it really rendered it super-intimate and more than just a wall of guitars.

WCT: Is it hard for you to tap into past songs like "You Oughta Know" and "Ironic," now that your life is different?

AM: It's actually not hard. I think that the anger—all of these emotions—are just part of the human condition so my husband can attest to the fact that I still have anger and that I'm feisty and fiery. It just shows up in different ways.

I think, if anything, I'm less reactive and less irresponsible in that way. But the emotions themselves still move through me at a really accelerated rate. It's now more that I can corral it and I'm more responsible for that huge life force moving through me. I think anger and joy are two of the biggest life forces that can move mountains and worlds, so I just have to be careful with it. I use songs like "You Oughta Know" to channel the rage that I might have. If I'm going through something particularly challenging I look forward to singing those songs at night because I can move that energy.

WCT: Is it a big concert production?

AM: I don't know if it's big but it's emotional, colorful and sweaty with lots of glitter.

WCT: Your fans are looking forward to you coming to Chicago.

AM: Yes, I can't wait.

WCT: It will be a blast. See you at the concert.

AM: Yes, I will see you there. Thank you.

Don't miss the "Guardian Angel Tour" as it arrives in town Saturday, Oct. 13, at the Riviera Theater, 4746 N. Racine Ave. For more on Morissette, visit www.alanis.com.

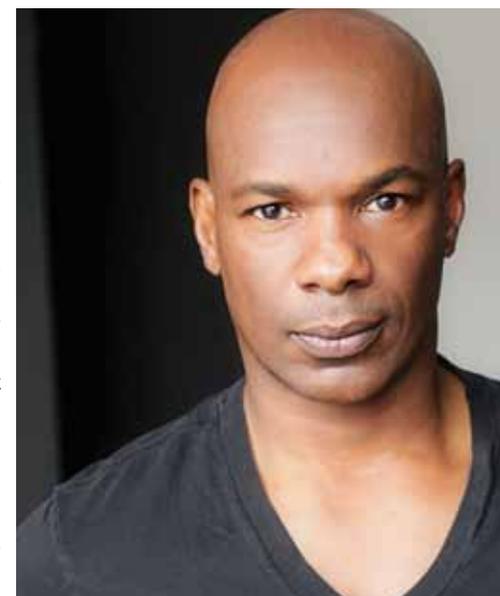
Funds needed for film 'Hot Guys with Guns'

Producers of the film *Hot Guys with Guns* are raising funds to make the movie, billed as "Hollywood's first gay action-comedy."

Using Indiegogo.com, the producers hope to raise \$50,000 by Oct. 8. Doug Spearman (who acted on the Logo show *Noah's Arc*) says on the page, "Every dollar we raise goes on the screen. We want to make *Hot Guys With Guns* under a SAG ultra-low budget contract."

The plot revolves around a wannabe actor and a "trust-funded alpha gay" who become involved in a crime spree that affects Hollywood's so-called "Velvet Mafia."

See www.indiegogo.com/HotGuysWithGuns.



Doug Spearman. Photo from Spearman

MUSIC

Matt Alber: Still hiding nothing

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Openly gay singer Matt Alber made quite the first impression with his initial CD, *Hide Nothing*, thanks to the ballad "At the End of the World," which featured a video showing two men dancing in a barbershop.

Now he's out with the album *Constant Crows*, which features more gorgeous songs, ranging from a duet with his brother, Bryce, to a cover of a Madonna song ("Take A Bow"). During a lively conversation, Alber talked about Madonna, his new CD, the *Scrooge & Marley* movie soundtrack—and public nudity.

Windy City Times: Is this the lovely Matt?

MA: Well, it's *Matt*. [Both laugh.] I was enraptured watching a video that I shot with four cello players here at the Conservatory of Music. It's actually lovely here. How's it in Chicago?

WCT: I think a lot of people are still in the afterglow of the Madonna concert.

MA: Oh, my gosh! That must've been amazing.

WCT: She puts on quite a show. Have you seen her in concert?

MA: I have never seen her in concert. It's never worked out when I can actually go.

WCT: Well, maybe one day you two will get to meet.

MA: I don't know if I'll ever get to meet her, but she's listened to me sing one song so I can die happy. [Note: A press release about Alber quotes Madonna saying of him, "That was so sweet. I want to listen to him again."]

WCT: And that's the perfect segue to your new CD. The cover of her song is impressive, but I'm wondering why you chose that particular song.

MA: Thanks! My first Madonna record was *Bedtime Stories*, so I fell in love with her smoky, sexy voice, and I really loved that arrangement with those beautiful strings. Plus, the whole bullfighting video [for "Take A Bow"] really burned into my brain.

WCT: Are there any other songs of hers you'd want to cover, such as "Like A Virgin"?

MA: [Laughs] I don't know if I can pull that one off. I basically thought I should tackle one, and that's it. I was nervous about covering "Take A Bow."

WCT: I'm also curious about the title of this new CD. How'd that come about?

MA: Well, I was living on an island [in Washington state] prior to making that record. It was the first time in a long time that I lived in a place that had all four seasons. I was just amazed! All the fields show up, there are deer that come and go, and daffodils sprung up. I was looking out the bedroom window where my studio was, and I could hear these crows—and they were the only things that seemed to hang around the entire year. There is the sound of them crowing at the end of the song "Tightrope."

WCT: Yes, I heard them. Are you still in Washington state?

MA: Well, I was on Vashon Island, but I just relocated to the Bay Area so I'm here in San Francisco. I'm talking with you from Walnut Creek.

I'm coming back. I moved here right out of college and lived here for seven years. I love it here; it's really nice to be back.

WCT: San Francisco is interesting for a lot of reasons—including allowing public nudity.

MA: Yes; there are about four guys in the Castro who take full advantage of it. I love it. You think it's going to be a big, shocking thing—but there are just a couple glances and you go get your Starbucks. I think you should see it for



Matt Alber. Image courtesy of Alber

yourself. I'll take you around.

WCT: Well, we'll see. Back to the CD, there's a song on here you sing with your brother ["Brother Moon"]?

MA: Oh, my brother—Bryce Alber—is amazing, and I've dreamed for a long time about singing with him. I wanted to do a duet with him on my first record but my label said "no," which is one of the reasons we broke up. But this time around I have [total control] about what goes on the record, so I invited my brother to come up to Seattle. He had the beginnings of the song worked out on the guitar, kind of a simple melody, and we wrote and recorded the song together.

We picked three memories of growing up together and we sewed those into the song. Now, we have a duet. He also has a solo record coming out soon; his stage name is Lou Jane.

WCT: Being a singer-songwriter, which is tougher: coming up with the lyrics or the melody?

MA: Oh, I would say the lyrics are the toughest part. I can sit down with an instrument and come up with a chord progression pretty readily—but I really wrestle with each word.

WCT: How does this album differ thematically from *Hide Nothing*?

MA: The first one I look at as a collection of experiments. I had never made recordings before and they were a bunch of songs. Since then, I have made music my job, being out on stage with just a guitar and piano for the last two years solid. I would say the first record as a mixed bag; this record actually feels like the first cohesive album, as it was recorded in two months. It took me two years to finish that first album, song by song by song.

WCT: Even with all the gorgeous songs on *Constant Crows*, "End of the World" will probably be one of your signature songs. Who came up with the idea for the video?

MA: Oh, I love singing that song. As for the video, my friend Robin Scovill came up with it. He's a director in Los Angeles and a longtime friend of mine. We came up with the concept

together; we were taking a walk in L.A., and we strolled past a barbershop. Robin fell in love with the place, and after a couple of arm-wrestling conversations with Jerry—who owns the shop, and who's the barber in the video—we convinced him to let us move into his shop for a day.

Most of the story came from Robin. I said, "Hey, I wrote the song but you're the director. Why don't you run with it?" He came up with the businessman from the '60s would get his shoes shined, and Jerry would play matchmaker. I will be forever grateful to Robin and his team.

WCT: And you're a Grammy winner, correct?

MA: Well, I'm part of one. When I moved to San Francisco, I joined a group called Chanticleer. Two of our records won Grammys, so I'm one-twelfth of each of the awards. [Laughs]

WCT: One-twelfth is far better than none at all, in my eyes. Now, you'll be in Chicago Oct. 11 to take part in the Legacy Walk dedication ceremony. How'd that come about?

MA: My good friend Paul Highfield spearheaded this whole project to create the first outdoor walking museum for LGBT icons. So he's been working on for years, and I'm honored to get to sing at this event.

WCT: And you have another Chicago connection—you're on the movie soundtrack to *Scrooge & Marley* [the upcoming gay-themed movie that was filmed locally].

MA: Yes—oh, my gosh! I didn't know anyone knew about that. That was really cool. Another friend of mine, Norm Cratty, connected me with the people behind the movie.

WCT: And this will be your first soundtrack song?

MA: It will be the second time. "End of the World" appears in a movie called *The New Twenty*, an independent film that came out a couple years ago. The song [on this soundtrack] is a cover of The Roches' "Star of Wonder."

WCT: With all these Chicago connections, you're going to have to move here next.

MA: Well, I do spend a fair amount of time in Chicago for a couple of reasons. One, it's the place where I had my first sold-out show. I was, like, "Wow. Maybe I can do this thing for a living." Also, all you guys are sexy; everybody is really handsome.

WCT: Well, on behalf of the city, thanks. Lastly, what's on your iPod?

MA: My brother's music is good; he's also the front man of a group called *Tijuana Tears* [http://tjuanatears.bandcamp.com]. They're brand-new but they're taking off like a rocket ship.

A friend turned me on to a musician who's passed away: Kenny Rankin. Kenny was known for his vocal jazz, and he played guitar pretty well. He did a cover of "Blackbird" that the Beatles loved so much they asked him to attend their induction into the Hall of Fame. Also, I listening to a lot of Mel Torme and Chet Baker right now. I'm performing Torme's and Baker's songs in Provincetown in a couple weeks; it's a one-night-only show on Oct. 7.

Find out more about Alber at www.MattAlber.com.

ENTERTAINMENT

Spacey, London venue to hold gay Ugandan play

In Britain, the Old Vic Theatre—led by actor and artistic director Kevin Spacey—has donated the venue free of charge to Ugandan playwright Judy Adong so that a benefit reading of her play (*Just Me You and the Silence*) can be seen in London Nov. 4, according to a Kaleidoscope Trust release.

"*Silence*," (set in Kampala, Uganda) follows the tragic story of Jacob Obina, an ambitious politician and family man. The play portrays the injustice and persecution gay and lesbian people suffer in Uganda.

Spacey said, "Theater has a crucial role to play in our world, to allow people to advance and discuss ideas, confront issues and communicate across cultural boundaries. This is an important piece that deserves to be heard and we are pleased to be providing an opportunity for audiences to connect with its message."

Frank Mugisha, a leading LGBT activist in Uganda, has also given public support to the production, adding, "This play is an important cultural moment that will give voice to a section of society that is given too little chance to express itself creatively and openly."

Writer of first lesbian pulp novel dies

Tereska Torrès—a French author who wrote the United States' first lesbian pulp novel, *Women's Barracks*—died Sept. 20 at her home in Paris at age 92, according to the *New York Times*.

"*Barracks*," published in 1950, is a fictionalized account of the writer's wartime service in London with the women's division of the Free French forces. The descriptions of liaisons the women had with male resistance members—as well as each other—drew much controversy. Torres later said she was sur-

prised by the hoopla.

The House Select Committee on Current Pornographic Materials condemned the book in 1952.

Torrès also wrote such works as *The Dangerous Games* (1957) and *By Cécile* (1963), in which a woman falls for her husband's mistress.

Chicago among Mika's first live dates

Singer Mika has announced his first U.S. live dates to support his upcoming album, *The Origin of Love*, out on Universal Republic Oct. 16.

His first dates include New York's Webster Hall (Oct. 15), the Vic in Chicago (Oct. 18) and Los Angeles' The Fonda (Oct. 21).

His single "Celebrate" (featuring Pharrell Williams) will be available on iTunes Sept. 4. Find out more at <http://MikaSounds.com>.

Bananarama at Hard Rock Oct. 9

The girl group Bananarama—best known for hits such as "Cruel Summer" and "Venus"—will be at the Hard Rock Cafe Tuesday, Oct. 9, at 8 p.m.

The appearance will be in connection with the annual PINKTOBER breast-cancer awareness campaign.

Tickets for the all-ages event are \$8 at Ticketweb.com and \$10 at the door. (All proceeds benefit the YSC: Young Survival Coalition.) For a VIP table, contact Brittany at 312-943-5572 or chicago_sales2@hardrock.com.

Brandy releasing 'Two Eleven' Oct. 16

Grammy Award-winning R&B/pop singer songwriter and actress Brandy will release the CD *Two Eleven* (on RCA/Chameleon Records) Oct. 16.

Album pre-order is available now at 4everbrandy.com and includes instant downloads of her singles "Wildest Dreams" and "Put It Down" (the latter featuring Chris Brown).

TELEVISION

'Flipping Out' over Jeff Lewis and Jenni Pulos

BY JERRY NUNN

Jeff Lewis flips houses on a regular basis, and not even the economy stands in his way. For six seasons he has helmed *Flipping Out*, the show that surrounds a break down. He brought along friend Jenni Pulos as a loyal sidekick to bounce his humor and anger off of. His partner Gage, housekeeper Zoila and new assistant Andrew round out the cast to a show that many fans just can't get enough of—even creating a spin-off called *Interior Therapy*.

Watch what happens as walls come down and fights get hammered out this next season on Bravo. *Windy City Times* talked with Lewis and Pulos right before the season kicked off.

Windy City Times: Hello to you both. I heard you visited Chicago recently.

Jeff Lewis: Well Jenni's been there many times. She would fly across the country. That's really far away to travel for a booty call. Jenni did that for probably a good year, right, Jenny? Was it a good year?

Jenni Pulos: Oh, yes, I just wanted to hear how many times you were going to say "long-distance booty call," but, yes...

JL: I only said it once.

JP: We've been doing the long-distance thing for two years. I love Chicago.

JL: I do, too. I went for her wedding.

WCT: Are you going to move here, or what is the plan?

JP: No, he is moving to Los Angeles.

JL: He already moved. He moved two or three weeks ago. We had a party for him.

JP: We did—a dance party.

JL: Yes, it was. I was really hung over, to be honest with you.

WCT: What can you tell readers about the new cast member Andrew?

JP: Andrew is the new addition, the new assistant and—oh, get ready—he's a great...

JL: Piece of work.

JP: ...addition to the office and a piece of work. Yes, I would say. There's a lot of drama.

JL: I had met Andrew on another job, I really liked his work and I brought him on. I did take a look at his resume—which apparently was a big lie—and then also I did ask him a lot of questions in his interview, which apparently was more lies. Did you ever see that movie *The Talented Mr. Ripley*?

WCT: Yes.

JL: This is part two, the reality-television version.

WCT: He's the gay version.

JL: Yes, but wasn't Matt Damon gay in the movie?

WCT: Oh, yeah. I forgot.

JL: It's another gay version. The problem was we had him in our house for, like, three or four months before we realized he really wasn't who he said he was. So that was a little concerning and scary. Don't you think, Jenni?

JP: Yes, you're going to see it all and it all unfolds. It's pretty crazy what happens.

JL: It's pretty nuts. I mean, you can't write this stuff. I don't understand why this keeps happening to me. I don't know if it's karma, I don't know what I did in a past life. I really don't, but it must've been really bad.

JP: It's a karma crock-pot. That's what I call it.

JL: So what did you do in a past life, Jenni, to be with me for over 11 years?

JP: More, I'm worse, trust me.

JL: You must have been a serial killer!

WCT: Since it has not been working out, what qualities do you look for in an assistant?

JL: Well, it is working out for some people.



Jenni Pulos and Jeff Lewis. Photo courtesy of Bravo

Jenni's been with me for over 10 years. Zoila's been with me for over 10 years. Gage and I dated for almost four years; he's been working with me for probably over two years. It's actually a good point that you brought up, because we start off this season where we're kind of floundering and we're so short-handed.

These people had been with me for several years and they all had been trained and everyone had their responsibilities. But the fact is that I need people that are dedicated, that are here for the right reasons—and that's the problem with the show: We've been doing this for six years now [and there have] been a few times where employees have come in for the wrong reasons. They want some sort of exposure or attention, and I'm looking for people that want to be in the design business and want to be here long term.

We live in Los Angeles, which is kind of a transient city anyway—where people are kind of trying to figure themselves out. I have people that are working here that don't necessarily know what they want to do and they're here just to pay the bills. I have got to weed those people out because I spend too much time training them.

WCT: You don't seem like you have been flipping out as much recently.

JL: After you watch this season, I think you're going to probably change your mind on that. I think it directly relates to my stress levels. I took on a lot these past six to eight months and it really affected me and I think that there's a lot of flip-outs. I think I regressed this season. Don't you think, Jenni?

JP: Well, I think that you've grown in many ways and then I do think that you were very stressed this season. I think it also had to do

with your personal house project, amongst other things. I think, overall, you're handling things better.

What I really appreciate about Jeff this year is that when he had issues and he was frustrated, he confronted them and in a healthier way. So you'll see that on the show, both between Zoila and myself. I think there has been growth but, I think when [he piles] a lot on [his] plate, it overwhelms him and he then has outbursts.

JL: We started therapy this season because Zoila, Jenni and I were at an impasse. We just couldn't figure things out on our own.

WCT: Did doing the show *Interior Therapy* affect things this season?

JL: We had finished *Interior Therapy* before we filmed *Flipping Out*. I will say it affected my business because it took me away from my business for six months. Then what happened was that added to my financial stress because

normally people don't want to remodel during the holidays. So normally I'm meeting in October and November with the intention to start their projects in January and February. Because I was shooting *Interior Therapy* right up through January, I missed the window of opportunity to book, you know, a good 12 clients. I saw my income drop in January and February. Most of the stress this season was financial.

WCT: Would you do QVC again, Jeff?

JL: I'm done with the QVC line and I am back to paint. It's called Jeff Lewis Color and I am hoping it will be on the shelves by November or December of this year.

WCT: I look forward to watching the new season, congrats.

JP: Thank you.

Flipping Out debuts new episodes every Tuesday. Visit www.bravotv.com for details and listings.

BUSINESS

Four-legged friends anchor new store, name

BY ROSS FORMAN

Jameson is a 70-pound lab-huskie mix whose favorite fellow, furry four-legged friend is Danger, a 17-pound Boston terrier-poodle mix that is afraid of, well, just about everything—from leaves to car horns and almost everything in between.

"It's a very unlikely pair," said Gracie Whalen, owner of Danger.

"Jameson has a protective relationship with Danger, especially at the beach. Jameson is very protective of Danger," said J Horne, owner of Jameson.

Whalen and Horne, friends for about four years, are now business partners—thanks to their pets.

Jameson Loves Danger is, fittingly, the name of their new pet-supply store in Andersonville. It opened in mid-September—with humans and their beloved pets attending the grand opening.

"Jameson and Danger were such a driving force [in opening the store] that it only seems right that they are incorporated in the name," Whalen said.

The store spans 1,700 square feet, and is filled with food, treats and more. There is a grooming area, and even a self-grooming facility. There are three full-time and two part-time employees.

"Gracie and I have a common bond: we love our animals. We love to incorporate them throughout our days. We also love this community," Horne said. "Sharing our lives and

our pets, and having our pets at work, is a really cool thing."

Horne, 34, lives in Andersonville and is originally from Evanston. Horne has two dogs and a cat and identifies as queer. Whalen, 31, also lives in Andersonville and is originally from downstate Illinois. She also has one cat and is an open lesbian. (The two, who are single, are business partners solely.)

Horne has worked in the pet industry since age 21. Whalen most recently worked in investment real estate and, for six years before that, she did social work.

"As a small business, we can really focus on the customers," Whalen said. "We have the time to sit and talk about what they really need, what they want, how they want things to look, etc. And we really enjoy those conversations; that's a big part of us personally and professionally."

Jameson Loves Danger offers all-natural products, plus raw food. "More than anything, we have tried to vary what we have, so we can meet the needs of everyone," Whalen said.

Many products are locally made.

The store also offers toys, supplements and a supply delivery option twice a week.

"This community is very diverse, very animal-friendly. The community reaction has been incredibly supportive so far. We're very happy about that," Horne said.

Jameson Loves Danger is located at 5208 N. Clark St. The phone number is 773-754-8816.



J Horne (left) and Gracie Whalen with Danger the dog. Photo by Ross Forman

Chicago women claim third place in Gay Bowl

BY ROSS FORMAN

The Chicago BruiseHers Blue Team knew it had its hands full in the semifinals of the inaugural women's division of the football event known as the Gay Bowl, played in late September in Denver.

The team had the fewest number of players (10) of any team and were facing Denver 303, a team that was undefeated and had outscored its opponents 106-40 in pool play.

Plus, the Chicagoans had to defeat the New York Dolls, which they did 25-21, and then only had about 10 minutes break before stepping back on the field against Denver 303—and Denver 303 was well rested, earning a bye into the semi as the No. 1 seed.

fore the Gay Bowl. We were so close to getting to the championship."

Veronica Soper, who lives in Evanston, said her Gay Bowl highlight was playing Denver 303. "The grueling four-overtime periods made me open my eyes to all the heart from both teams on that field," she said. "Both teams were competitive, very athletic, and never gave up."

"Coming from Chicago, the dense air from the high elevation made it hard for us to breathe. However, we gave it our all until the final play. I am so proud of my teammates who struggled through injuries and continued to play their hearts out."

Dee Allen, 39, of Chicago, said the BruiseHers Blue team did a "great" job in the Gay Bowl and the third-place finish was "an honor."



The Chicago BruiseHers Blue women's football team. Photo by Travis Prior

"[The] team was exhausted," said Kelly McMahon, coach for the BruiseHers Blue Team.

Denver 303 came out and scored twice, quickly.

However, the Chicagoans never surrendered, and the game was tied at the end of regulation time. The game was still tied after the first overtime time, and the second, and the third.

Denver 303 ultimately triumphed in the fourth overtime.

"We came to find out later that one of our team members had a broken finger that she played through, and another had a pretty seriously injured foot," McMahon said. "There were about three separate instances in overtime where we could have won depending on a referee's call. It was heartbreaking to lose that game, but we came out of it with our heads held high. Most of the players and spectators said it was one of the most exciting games they'd ever seen or been a part of. I agree."

The BruiseHers Blue Team regrouped and defeated the Denver 5280 team to claim third place.

"I think it was very impressive," finishing third, McMahon said. "The two Denver teams had actual tryouts and had been practicing together since May. Our team was basically put together on a volunteer basis, and we only had time for about seven practices and a few scrimmages be-

"We went into four overtimes with the team that ended up winning it all, Denver 303; that's something I will always remember," Allen said.

The BruiseHers Blue Team was awarded the Gay Bowl's Team Spirit Award.

"We represented Chicago in a great way, and I could not be more proud of the girls that I played with," Allen said.

McMahon, 35, who lives in Chicago's Jefferson Park neighborhood, is a construction project manager. She has been playing and coaching flag football for 18 years, dating back to inter-hall flag football as a freshman at the University of Notre Dame in 1994.

"I couldn't be more proud of the Chicago BruiseHers Blue team," she said. "To come in third place, [while] playing in our first-ever travel tournament together as a team was extremely impressive."

"I think our highlight was winning the Team Spirit Award. Not only did we have a great showing in terms of our third-place finish and some very exciting, hard-fought games, but we also captured the respect of all of the teams out there with our good sportsmanship and heart. I had many [officials] and other players come up to me and tell me that our team was one of the most fun and unified squads they'd ever seen."

Alisha Brennon offered one of the team's most memorable moments: a game-ending intercep-

tion against the New York Dolls.

The Dolls were driving downfield, trailing by four with only about a minute remaining in regulation time.

"Their quarterback threw a ball into the end zone and Alisha snatched it away to end the game," McMahon said.

Sandra Urquiaga was the Chicago quarterback.

"One of my favorite moments [from the whole trip] was starting an impromptu flippy-cup game against the Denver 5280 team after we beat

them in the third-place game." McMahon said. "We just used one of the folding water tables on the side of our field, sent the local players out to get a couple of cases [of beer], and played Denver 5280 versus Chicago Blue drinking games for a few hours once the tournament was over."

"It was great to bond with them and have some fun off the field."

Chicago won that game, too, McMahon said.

Six-year-old supports Team to End AIDS

BY ROSS FORMAN

His lemonade stand features a hand-painted sign, along with cookies and brownies. Oliver Bean Thome, 6, doesn't charge for drinks or snacks, but rather, simply asks for donations—with all money going to the Team To End AIDS (T2), the endurance-training program of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC), of which his mom, Jamie, is a coach for the program.

The youngster, known to most as "Bean," admires the T2 participants and knows the basics of why they run marathons, compete in triathlons and do countless hours of fundraising for AFC.

"So people can get their medicine," Bean answered when asked why he—like all T2 participants—raises funds for AFC. "The money is used for buying the medicine that people who have AIDS need."

Bean is the youngest fundraiser for T2, and this is his second year supporting the cause. Last year, Bean raised about \$600. This year, he has already raised more than \$1,000.

His goal is \$3,000, though he wanted to raise \$1 million.

Again, these are words of a 6-year-old.

"I actually don't have him fundraising. It was his choice," said Jamie Thome, 40, who lives in Evanston, has run seven marathons and been coaching for T2 for three years.

"Last year, when we were registering him for his first duathlon, the Splash and Dash at the McGaw YMCA, he asked me who it was for. Confused, I said, 'It's for you. You're doing this race.' And he replied, 'No, who am I raising money for?'"

She then asked him who he wanted to raise money for, and Bean shrugged and said, "T2, of course."

Bean even asked his mom to make a fundraising video, similar to one he saw of T2 participant Paul Kilian.

"I think the impetus for his generosity and choice of cause was that he's grown up around fundraising for AFC," said Thome, whose first marathon was when he was 9 months old.

Thome admitted that explaining HIV/AIDS to a 6-year-old can be, "tricky in a lot of ways."

"Of course, it's inappropriate to bring up the sexually transmitted part of the cause to a 6-year-old, but we talk a lot about what HIV and AIDS actually are, medically, not specifics about how it's contracted, either sexually or through tainted needle use, etc.," Jamie Thome said.

"That said, we do talk about prevention and that some of what he raises for AFC goes to educational programs and prevention. We have talked about how babies with HIV-positive mothers can benefit from his fundraising, with the result of being born without HIV. Naturally, helping babies and other kids interests him. His biggest concern, though, is that people with HIV/AIDS are able to afford and receive their medicine."

Jamie said she truly believes Bean understands that he's raising money to help people



Oliver Bean Thome. Photo by Ross Forman

who need to be helped.

"He's got such a huge heart and a generous spirit. He always has," Thome said. "He's a sensitive and caring kid, the one in the classroom who is the diplomat, the negotiator of peace. It's really hard to put into words what it means to us that he's such a great guy and that he just naturally wants to help others. My heart swells."

Earlier this year, when Jamie and her husband, Doug, asked Bean how much he wanted to raise for T2, he randomly replied, \$1 million. Mom and Dad laughed.

"I have absolutely no idea how he came up with that number," Thome said.

It now stands at \$3,000.

"T2 is an amazing group of people; the athletes are not only raising their own funds for AFC, but a lot of them have donated to his fundraising, [too]. I think that's terribly sweet and pretty much par for the course with T2. You won't find a more supportive, generous group of people."

"Not to sound sappy or like a crazy person, but I hope that Bean is truly learning what it means to be of service, to help other people. We're not particularly religious as a family, but do put a great deal of faith in kindness and quiet charity."

Bean will be in first grade in the fall at Dr. Bessie Rhodes Magnet School of Global Studies in Evanston. His hobbies include LEGOS, Hot Wheels, reading and swimming.

"My favorite thing about fundraising has been raising all the money. Also, I like hanging out with everybody at my lemonade stand," Bean said. "I think [the T2 marathon runners] are all fast and speedy."

To support Bean and his fundraising for T2 and the AIDS Foundation of Chicago, go to www.afc.aidschicago.org/netcommunity/thome.

the **DISH** WEEKLY DINING GUIDE IN

WINDY CITY TIMES



LM Bistro

BY MEGHAN STREET

Nicole and Stephan Outrequin Quaisser traded their cozy Lincoln Square address for a slightly swankier one in River North. The husband-and-wife team closed LM Restaurant in Lincoln Square, and swiftly opened LM Bistro in a space previously occupied by Elate in the Felix Hotel.

The Outrequin Quaissers changed locations, but they brought with them many of the things I (and I suspect, many other diners) loved about LM Restaurant (<http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/SUGAR-SPICE-Alfresco-dining-options/27100.html>). Like its predecessor, LM Bistro is decorated in warm orange and deep brown woods, and the menu still features authentic French food at relatively affordable prices. In fact, you can get a three-course prix fixe lunch for just \$22 and a three-course dinner for \$35.

I recently enjoyed a late lunch with friends at LM Bistro that, fueled by a couple of bottles of French wine, lasted almost until dinnertime. The wine list is impressive, but not intimidating. Aficionados will find \$100 bottles to splurge on, and there are plenty priced under \$40 for the rest of us. I loved the Le Peu de la Moriette Chenin Blanc, a dry white with a creamy texture that paired well with all of my courses.

I started my leisurely lunch with a cheese and charcuterie plate. I selected a blue and a goat cheese, which were both lovely and served in ample portions with plenty of crusty toasted bread. To my delight, the soup de jour was French onion. LM Bistro's tasty version is served



Selections at LM Bistro. PR photos



in a mini Dutch oven. It's warm, hearty and the perfect cheese-topped treat for the chilly fall days coming our way.

I also tried the tomato tart. The crisp bread was topped with flavorful olive puree, goat cheese, basil and fresh tomatoes. It was more like an Italian flatbread than a French tart, but I rarely complain when I have cheese and carbs combined in any manner sitting in front of me. Plus, whether French or Italian, the tart was delicious and large enough to share or eat as a main course.

The lunch entrée selections, many of which are also available at dinner, are the traditional offerings you would expect at a French bistro—cassoulet, roasted chicken and bistro steak. You won't find a lot of a bunch of experimental bells and whistles at LM Bistro. Instead, you'll get superbly prepared French classics.

The slow roasted salmon was divine. It was perfect light pink color that all salmon should be when cooked properly, and the flaky fish pulled apart with just a fork. The salmon was served with wild mushrooms and French gnocchi with chive emulsion. The fresh mushrooms and tender gnocchi made excellent companions for the salmon, without stealing the show. My only criticism was the chive emulsion was just a tad too salty—enough to notice, but not enough to spoil the otherwise perfect dish.

You won't go wrong with the bistro steak (especially if you order it medium rare). The large and juicy steak is slathered with tangy red onion jam, and beneath it you'll find fingerling potatoes drenched in a creamy Fondant cheese sauce. The decadent sauce is also made with bone marrow—not something I seek out in a meal. But in this sauce, it works well, making the dish richer, but not gross, as bone marrow can sometimes do, in my opinion.

Like the rest of the courses, LM Bistro's desserts consist primarily of French classics. The chocolate pot de crème, I must admit, was a bizarre disappointment. The flavor was just fine (what's not to love about chocolate?), but the consistency was sticky and thick, almost like cake frosting that comes in a jar. It had none of the light airiness that typically makes pot de crème so worth ruining your diet. Fortunately, the crème brulee hit the nail on the head. It was sweet, creamy, glazed with the perfect brown on top, and served with a soft, fresh Madeleine.

I think LM Bistro will please both tourists and Chicagoans seeking authentic French food at reasonable prices. The Outrequin Quaissers are no strangers to running French restaurants. They also operate Trouquet in Ravenswood and Brasserie by LM on Michigan Avenue (both previously profiled), and they are the folks behind the just-opened Brasserie 54 in Andersonville. I look forward to seeing what this dynamic couple and their team do with all of their culinary endeavors.

LM Bistro is located at 111 W. Huron St.; call 312-202-9900 or visit [www. http://lm-restaurant.com/home.html](http://lm-restaurant.com/home.html).

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.

Dining news

COMPILED BY ANDREW DAVIS

—Bridge Bar, 315 N. LaSalle St., has captured Boardwalk Empire fever as head bar chef Kevin Schulz has created fall inspired handcrafted bottles of hooch (pictured). The hooch has a bourbon base mixed with selected spiced liqueurs. Also, as the October cocktail of the month, the hooch will be half off on Tuesdays, costing \$10. See www.BridgeBarChicago.com.



—Shaw's Crab House is hosting its 24th Annual Oyster Fest Oct. 8-12, culminating in the "Royster with the Oyster" block party Oct. 12. "Royster"—which more than 4,000 people attended last year—is 3-10 p.m. in the parking lot on Rush Street between Hubbard and Illinois streets. Country singer Lee Brice will be featured. See www.TicketWeb.com or www.ShawsCrabHouse.com.

—Bring on the waffles! BEL 50 will open in October at 738 N. Clark St.—and it will feature gourmet waffle sandwiches. The sandwiches (\$4-\$9) include egg and sharp cheddar, BBQ pulled pork, PB&J with strawberry cream cheese, and portabella mushroom with roasted tomato, goat cheese and roasted pepper aioli, among others. (As another option, BEL 50 will offer all sandwiches on a low fat, gluten-free waffle.) See www.facebook.com/BEL50chi.

—Maxwell's at the Club's, 500 N. Kingsbury St., popular Sunday Brunch is returning, beginning 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 7. The brunch menu includes a variety of choices from a full omelet bar, freshly made waffles, to herb-roasted salmon, salads, seasonal fruit and more. Brunch is \$28 for adults, \$12 for children 7-10 and \$6 for kids 4-6. Reserve at 312-527-5800, ext. 301.

—Clutch, 459 N. Ogden St., is open for lunch and brunch. Lunch is served Monday through Friday beginning at 11 a.m. and features appetizers, sandwiches, burgers, salads, flatbreads and desserts that are \$6-\$22. Clutch's new brunch menu is available every Saturday and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and includes crab Benedict, whiskey vanilla French toast, breakfast burger and more (\$2-\$16). See www.clutchbar.com.

Send news items to Andrew@WindyCityMediaGroup.com.

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

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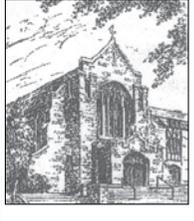
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OUT OF TOWN - REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

MICHIGAN PROPERTY FOR SALE 1.5+ acres (8 lots) located minutes south of Saugatuck, parcel sits east off Lake Shore Drive in Pier Cove. Wooded, private, perfect for camping or building. \$87,500. **Contact Mike @ mandm100910@comcast.net (10/24/12-4)**

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MARGATE PARK. BEAUTIFUL 3BR/2BATH. Hardwood floors. New Kitchen & baths. Washer/Dryer in unit. Large Private deck. Parking. Close to transportation, park & lake, doggy park. 939 W. Ainslie, Chicago. **Zoretich Realty Group. 773-704-8880 (10/3/12-2)**

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ROGERS PARK GRANVILLE WESTERN TWO BDRM, 2nd floor. Newly redecorated, granite countertops, C/A, washer/dryer in unit. Walk to L. Permit prkg. Immediate occupancy. **2344 Granville, U2. Advisors Properties Group. 630-370-5471. (10/24/12-4)**

HOME FOR RENT

UNIQUE BUILDING IN LINCOLN PARK, has recently been renovated into chic single family loft residence. A skylight permeates this 3400 sq ft four bedroom two bath stand alone home. You'll think it should be in the restoration hardware catalogue with its rustic cabinets, granite topped island that seats 8 easily, polished concrete floors, three stairways leading to two loft rooms and a huge rooftop deck. Includes parking. \$4950/mo. View the property here: <http://www.jameson.com/08125978>. If you're not looking for the ordinary call Rita 312-925-5245, **JamesonSIR (10/10/12-4)**

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Wed., Oct. 3

HIV Support Groups Living with HIV? Join one of our 10-week groups to share experiences, learn from one another and find support in a safe, confidential setting. Wednesdays and Thursdays; noon, Saturdays. Free; 6pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., www.CenterOnHalsted.org

The Acro-Cats Caterwaul into Chicago The Amazing Acro-Cats will perform their remarkable feats of agility (remarkable because they're ... you know ... house cats). 7pm-8pm, 773-456-8808, Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave., www.stage773.com; Tickets: <http://boxoffice.printtixusa.com/stage773/eventcalendar>

God Believes in Love: Straight Talk About Gay Marriage In God Believes in Love, openly gay New Hampshire Episcopalian Bishop Gene Robinson addresses key questions about same sex marriage in a culturally polarized election year. Sponsored by Women & Children First and hosted by St. Paul's United Church of Christ. 7:30pm, 773-769-9299, St. Paul's United Church of Christ, 2335 N. Orchard St., www.spucc.org; Tickets: www.womenandchildrenfirst.com

Naomi Wolf, author: Vagina: A New Biography In 1991, feminist social theorist Naomi Wolf broke ground with her international bestseller, *The Beauty Myth*. Eleven years and seven books later, Wolf returns to her essential message of female empowerment in her new release. 7:30pm, Women & Children First Books, 5233 N. Clark St., www.womenandchildrenfirst.com

Bailiwick Chicago Presents Rock Show(tunes) Classic Broadway showtunes reimagined as modern rock. Doors open at

VALENTINE'S DAY Tuesday, Oct. 9

The lesbian band Hunter Valentine will be at Stage Bar, 4358 N. Cicero Ave.

Photo by Leslie Van Stelten



8 pm. \$10 in advance, \$15 at the door; 9pm, Underground Lounge, 952 W. Newport Ave., www.bailiwickchicago.com

Thursday, Oct. 4

Columbia College shows three films by Peter Thompson The reception begins at 5 pm followed by the screenings at 6 pm of Universal Hotel, Universal Citizen and Lowlands. After the films, a Q&A with Thompson will follow. The evening will be introduced by Bruce Sheridan and Film Critic Jonathan Rossenbaum. 5pm-9pm, Film Row Cinema of Columbia College Chicago, 1104 S. Wabash Ave., 8th Floor; <http://gopride.com/z7if>

TPAN 25th Anniversary Celebration "The 25th Hour: Celebrating A Quarter-Century of Service" will take place at the historic Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E Washington St., 5:30pm-8:30pm, <https://39893.thankyoudcaring.org/25hour>

Coming Out Support Group This Coming Out Support Group is for women who find themselves attracted to other women,

or may be questioning their sexual identity and are looking to discuss issues of sexuality in a safe and confidential space. 6pm-7:30pm, 773-388-1600X3319, Howard Brown, 4025 N. Sheridan Rd., www.howardbrown.org/lccp

Sphinx Virtuosi with Sweet Honey In The Rock America's most celebrated and influential African-American and Latino youth orchestra ensemble is part of Sphinx Organization, a national non-profit group focused on youth development and diversity in classical music. 7:30pm-9:30pm, 312-334-7777, Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E Randolph St., www.harristheaterchicago.org

Bishop Gene Robinson Presenting on Justice and Compassion in an Age of Demonization. \$10 for the general public, free for Elmhurst College students, faculty, staff and alumni. After, Robinson will sign copies of his book, which also will be for sale. 7:30pm, 630-617-3390, Elmhurst College, Hammerschmidt Memorial Chapel, 190 Prospect Ave., Elmhurst, www.elmhurst.edu/tix

White Party Minibar's White Party is known for being the best way to kick off your weekend! Make your VIP Reservation for tonight, 773-871-6227. 10pm, Minibar, 3341 N Halsted St., www.minibarchicago.com

Friday, Oct. 5

Andersonville's annual arts weekend Original artwork by dozens of local artists showcased in businesses and galleries throughout the neighborhood, plus a variety of live shows and parties. This year we will be featuring several paintings by local artist and writer Carol Anshaw (Carry the One, Lucky in the Corner). Through Oct. 7. 12pm, www.womenandchildrenfirst.com

The Living Circle An interfaith GLBT spirituality group that meets weekly for discussion, meditation, prayer. 7pm-8:30pm, 847-581-9136, 825 W. Wellington Ave.

Doug Ischar Showcase, screening Expressions of Self A collection of short experimental work including a world premiere of his newly finished piece, *Tristes Tarzan*. 7:30pm-10pm, 773-293-1447, Hokin Hall at Columbia, 623 S. Wabash Ave., <http://gopride.com/z7iw>

Xanadu Based on the Universal Pictures cult classic movie, *XANADU* follows the journey of a magical and beautiful Greek muse who descends from Mt. Olympus to California in 1980 to inspire a struggling artist to achieve the greatest artistic creation of all time: the first roller disco. Through Oct 28; 8:30pm, Drury Lane Oakbrook 100 Drury Lane, Oakbrook Terrace, www.drurylaneoakbrook.com/index.php

Art and Cookbook Sale Get 25 percent off all art books and cookbooks in stock. Think ahead, and buy now for holiday gift-giving. Through Oct. 12. 8:45pm, Women & Children First Books, 5233 N. Clark St., www.womenandchildrenfirst.com

Scarlet's Homecoming 2012 Calling all Queens and Kings, come to Scarlet dressed to impress as ChicagoPride.com's Bill Pritchard crowns the 2012 Homecoming King and Queen at 11pm. Featuring DJ DOLO and a few special celebrity guests! No cover. 9pm, Scarlet Bar, 3320 N Halsted St., www.scarletbarchicago.com

Saturday, Oct. 6

LGBTQ College Fair at Center Students and families will be able to talk with representatives from more than 35 local and national colleges, including DePaul University, Knox College, Northwestern University, Washington University in St. Louis and the Adler School of Professional Psychology. 11am-2pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., www.centeronhalsted.org

Screams in the Park In this Halloween attraction, professional actors will take thrill-seeking visitors back in time as they enter the mansion of H.H. Holmes, the notorious serial killer of the best seller "Devil in the White City." Dr. Holmes' sprawling gothic mansion appeared to be an inviting hotel for visitors to the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, but was designed for murdering and dismembering Holmes' hapless victims. Age 13 and up or up to parent/guardian's discretion. 6:30pm, 847-349-5008, MB Financial Park at Rosemont parking garage, 9703 Bryn Mawr, www.screamsinthepark.com

Go-Gos All-female rock band Go-Gos with bassist Abby Travis. 8pm, Star Plaza Theatre, 800 E. 81st Ave. Merrillville, Ind., www.songkick.com/concerts/13639679-gogogs-at-star-plaza-theatre

CAKE Chicago 6 Year Anniversary Show Many fab talents; 9pm, Red Line Tap, 7700 N Glenwood Ave.

DREAMers Act Workshop Fill out your Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Application with assistance, register, bring confirmation email and all required documentation. Trained Application Assistant volunteers will help fill out DACA applications and give a final legal review. Register online. 9:15pm, Harry S. Truman College; www.dreamrelief.org

Sunday, Oct. 7

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

2012 LGBT Documentary Film Series Takes place every Saturday afternoon in October. This week: *Trans*, an up close and personal look at the transgender community. Hosted by the Chicago Gender Society. 2pm-5pm, 708-452-3440, Oak Park Library, Veterans Room, 834 Lake St., Oak Park, www.oppl.org

We Got The Beat - 80's Video Dance Party It's an Awesome '80s video dance party in Andersonville! Who says the weekend has to end? 9pm, The Call (Chicago), 1547 W Bryn Mawr Ave.

Monday, Oct. 8

i2i new API Coming Out Group Open to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, and queer APIs. Adoptees, hapas, and multiracial folks welcome too. First Monday of every month. Free. Snacks. More info: chicagoi2i@yahoo.com; 6pm-7:30pm, Asian Human Services, 7th flr conference room, 4753 N. Broadway; email chicagoi2i@yahoo.com

Cyon Flare presents United House: A Night of Unity in House Music The event returns to Boystown at a new location where everyone is family—Black, white,



ALL'S FAIR

Saturday, Oct. 6

Dozens of schools will have representatives at the LGBTQ College Fair at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St.

Photo by Andrew Davis

Latin, Asian, LGBTQI and straight. Presented by Cyon Flare; 10pm, Circuit Night Club, 3641 N Halsted St., www.facebook.com/cyons.unitedhouse

Affinity Board Recruitment Event Seeking people who want to take leadership to the next level and learn about board membership. 6:30pm-8pm, Affinity Office, 1424 E. 53rd St., #306, www.affinity95.org

Tuesday, Oct. 9

Former Editor of Ms. Magazine to Give LGBTQ Heritage Month Talk "From Vincent Chin to Marriage Equality, From Invisible to Envisioning: Personal Reflections on Interconnectedness and Transformation" by journalist and activist Helen Zia. Free. Reception will follow. Info by phone or online. 4pm-5:30pm, 312-413-8619, Student Center East, 750 S. Halsted St., Illinois Room B, www.gsc.uic.edu

RAICES presents Out in Cicero Co-sponsored by Morton College Pride Group and Morton East Gay Straight Alliance. Spread the message of equality and explore the challenges and opportunities that living openly offers to each of us. Free. Allies encouraged. Info from raices@project-vida.org; 5:30pm-8pm, 2250 S. 49th Ave., Cicero

Bananarama Benefiting Young Survival Coalition. \$8. online, \$10. at door. All Ages; 8pm, <http://gopride.com/z7jt>; Tickets: <http://www.ticketweb.com>

Hunter Valentine lesbian rock quartet Appeared on The Real L Word; 8pm, Stage Bar, 4358 N. Cicero Ave., Tickets: <http://gopride.com/z7ju>

Wed., Oct. 10

Fireside Chat: Douglas O'Keeffe and Lourdes Torres Dr. Lourdes Torres of Amiga Latinas will be the subject interviewed. Torres will discuss her community history, and involvement. Suggested donation \$5.00. 7:30pm-9pm, 773-472-6469, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., www.centeronhalsted.org

Women Wednesday Second Wednesday of every month, Equality Illinois holds a monthly social gathering for women. 7pm-9pm, 773-477-7173, Mary's Attic, 5400 N Clark St., www.eqil.org/events.html

Thursday, Oct. 11

The Legacy Walk Dedication of the walking museum on a half-mile stretch of Halsted Street showcasing biographies of notable LGBT people across history. 2-3pm VIP pre-ceremony, Sidetrack. 3-4:15pm Tented outdoor ceremony, Roscoe and Halsted. 4-4:15p Streetscape dedication, Halsted from Melrose to Bradley; free. 4:30-7pm Reception, \$100 - \$200 VIP; 4pm-7pm; www.facebook.com/pages/the-legacy-project/124794807576962; tickets at www.legacyprojectchicago.org/dedication_tickets.html



GENE THERAPY

Wed.-Thurs., Oct. 3-4

Bishop Gene Robinson will be at St. Paul's United Church of Christ, 2335 N. Orchard St., and Elmhurst College.

Image by BProud Photography

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online



WindyCityMediaGroup.com
ChicagoPride.com

BILLY MASTERS

"We are the Susan Lucci of reality shows!"—Tweeted Tim Gunn after Project Runway lost (again) to The Amazing Race. He also wanted to make sure we remembered it's a super-gay show.

I think I'm all award show-ed out. I simply could not get excited about going to the Emmys this year. I could, however, get excited about going to the parties—especially the hottest party in town. With HBO dominating the awards the last few years/decades, its soiree has become the place to be. In fact, several lesser parties (no names, but several networks with initials) cancelled their events due to a paucity of positive RSVPs. So my new plan consisted of staying home, watching the awards in peace and then casually meandering over to the Pacific Design Center—just a hop, skip and a jump away from my Beverly Hills (adjacent) abode.

Since HBO went with a carnival theme of vibrant colors, I was smart to stick with basic black. (I checked out the venue the day before.) Everything looked spectacular, due in no small part to the creative juices of party planner Billy Butchkavitz ... with some help from the fire department. Apparently, the midday sun reflects off the new "red building" at the Pacific Design Center and causes some minor problems—like tents melting and transformers blowing up at the WeHo sheriff's department! Thankfully, that was all squared away pre-party.

I have a confession to make—I kinda touched Dick Cavett's penis. It was clearly accidental—he's far too short for me. He was at the party because his HBO special, Mel Brooks and Dick Cavett Together Again, had been nominated. After our chat, he asked if I'd seen Mel (the only person in the room older than Cavett). I told him where he was and as he brushed by me, something dangling betwixt his legs grazed my palm. My natural instinct is to hold onto such an appendage until it is a throbbing purple mass, but I didn't have a few hours to invest.

When I said hi to Sofia Vergara, she told me that her skintight dress had split just before Modern Family won Best Comedy. One of her assistants literally sewed her back into it. With that, she said, "Look at it." I politely glanced at her derriere, and she said, "Dios mio, why are the gay ones so shy? Just look at my ass!" That's how I ended up in a second compromising position with a celebrity. Sofia effortlessly balances hanging out with her friends (she always has a large coterie in attendance), gabbing with her colleagues and greeting her fans as if it were no big deal. And somehow she also manages to eat, laugh and dance ... especially dance. Around midnight, her group moved to a table by the DJ. Sofia then led everyone onto the dance floor, where she stayed for over an hour. At one point, her boyfriend was playing the drums and Vergara got up on stage and shimied like your sister Kate (which was the name of a short-lived sitcom starring Stephanie Beacham, by the by). The party continued well past the scheduled shutdown time because everyone was having such a blast.

While the director of Game Change, Jay Roach, was being pulled in a million directions, I was sitting with his wife, Susanna Hoffs—someone I have known for eons. This summer, Hoffs put out her first solo CD in more than 16 years, and I love it. I think of Someday as an homage to the '60s, with a decidedly modern sensibility. Surely her duet work with Matthew Sweet under the moniker Sid n Susie helped pave the way for this very tuneful collection. I was particularly struck by the orchestrations.

Susanna told me that all of the instruments are live—including the extensive horn and string sections. The results are impressive. How she's found time to make this solo CD in addition to being a wife and mother of two boys while

still touring with The Bangles (who put out a new CD of their own last year) is a mystery to me. She'll also be doing several solo dates this fall, and I can assure you her shows are incredible. Check out her schedule (and buy the CD) at SusannaHoffs.com. She's the real deal.

When I think of Susanna, I immediately think of the lovely Belinda Carlisle, whom I have known even longer. Belinda and her hubby, film producer Morgan Mason, moved back to LA this year. And like Susanna, she's busier than ever. Of course, she's touring with The Go-Go's through the fall. She has her "Belindia" line of home furnishings at Bergdorf Goodman (with a portion of the proceeds going to the Shuktara Project, a charity that helps abandoned and disabled children). And she's been collaborating with Dan Rucks (of the popular "Dan-O-Rama" videos) on a show chronicling her work in India, where



Billy says that Belinda Carlisle is apparently busier than ever. Publicity photo

she spends half the year designing. Anyone who has seen Carlisle interviewed knows she's a very private and guarded person. But through Rucks' lens, this program shows you the side of Belinda that her friends know—the loyal, patient, determined, vocal and hilarious Belinda. We've got an extended trailer of the show, which you can see on BillyMasters.com or on her site, BelindaCarlisle.tv.

When I'm getting ass at an Emmy party, it's definitely time to end yet another column. Alas, I don't have room to include my blind item. And it was a good one. All about closeted celebs at the Emmys. Maybe I'll squeeze it in next week. Or maybe it will turn up on www.BillyMasters.com, the site that has no limits. For your own pressing needs, just drop me a note at Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before Cavett finally gets aroused! Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

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AIDS Run & Walk tallies about \$400K

BY ROSS FORMAN

The annual AIDS Run & Walk Chicago shifted to Soldier Field this year and certainly featured some high-profile celebrity involvement.

About 5,000 participated on Sunday morning, Sept. 30, in three events—a 10K run, a 5K run and a 5K Walk.

"It was a fantastic event on a gorgeous day and we raised a lot of money," said David Ernesto Munar, the president/CEO of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC).

More than 160 teams participated.

"One of the great things about this event is, it draws people from all walks of life—teens, families, people from the workplace, church groups and more. It really is an uplifting event," Munar said.

The fundraising goal for the 2012 event was \$400,000 and Munar said the event is on track to match the 2011 totals. He will know within a week or so if it surpasses that total.

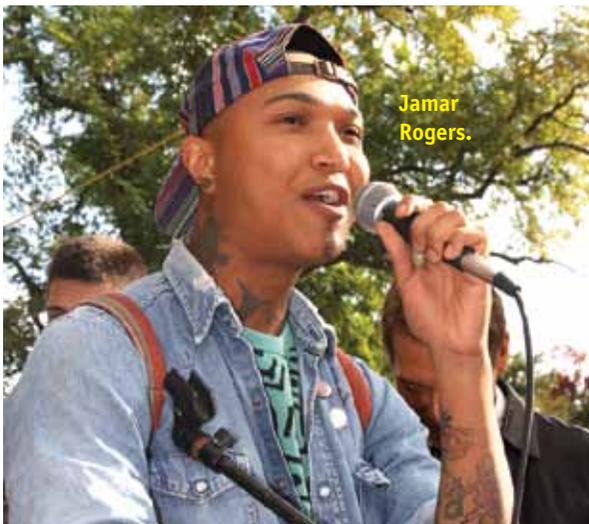
The event featured appearances by lesbian comedian Wanda Sykes, gay Broadway legend Michael Feinstein, and singers Adam Emil and Jamar Rogers.

"We were real excited to bring Wanda, Michael and Jamar Rogers. Their involvement is great," Munar said.

Linda Coon was the top individual fundraiser (\$7,435), while Team Chicago House (\$26,992.85) was the run-away top fundraising team.



Wanda Sykes.



Jamar Rogers.



Above, from left: Congressman Mike Quigley, AIDS Foundation of Chicago CEO David Ernesto Munar, Wanda Sykes, Michael Feinstein and WGN-TV entertainment reporter Dean Richards. Photos by Ross Forman; many more online at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com



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UPDATES TO KEEP YOUR ESTATE PLAN PROBLEM FREE

Some common problems that I see with estate plans are:

Old Powers of Attorney. Powers of attorney are wonderful documents in theory. Working with them can sometimes be a chore, though, especially when trying to convince others (like banks) to accept them on their face. An "old" power of attorney is more difficult to deal with than a fresh one because a question arises as to whether it is still good or whether it has been replaced. I suggest that you "refresh" your powers of attorney every two to three years by restating them.

Outdated Beneficiary Designations. Always verify who the named beneficiaries are for each asset that does not pass through a will. Individuals will often name someone other than their LGBT partners as beneficiaries on employee benefits such as life insurance or 401(k) plans. It is extremely common for clients simply to forget that a previous unmarried partner or parent is still named on an IRA or life insurance policy. For individuals who wish to leave a portion of their estates to a charity, designation of a charity as a direct beneficiary of some or all of a tax-deferred account is often preferable to making a bequest in the will that will be funded with post-tax dollars.

Not Safekeeping Documents. You need not always give copies of your trusts, powers of attorney, etc. to other people (agents and fiduciaries) who may need to implement them. However, you should communicate to the interested people their role, what kind of documents exist, and where they can find them if the need arises. If these people cannot reach the documents when needed, implementation will not be smooth. Many times clients do not know where their documents are. Keep copies in each person's car and suitcase when you travel.

Power of Attorney for Health Care. The agent and successor agent(s) under your health care power of attorney should be made aware of its existence and the location where it can be found in the event the agent needs a copy of it for purposes of implementation. The health care power of attorney is only effective if the agent is aware of it and can obtain a copy when it needs to be used. Further, it is your agent's or your responsibility to communicate the health care agency to your health care providers.

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Ray is a legal authority on all of his practice areas, which include probate, trusts, guardianship, estate planning, and elder law, including the litigation of those areas. He is a longtime advocate for and member of the LGBT community, and is involved in several charitable groups, community associations, and professional organizations. Ray is a member of Clark Hill PLC, a full-service law firm consisting of a diverse team of attorneys and professionals committed to our clients and our communities.

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