

JOHN STAMOS ON 'NEW NORMAL'

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# WINDY CITY TIMES

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LOCAL LGBTs MARCH AT INAUGURATION  
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# Boy Scouts may end gay ban

BY KATE SOSIN

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) could be ending its longtime ban on gay scouts, the organization announced Jan. 28.

Deron Smith, director of public relations for BSA, said in a statement that BSA was discussing removing the national restrictions on sexual orientation.

"This would mean there would no longer be any national policy regarding sexual orientation, but that the chartered organizations that oversee and deliver Scouting would accept membership and select leaders consistent with their organization's mission, principles or religious beliefs," Smith said in the statement. "BSA members and parents would be able to choose a local

unit which best meets the needs of their families."

The statement goes on to say that religious, civil and educational organizations will be left to determine their own policies around sexual orientation.

A change in policy could come as early as next week according to NBC News, which broke the story.

News of the possible policy revision comes after years of debate.

Last April, Jennifer Tyrrell, an Ohio Boy Scout den mother, made headlines when she was removed from the group for being gay. Tyrrell's Change.org petition attracted hundreds of thousands of signatures.

Last June, Jim Turley, a BSA board member and CEO of Ernst & Young, came out against the ban and said he was working to overturn it. AT&T CEO Randall Ste-

phenson, another board member, similarly opposed the policy.

BSA announced that it had reaffirmed the ban last summer after a two-year review of the policy.

That move prompted protest from LGBT groups throughout the country.

In late January, Mother Jones reported that Maryland Boy Scouts Pack 442 alleged that BSA had forced the troop to drop its gay-friendly anti-discrimination policy or lose its charter.

But just days later, news broke that that BSA was seriously considering ending the policy.

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PLANNED PARENTHOOD HONORS NETSCH  
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## Flying high

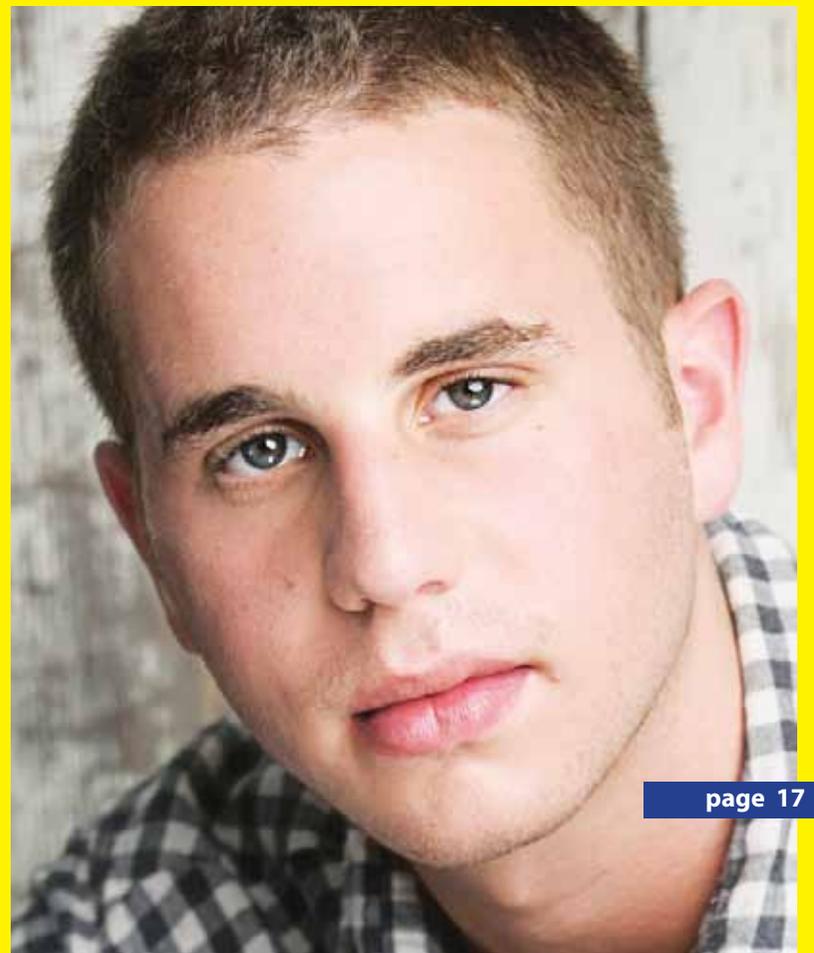
The ever-youthful Cathy Rigby is back, reprising her headline-making role in Peter Pan. Read an interview with her on page 16. Photo by Isaac James

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DISCOVERING THAILAND  
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## By the 'Book'



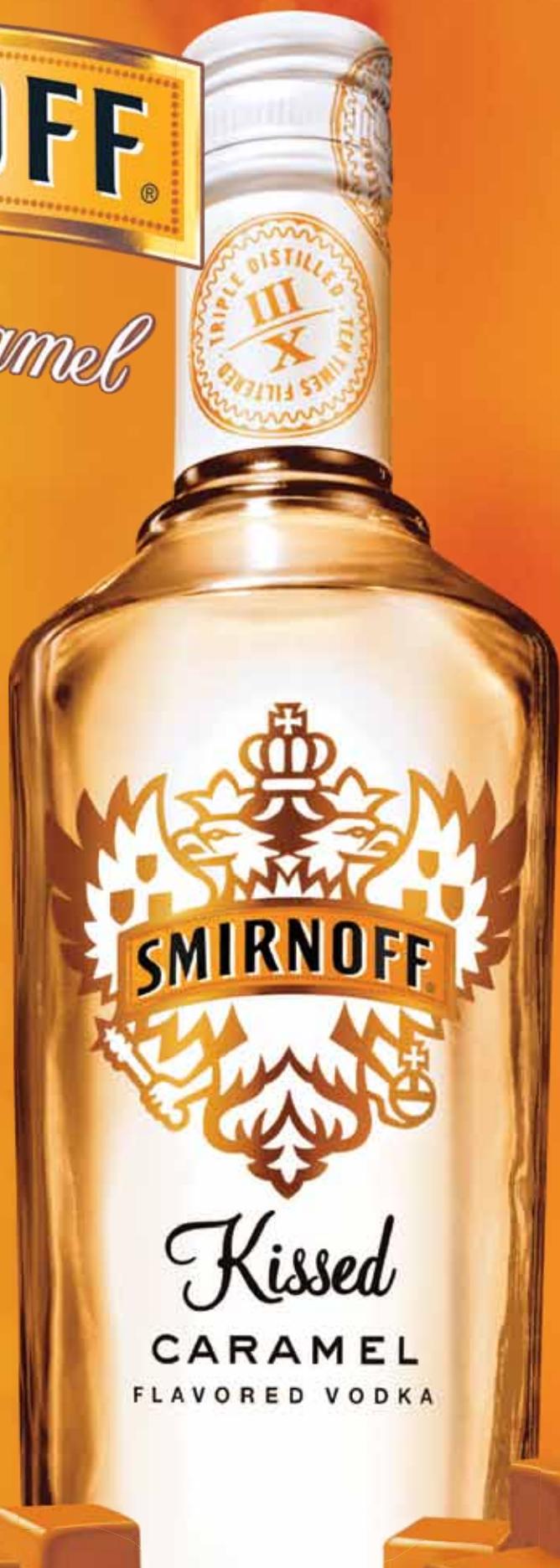
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Book of Mormon's lead actor Ben Platt talks with Windy City Times about the production and auditioning. See page 17. Publicity photo

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Photos on cover (left, from top): John Stamos in *The New Normal* image from NBC; photo of band member Brandon Strawn from *Strawn*; photo of Dawn Clark Netsch by Erica Demarest; photo of Thailand's Pimilai Resort by Kelsy Chauvin



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### IT'S 'GREEK' TO ME

Nia Vardalos (left) chats about going from 'My Big Fat Greek Wedding' to guesting on TV's 'Law & Order: SVU.'

Photo of Vardalos on *Law & Order: SVU* from NBC



In Bent Nights, Vern Hester switches concerts for a book—Cyndi Lauper: A Memoir. PR photo



The apple-pancetta pancakes at Eduardo's Enoteca are among the items in Five Worth Finding. Photo by Andrew Davis

### POP RALLY

The newest Pop Making Sense covers God-des and She as well as movie soundtracks.

### THE RIGHT STUFF

In the column "Loving the Lepers," Timothy Villareal covers LGBTs and religion; Rev. Irene Monroe discusses an Obama quote that has split Blacks.

### ENTERTAINMENT NEWS

Find out the latest about Chely Wright, Whitney Houston and Suze Orman.

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# Hagel attempts to show commitment to equality

BY LISA KEEN  
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

The Senate Committee on Armed Services has scheduled the first day of Defense Secretary nominee Chuck Hagel's confirmation hearing for Jan. 31. Many expect his positions on benefits for the families of gay service members may get some scrutiny from both sides of the partisan aisle.

Hagel's response to a letter from Sen. Barbara Boxer this month—saying that he “fully” supports the law that repealed “Don't Ask, Don't Tell”—helped earn her vote and was apparently influential in helping to win over Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y.

One additional statement in Hagel's letter—saying he would do “everything possible to the extent permissible under current law to provide equal benefits to the families of all our service members”—did win support from some in the LGBT community, but the community still seems torn.

Allyson Robinson, executive director of OutServe-SLDN, called the equal benefits statement a “turning point” for gays in the military and their families.

Hagel's qualifying words “to the extent permissible under current law” were an apparent reference to the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). While the Obama administration is arguing in court that DOMA is unconstitutional, it still must enforce the law until it is repealed or struck down. The U.S. Supreme Court could strike down the law as soon as June, but the Republican-led House is unlikely to do so during the next two years.

OutServe-SLDN's Robinson said Hagel's promise to provide equal benefits to gay service members' families “demonstrates his deepening grasp of the injustice currently being done to them.” The group had already expressed its opinion that Hagel is “exceptionally qualified” for Secretary of Defense and expressed its commitment to “working with him should he be confirmed.”

Most LGBT groups were initially opposed to Hagel's nomination, many citing his 1998 remarks against the nomination of openly gay James Hormel to serve as ambassador to Luxembourg in the Clinton administration. Hagel expressed concern about the appointment of an “openly, aggressively” gay man “representing America” as ambassador.

“They are representing our lifestyle, our values, our standards. And I think it is an inhibiting factor to be gay—openly, aggressively gay like Mr. Hormel—to do an effective job,” Hagel told the Omaha World-Herald. He had also racked up a zero voting record—the worst possible—from the Human Rights Campaign during his years in the U.S. Senate.

Even before he was nominated, Hagel issued an apology for his remarks against the gay nominee, and some organizations and LGBT leaders backed off their opposition. Some expressed a desire to examine the nominee's LGBT positions more carefully. Some continue their opposition.

Log Cabin Republicans has held onto its opposition, saying Hagel's apology and evolution on gay issues is suspect, given its timing. GOProud, another gay conservative group, hasn't taken a position yet but leader Jimmy LaSalvia says he does not see Hagel as anti-gay.

“He is not,” said LaSalvia, noting that Hagel voted against a constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage. And GOProud's co-founder Chris Barron, who once served as Log



Defense secretary nominee Chuck Hagel. Official headshot from his term as senator

Cabin's political director, told the dailycaller.com, that the Senate office of Hagel as a Republican senator from Nebraska “always had an open door to Log Cabin.”

Rea Carey, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, said Hagel's letter to Boxer was a “positive sign, but we will be watching very closely to see what steps he takes to demonstrate his support ... should he be confirmed.”

“We still expect him to provide more detail on his views during the confirmation process, as well as what specific steps he intends to take as defense secretary to support all military families,” said Carey. “We recognize that people do evolve on these issues, and believe that Hagel, if confirmed, must ensure full fairness for all military families.”

OutServe-SLDN's Robinson said Hagel does need to deal with the “foot-dragging” of the Department of Defense on its gay discrimination policies. She said DOD needs to amend various military non-discrimination policies to explicitly prohibit sexual orientation discrimination. These policies, she said, “help establish the command climate for the entire force, and for Senator Hagel to expand them in this way would send a very clear message that the days of treating LGBT service members as second class citizens will be coming to an end under his leadership.”

HRC President Chad Griffin said Dec. 21 that he “appreciated” Hagel's apology for the remarks against Hormel. He called Hagel an ally. But in a press statement January 16 illustrating an example of such “foot-dragging,” HRC noted that a U.S. Army club for military spouses at Fort Bragg in California recently refused a membership card to the same-sex spouse of a gay Army officer. While repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell enabled gay service members to serve openly, said HRC, DOMA blocks the ability of their spouses to access many of the benefits granted routinely to the heterosexual spouses of heterosexual service members.

“However, other benefits, including access to military ID cards, could be granted to these spouses and partners through regulatory revisions,” said HRC. “Changes to the appropriate regulations have been pending since December 2010.”

U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., initially expressed some reservations about Hagel's

nomination, saying she wanted to ensure that Hagel's apology for the Hormel remarks was “sincere and sufficient.” She has since had an introductory conversation with Hagel and expects to meet with him before making a decision about his confirmation.

But even before next week's confirmation hearing, strong testimony of sorts is emerging for Hagel.

Pulitzer Prize-winning, openly gay commentator Jonathan Capehart, of the Washington Post, wrote Jan. 8: “Times change. People change. And on issues of civil rights, when both change, folks should be given the space to make amends for being on the wrong side of history. Besides, I can't imagine Obama selecting someone for his cabinet who would stall or reverse the considerable actions he has made on equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans.”

Steve Clemons, the gay Washington editor for The Atlantic political news magazine, published an article last month calling Hagel “pro-gay, pro-LGBT, pro-ending ‘don't ask, don't tell.’”

“I'm not sure where Hagel stands on same-sex marriage,” wrote Clemons in the Dec. 21 article, “but I know that he supports solid legal protections for gay families and is personally supportive of gays and lesbians.”

“How do I know this? Because I'm a national-security wonk who happens to be gay and who happens to have interacted with and followed Chuck Hagel for years. I have spoken directly about these issues with him over the years....”

Glenn Greenwald, an openly gay political commentator for salon.com and others, responded to criticism that Hagel, in 1998, expressed negative views on the Hormel nomination.

“When it comes to LGBT equality, 1998 is a different universe. Virtually no prominent Democrats (let alone Republicans) supported marriage equality back then, or even equal rights for LGBT citizens,” wrote Greenwald on salon.com Jan. 5.

“In fact, Hagel's comment came only two years after the overwhelming majority of Democratic Senators voted in favor of the truly odious and discriminatory Defense of Marriage Act—including Joe Biden, Patty Murray, Pat Leahy and Paul Wellstone—which was then signed into law by Bill Clinton. ...If you're going to judge politicians by how they felt about LGBT issues 15 years ago, be prepared to scorn almost every national Democratic Party hero you have as a bigot.”

A 2007 interview with Hagel by Gentlemen's Quarterly magazine might be of interest. In the interview, uncovered by a reader posting a comment on democraticunderground.com, Hagel was asked, “How conservative are you really? Tell me the truth: You don't care whether or not gay people get married, do you?”

“No. Personally, I think marriage is between a man and a woman, but that's because I see it as a religious union. As a legal contract,” said Hagel, “marriage should be up to the states. If a state wants to change the rules, that's up to them.”

Later in the interview, he expounded on how he, as a conservative Republican politician, could hold views that seem contrary to most Republican conservatives.

“We are living through one of the most transformative periods in history. If we are going to make it, we need a far greater appreciation and respect for others, or we're going to blow up mankind,” said Hagel. “Look at what zealotry can do. Religious zealotry has been responsible for killing more people than any other thing. Look at the Middle East today. It's all about religion. We need to move past those divisions and learn to be tolerant and respectful. If we go out there full of intolerance and hatred, we'll never make it.”

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## Honduran LGBT leader in Chicago Jan. 30, Feb. 1

LGBT leader Jose “Pepe” Palacios will discuss LGBT activists' role in the movement to end violence and restore democracy in Honduras Wed., Jan. 30, at 6 p.m. at DePaul University's Lincoln Park Campus, Room 412 of the Arts & Letters Hall, 2315 N. Kenmore Ave.

Palacios is a founding member of the Honduran LGBT group Diversity Movement in Resistance and a member of the steering committee of the National Front of Popular Resistance.

In addition, *La Voz de los de Abajo* will host a Spanish-language event with Palacios Friday, Feb. 1, at 7 p.m. at the MESTLI Galleria, 2005 S. Blue Island Ave. For more info, email [LGBTliberation@aol.com](mailto:LGBTliberation@aol.com).

## Supreme Court's Sotomayor in town Jan. 30

United States Supreme Court Associate Justice Sonia Sotomayor will discuss her memoir *My Beloved World* at 6 p.m. in the ninth-floor winter garden at the Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S. State St., on Wed., Jan. 30.

President Obama appointed Sotomayor to the U.S. Supreme Court in May 2009; the U.S. Senate confirmed her later that year with a super majority vote.

Seating will be held on a first-come, first-serve basis. Visit [www.chicagopubliclibrary.org](http://www.chicagopubliclibrary.org) or call 312-747-4050.

## SCOUTS from cover

Boy Scouts Chicago Area Council CEO Charles Dobbins said he was first hearing of the possible lifting of the gay ban through media reports. He noted that while BSA was weighing the issue, no official decision had been made.

He said the Chicago council would not be taking a stance on the ban.

“We will live with whatever boundaries we get from national,” Dobbins said.

Dobbins added that the Chicago council had forwarded local feedback, both in support and against the ban, to Boy Scouts of the America.

LGBT-rights groups applauded BSA's announcement.

National LGBT media group GLAAD noted that the change comes after more than a year of pushing by GLAAD, Scouts for Equality and

Change.org, which gathered more than 1.2 million signatures against the ban.

“The Boy Scouts of America have heard from scouts, corporations and millions of Americans that discriminating against gay scouts and scout leaders is wrong,” said GLAAD President Herndon Graddick, in a statement. “Scouting is a valuable institution and this change will only strengthen its core principles of fairness and respect.”

Also active in opposing the ban was LGBT-rights advocate and founder of Scouts for Equality, Zach Wahls.

Wahls called the news “an incredible step in the right direction.”

“We look forward to working with BSA Councils and chartering organizations across the country to end the exclusion of our gay brothers in Scouting, as well as the gay and lesbian leaders who serve the organizations so well,” Wahls said in the GLAAD statement.

# Author Julia Penelope dies

BY TRACY BAIM

Julia Penelope, 71, an author, philosopher and linguist, died Jan. 19 in Texas. She was part of a movement of critical thinkers on lesbian and feminist issues.

Penelope, who had come out to her family as a young child, was kicked out of two colleges. Her dismissal in 1959 from Florida State University was part of the high-profile lesbian and gay witch hunts in that state, conducted by the notorious Charlie Johns Investigating Committee on Communism and Homosexuality. Her dismissal in 1960 from the University of Miami was actually because she had men in her room.

She received her B.A. in English and linguistics from New York's City College and in 1971 completed her Ph.D. in English from the University of Texas. She taught for two decades at universities (including the University of Nebraska-Lincoln), but was reportedly passed over for promotions because of her focus on lesbian issues.

In 1988, she co-edited *For Lesbians Only: A Separatist Anthology* with Chicagoan Sarah Lucia Hoagland.

Among her other books: *The Original Coming Out Stories* (1980-89); *Finding the Lesbians* (1990); *International Feminist Fiction* (1992); *Sexual Practice/Textual Theory: Lesbian Cultural Criticism* (1993); *Lesbian Culture: An Anthology* (1993); *Out of the Class Closet: Lesbian Speak* (1994); and *Crossword Puzzles for Women* (1995).

Penelope wrote the following in *Call Me Lesbian: Lesbian Lives, Lesbian Theory* (Crossing Press, 1992): "But some survive. Many of us have lived to tell our stories, to create Lesbian texts, to read Lesbian texts, even to write commentaries and criticisms of Lesbian texts. All of these activities must be pluralized, multiplied, complicated, and pluralized again, because there is no single, narrow, one-sentence definition of 'The Lesbian.' The sexologists may have been the ones to name us, but we can, and do, create ourselves. Our of a mishmash of disinformation, misinformation and outright lies, each Lesbian constructs some story about who she is and who she might someday be ..."

Chicago lesbian activist and retired philosophy professor Jackie Anderson noted Penelope's impact: "Julie Penelope mattered. She mattered because she was another who 'spoke truth to power' and paid the price. However, she mattered to me because she made things clear without compromise. She was critical because there was stuff, often our stuff, that needed to be criticized. She mattered because she left us so much important work from which I learned much. Julia mattered to me because she was fun. I always had a good time when we were together. Her frustration and anger were not without warrant and she left us because of it a while



Julia Penelope.

ago. I missed her deeply. I am very sorry that she has died, but I am glad that her suffering is over."

Kathy Munzer, another Chicago lesbian activist, called Penelope "a brilliant and brave, funny lesbian. She was often angry at the injustices done to lesbians, including herself. During her life, there were many instances of misunderstandings, miscommunication, adversarial encounters and hurt at the lack of appreciation of her work. She wrote and raged and was an inspiring author, linguist, activist and writer of haiku. She could be a goofy and hilarious companion and she had an impish grin and a great laugh that was deep and booming and could on and on and on. She has been quoted and misquoted and found pleasure in being a true rabble rouser. Her soft butch presence could be sweet and kind. She was passionate and compassionate. Julia could be either your best friend or your worst enemy, with no in-between."

*Women's Studies: A Recommended Bibliography* (2004, by Linda Krikos and Cindy Ingold) summarizes the *Call Me Lesbian* book: "Penelope offers a sampling of nine of her essays exploring lesbian lives and perspectives. She tackles questions of lesbian history, identities, sexuality, and politics in provocative ways that acknowledge inherent ambiguities, complexities, and contradictions. Along the way, she provides insights into such issues as role playing in lesbian relationships, lesbian separatism, sadomasochism, incest, lesbian femininity and the necessity, in her view, of a radical feminist framework.

"She challenges notions of a unitary lesbian identity, rejecting even reductionist sexual definition. Rather, lesbian identities are multiple, deriving from the varied backgrounds and lives of individuals. It is this lived experience, she argues, that must be shared and communicated, breaking silence and isolation, to build community. Reflecting back on the sources of her own life, she attempts to understand and theorize broader lesbian existence and asserts that lesbi-

an perspectives, originating through resistance and a profound sense of difference, challenge conventional interpretations of the world and ways of knowing and seeing. Key to this process, she maintains, is language and the power of words not only to reflect but also to shape values, experience, and possibilities."

A biography of Penelope ran in the *Encyclopedia of Lesbian and Gay Histories and Cultures*, Volume 1, edited by Bonnie Zimmerman and George Haggerty (1999). In it, they say Penel-

ope was open about being a kept butch (which was a brief period of her life), "a butch who is supported by another woman, often, but not always, a prostitute, a call girl, or the mistress of a wealthy man."

The encyclopedia also notes that she "was a separatist whose lesbian publications were often controversial, criticizing sadomasochism and other practices within lesbian communities." In her later years, she worked editing copy for commercial presses.

## Planned Parenthood marks *Roe v. Wade*, honors Netsch

BY ERICA DEMAREST

Nearly 1,000 people joined Planned Parenthood at Carnivale Jan. 23 to celebrate the 40th anniversary of "Roe v. Wade," the U.S. Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion.

"This most fundamental of choices should be between a woman and her doctor, and not the government," said keynote speaker David Axelrod, former senior advisor to President Obama. "We work hard to keep that principal enshrined in our law."

Although a handful of protestors gathered outside with graphic photos and anti-choice messages ("Abortion is nothing to celebrate"), spirits were high inside the packed fundraiser at the restaurant, located at 702 W. Fulton Market.

Planned Parenthood honored Dawn Clark Netsch, an outspoken ally of the LGBT community, with a lifetime achievement award.

"She paved the way for others," Obama wrote in a letter read by Axelrod. "The unwavering grace and integrity [Netsch] has shown throughout decades of public service are an inspiration to us all. Dawn's legacy will live forever in our hearts and the history books."

Netsch graduated first in her class from Northwestern University's law school, and later joined its faculty as one of the first female law professors in the U.S. She was elected in 1972 to the Illinois Senate, where she would serve for 18 years. In 1990, Netsch became the state comptroller; she was the highest-ranking woman in Illinois state government and the first female elected to state constitutional executive office.

"Her life is a series of firsts," Axelrod said.

Netsch, who has been diagnosed with the degenerative nerve disorder Lou Gehrig's disease, spoke briefly.

"I can't make a long speech [because of my health], but what I can say to everyone in this room—young, old or in between—is keep on doing what you've been doing so well," Netsch said. "We need it."



Dawn Clark Netsch at the event. Photo by Timmy Samuel; more photos online at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com)

Other speakers included Illinois Senate President John Cullerton, Planned Parenthood of Illinois President/CEO Carole Brite and Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, who cracked jokes and spoke earnestly about his daughters.

"I want to thank Planned Parenthood ... for being on the forefront of allowing this country to live by its ideals and its values," Emanuel said, "and also for never losing your nerve when there were times you could have."

Laura Tucker, William Marovitz, Deborah Witzburg and Jay Beidler co-chaired the event.

Notable guests included Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan, Ald. James Cappleman (D-46), state Rep. Kelly Cassidy (D-14), state Rep. Sara Feigenholtz (D-12), state Rep. Deb Mell (D-40), Ald. Joe Moreno (D-1), U.S. Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-9), Cook County Commissioner Deb Shore, state Sen. Heather Steans (D-7) and state Rep. Ann Williams (D-11).

For more on Planned Parenthood, visit [www.plannedparenthood.org/illinois](http://www.plannedparenthood.org/illinois).

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# Quiet power: Gay money in the 2012 election

BY LISA KEEN  
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

There has been much said and written about right-wing political operative Karl Rove's spectacular failure to buy a Republican conservative victory in the 2012 elections. The two Crossroads political action committees run by Rove spent more than \$200 million on television advertising attacking Democratic candidates in an effort to hoist Republicans into office. That included \$6 million against lesbian Senate candidate Tammy Baldwin in Wisconsin and another \$1 million for her Republican opponent, Tommy Thompson. It also included \$263,000 against openly gay Congressional candidate Sean Maloney in New York.

But both Baldwin and Maloney won, despite the millions of right-wing dollars that poured into campaigns seeking a Republican win. That's because they, like five other openly gay and bisexual Congressional candidates, benefitted from a strong outpouring of funding from many various Democratic PACs and super PACs.

For instance, Baldwin's successful campaign for the U.S. Senate spent \$15 million, and outside groups spent another \$20 million to get her elected. Of that \$35 million total, according to Federal Elections Commission (FEC) reports, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) PAC and super PAC spent only \$2,826, and the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund chipped in \$10,000.

The biggest contributors to Baldwin's successful bid were the Democratic Senatorial Committee, which spent \$5.8 million on Baldwin's win, the pro-Democratic "Majority PAC" that spent \$4.9 million and the EMILY's List super PAC "Women Vote" that spent \$3.1 million.

But the \$12,826 spent by HRC and the Victory Fund did not represent all the "gay money" in Baldwin's success.

Many individual LGBT people all over the country gave to the effort. For instance, Miami gay philanthropist and Victory Fund board member Joe Falk gave Baldwin \$2,500. Dallas attorney Vanessa Benavides gave \$4,000, and Texas philanthropist Paul Boskin gave \$7,000.

And many gave both to Baldwin and to pro-Democratic PACs that supported Baldwin. According to FEC records, gay Colorado philanthropist Tim Gill gave \$5,000 to Baldwin's campaign directly, and another \$250,000 to Fair Share Action. Fair Share Action spent \$125,000 on Baldwin's victory.

Illinois lesbian activist Laura Ricketts gave \$2,500 directly to the Baldwin campaign, and



U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin.

gave \$242,500 to the LPAC, and \$200,000 to the Women Vote PAC. The lesbian-organized LPAC did not give directly to the Baldwin effort, but the Women Vote PAC pitched more than \$3 million into Baldwin's campaign.

Chicago gay political activist Fred Eychaner gave \$2,500 to Baldwin's campaign but also gave \$4.3 million to the Majority PAC (which spend \$4.9 million on Baldwin) and \$750,000 to Women Vote (which spent \$3.1 million on Baldwin).

San Francisco gay philanthropist James Hormel did not give any money directly to the Baldwin campaign, but gave the Victory Fund \$125,000 and the Victory Fund gave \$10,000 to Baldwin. Hormel also gave \$100,000 to the House Majority PAC, which helped Democratic candidates, including \$1.4 million against Sean Maloney's Republican opponent in New York and \$672,500 against bisexual Kyrsten Sinema's Republican opponent in Arizona.

Michigan gay philanthropist Jon Stryker chipped in \$2,500 directly to Sinema's successful campaign but he, too, contributed \$250,000 to the House Majority PAC, which directed \$672,500 in television advertising against Sinema's opponent.

Sinema, who became the first openly bisexual person to win a seat in Congress, took in \$55,528 through the Victory Fund for her campaign and \$9,984 from HRC PACs. These were the largest amounts given by each of the groups

to openly LGBT candidates in 2012. The Victory Fund gave or "bundled" a total of \$114,136 to six out of seven openly LGBT candidates to the U.S. House in the 2012 elections; and HRC's two PACs gave \$36,623 in direct contributions to five out of seven gay House candidates.

Richard Tisei, the only openly gay Republican candidate running for Congress, received no support from the Human Rights Campaign PACs and \$18,618 through the Victory Fund. Tisei's effort to unseat incumbent Democrat John Tierney of Massachusetts fell short. But Log Cabin Republicans' PAC and GOProud apparently had no money to spend during the past election, according to FEC records.

U.S. Rep. Jared Polis, D-Colo., with assets exceeding \$65 million, is the sixth richest member of Congress and recorded no contributions from the Victory Fund or HRC for his successful re-election bid.

Still, despite the fact that LGBT political funding groups have less money to throw into campaigns than most groups, they make their mark.

The Center for Responsive Politics lists HRC at the top of 50 "single issue" PACs, in terms of money to candidates during the 2012 election cycle. The Victory Fund places seventh on that list, Log Cabin Republicans' PAC places 14th, the LPAC places 39th.

The LPAC, a lesbian-run super PAC which organized just last April, raised \$774,989 during 2012 but contributed only \$10,500, according to its latest report to the FEC. Contributions included \$5,000 to U.S. Rep. Donna Edwards', D-Md., re-election, \$5,000 to Elizabeth Warren's successful bid for the Senate, and \$500 to Sinema's win in the House.

And according to the latest data, released by the FEC Jan. 15, the HRC PAC contributed \$775,378 to all federal candidates—gay and straight—and campaign committees in 2012 and \$267,855 in 2011, for a total of \$1,043,233 in the 2011-12 election cycle.

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## Steans: Marriage push expected soon after February return

BY KATE SOSIN

The Senate sponsor behind a bill that would legalize same-sex marriage in Illinois says she hopes to move the bill shortly after the senate returns in early February.

State Sen. Heather Steans said that she is currently working on revisions to the bill.

"We are working to address concerns expressed with particular language in the bill, and I expect we will take up the marriage bill sometime soon after our return," Steans said in a statement.

Lawmakers had reservations about the bill when sponsors tried to move it to a vote in

dom and that no church will have to solemnize or consecrate a marriage against its beliefs.

Per the bill, churches that receive government funds or charge money for weddings could be required to perform same-sex ceremonies. Steans said that mandate takes into account pre-existing anti-discrimination law.

But also unsure of the bill was also Republican Sen. Christine Radogno, who has occasionally been seen as supportive on LGBT issues. She voted "no" on the measure in committee, but expressed openness to supporting it with revisions.

Sponsors reintroduced the "Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act" into the new General Assembly this January with the language unchanged.

But Steans said that she and sponsors are currently working with religious leaders to address concerns raised in the bill.

Steans did not say what the specific revisions would include.

The Senate heads back into session Feb. 5. LGBT advocates have been building support for the bill in recent weeks, while opponents have also stepped up pressure, especially on Republican supporters.

Former Congressman Joe Walsh renewed calls for Illinois Republican Chair Pat Brady to step down, after Brady came out in favor of marriage equality. State Sen. Jim Oberweis told the Daily Herald that he is trying to gain support to oust Brady.

Brady has indicated to local media that he does not intend to step down.



State Sen. Heather Steans.

## '50 Shades of Blues' Jan. 31 at CHM

The Chicago History Museum's annual "Out at CHM" series will kick off with "50 Shades of Blues" Thursday, Jan. 31, at the museum, 1601 N. Clark St.

Through conversation and live performance, Sharon Bridgforth and Dr. Omi Osun Joni L. Jones will discuss how blues expressed taboos and called for greater freedoms during the 1920s and '30s.

There will be a cocktail reception at 5:30 p.m. The program will start at 7 p.m.

Admission is \$15 (\$10 for students and CHM members); call 312-642-4600 or visit [www.ChicagoHistory.org](http://www.ChicagoHistory.org).

the lame-duck session in early January. Chief among them was whether the bill adequately shielded religious institutions from being forced to perform same-sex weddings.

Republican state Sen. Dale Righter argued in committee that the language of the bill was unclear, leaving most churches open to legal action if they refused to perform gay weddings.

"Most churches with which I'm familiar will not qualify," he said in the Senate Executive Committee.

Steans said that bill protects religious free-

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The Illinois contingent of the LGBT band that marched at Obama's 2013 inauguration. Photo courtesy of Brandon Strawn

## Chicago LGBT musicians reflect on playing at inauguration

BY STEPHEN SONNEVELD

Barack Obama made history Jan. 21 when he became the first president to acknowledge the LGBT community during an inauguration speech—and nine Chicago LGBT musicians were there to sound the trumpets of celebration.

Members of the Lakeside Pride Music Ensembles joined their colleagues from 25 other states, the District of Columbia and five other countries to march as the Lesbian and Gay Band Association (LGBA) during Obama's inauguration parade. The only LGBT group ever invited to perform at the ceremony, LGBA was chosen from among 2,800 bands, and had a massive presence of 215 people, second in number only to the Navy band.

The nine area musicians attending the event were: Erin Campbell, mellophone; Andrew Favreau, clarinet; Denise Montiel, percussion; Jessie Reuteler, mellophone; Dale Spaulding, euphonium; Brandon Strawn, trombone; Melissa



Brandon Strawn. Photo from Strawn

Terrell, trumpet and assistant brass captain; Kent Watkins, flute; and Mark Wienand, euphonium and brass captain.

The four-song selection was an eclectic blend of the classic and contemporary, including the Broadway belter "Tonight" from gay composer Leonard Bernstein; pop hits "Give Me Everything (Tonight)" and "The Edge of Glory;" and a composition intertwining "Battle Hymn of the Republic" with the Shaker song "Simple Gifts."

"Tonight" was timed to be the song LGBA played as it marched past the president and Vice President Biden, but by the time the group's division of the parade had reached the viewing stand, "Tonight" had concluded, and the next song in the set was Lady Gaga's "The Edge of Glory."

Brandon Strawn laughed as he recounted, "[T]hat actually ended up being so much better because we were playing this super gay song and there was Barack, fist pumping in the air, and Biden had this smile from ear to ear. Both were clapping along, and it was this surreal moment I will never ever forget."

By that point, the D.C. sun had set, and the band was marching into a flood of television production lights. Strawn described the scene as "ethereal. Moments like that just get ingrained in your memory forever, and I can't wait to tell my kids that; that one of their daddies was in that inaugural parade for the first president who really stood up for us when he was in office."

"It's still so surreal, honestly," said Melissa Terrell, who was on the side of the band that was closest to Obama. "As we're marching past, I stopped playing for, like, 10 seconds and just looked over and realized that I am literally passing within 20 feet of our president, and that's probably the closest I'll ever get. We could see him clearly and he was clapping along to the music, which was amazing. And just knowing that I had the privilege to play for him, one of our most amazing presidents in my lifetime so far, it blows me away."

Earlier in the day, Obama included two LGBT references in his inaugural address. "We, the people, declare today that the most evident of truths—that all of us are created equal—is the star that guides us still; just as it guided our forebears through Seneca Falls, and Selma, and

Stonewall," the president stated, referring to the locations that gave birth to the civil rights movements for women in 1848, African Americans in 1965, and LGBT peoples in 1969, respectively.

Obama would not speak in allusion the second time, clearly saying, "Our journey is not complete until our gay brothers and sisters are treated like anyone else under the law—for if we are truly created equal, then surely the love we commit to one another must be equal as well."

At the time of the speech, the LGBA band members were on their buses back from the Pentagon, where they, like all 28 civilian marching bands and other parade participants, had to undergo security procedures and be issued clearance badges.

"[W]hen he mentioned Stonewall the whole bus erupted," Terrell remembered. Her bus was playing the speech over the speakers, while others were listening to it on NPR. When Obama mentioned LGBT equality, she said, "Our bus just went crazy. It was really an amazing experience just to hear that with a whole group of people who were looking for equal rights."

Back home in Chicago, Lakeside Pride has begun rehearsals for its spring season, and Strawn is grateful to "have a place to continue my love of music and at the same time really feel part of a community, and [at the inauguration], being part of a national movement that is really just picking up steam like no other."

"It's a helluva time to be alive," he told WCT. "Especially to be in Illinois."



"Absolut Wraapture."  
Photos by  
Erica Demarest;  
more online at  
[www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com)

### Chicago House hosts 'Absolut Wraapture'

BY ERICA DEMAREST

The Chicago House & Social Service Agency hosted its annual "Absolut Wraapture" fundraiser Jan. 24 at the Willis Tower SkyDeck.

About 350 people attended the cocktail party, which featured Absolut vodka cocktails, hors d'oeuvres from J&L Catering and a silent art auction. Guests placed bids on their smartphones, and all proceeds benefited the 27-year-old HIV/AIDS nonprofit.

"We provide housing and support services for about 1,400 people each year," CEO Stan Sloane told Windy City Times. "A lot of those people fit nicely into government grants, but every so often you get somebody who, if we didn't have [fundraisers] like this, would just fall through the cracks. ... This will allow us to serve them."

To learn more about Chicago House, visit [www.chicagohouse.org](http://www.chicagohouse.org).

### Ella Jenkins honored by Metro AEYC

Chicago music legend and first lady of children's music Ella Jenkins received the Lifetime Achievement Opening Minds Award at a private reception in Chicago Jan. 23 for her contributions to and advocacy in music education for children.

The award was presented by the Chicago Metropolitan Association for the Education of Young Children (Chicago Metro AEYC), a leader in early care and education services for young children ages birth through age eight and coincided with the opening of its annual Opening Minds Conference attended by 5,000 educators and early care professionals.

Through her music, Jenkins has dedicated her life to making the world a better place for children and has achieved international stature as a pioneer and leader in the children's educational music industry. She has a collection of award-winning audio and video releases and her children's songs are part of educational curriculum's spanning the globe.

At age 88, Jenkins continues to bring millions of children the joy of music; her new CD, *Moving with Ella Jenkins*, was released Jan. 29 by Smithsonian Folkways Recordings (her 33rd title recorded by the organization).

Pictured from left are Gail Conway, CEO of Chicago Metro AEYC; Michael Schulte, board president; and Ella Jenkins. Photo by Hal Baim



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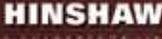
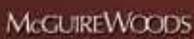
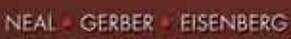
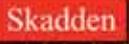
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Angelique Munro and Douglas O'Keeffe. Photo by Carrie Maxwell

## Trans activist Angelique Munro featured at Center event

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Trans activist and entertainment professional Angelique Munro was the featured guest at a "fireside chat" held Jan. 23 at Center on Halsted. Leatherman Douglas O'Keeffe co-produced and hosted the event.

The chats are, according to the Center on Halsted website, "a series designed to capture for posterity the historical record of community luminaries from the LGBT and allied communities." Each chat is recorded and stored at the Leather Archives and Museum.

Featured in Chicago House's recently released TransLife Center video, Munro—who also works at Chicago House—is also a cast member of the upcoming miniseries "Shelter City" and the

host of an upcoming talk show, *Week by Week with Eric & Angelique*, for the Gay TV On The Go website. Her other endeavors include lecturing at colleges and universities about transgender issues and HIV/AIDS awareness, and hosting a drag show called "DIVA" at the nightspot @mosphere. Munro has also appeared on a number of television shows and on the radio.

O'Keeffe is a longtime community volunteer, writer and educator, and was named the 2004 Cellblock Shel-don Chicago Leatherman and was a top International Mr. Leather finalist in 2004.

Following O'Keeffe's introduction, Munro answered a series of questions about her life, work, community involvement and transgender issues. Munro said she lived in the Lincoln Park neighborhood until she was 9 years old, and then re-located to the Humboldt Park neighborhood for the remainder of her childhood/teen years. Humboldt Park, Munro said, was a difficult place to grow up since the people in her neighborhood did not see and accept her as the person she felt she was.

"When I was born, my brain told me I was a girl," said Munro, who began verbalizing this information as early as two-years old. Munro endured taunts and physical abuse from her parents while growing up as an only child in the 1970s. The only time Munro felt free as a child was when she played dress-up by herself and with her girl cousins.

Munro later learned from her mother that there was a cycle of abuse in her family—her mother was raped by her father, and she was raped by two of her uncles. Although Munro said she was able to forgive her mother, she never forgot what happened to her as a child. Reflecting on her mother's death Munro said, "The day my mother died was the day Teddy [her former name] died."

Angelique (her new name) was born on Halloween in 1995 shortly after Munro started doing guest spots at the Baton Club, according to Munro. Munro said she originally chose the name Norma Jean as a tribute to Marilyn Monroe; however, there was already a performer from Atlanta named Norma Jean. Since there was already a Norma Jean, Munro chose another name to cre-

ate her own identity. When her drag mother, Monica Munro, referred to her as "angelic" and "unique," Munro changed her name to Angelique while her last name Munro was given to her by Monica. Munro says she still feels her name is connected to Marilyn Monroe.

While still a teenager, Munro saw an episode of *The Phil Donahue Show* on transgender individuals; because of that episode, she found the word that identified her. When people ask her how she self-identifies Munro said, "I am a [straight] woman who happened to be born transgender."

When asked how her employer (she worked in accounting at the time) reacted when she began her transition process Munro noted that her boss

just said "OK" and her name plate on her office door was changed immediately to reflect her new identity. Her boss was replaced by a new person and the new boss fired Munro from her job with the official reasoning being the downturn in the economy, Munro remarked.

Of her life today, Munro noted that the misconception people have about her is that she has her life together. When O'Keeffe asked Munro what she would say if she could go back in time and speak to Teddy, her answer was, "I'm sorry."

A Q&A with the audience followed the chat. Munro told the audience that she may retire from performing sometime in the near future.

See [www.facebook.com/angelique.munro](http://www.facebook.com/angelique.munro) for more information.

## RAICES raises awareness with poster campaign

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

A number of RAICES (Resources, Acceptance, Inclusion, Community, Education, and Services) members participated in a call to action to end homophobia, transphobia and the stigma of HIV/AIDS in the Latino community along Cermak Road in Cicero on Jan. 26.

One of Project VIDA's health-education campaigns, RAICES (Resources, Acceptance, Inclusion, Community, Education, and Services) is, according to its website, "a youth-led social marketing campaign around HIV/AIDS in Cicero and Berwyn."

The members of RAICES who participated in the day's call to action were Emmanuel Garcia, project coordinator at RAICES; Cesar Robles, Morton College gay-straight alliance's president; and Christopher Avalos and Reyna Ortiz, core members of RAICES.

The Illinois Department of Public Health's Red Ribbon Quality of Life Endowment Fund financed the campaign to educate people because of the increasing numbers of HIV/AIDS

poster at their store. Most of the businesses have said yes and they immediately placed the poster where their patrons could easily see it, according to Garcia. Garcia said that the few businesses that have declined did so because the manager wasn't present or their corporate policy states that all requests such as the one RAICES' was making have to go through their corporate offices.

RAICES representatives speak Spanish when appropriate as they query each business owner/manager about the poster campaign. One of the requests that they make is that the poster is displayed for a minimum of three months. According to Garcia, the poster is featured in more than 75 businesses along Cermak Road.

RAICES is looking to expand the poster campaign beyond Cicero and Berwyn to other majority Latino communities/neighborhoods in the Chicagoland area. A Cicero based LG-BTQ town hall is also in the planning stages. At the town hall, RAICES representatives will be presenting the results of their poster campaign.

See [www.projectvida.org/raices](http://www.projectvida.org/raices) and Facebook for more information.



A business displays one of the RAICES posters. Photo by Carrie Maxwell

cases in the Latino community. RAICES chose a poster campaign titled "Everyone should be accepted" as their way to raise awareness in Cicero and neighboring Berwyn. The poster was created by a group of LGBTQ youth from Cicero who are a part of a youth group that RAICES formed whose members come from all over the Chicagoland area, Garcia remarked.

Every Saturday since Dec. 28, RAICES members have been visiting businesses along Cermak Road to inquire if they would display the

## Howard Brown calls for community members

Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC) is seeking community members to become members of the recently reconfigured Community Advisory Board (CAB).

HBHC will rely on the CAB to provide input and recommendations on the effectiveness of service delivery, program and service offerings, and overall community engagement activities. In addition to providing programmatic and service feedback to the organization, two members of the CAB will serve as representatives on HBHC's board of directors.

Applications to join HBHC's CAB are available at [www.howardbrown.org/CAB](http://www.howardbrown.org/CAB). Applications are due Friday, Feb. 22.

## 'Queer Black History' Feb. 9

"Queer Black History: Leaving the Shadows Behind" will take place Saturday, Feb. 9, 4-6 p.m., at the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts, 915 E. 60th St.

The program will start with a screening of "Leaving the Shadows Behind," a short video that features interviews with Black LGBT activists from the mid-'90s. A panel discussion with activists such as Mary Morten (president of the Morton Group), Lisa Marie Pickens (co-founder of Affinity) and Michael O'Connor (co-founder of The Rocks Pride event) will follow.

This is a free event. RSVP at <http://queer-blackhistory.eventbrite.com>.

**Sunday, February 3**  
**4:30 p.m.**  
**Polly Campbell**  
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**Age**  
70

**Neighborhood**  
Kenwood

**Hometown**  
A farm near Sturgis, Mich.

**Job title**  
Artist

**Relationship**  
Girlfriend, Karin Herrmann

**Favorite artist**  
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As a child, Mary King lived on a farm and her mother sold eggs to people who came from the nearby town. King then used the remaining pages in her mom's receipt books to draw.

"I first just made curvy lines," she said. That expanded into paper dolls which she made from pages out of the old Sears Roebuck catalogs.

Then when her brother got a job in a paper mill, he'd bring home the end rolls of paper, and she'd draw life-size paper dolls.

"I've done art as long as I can remember," King said. "Art is just a part of me. My art comes from my heart."

In the 1980s, King start making figure drawings wearing a blind-fold—"and that's when I found my true voice, when I started drawing pictures about relationships and making the figures very emotional," she said.

In the 1990s, she moved to Chicago and started teaching near the Indiana border, near an abundance of factories, steel mills and refineries.

That led to her series of artwork under the Beautiful Industry framework.

Her art also includes such categories as People You Know and War Stories.

"I want my art to open up the world for people," King said. "Initially, my art clearly was about lesbian life. I have now expanded into [more] themes. I'm making art now that is important to me at this time."

Three times per year, each for a six-week stretch, King sets up her art studio in the home of her girlfriend in Hamburg, Germany. While abroad, she often is talking to Germans for inspiration for her War Stories art.

"I think I have something to say [with my art,] especially with these war pictures," she said.

King will have a one-person showing next March at the South Bend (Ind.) Museum of Art.



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 Community Marketing, Inc.



**BRIAN  
ALSTON  
CARTER**

## State of the union: Young Black gay America

Seventy-six entries were submitted from across the country for National Youth Pride Services' annual State of the Union For Black Gay America essay contest. This was the winning entry—and the official state of the union for National Youth Pride Services.

Black SGL young men across the nation are in a serious state of crisis at the back of the line. There is an urgent need for a call to action and strategy specifically for this group of youth. Young Black SGL men must understand that they matter in this country.

We must begin by looking at the society that we live in the United States of America. Then, take a closer look at our own community: Black America. Finally, the system that silences our voices and denies our history must be addressed in relation to LGBT community. Stigma and silence plague our community, and it is this generation's responsibility to answer the call.

Examining the context of society in which we live is key to addressing this call. Sexual-relationship dynamics, social norms, social support, policies, laws, environmental barriers, racism and homophobia are external factors that dictate our existence. We are facing issues of power, control and decision-making within our sexual relationships like we have never seen be-

fore as a community.

The pressures of family, culture, religion and peers orchestrate our behaviors, whether it is right or wrong or whether it is okay or not okay to do. We need positive reinforcement of our change efforts from our partners, family and peers. The most impactful encouragement comes from the people in our own circle of friends.

America is making progress when it comes to rules in place that will assist us with changes within our community and some that help create barriers for this specific group. Laws that govern our behavior have been strike off the books but still plague the mind of the nation. Our communities lack the resources and knowledge that make things easier for us as a people, whether we have access to the necessary life saving resources to support our existence. In society, there is a perceived and experienced sense of negative social attitudes, beliefs, and actions based on race and sexual orientation that affect our personal behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs.

As a community, these interrelated concepts of self-worth and value matter. They define how we see ourselves as individuals: Determining what we believe in, what we think is okay and not okay for us to do. We identify ourselves based on who we are and where we fit into society. Ultimately, how do our lives fit in with how we see ourselves?

We struggle with our dual identity of being Black men and gay men, and how to manage our identity. We must fit into the Black community because of the color of our skin and fit into the gay community because of the lives that we live—or so we think. This dual identity makes the visibility of a strong and proud community almost invisible.

In Black America, men are everything that our lives are stereotypically not supposed to be. The community sees Black men as strong, masculine, heterosexual, fathers and providers, marrying Black women and taking care of the family. Why cannot all of these things coexist with another

and private sphere when it comes to issues of values. For us there is no shame in publicly identifying ourselves as LGBT Catholics. We refuse to live out a "don't ask, don't tell" policy, and will challenge publicly any attempt to impose such a policy on us. This has nothing to do with our faith; rather, it is a matter of personal bias.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite our allies within the ecumenical/intrafaith community to join with us. The cardinal's actions against same-sex marriage affect all of us.

Joe Murray  
Chicago

### Making history

I want to congratulate Kathleen Meany on her selection as the new president of the board of commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago. While I was interested in the opportunity to lead the agency and worked hard to secure the necessary votes, it was not to be. Such is the nature of politics, but I am continually impressed by the professionalism of the members of this board, and I intend to do my part to strengthen the relationships among us.

We will have differences of opinion, to be sure, but we are all united in common purpose to serve the people of Cook County and to fulfill the District's vital mission: protecting the drinking water supply, treating wastewater to protect public health, and managing stormwater to reduce flooding and enhance our quality of life.

Black man? They can, with the exception of the obvious. The community voids of romantic and sexual contact with other Black men. We encounter homophobia and disapproval from our own community, including the places that we should feel secure in such as churches, family and friends.

These experiences result in our own internalized homophobia. When we look at the gay community, we see something completely different. White and feminine are the images that we see that do not reflect us as Black men. The ownership of being LGBT rests amongst this community because of racial discrimination and disapproval based on skin color, fueling internalized racism. This is a struggle for our community and our identity because society has not created a place for us to Black, SGL men. If it has not been created, then we must create it. But why have we, as a community, expected someone else to create our community for us? All of these identities make up who we are as a people, so they must be embraced and woven into the fabric of our society.

Our perils and possibilities on this journey as a modern young SGL Black man is a path of pride and prosperity. We are gifts with a sense of hope. As a community, we must start where we are as a community, not where society is as a collective body. This community is a group of individuals, just like each and every one of us. There must be a paradigm shift to impact this population, so that we are not marginalized without resources. Room needs to be made at the table for us with a chair that has our names on it.

Hope is vital to our survival to create a healthy sense of masculinity because our current state is about performance. If we address these issues that plague our community, we can make positive changes to our physical (health), mental, emotional, social and educational well-being. We have work to do as a community and it will take each one of us to create our community.

Our challenges are great. The drought this year actually had a positive effect on our agency. We had no stormwater releases to Lake Michigan and saved some energy costs. But we know that big storms will return. It is imperative that we adopt a sound Watershed Management Ordinance to begin to address the displacement of water caused by development and redevelopment throughout Cook County. And with the water level in Lake Michigan near its historic low, the District can promote and support a range of techniques to convey filtered rainwater back to the lake through green infrastructure within the Lake Michigan watershed.

We need to rethink, revisit and revise our land management practices and policies. Climate change makes the District's land holdings more valuable than ever as places to sequester stormwater, capture carbon, and as repositories for biological diversity. As unlikely as that may seem in the midst of our great metropolis, it is as possible as the herons that live on the Calumet River.

With the election of three women as officers of this board—40 years after women were first elected as trustees of the Sanitary District—we make history.

I salute President Meany, Vice President Barbara McGowan and Finance Chair Mariyana Spyropoulos, and look forward to working with them and the rest of my colleagues to ensure the proud legacy and fulfill the promise of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago.

Commissioner Debra Shore

### Supporting the protest

To the Editor:

The Rainbow Sash Movement supports the call for a demonstration outside of Holy Name Cathedral on Sunday, Feb. 10, at 10:30 a.m., primarily because we believe that the Catholic Church, under the leadership of Cardinal Francis George and the other members of Illinois Catholic Conference, is on a collision course with state over the issue of rights and jurisdiction when it comes to same-sex marriage. I believe this reveals how far the Catholic leadership has distanced itself from our democratic society.

Fundamental to the beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church are that we are all children of God, and are promoting the voice of an informed conscience. Catholics are taught to respect the fundamental, inherent dignity of every person—each made in the image of God—and to work to establish a just society. The Church also teaches that it is our obligation to manifest love of neighbor, to provide charitable service to others, and to promote truth and genuine freedom. We can no more distance ourselves from these beliefs than we can deny our LGBT identity.

Under the leadership of George, the Archdiocese of Chicago is increasingly sealing itself off, often acting like it is a state within state, a universe subject to its own rules that is overseen by the pope and his bishops. And a world in which federal, state and local governments have little say about how the law applies to their operation.

We do not agree with the strategic morality that George promotes by separating the public

## LETTERS

## GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION

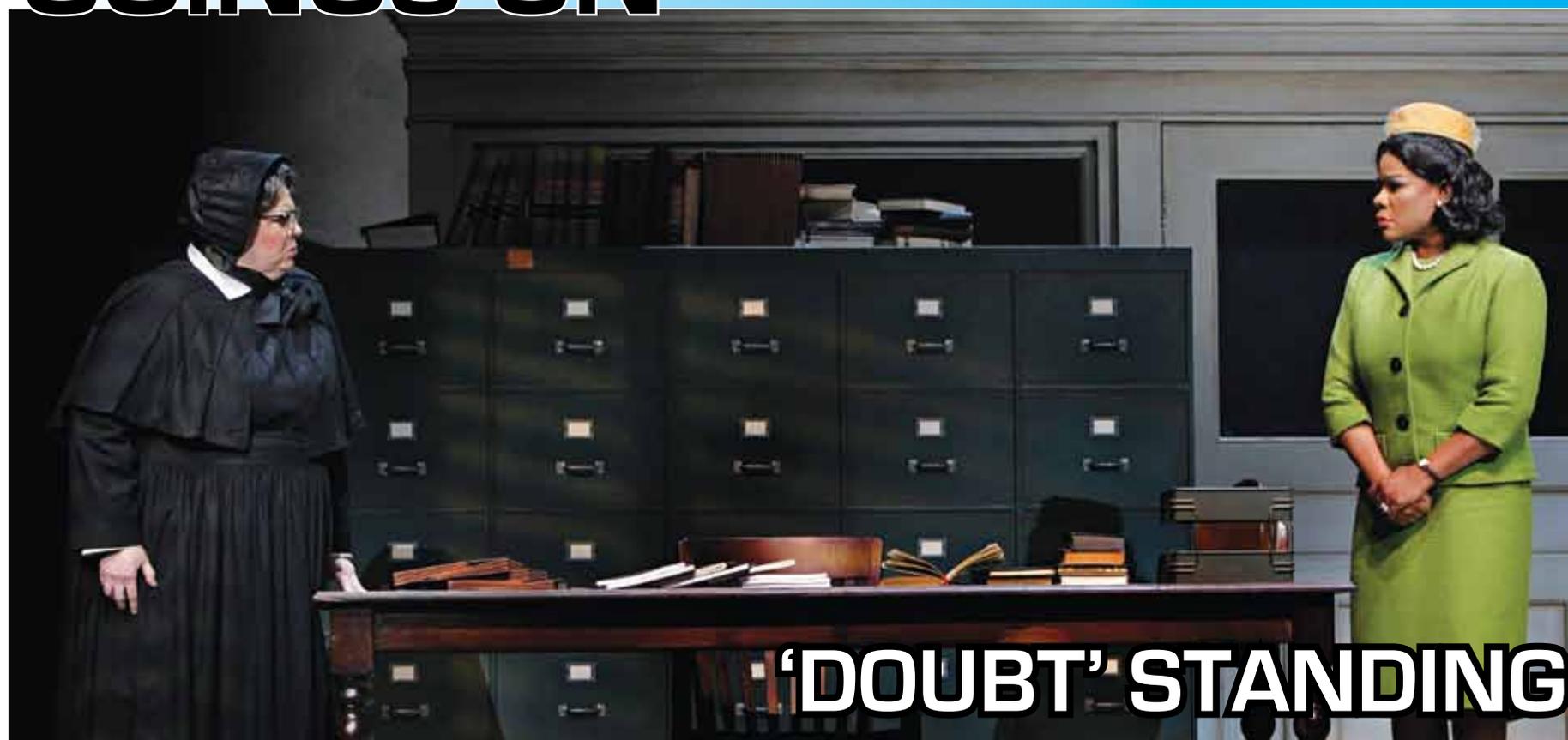


Photo by Michal Daniel

## 'DOUBT' STANDING

Christine Brewer (left) and Denyce Graves star in the Minnesota Opera's production of *Doubt*. See below.

## DISH

Hot cuisine.  
Page 22

Photo of mk Executive Chef Erick Williams by Ed Negron



## THEATER

Left to one's  
own 'Devices.'  
Page 16Photo from *Concerning Strange Devices...*  
by Lara Goetsch

## SPORTS

Living in Sin (City).  
Page 26

Photo by Ross Forman



## SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

## Heightening 'Doubt'

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL—When I told friends and family members that I going to visit Minnesota for a weekend vacation in January, their inevitable response was something along the lines of “Why on earth are going somewhere even colder than Chicago?”

But I had my reasons, as a die-hard opera and theater buff. Top of the list was to see Minnesota Opera's world-premiere opera *Doubt*. It intriguingly features a score by multi-disciplined composer Douglas J. Cuomo (*Sex and the City*, *Kyrie*) and a libretto by John Patrick Shanley based upon his own 2005 Pulitzer Prize-winning play and his five-time Academy Award-nominated 2008 film of the same name.

I also wanted to finally visit Minneapolis' two Tony Award-winning regional theaters: the Guthrie Theater and Children's Theatre Company.

## Voicing 'Doubt'

The latest iteration of *Doubt* sees the original drama's emotions elevated to a higher plane now that practically everything is sung and underscored. Cuomo's music adds extra layers of unease and unexpected beauty to this multi-faceted parable about a stern Catholic School nun who relentlessly pursues her suspicion that the popular and reforming new Parrish priest is sexually abusing the school's first African American student.

While opera fanatics stuck in the 19th century will likely bemoan the score's lack of hummable extractable arias, the orchestral colors Cuomo creates are certainly melodically tonal and all expertly support Shanley's gripping dialogue and many droll observations.

Like his opened-up film version of *Doubt*,

Shanley uses the grand resources of an opera company to give voice to many other congregation members shown living in the Bronx circa 1964. This expansion gives a bigger picture of a whole community than Shanley's four-character play, though it's unlikely that the opera of *Doubt* will entirely supersede his compact original.

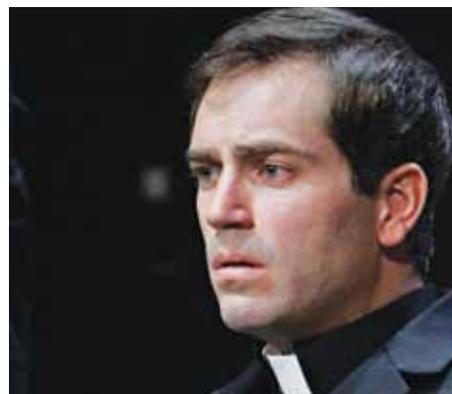
But in terms of creating a work that speaks to grander ideas of certitude and belief (not to mention feeling timely due to the Catholic Church's many sex-abuse scandals), *Doubt* gives opera audiences an dramatically engrossing work that gives them plenty to contemplate.

Director Kevin Newbury deserves kudos for helming a superlative production that fleetly moves through multiple locations via Robert Brill's chilly sets, while conductor Christopher Franklin led a polished performance of the new score.

The singers cast were also extremely strong, led by the formidable soprano Christine Brewer as the crusading nun Sister Aloysius and the handsomely affable Matthew Worth as Father Brendan Flynn (who privately acknowledges an unspecified transgression early on in this version).

Offering extra dramatic support are two mezzo-sopranos: Adriana Zabala the kindly teacher Sister James who gets drawn into the web of suspicion, and Denyce Graves as the mother who gives a surprising revelation to Sister Aloysius about her son.

**Minnesota Opera's *Doubt* continues through Sunday, Feb. 3, at the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, 345 Washington St., St. Paul. Remaining performances are at 7:30 p.m. Jan. 31, Feb. 2 and 2 p.m. Feb. 3. Tickets are \$20-\$200. Call 612-333-6669 or visit [www.mnopera.org](http://www.mnopera.org).**

Matthew Worth in *Doubt*. Photo by Michal Daniel

## A winning theater scene

Six years ago, Chicago and Minneapolis were running neck and neck when it came to the number of homegrown companies honored with the Regional Theatre Tony Award. Both cities had three apiece: Chicago was represented by Steppenwolf, Goodman and Victory Gardens while Minneapolis had the Guthrie, Children's Theatre Company and Theatre de la Jeune Lune.

But Chicago pulled ahead when Chicago Shakespeare Theater and Lookingglass Theatre Company respectively notched up regional Tony honors in 2008 and 2011. Minneapolis fell further behind when Theatre de la Jeune Lune disbanded three years after its Tony win.

Yet Minneapolis still has plenty to boast about theatrically. The Guthrie Theater is the envy of the theater world with its amazing 2006 three-theater complex designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Jean Nouvel. And Children's Theatre Company is generally regarded as the nation's respected American theater for young audiences with a proven track record of creating durable works like *A Year With Frog and Toad* and Dr. Seuss' *How the Grinch Stole Christmas! The Musical*.

Both theaters were presenting debuts during my recent visit: the Guthrie was performing its first production of Eugene O'Neill's Pulitzer Prize-winning drama *Long Day's Journey Into Night* on its famed thrust stage, while Children's Theatre Company served up a simple, but wildly imaginative world premiere adaptation of Carlo Collodi's classic book *Pinocchio* by veteran playwright/director Greg Banks.

Of the two, *Pinocchio* impressed the most. The unleashed imagination was simple, yet magical as a company of four actors (Dean Holt, Maggie Chestovich, Elize Langer and Adam Qualls) and musician Victor Zupanc depicted a crew of scenic painters who unexpectedly find themselves in front of an audience. Using everyday work items from paint brushes to drop cloths, this quintet proceed to tell their on-the-spot version of *Pinocchio* with enough energetic verve and panache to keep the attention of any squirmy kid.

As for the Guthrie's *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, the production sadly didn't fully satisfy. The company of actors under director Joe Dowling didn't fully get under the skin of their contradictory and substance-addled characters. Without a top-notch cast, *Long Day's Journey Into Night* can become a resigned slog of familial disillusionment and recrimination.

At least the Guthrie production values for this O'Neill classic were all top-notch, and the theater's building itself warrants repeated visits just to take in the full scope of its sleek modern beauty near the banks of the Mississippi River. Minnesota may be numbingly frigid in winter, but its current cultural scene is certainly hot.

***Pinocchio* continues through Feb. 24 at Children's Theatre Company, 2400 Third Ave., Minneapolis. Tickets are \$10-\$56. Call 612-874-0400 or visit [www.childrenstheatre.org](http://www.childrenstheatre.org).**

***Long Day's Journey Into Night* continues through Feb. 23 at the Guthrie Theater, 818 S. 2nd St., Minneapolis. Tickets are \$29-\$71. Call 612-377-2224 or visit [www.guthrietheater.org](http://www.guthrietheater.org).**

## THEATER REVIEW

**A Grand Night for Singing**

Playwright: Rodgers (music) and Hammerstein (lyrics)

At: The Mercury Theater, 3745 N. Southport Ave.

Tickets: 1-773-325-1700,

[www.mercurytheaterchicago.com](http://www.mercurytheaterchicago.com); \$25-\$59

Runs through: March 10

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

"I can piss a melody," Richard Rodgers once remarked. Arrogant, perhaps, but more a statement of fact than a boast as Rodgers (1902-1979) proved in his illustrious Broadway and Hollywood composing career. He likely would have been successful even if paired with lesser lyricists than his first collaborator Lorenz Hart, then Oscar Hammerstein II. Radically different in temperament and style, Hart and Hammerstein were equally adept at stimulating Rodgers to work at his best. Also, the slightly-older Hammerstein (1895-1960) was recognized in his lifetime as a master theoretician of musical theater, whose innovations greatly advanced and expanded the form.

But to hell with all that. Rodgers and Hammerstein wrote great songs together and *A Grand Night for Singing* is a showcase for more than three dozen of them, mostly familiar to anyone acquainted with the Great American Songbook, with several lesser-known bonbons included. The songs are sung mostly with straight-forward elegance and crisp, clear diction by an engaging cast of three women and two men, backed by a wonderful six-piece orchestra (and it is an orchestra, not a band). A handful of tunes are given comic readings and a few others are jazzed up with close-harmony treatments or are given to a singer of the opposite sex from the song's original context. These changes generally refresh

the familiar, although an eccentric rendering of "Shall We Dance?" is the show's only miscue.

Skillfully directed and choreographed ("Honey Bun" as a Charleston) by Kevin Bellie, *A Grand Night for Singing* is a lilting revue (partly because of Rodgers's fondness for 3/4 time) that focuses chiefly on R&H love songs, rather than novelty or character numbers or message songs (such as "Carefully Taught" from *South Pacific*). Fortunately, R&H recognized the nuances of love and they covered the waterfront. They especially excelled at songs of love lost or unrequited, and this revue features a good half-dozen, among them "Love Look Away," "We Kiss in the Shadows," "If I Loved You," "This Nearly Was Mine" and "The Gentleman is a Dope."

The last-named is one of the lesser-known bonbons, as the revue includes one or two numbers from each of the few R&H shows which were not giant hits: *Me and Juliet*, *Pipe Dream* and *Allegro*. One wishes there were more, although my personal wonderful tune discovery was "A Lovely Night" from *Cinderella* (originally a TV special).

The well-blended voices and nice smiles belong to Marya Grandy, Leah Morrow, Heather Townsend, Stephen Schellhardt and Michael Reckling (confidently subbing for an ailing Robert Hunt). Eugene Dizon is the reliably tasteful musical director and Elizabeth Doran is the personable conductor. Jason Epperson rendered the elegant night-clubish setting and lighting, and Mike Ross has provided subtle sound design.

**'God of Carnage'**

Yasmina Reza's critically acclaimed and commercially successful comedic production *God of Carnage* will run at Lake Forest's Citadel Theatre, 300 S. Waukegan Rd., Feb. 8-March 10.

Tickets are \$37.50; see [www.citadeltheatre.org](http://www.citadeltheatre.org) or call 847-735-8554.

**SPOTLIGHT**

It's been eight years since star John Malkovich last appeared at Steppenwolf Theatre in the play *Lost Land*. Now Malkovich is back in a disturbing opera-theater hybrid drama called **The Infernal Comedy: Confessions of a Serial Killer**. Malkovich stars as the Austrian writer/mass murderer Jack Unterweger, who was notorious for killing prostitutes in the 1970s and again after he was released from incarceration. Interlaced with Malkovich's monologues are opera arias by Gluck, Vivaldi, Beethoven and others sung by sopranos Laura Aikin and Kirsten Blaise, who represent Unterweger's victims. *The Infernal Comedy: Confessions of a Serial Killer* starring John Malkovich plays two performances at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Feb. 1 and 2, at Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan Ave. Tickets are \$35-\$125; call 312-294-3000 or visit [www.cso.org](http://www.cso.org). Photo by Olga Martschitsch.

**'Now & Forever' spotlights music of Webber**

The Marriott Theatre, 10 Marriott Dr., Lincolnshire, will present an all-star cast in the World Premiere of *Now & Forever: The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber*, featuring the composer's greatest musical treasures. The production, which launches the 2013 season, runs through March 17.

Among the productions whose music is featured are *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Evita*, *Cats* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

The performance schedule is Wednesdays at 1 p.m. and 8 p.m., Thursdays and Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 4:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., and Sundays at 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. Ticket prices are \$40-\$48, excluding tax and handling fees; call the box office at 847-634-0200 or visit [www.MarriottTheatre.com](http://www.MarriottTheatre.com).



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Other Desert Cities. Photo by Liz Lauren

**THEATER REVIEW**  
**Other Desert Cities**

**Playwright:** Jon Robin Baitz  
**At:** Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn St.  
**Tickets:** 773-975-8150 or [www.goodmantheatre.org](http://www.goodmantheatre.org); \$25-\$86  
**Runs through:** Feb. 17

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

It's easy to see why Other Desert Cities was one of the most popular and critically acclaimed plays of 2011. A Pulitzer finalist penned by out writer Jon Robin Baitz (Brothers and Sisters, Three Hotels), Other Desert Cities crackles with

sarcastic comedy and heated conflict as a politically polarized family is threatened with being irreparably pulled apart.

Now playing at the Goodman Theatre in a superlative production, Other Desert Cities certainly draws in audiences and prods them to take sides. There are battles of parents versus children and sibling versus sibling, plus that complex blend of familial love, regret and disappointment that often rears its ugly head during the holidays.

Other Desert Cities is largely set in 2004 in Palm Springs, Calif., focusing on the staunch Republicans Lyman (a very distinguished Chelcie Ross) and Polly Wyeth (an appropriately acidic Deanna Dunagan). These Hollywood journey-men-turned-Republican political operatives are

hoping for a nice Christmas holiday with their surviving grown children, the left-leaning novelist Brooke (a very emotionally adept Tracy Michelle Arnold) and reality TV producer Trip (a very funny and honest John Hooganakker). Also in the mix is Polly's sister, Silda Grauman (a comically zinging Linda Kimbrough), her former screenwriting collaborator who is in recovery from alcohol addiction.

But any semblance of harmony is shattered when Brooke announces that she's written a memoir that all but damns her parents' actions and political beliefs for driving her hippie brother to be a part of a Weather Underground-style attack in the 1970s and to commit suicide. Yet Brooke is also seeking her parents' blessing for the soon-to-be published book and for her version of the truth. Understandably, they're having none of it.

Baitz lays out his characters' arguments with clarity and insight, plus he also has fun drawing connections to prominent Republicans like Ronald and Nancy Reagan. While some audiences may find Baitz's turnaround revelation at the end a bit of a letdown, it does humanize his moneyed characters who could have been easily reduced to partisan stereotypes.

The Goodman cast, under the polished leadership of director Henry Wishcamper, all latch onto the complexity of their characters and the family dynamics to match Baitz's involving situations. They're all wonderfully framed by the luxuriously modern grand home set designed by Thomas Lynch, which has a lovely touch of the desert mountains nearly concealed by oversize shrubbery (clearly a symbol of how the Wyeths have something to hide from the outside world).

In Other Desert Cities, the personal Wyeth family struggle can also be seen to symbolize America's own conflicting political views of our own history and political polarization. This is what makes an already entertaining play into a powerful meditation calling for reconciliation and coming together.

**CRITICS' PICKS**

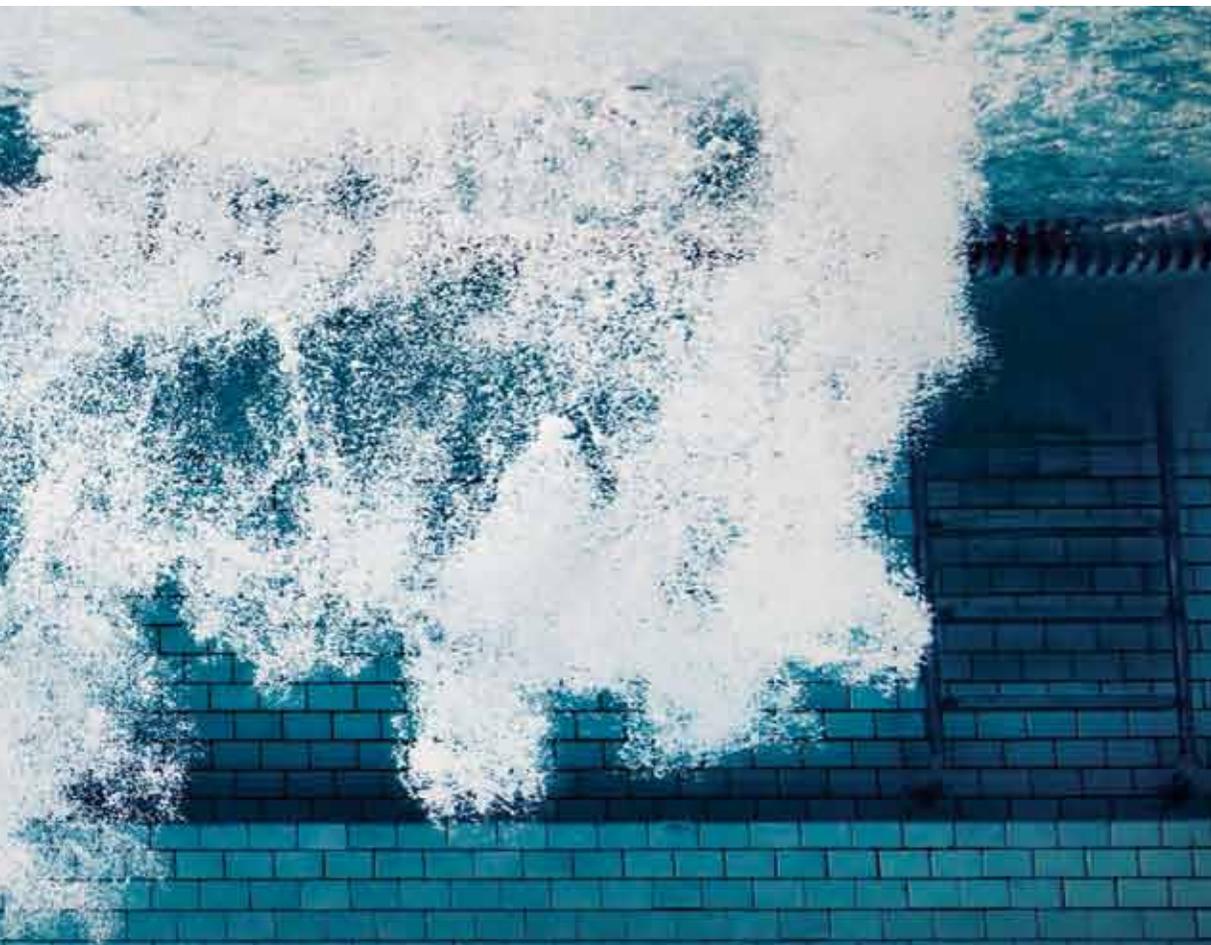
**Beautiful Thing**, Pride Films and Plays at Athenaeum Theatre, through Feb. 17. It's been two decades since Jonathan Harvey's public-housing teenage waifs—and a few grown-ups, too—redefined the concept of “family” for a generation, but their heart-warming lesson has only grown more timely in this sensitively directed production. MSB

**Flare Path**, Griffin Theatre Company at Theater Wit, through Feb. 24. Terence Rattigan's 1942 drama about British “bomber boys” and the women who love them during World War II may be old-fashioned at times, but the emotions are true in this wonderfully acted production. SCM

**The Motherf\*\*ker with the Hat**, Steppenwolf Theatre, through March 3. Not since American Buffalo have foul-mouthed street passions inspired as much hilarity and pathos as in Stephen Adly Guirgis' wry look at recovering addicts in love and rehab. MSB

**When the Rain Stops Falling**, Circle Theatre at The Greenhouse, through Feb. 24. Are sins of the father visited upon the son? This elegiac, poetic Australian play by Andre Bovell examines three generations of two families across the Outback. A remount of Circle's spring 2012 hit. JA

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan



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Concerning Strange Devices... Photo by Lara Goetsch

## THEATER REVIEW

### Concerning Strange Devices from the Distant West

**Playwright:** Naomi Iizuka  
**At:** TimeLine Theatre Company,  
 615 W. Wellington Ave.  
**Tickets:** 773-281-8463;  
[www.timelinetheatre.com](http://www.timelinetheatre.com); \$32-\$42  
**Runs through:** April 14

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

"The camera doesn't lie" may have been a plausible assertion when first uttered in 1859, although our own age of DIY Photoshopping might make "Cameras don't lie—people lie" a more accurate assessment. Naomi Iizuka explores the distortions in our perceptions, some imposed from outside and some inherent in our own humanity, as applied to international, intergenerational—oh, and let's not forget intergender—relations.

Our story begins in 1884, with a U.S. husband and wife living in Yokohama, Japan. A picture glimpsed in the studio of expatriate photographer Adolfo Farsari spurs the repressed Isabel to embark in search of adventure in this foreign land, while another predisposes the stodgy Edmund to embrace adventure when it confronts him. We then leap ahead in time to present-day Tokyo, where an art historian negotiates—with the help of an interpreter—the purchase of some antique Farsaris from a descendant of their original owner. Advances in film editing/finishing techniques being equal-opportunity weap-

ons for fraud and extortion, none of them are bargaining in good faith, but when, asks Iizuka, was it ever otherwise?

Therein lies the ray of hope offered to cynics who would lament the corruption bred of technological sophistication. An impairment arising from a "blind spot" in the optic nerve, we are told, renders even what we see with our own eyes untrustworthy (so much for "seeing is believing")—but we acclimate to this flawed vision, our imaginations supplying the missing information to deliver us a coherent picture. The false images of long-lost realms viewed by Isabel and Edmund do not preclude their ultimately finding fulfillment, faith in the camera's infallibility conjuring reality from fantasy. Their hubristic modern counterparts, by contrast, discover themselves to be betrayed by the very instruments whose evidence they would manipulate.

These are a lot of metaphysical dimensions to travel in only 90 minutes, but Timeline production spares no effort in guiding us on our tour. Lisa Fortes' direction, assisted by an all-star technical team—including such specialized consultants as Eva Breneman overseeing the dialects, Nan Zabriskie assuring the accuracy of the full-body tattoos and Julia Eberhardt's geographically precise decor—keep our attention riveted on the dynamics of the five actors playing eleven widely-diverse roles in the intimate basement space.

Lazy playgoers distracted by the sexual subtexts and Michael Tutaj's dazzling projections may leave with brains unexercised, but they will never look at Instagram in quite the same way again.

## THEATER REVIEW

### The Aliens

**Playwright:** Annie Baker  
**At:** A Red Orchid Theatre, 1531 N. Wells St.  
**Tickets:** 312-943-8722;  
[www.aredorchidtheatre.org](http://www.aredorchidtheatre.org); \$25-\$30  
**Runs through:** March 3

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Our play opens on two nondescript men engrossed in contemplative silence that continues unbroken for nearly three minutes—in performance time, an eternity—but this is not *Waiting For Godot*. Jasper and KJ are in their late 20s, dressed in shabby mall-outlet garb, and their domain is the back lot of a coffee shop located off a highway where unseen cars occasionally pass, but never stop. Jasper is a high school dropout, while KJ lives with his New Age mother, following his breakdown and subsequent departure from college. Jasper has long abandoned the garage-band (called "The Aliens"), for which KJ once wrote songs, to pen his great semi-autobiographical novel. Ah, but today their solitude is interrupted, by a teenage barista named Evan who thinks they're really "cool."

Okay, maybe this *is* *Waiting For Godot*. (Did I mention that Jasper admires the neo-beat aesthetic of the late Charles Bukowski, and that KJ's major was theoretical mathematics and philosophy before psychotropic medications rendered his universe even more nebulous?) Unlike Vladimir and Estragon, however,

these comrades-in-torpor are past pretending that their vigil has any purpose. Evan's shy overtures—bringing snacks and sparklers to their spartan Independence Day observances—disturb their self-imposed enervation only momentarily. Will the impressionable youth likewise succumb to inertia, alleviated by occasional bursts of hostile rage, or will he inspire his elders to escape from their existential void?

A production pandering to audiences' expectations might sentimentalize the male-bonding aspects of Jasper and KJ's relationship to invoke a slacker version of George and Lennie, or perhaps emphasize the threat posed by a society indifferent to bright young misfits. At the very least, it would reconfigure the dialogue into that unique brand of theatrical repartee swapped by allegedly bored characters, but carefully phrased to keep spectators entertained (known in the trade as "enhanced ennui").

This is not such a production. Director Shade Murray is not afraid to dispense with actorly artifice to confront the tragedy of creative potential lacking the tools to express itself, and has instructed Steve Haggard, Brad Akin and Michael Finley to play these social waifs every bit as repressed and inarticulate as Baker has conceived them. Their leisurely delivery, designed to while away the endless days, may present a challenge to our patience, but theatergoers willing to stay the course will be rewarded with a vivid portrait of post-adolescent anomie in America today.



The Aliens.

*Beautiful Thing*  
 By Jonathan Harvey  
 Directed By John Nasca  
 January 17 - February 17  
 At The Athenaeum Theatre, Chicago  
[AthenaeumTheatre.org](http://AthenaeumTheatre.org)

PRIDE  
 Films & Plays

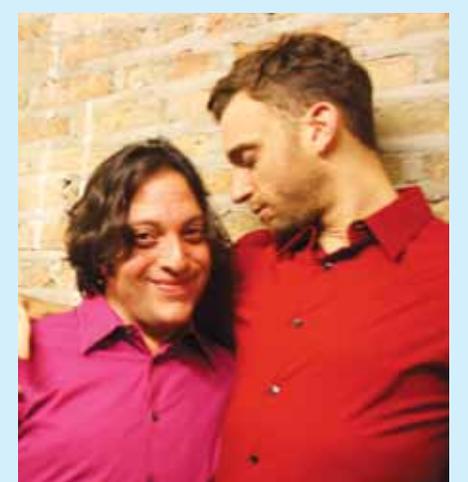
## Gay-themed sketch comedy in Feb., March

"Same Sex, Different Gays: Musical Tales of Relationships" will run Saturdays at 9:30 p.m. Feb. 16-March 30 at pH Comedy Theater, 1515 W. Berwyn Ave.

Written by a team of three gay men, one lesbian and two straight individuals, "Same Sex" is promoted as "a satirical but honest look at the multifaceted world of same-sex relationships."

There will also be a special Valentine's Day performance Thursday, Feb. 14, at 8 p.m.

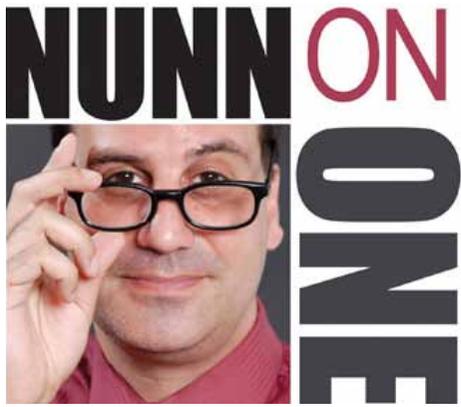
Tickets are \$10-\$15; visit [www.whatisph.com/samesex.php](http://www.whatisph.com/samesex.php).



Part of the Same Sex, Different Gays cast.

## NUNN ON ONE: THEATER

# Ben Platt: Stormin' 'Mormon'



BY JERRY NUNN

The Book of Mormon may refer to the sacred text of the Latter-Day Saints movement in some circles, but in Broadway's case it's a hit Tony-winning musical. From the twisted minds of the creators of South Park and Avenue Q, this production not only took home Best Musical from the Tonys but also won a Grammy that year.

The story revolves around two Mormon missionaries sent to a village in Uganda to convert locals. Things go awry when the village people are more concerned about war, famine and AIDS than being converted.

Ben Platt plays Elder Cunningham, a missionary sent to Uganda who happens to have a love for Star Wars and Lord of the Rings that he mixes with religion. Platt recently made his cinematic debut in Pitch Perfect and has nationally toured with the musical Caroline, or Change.

Windy City Times talked to him right before he

arrived for the huge Chicago opening.

**Windy City Times: Hello, Ben. What is your acting history?**

Ben Platt: I'm from L.A. My whole family grew up there. My dad was in business. Everyone sang and performed growing up. I was singing as young as 3 and 4 years old, doing showtunes in school. I then grew into working at the few venues that they have there for theater in L.A. As I got older, I started venturing into New York more often doing readings and workshops. I did a tour of Caroline, or Change. I took time off to do the movie Pitch Perfect and [am] now doing Book of Mormon.

**WCT: Everyone wanted a role in Mormon. How was the experience of auditioning?**

BP: It was crazy. It is kind of an unusual cast because of how it came about. I had tried in the first round of castings but I was told "too young" right away. Fast forward to this past August. I got a call from the creative team that they had saw me in Pitch Perfect and thought that would translate very well into Book of Mormon and [the role of Elder] Cunningham. I went in and ended up going back three times, the last one being onstage in New York with Nic Rouleau. We clicked and they offered me Chicago. Here I am!

**WCT: Tell our readers about Elder Cunningham.**

BP: It is a unique experience. I was not clearly going to be able to replicate the role but that is my favorite part of having my own take on things. From my point of view he is socially awkward, eager and doesn't understand social cues.



Ben Platt.

He just wants to fit in and be loved. He wants a best friend. He's the kind of guy that everyone has in their group of friends. He's just slightly off but his intentions are great. It's been really fun because before I didn't usually play the out-cast character.

**WCT: Being the show's first time in Chicago, can you describe it for people that didn't go to New York and know nothing about it?**

BP: There is something for everyone in it. They get that great South Park humor. It is belly

laughs from beginning to end. It is also a real love letter to musical theater. There are great dance numbers, spectacle, and all the things you love about great theater. It is some of the most hilarious writing I've ever seen.

**WCT: Does it poke fun at religion?**

BP: That is the platform it uses, but is not so concerned with the religion itself. It is more being fascinated by the Mormon religion. The rules, regulations and traditions of Mormons are the platform of the comedy. You get a taste of religion but that is not the main point.

**WCT: Are LGBT topics covered in the show?**

BP: Yes, there are some great innuendos to look forward to in that arena. I won't give it away but there is a particular number that pokes fun at that. That is my personal favorite.

BP: For the rehearsal process, yes.

**WCT: I heard you did a reading of Alice By Heart from Duncan Sheik. What is that show about?**

BP: It is sort of like a Spring Awakening type of show as a take on Alice in Wonderland. It is Alice as a teenager going back into the book and she is too old for everything. Through friends that knew Steven Sater and Duncan Sheik, we did some workshops with it. Now it is at the National Theatre in London being used in their youth program.

**WCT: Are you going to have any fun on your off time in Chicago?**

BP: I have a lot of personal friends in Chicago but have never been here for an extended period. I think we are all excited to get to know the city and get a feel for it. We will try out all the touristy things in the first two weeks hopefully. We couldn't be happier as to where we have been stationed!

**Book of Mormon preaches the word at Bank of America Theatre, 18 W. Monroe St., currently running now until at least Sept. 8. Visit [www.broadwayinchicago.com](http://www.broadwayinchicago.com) for tickets and show times.**

WORLD PREMIERE

# TEDDY FERRARA

BY CHRISTOPHER SHINN  
DIRECTED BY EVAN CABNET

## GABE'S PICTURE PERFECT WORLD IS ABOUT TO FALL TO PIECES

It's Gabe's senior year of college and his future looks bright: he runs the Queer Students Group, he finally has a single room and he recently started dating a great guy. But when a campus tragedy occurs that makes national headlines it ignites a firestorm and throws Gabe's world into disorder.

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# KNIGHT AT THE MOVIES

BY  
RICHARD  
KNIGHT, JR.

## Warm Bodies; film notes

It was inevitable, I suppose, that America's cultural fascination with all things zombie-related would eventually lead to a romantic comedy, albeit one with an admittedly dark core. **Warm Bodies**, from a debut novel by Isaac Marion, has been adapted by writer-director Jonathan Levine (50/50, The Wackness) and stars Nicholas Hoult (the hot young twink from 2009's *A Single Man*) as R, a teenagerish zombie who shambles about the airport terminal in his red hoodie, hoping to pick up the scent of human flesh—which he eats.

R has a certain amount of regret about his eating habits ("I'll eat anything with a heart but at least I'm conflicted" he comments mournfully in voice over). After years of wandering around with his fellow zombies following an apocalypse, and sorta grunting every once in a while in an attempt to bond with M (Rob Corddry), his "best friend," R is filled to the brim with the old ennu. Over the years he's collected the detritus of American culture, stowing it in an abandoned jet plane, his secret lair. His yearning to be anything but a zombie—as he plays John Waite's '80s power ballad "Missing You" on the record phonograph he's retrieved—is palpable and funny.

This malaise over R's endless day-to-day existence, which he narrates in a dry manner, takes a sharp turn toward romance, however, when R encounters pretty blonde Julie (Teresa Palmer). Julie, accompanied by boyfriend Perry (Dave Franco) and a group of other volunteers, has left the safe confines of the walled city presided over by her father, General Grigio (John Malkovich), in order to forage in the zombie-infested urban wilderness for food and medicine.

Careless and filled with the importance of doing his patriotic duty, Perry ignores the warnings of the others that a pack of zombies is nearby and R grabs him and kills him, chomping on his brains—ingesting Dave's memories as he does so. The sight of Julie, however, stops R in his shambling tracks. Smitten, he saves her from being discovered and killed by his fellow flesh-eaters. (It's perhaps one of the most bizarre examples of a "meet cute" in all cinematic history.) He takes Julie back to his lair and insists in his Frankenstein-like grunt (he can speak a word here, and a phrase there) that she remain with him until he can safely release her.

Various plot complications, naturally, ensue as Julie—over the course of a hopelessly twee montage—finds herself charmed by R's innate gentleness, cool record collection and hottie looks (in spite of his deathly pallor and, one supposes, his dreadful bad breath). Will the rebellious Julie be able to convince her stern, zombie-hating father that some of the walking dead—especially R—are really not so bad and just need a little TLC? Will these two mismatched lovebirds find bliss in a post-apocalyptic world? Will they successfully elude the "boneys"—the skeletal remains of the zombies who have no conscience thought other than to cannibalize the remaining humans?

As these plot devices arise, the charm factor



Nicholas Hoult in *Warm Bodies*. Photo by Jonathan Wenk

in Levine's movie wanes—ironically, as the zombies start to become more human, the thinness of the premise intensifies and the heartbeat of the film slows to a crawl. But the movie, which could easily have been titled *I Was a Teenage Zombie*, is bound to have its passionate followers. Even in his decrepit state, R is awfully cute (and spunky Julie isn't so bad to look at either). Not surprisingly, this being one of those paranormal teenage romances (a la the *Twilight* saga), to truly appreciate this zombie Romeo & Juliet you either go all the way with it or not at all. Prepare to squeal with delight—or groan in complete dismay.

### Film notes:

—**The Little Queer Film Festival (LQFF)** is a new series spearheaded by Sapphic Adventures, a social networking group for lesbians co-founded by Kelly Zeng. Zeng, along with fellow organizers such as Baby Girls and Co., Jeanette Diaz Photography, the Human Rights Campaign, and the Center on Halsted, will present a slate of six films Saturday, Feb. 2, and Sunday, Feb. 3. The screenings, which will include a social component, are scheduled to take place at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., in the Hoover-Leppen Theater. The line-up for the LQFF is as follows:

#### Saturday, Feb. 2

**Call Me Kuchu.** This documentary focuses on veteran activist David Kato working to repeal Uganda's homophobic laws and liberate his fellow LGBT men and women, or "kuchus." It's co-presented with the HRC. A discussion will precede the 11 a.m. screening.

**Kiss Me** is a Swedish lesbian love story with a twist. 3 p.m. screening

**Facing Mirrors** is an Iranian film with a transgender protagonist. 7 p.m. screening

#### Sunday, Feb. 3

**Lesbian Factory** is a documentary about the unfair treatment of foreign migrant workers in Taiwan which follows the lives of seven lesbian couples. 11 a.m. screening

**Zenne Dancer** is a Turkish drama about the friendship between three men—including one who is murdered by his father for being gay. It's based on a true story. 1:30 p.m. screening

In **I Do**, a British gay man marries his lesbian friend in order to get a green card. It's co-presented with the American Civil Liberties Union. An ACLU representative will speak about the status of legalizing same-sex marriage in Illinois preceding the 4 p.m. screening.

Advance tickets and more about the LQFF are at [www.littlequeerfilmfest.org](http://www.littlequeerfilmfest.org).

—Openly gay filmmaker Matthew Smith docu-

ments the continuing struggle to come out in his documentary **Out in the Open**. The movie, framed in a mock narrative style purporting to examine the "homosexual lifestyle," focuses on Smith's story as a gay filmmaker working in Hollywood.

As Smith and his family relay stories about his own coming out; his love for his partner, Solly Hemus; and their life together, he intersperses personal reminiscences from well-known queer folks like Carson Kressley, Olympic gold medalist Greg

Louganis and Broadway performer Josh Strickland as well as friends of the community like Eric Roberts and his wife, Eliza. The film, which includes Smith's commentary, deleted scenes and other special features, has just been released on DVD from Breaking Glass Pictures.

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

### NUNN ON ONE: TELEVISION

## John Stamos on 'The New Normal' fighting stereotypes

BY JERRY NUNN

Actor John Stamos first came to fame in the '80s playing Blackie Parrish on *General Hospital*, earning an Emmy nomination. It was ABC's *Full House* that made Stamos a huge star as Uncle Jesse, raising Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen with the help of Bob Saget and Dave Coulier—eventually having twins himself on the show.

Afterwards, he went on to guest-star in *Friends* and played a gay wedding planner on the A&E movie *Wedding Wars*. He became a series regular on *ER* in 2006. On *Glee*, he romanced Emma Pillsbury, and then guest-starred on *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit* and *Two and a Half Men*.

Stamos continues his strong television career, now appearing on *The New Normal* on NBC. This Ryan Murphy-helmed hit follows the story of a gay couple attempting to adopt a baby from a surrogate single mother. Ellen Barkin is the conservative grandmother on the show and meets Stamos' character Brice during a real-estate showing. Determining if he's gay or not is part of the plot of the recent episode.

Stamos talked about gaydar and how gays have influenced his life—making his career a "new normal."

**Windy City Times:** Hi, John. You are now officially on the gayest show on television!

John Stamos: Wait a minute. I did *Full House*. I mean how much gayer ... oh, you're talking about *The New Normal*.

**WCT:** [Laughs] Yes, *The New Normal*. What was it like working with Ellen Barkin and Ryan Murphy?

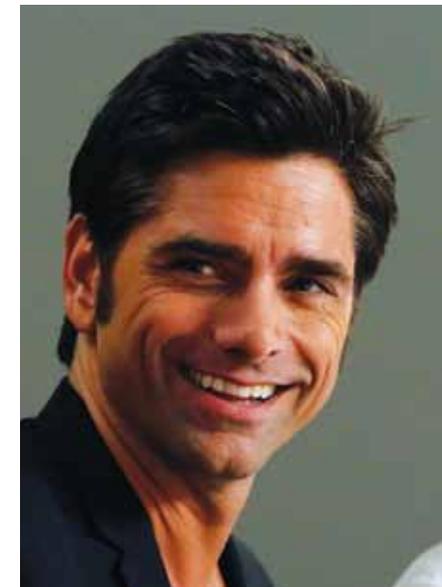
JS: Oh so good. I think it was our first show where we had to kiss. We did the read-through of the first episode and I felt like we were kind of cat-and-mousing each other. I [asked] Ryan, "What if I just grab the back of her hair and just make out?"

The whole room was silent and then everybody looked at Ryan. He said, "Oh my God. That's a great idea." Ryan likes surprises, especially when he's directing. He's very spontaneous and he loves to kind of throw out jokes and ideas. I've known him for so many years and I have a great relationship with him.

He's always been so good to me. He's also protected me in the stuff that I've done. Like he'll say, "I'm going to write you this." He always comes through for me.

I'm proud of him. I knew him before all those big shows happened. He came to me originally right after *Full House* with a show about three [people who] would fix marriages like *Charlie's Angels*—but they were hookers.

It was a little too much for me at the time. But looking back, I'm like wow, I should have done that. I know I'm probably one of five guys that say this, but he offered me Nip/



John Stamos. Photo from NBC

Tuck and I didn't do it.

When Ellen and I started working together it was just this great chemistry, and I think it was sort of set up where I would do an episode.

**WCT:** What is the plot of the episode?

JS: I come on and they don't know if I'm gay or straight. The truth is, nowadays, who the hell knows? Maybe it was more defined 10, 15 or 20 years ago if you were a florist or hairstylist—stereotypical crap.

**WCT:** Did you have instant chemistry with the cast of *The New Normal*?

JS: Yes. They're really good. I have to be honest. I didn't watch the show a lot before. But I knew the acting was good but I didn't realize how good it was until I got down there. It's a very well run show.

It's sort of exciting because it's not like *Glee* that was getting ready to blast over the whole world and stuff. But there's still feel a little bit of what I felt when I jumped onto *Glee*, which was they have something here. They have something important to say. Ryan once again put the right people together to get the right message out.

**WCT:** What cracked you up on set?

JS: [Co-star] NeNe [Leakes] is very funny. I've seen naturally funny people like Bob Saget, but this girl is funny.

**WCT:** What did you add to the character Brice?

JS: There was the kiss that we put in. So I already played through the character and sort of his result and where he ends up being. I'm not gay, but this is a modern world and just because a guy wears a bracelet or is into hair processing and culture and fashion doesn't make him gay. Just as I say that my gay hairstylist walks by and goes, "Here,

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## NUNN ON ONE: PERFORMANCE

# Cathy Rigby returns as Peter Pan

BY JERRY NUNN

Peter Pan is flying into the Cadillac Palace Theatre for a short run and we have an interview with star himself—umm, herself.

Cathy Rigby began her career as a gymnast in the 1968 Summer Olympics. She was the first U.S. woman to win a medal at the World Gymnastics Championships, for the silver balance beam.

She then performed as Peter Pan before appearing in the Wizard of Oz and Annie Get Your Gun. She returned to Neverland on Broadway where she was nominated for a Tony Award. Rigby took the show on tour before retiring it in 2006.

She proves she will never grow up one last time, with her own production company called McCoy Rigby Entertainment taking the show out on the road again. Chicago is lucky enough to be one of her stops because Cathy Rigby is Peter Pan!

**Windy City Times: Hey, Cathy.**

Cathy Rigby: How are you, Jerry? Is it cold out there in Chicago?

**WCT: You might want to pack an extra pair of green tights! It's not like the summertime, when you were here last.**

CR: I know. I heard you have had a balmy winter and it's going to be cold just when we come in.

**WCT: Lucky you. I did see you in Millennium Park for the preview and you were wonderful.**

CR: Aww, thank you. I did my little handstand there.

**WCT: I heard you were a fan of musicals, even as a child with West Side Story.**

CR: It's funny because I never thought musical theater or the acting world would be part of my life. When I look back at my life we used to make shows in our garage, like Chorus Line. We would dance around the living room. Even though I was in the gym six to eight hours a day, we always listened to musicals. We listened to everything from Hello, Dolly to West Side Story to Mary Poppins. As we trained, unless we were doing floor exercises, we would have music on. It must have been a premonition as to what would come.

**WCT: After you were in the Olympics, did they come to you to play Peter Pan?**

CR: I was doing an arena version of Peter Pan. It was more like a Disney Ice Capades, where it was an extravaganza. We used big sets and costumes. It emphasized the athletic sides of things. Someone in the group that year told me to take some voice lessons and acting classes so I did. That tour ended but I studied for about seven years. My voice teacher wanted me to go audition for Dorothy in The Wizard of Oz. This was in 1981 and I got the role, which was terrifying enough and had to perform in front of 2,000 people. Once I got that show I was hooked and went on to perform with Gordon MacRae in Paint Your Wagon.

I never thought I would have the courage to stand up in front of anybody onstage let alone sing. It has been an amazing second career.

**WCT: It changed your life. You met your husband in The Wizard of Oz.**

CR: It changed it for many reasons. I was really shy. I used to cry giving book reports in school. When you are working with an inanimate object like a balance beam then you are only focused on perfection and what you do. To suddenly be asked to relate to other people and take emotional risks you have to not be in your own head

and to let go. That was a big fat lesson for me. You can do all the technique you want but acting is really about reacting and being alive.

**WCT: You stopped doing Peter Pan for a while, correct?**

CR: We did other shows like Steel Magnolias and Sylvia. I even got to play Mammy Yokum in Li'l Abner. I haven't come back to Peter Pan until the tour this year. The great thing about returning to a role is bringing a different perspective to it. In my experience something different and magical happens with Peter Pan.

You let go of any preconceived ideas about how children act. They are direct, honest and politically incorrect. They don't care about feelings they just react. That has been such a joy to play. There are no apologies. You just are. Kids are funny. They have a belief that anything is possible that we don't have as adults. They bring characteristics to Peter that makes it great fun to do every night.

**WCT: And you get to travel all over the place...**

CR: You get to travel and fly. People ask me why I keep doing it but what a great job I have! I get to fly every night and be a kid.

**WCT: Are there some days where you just don't want to fly?**

CR: Flying is the easy part. I think the seven shows a week can be rough. It's like Richard Simmons at the end of the workout!

When I am crouched down in the window before I make my entrance into the nursery then I come flying through wakes you up real fast. If you are not in the mood then that will tickle your stomach a little bit. It is a really good way to warm up.

**WCT: I read you are into nutrition and taking care of yourself.**

CR: You have to. I am better as an adult when I am more focused and doing Peter Pan. There is no playing around. You have to do exercises. I know the role so well, the steps, the flying. The great thing about being older is that I don't white knuckle it. I'm more relaxed, which makes it easier to do.

**WCT: You have a great cast to work with.**

CR: Yes! I have my buddy Brent Barrett who worked with me in Annie Get Your Gun and is now playing Hook. He's so wonderful. Everybody gets along including the crew. The fact is after touring for 15 months we have had very little turnover, except when the kids grow up and get too old to play their roles.

**WCT: How does the fairy work in the show?**

CR: We started off trying to make it a little more literal. We wanted her to flap her wings. We found out that if she was a little ball of light that bounced around the stage it was better. The more literal we tried to make her the less magical she became. She reflects off my face and you will see her pulsing.

**WCT: Neat. Touring gives audiences a chance to see this show that normally wouldn't get to New York. I read several gay papers that wrote about it on the West Coast.**

CR: I have done several interviews with gay papers specifically and they have been great. I'm cross-dressing, so what the heck? I think I should be an honorary member, right?

**WCT: "All you need is trust and a little bit of pixie dust!"**

**Look for Rigby and the gang at the Cadillac Theatre, 151 W. Randolph St., flying high Jan. 30-Feb. 10. Visit [www.BroadwayInChicago.com](http://www.BroadwayInChicago.com) for details and ticket information.**



Cathy Rigby (top) in Peter Pan. Photo by Isaac James

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## TRAVEL

# Thailand, 'The Land of Smiles,' earns its rep

BY KELSY CHAUVIN

There are clear universal truths about the Thai experience. Thailand is hot—very hot. In Thailand, it's easy to get used to paying just \$1 to a street vendor for the best pad Thai ever. The massages are intense, incredibly inexpensive and never get old. And above all, the country is one of the world's friendliest places—proudly demonstrating its nickname "The Land of Smiles" everywhere you go.

A first-timer to Thailand will find a surprisingly Westernized experience, albeit with some authentically non-Western flair. It is a proud 95 percent-Buddhist nation, making it gloriously laid-back and extraordinarily liberal about the LGBT crowd—as well as vibrant, colorful and welcoming.

Roughly the same size as California, Thailand is famous for its largest cities—Bangkok on the southern edge and Chiang Mai in the north—and for its sandy beaches and plush resorts.

As the bustling capital, **Bangkok** is home to more than 8 million people, all of whom seem to be traversing the streets all hours of the day. The

Organized and affordable tours can ease your Thai experience, complete with an air-conditioned ride and English-speaking guide. This is a great option for the must-see **Damnoensadua Floating Market**, located about an hour's drive south of Bangkok. There, you can hop on a long-tail boat for a canal tour to the market, where stalls line the banks and you can order fresh noodle dishes and buy souvenirs without ever leaving the boat.

If you're in town over a weekend, practice your bargaining skills at the enormous **Chatuchak Weekend Market** in northwest Bangkok. While nighttime markets crop up all over town, Chatuchak is a true convergence point of Bangkok, loosely organized into 27 shopping sections that span everything from textiles and electronics, to ceramics and live animals, to handicrafts and Buddhist amulets.

Because Bangkok, like Thailand in general, is so unfazed by all things gay and lesbian, there is a surprising lack of designated queer clubs. In fact, the red-light districts of **Patpong** and **Soi Cowboy**, both near the **Sukhumvit** metro (find Soi 2 or 4), are famous for ubiquitous prosti-

From Bangkok, historic **Ayutthaya** is an hour north, and a great short trip for visiting some of southeast Asia's oldest temples and royal ruins. Be sure to visit the elephants at the lesbian-owned Elephant Stay, which offers overnight volunteer packages at its sanctuary, or hour-long rides in town.

Few people who cross an ocean to visit Thailand do so for only one city, and many of them come mainly for the legendary beaches that make the heat not only bearable, but welcome. **Koh Samui** is the big island in the Gulf of Thailand, and an unrivaled, picturesque tropical setting. Many big-time hotels have opened on Samui, but one of the best is **Napasai**, by gay-friendly Orient-Express. The resort has its own quiet inlet on Maenam Beach, on the calm northern coast, and offers villas on the beach or up the lush slope at competitive package rates.

Another luxurious option is **Karma Samui**. Located near Samui Airport and the Chaweng strip, it offers private plunge pools, gorgeous gulf views, and multi-bedroom villas that encourage group stays (and minimize rates).

Tour companies like **Grand Sea Discovery** offer packages at all prices, like a day-long cruise to two nearby islands, snorkeling and lunch for around \$70—the going rate for such tours, and a sign that the island paradise of Samui is catching on to Western pricing. (But don't be shy about trying to bargain your way to a better deal.)

For something even more remote, head west to the far side of the Thai peninsula, through the small town of **Krabi** to **Koh Lanta**. Here's where things get more remote, and you can soak it up in style at the posh **Pimilai Resort**, where your hillside villa overlooking the Indian Ocean will leave you mesmerized with serene natural beauty.

Alas, a traveler must move on eventually. And the best final stop is **Chiang Mai**, a less daunt-



A food vendor and customer at a night market. Photo by Kelsy Chauvin

ing, more traditional Thai city nestled in the northern hills. Here you can stop by the local zoo, home to Thailand's only pandas, or head up the mountain to the spectacular **Doi Sutthep** temple. Chiang Mai is a terrific shopping town, so don't miss the sprawling night and weekend markets.

The city also is home to one of the world's most luxurious resorts, the **Mandarin Oriental Dhara Dhevi**, which functions like its own kingdom and actually offers tours of its elaborate grounds and palatial, traditional architecture. If you can find an overnight deal that's in your budget, don't miss it.

Undoubtedly, Thailand is on a major economic upswing, thanks partly to its booming tourism, and to its kind and industrious people. There's never been a better time to see this thriving country, just hurry up and catch it before the whole rest of the world shows up.



Thailand's Pimilai Resort. Photo by Kelsy Chauvin

infamous traffic earns its reputation the hard way, slowly grinding to a crawl as zillions of mopeds glide in and out of gridlocked taxis, buses and jazzed-up tuk-tuks. Fortunately, you can stay above or below the fray thanks to Bangkok's speedy, spotless and remarkably cheap metro system, which happily also serves Suvarnabhumi International Airport.

Bangkok is teeming with things to do and see, which has made it one of the world's top tourist destinations with more than 12 million visitors annually. And you will feel them, in droves, flocking to the major attractions dotting the city and along the Chao Phraya River. Top among them is the **Grand Palace**, home to two centuries of Thai monarchs; today, you can marvel at regal architecture, intricate mosaics and embellishments as well as the solid-jade Emerald Buddha statue inside stunning **Wat Phra Kaew**.

Nearby at **Wat Pho**, don't miss the great, golden 151-foot-long Reclining Buddha, where newly re-elected President Obama and outgoing Secretary of State Hillary Clinton visited during their historic November 2012 Thai junket. Across the river, the lovely **Wat Arun** temple lets you climb 250 feet up for a spectacular city view.

tution and strip clubs, but also are the closest Bangkok really gets to a gay village—and even then the gays are limited to a few mainly late-night bars, like the Balcony or Telephone, where you can find gorgeous "ladyboys" and their more masculine counterparts.

Lesbians are bit more visible throughout Bangkok, where "Toms" are free to dress as boyish (and way stylish) as they like, especially when escorting their femme "Dees." But when it's time to hang out with just the girls, there's **Zeta**, a women's-only bar on the north side of town. (Just make sure you get a cab driver who knows where he's going.)

Accommodations run the gamut of choices in this capital city. On the high end, splurging on a river-view room at the **Shangri-La Hotel Bangkok** will make for a tranquil, well-located retreat, with indulgence around every corner.

For less *baht* (currency is about 30 *baht* to the dollar), **OmYim Lodge** is a clean, central option for the budget traveler, and gets even cheaper if you go without windows. The Bangkok Rama Hotel is nearer to the airport, offers low rates for more space and is just 20 minutes from the center of town.

## Show spotlights Afro-surrealism

BY ROSS FORMAN

It's the work, not the space where the work is displaced, that matters most to avery r. young, one of 11 artists who will be featured in "Marvelous Freedom: Vigilance of Desire, Revisited," a group exhibition that explores Chicago's contemporary and emerging artists of color who approach art-making through an Afro-Surrealist lens.

But young, an out artist, certainly isn't opposed to the high-profile real estate where

Vigilance of Desire, the Surrealist exhibition that took place in Chicago in 1976.

"It deals with youth who are affected by the violence in Chicago," young said. "I am excited [to hear] what people will say once they see the exhibit. I also am excited to hear the dialogue that the artwork will initiate."

San Francisco-based writer and performer D. Scot Miller's "AfroSurreal Manifesto: Black is the New Black" helped launch the arena, which young said, "is about what's going on now, not about what happened in the past, or



avery r. young. Photo from young

his art will be displayed—at Columbia College Chicago, 618 S. Michigan Ave..

"I don't identify myself as much by the building [my art is showcased in] as much as the art ... but I'm thankful for the building," young said, laughing. He has one piece in the exhibit, which will be on display through mid-March. young spent two years working on the piece.

Alexandria Eregbu is the curator for the project, which according to organizers, showcases the richness of Chicago's Surrealist history in order to extend, expand, and re-impose new visions of 21st century Afro-Surrealist aesthetics and cultural concerns, reexamining the first Marvelous Freedom/

in the future. It's about what's in the current state."

young said the project "is very important to me."

"Normally, I'm known as a spoken-word artist. This is one of the first times I have been featured [through] my visual artwork. This is a personal matter for me," he said.

young's piece will be showcased within a newsbox, "which diversifies this idea of what, how children are affected by violence," he said.

"The piece is letterpress on top of a front-page news story. The newsbox is an important statement to me."

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# the **DISH** WEEKLY DINING GUIDE IN | WINDY CITY TIMES

## mk

BY ANDREW DAVIS

In the modern restaurant world, **mk** (868 N. Franklin St.; mkchicago.com) is practically Me-thuselah, marking its 15th anniversary this year.

To this diner, the accomplishment is even more remarkable because this restaurant is not in the most conspicuous space, even though it's in the trendy River North area.

However, word of mouth accounts for a lot—and this restaurant deserves all the accolades it has received.

The interior is sleek, with plenty of dark woods. The place is also elegant—a fact enhanced by the impeccable service (which Tino provided) and even the patrons, who tend to wear very nice threads.

Executive Chef Erick Williams (who has been with **mk** practically from the beginning, including four years at his current post) has prepared a tasting menu. The culinary line-up here has items such as Nantucket Bay scallops, bobwhite quail, venison short loin, flagship reserve cheddar and a chestnut financier (a small French cake).

However, my dining companion and I decided to try a variety of items from the a la carte menu—and, boy, were we impressed.

Among the appetizers are seasonal oysters; kale salad with lettuce, mustard greens, quinoa and pears; and Hudson Valley foie gras. However, we decided to go with what Williams told us are two staples—yellowfin tuna tartare and endive salad—as well as butternut squash ravioli. Befitting a restaurant of this stature, the presentation of the dishes was top-notch. As for taste, the endive salad was practically perfection, with the endive balancing very well with apple, blue cheese and spiced pecans. (I'm not the biggest fan of nuts, except for almonds—but this dish converted me.) My friend also enjoyed his tuna.

Also, Williams sent out a dish of baby octopus grilled over hardwood charcoal, complete with fennel, pearl onions, dried apricots, piparras peppers, preserved lemon and smoked paprika aioli. This was, up until dessert, my favorite dish of the night. While sometimes smoke can overpower a dish, it only enhanced this one—and, thankfully, the octopus was not rubbery.

The list of entrees at **mk** is equally tantalizing, with featured items such as braised beef short ribs, veal porterhouse, Snake River sturgeon (complete with truffle-scented sunchoke), striped bass, roasted chicken and New York



Images from **mk**. Photos by Ed Negrón

sirloin. My friend chose the Skuna Bay salmon while I went with the duck. The salmon was perfectly seasoned (in fact, Williams told us that there's "no hospital cooking" at **mk**), and the duck was extremely tasty as well. Delectable truffle fries topped off this particular course.

Lastly, we (naturally) had dessert—and Pastry Chef Stephanie Mazzone's creations take the cake, literally. Sure, one can try the artisanal cheeses (which I'm sure are tasty), but our palates were set to "sweet" at this point. While my friend went with the banana popstar (a melange consisting of banana-chocolate mini-pop tarts,

marshmallow fluff, chocolate butterscotch ice cream pop and chocolate cake crumbs), I decided to try the cake & shake (chocolate layer cake with mousse and hot fudge, along with a mini-malted vanilla shake).

While my companion appreciated his selection, we both fell in love with mine. It was, hands down, the best dessert I've had in the past several months. By the way, as an editor, I can appreciate the punny names of some of the items, including "papi churro" and "pear down (Chicago pears)."

Also, potential patrons will be happy to know

that, although the place had a fair share of people there (even on a Thursday), it's quite easy to have a conversation there without raising your voice.

I highly recommend **mk**. From top to bottom, this is one place that consistently impresses.

**mk will offer 50 percent off all bottles of wine Sunday through Thursday until Jan. 31. (The promotion includes any selection from mk's portfolio, which features more than 1,000 choices.)**

**Additionally, every Wednesday at 6-9 p.m., mk invites guests to relax and unwind in the restaurant's lounge space with "Wine on Wednesday," the popular wine-and-menu tasting series. For reservations, call 312-482-9179.**



## DINING NEWS

COMPILED BY ANDREW DAVIS

### Fiorenza to carry 'Égalité' wine

Forest Park eatery Fiorenza Ristorante will be the first restaurant in the world to carry Égalité, a sparkling wine dedicated to the spirit of LGBT equality.

The sparkling wine was created by New York winery Biagio Cru, which has been a supporter of LGBTQ equality issues and previously donated \$1,000 each to The Trevor Project, The Ali Forney Center, Equality Maine, GLSEN and Chicago's Center on Halsted.

For every bottle of Égalité sold, a portion of the proceeds will be donated to LGBTQ youth groups.

### J&L Catering marks 25 years

Chicago-based J&L Catering held a celebration marking 25 years in business Jan. 23. Co-owner Ted Grady is in the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame, in part because of how much support his company has given to LGBT and AIDS organizations over the years.

Pictured, from left, are Cam Harshman, staff-ing director; Jim Bailey, event planner; Evelyn

Hitchcock, event planner; Scott Reichelsdorf, event planner; Kevin Kelly, executive chef/co-owner; Ted Grady, sales manager/co-owner; Rachel Razowsky, event planner; Vanessa Flink Larson, director of corporate sales; and Laura P. Ramirez, director of operations. Photo by Hal Baim

Send items to [Andrew@WindyCityMedia-Group.com](mailto:Andrew@WindyCityMedia-Group.com).



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**the DISH** DINING LISTINGS

<p><b>AMERICAN</b> <b>The Counter</b> 666 W. Diversey Pkwy. Chicago 773-935-1995 Custom built burgers with hormone-and-antibiotic-free 100% Angus beef. Facebook: The Counter Lincoln Park.</p>	<p><b>Hamburger Mary's</b> 5400 N. Clark St., Chicago 773-784-6969 <a href="http://hamburgermarys.com/chicago">hamburgermarys.com/chicago</a> Burgers, salads and sass served up in a kitschy atmosphere with an on-site brew pub.</p>	<p><b>BAKERY</b> <b>Swedish Bakery</b> 5348 N. Clark St., Chicago 773-561-8919 <a href="http://swedishbakery.com">swedishbakery.com</a> European-style cookies, pastries, breads, and tortes. We'll create a cake for any celebration.</p>	<p><b>Club Lucky</b> 1824 W. Wabansia Ave., Bucktown 773-227-2300 <a href="http://clubluckychicago.com">clubluckychicago.com</a> 1940s style, Italian supper club and cocktail lounge. Award-winning, must-see holiday decorations and private party room. Accepting online reservations. <b>NOW DELIVERING.</b></p>	<p><b>GERMAN</b> <b>Chicago Brauhaus</b> 4732 N. Lincoln Ave., Chicago 773-784-4444 <a href="http://chicagobrauhaus.com">chicagobrauhaus.com</a> Serving up traditional German specialties, beer, wine, music and dancing 6 days a week.</p>
<p><b>Jane's Restaurant</b> 1653-55 W. Cortland Ave. 773-862-5263 <a href="http://janesrestaurant.com">janesrestaurant.com</a> An everyday, upscale eatery located in neighborhood Bucktown. Stunning Special Events Room. Brunch, Lunch &amp; Dinner.</p>	<p><b>ASIAN</b> <b>Thirteen Tapas</b> 4202 W. Irving Park Rd., 773-283-6626 <a href="http://www.13pins.webs.com">www.13pins.webs.com</a> Serving unique Asian tapas-style cuisine, inspired by dishes of the Philippines. Half off tapas Tue. -Thu. from 3-6.</p>	<p><b>ITALIAN</b> <b>Taverna 750</b> 750 W. Cornelia Ave., Chicago 773-348-5172 Bright and fresh Italian small plates with an exciting cocktail menu. Surprisingly affordable.</p>	<p><b>Ceres' Table</b> 4882 N. Clark St., Chicago 773-878-4882 <a href="http://cerestable.com">cerestable.com</a> Sustainable, locally sourced contemporary Italian food, great cocktails, and fabulous wine and beer lists.</p>	<p><b>MEDITERRANEAN</b> <b>Troy Mediterranean Grill</b> 2908 N. Broadway 773-770-3866 Facebook: <a href="http://TroyMediterraneanGrill">TroyMediterraneanGrill</a> 100% homemade, fresh menu includes veggie dishes. All food is prepared fresh as the time of ordering.</p>

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Early Buyers: Sat. 8am-10am / \$25  
**Lake County Fairgrounds**  
**GRAYSLAKE (1060 E. Peterson)**

**ANTIQUÉ FLEA MARKET**  
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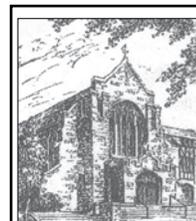
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## NewTown Writers seeks submissions

NewTown Writers is seeking submissions for the organization's annual anthology, *Off the Rocks*. (The next edition will be the 17th volume.)

Poetry, prose, artwork and photographic submissions are being accepted. Individuals can submit a maximum of three items (not to exceed 5,000 words) that would be rated PG-13 or lower. Submissions should be single-spaced, and in the body of an email.

The theme is "subtext."

Contributors receive one complimentary copy of the anthology. Submit to [allisonfradkin@aol.com](mailto:allisonfradkin@aol.com) by March 15.

## Swing Out Sister marks 25th year with new CD

The duo *Swing Out Sister*—composed of singer/songwriter Corinne Drewery and keyboardist/composer Andy Connell—is marking its 25th anniversary with the new CD *Private View*.

This deluxe collection is a special long-box collector's item with a CD, DVD and extensive booklet with previously unseen photos, an essay and commentary by Drewery. The CD features



reimagined versions of classics and lesser-known tunes, while the DVD features a live concert shot at *Billboard Live* in Tokyo and rare behind-the-scenes footage.

*Private View* marks 25 years since *Swing Out Sister's* first album, *It's Better To Travel*.

## Fleetwood Mac in Chicago in April, June

Legendary musical act *Fleetwood Mac* will be in Chicago in April and June.

The current line-up of Mick Fleetwood, John McVie, Lindsey Buckingham and Stevie Nicks is already slated to perform at the United Center April 13. However, the band also added a June 14 visit to Allstate Arena to its roster of 13 additional dates. Tickets for the latter show go on sale Feb. 2.

"*Fleetwood Mac Live 2013*" begins in Columbus, Ohio, at the Nationwide Arena on April 4 with confirmed dates through July 6 in Sacramento, Calif., at the Sleep Train Arena. For additional ticket and tour information, visit [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com) and [www.fleetwoodmac.com](http://www.fleetwoodmac.com).

## Levi Kreis to sing at Davenport's March 2

Openly gay singer Levi Kreis—a Tony Award winner for his role in *Million Dollar Quartet*—will perform at *Davenport's Piano Bar & Cabaret*, 1383 N. Milwaukee Ave., on Saturday, March 2, at 8 p.m.

Admission is \$25 plus a two-drink minimum. Call 773-278-1830 or visit [www.davenportspianobar.com](http://www.davenportspianobar.com).

# calendar

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## Wed., Jan. 30

**Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor**  
Discussion of her memoir *My Beloved World* about her transition from early life growing up in a Bronx housing project to the country's highest federal bench. Free. 6pm, 312-747-4050, Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S State St., <http://chicagopubliclibrary.org>

**Honduran LGBT Leader speaks in Chicago**  
LGBT leader Jose "Pepe" Palacios will discuss LGBT activists' role in the movement to end violence and restore democracy in Honduras. 6pm-7:30pm, 773-209-1187, Arts & Letters Hall, Room 412, 2315 N. Kenmore Ave, DePaul University, Lincoln Park Campus, <https://www.facebook.com/events/451181061616363/>

**Mx. Queer (U)SA Pageant** Subject to Change presents the Mx. Queer (U)SA Pageant, benefiting the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance Queers, community, no shame jams and a zine; 9pm-11pm, The Burlington, 3425 W. Fullerton, <http://www.facebook.com/groups/subjecttochangechi/>

**Women's Health Drop-In Night & group acupuncture** For women under the age of 35 with no insurance, free pap test and breast/chest exam, counseling intake session, health and wellness information. Group acupuncture for \$15. Info: [bet-syr@howardbrown.org](mailto:bet-syr@howardbrown.org). Registration 5pm. 5pm-8pm, 773-388-8993, Howard Brown Health Center, 4025 N. Sheridan Rd., [www.howardbrown.org](http://www.howardbrown.org)

## Thursday, Jan. 31

**Marvelous Freedom: Vigilance of Desire, Revisited** Group exhibition including a very young explores Chicago's contem-

## AN ACTIVIST SPEAKS

Wed., Jan. 30

Honduran activist Jose "Pepe" Palacios will speak at DePaul University, 2315 N. Kenmore Ave.

Photo from the Gay Liberation Network



porary and emerging artists of color who approach art-making through an Afro-Surrealist lens. 5pm-8pm, Arcade Gallery, Columbia College, 618 S. Michigan Ave. 2nd Flr

**50 Shades of Blues** 5:30 complimentary cocktail party; \$15 program at 7pm. Blue vocalists brought gender fluidity to their music through suggestive lyrics and tongue-in-cheek performances. Sharon Bridgeforth and Dr. Omi Osun Joni L. Jones will use conversation and live performance to explore how the complex musical movement expressed social and sexual taboos and called for greater freedoms in the 1920s and 1930s. Katherine Davis and her trio sing the Blues at the cocktail party. 5:30pm, Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark St., [www.chicagohistory.org](http://www.chicagohistory.org)

**The Murder Mystery Company presents** Award winning theater troupe presents and interactive show. 7:30pm-10:30pm, 888-643-2583, Sopranos, 2901 N. Sheffield Ave., [www.grimprov.com/chicago-murder-mystery-dinner/](http://www.grimprov.com/chicago-murder-mystery-dinner/)

**Tamale Presents Brass Chuckles Comedy Showcase** Brass Chuckles is a comedy show that invites fascinating people to come out to play hosted by comedian and Femme(ce) Tamale Sepp. Explores comedy through stand-up, sketch, improv, videos, performance art, live readings of personal narrative work, and other creative methods. \$10. 10pm, Playground Theatre, 3341 N. Lincoln Ave., [www.brasschucklescomedy.com](http://www.brasschucklescomedy.com)

## Friday, Feb. 1

**By Women for Women Center** on Halsted's Women's Action Committee present an evening with cocktails, appetizers and desserts on the rooftop, performance by Vaudezilla Burlesque, and info on new programs for women who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or ally. Hosted by Alma Izquierdo and Kim Hunt. Cupcake competition will feature Alma Izquierdo of Amigas Latinas, Renauda Riddle of Center on Halsted, K. Sujata of Chicago Women's Foundation, Kim Hunt of Affinity and Vivian Gonzalez of L Stop. \$20 ticket includes 2 drink tickets, entrance to after-party at Rehab and hors d'oeuvres created by celebrity lesbian chefs. Tickets online. 6pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., <https://community.centeron-halsted.org/bywomenforwomen>

**Flesh - Photographs by Justice Howard** Dangerous like a whirlwind of razor blades and seductive as candy coated opium... Alpha-femme photographer Justice Howard ain't for sissies. 7pm-10pm, 773-761-9200, Leather Archives & Museum, 6418 N. Greenview Ave., [www.justicehoward.com](http://www.justicehoward.com)

**Hamburg Ballet** The Harris Theater for Music and Dance brings the best in international dance to the Windy City: Hamburg Ballet. Through Feb. 2. 7:30pm-10:30pm, 312-334-7777, Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph St., [www.harristheaterchicago.org](http://www.harristheaterchicago.org); Tickets: [www.harristheaterchicago.org](http://www.harristheaterchicago.org)

**Fred's Disco Birthday Party** Flash back with Fred and put on your best '70s look for your chance to win a two-night stay in Vegas. DJ Kevin spins disco and current hits all night. \$2 SoCo shots, \$3 SoCo drinks and special performances throughout the night. 8pm, Maneuvers Bar, 118 E. Jefferson St., Joliet, [www.jolietmaneuvers.com](http://www.jolietmaneuvers.com)

## Saturday, Feb. 2

**LittleQFilmFest: Call Me Kuchu** Documentary, 87 min. In an office on the outskirts of Kampala, veteran activist David Kato labors to repeal Uganda's homophobic laws and liberate his fellow lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender men and women,

or "kuchus." \$9 online; \$14 at the door; 11am-1pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., [www.littlequeerfilmfest.org](http://www.littlequeerfilmfest.org); Tickets: <http://callmekuchu.brownpapertickets.com>

**Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance (LGBTQ)** Weekly, peer-led support group for members of the LGBTQ community with mood problems such as depression or bipolar disorder. Free. Community Room; 11am-12:30pm, 872-216-3272, Howard Brown Health Center, 4025 N. Sheridan Rd., [www.dbsa-glbtc-chicago.com/](http://www.dbsa-glbtc-chicago.com/)

**Queer Music Alliance of Chicago open mic** An all-inclusive open mic and spoken-word event, encouraging all queer and gender-variant folks, their friends, and allies, to bring a song, talent, thought, or rant to share. Each performer gets five minutes to do their thing and there may be time for encores. DJ Scott Free spins local queer music until 10. 8pm-10pm, Parlour on Clark, 6341 N. Clark St., [www.parlouronclark.com](http://www.parlouronclark.com)

**9 to 12 No Tap Bowling League** LGBT bowling on the first Saturday of the month from 9 to 12 pm. Bowling takes place at River-Rand Bowl (on River Road just north of Rand Road). Leagues begin at 9pm and substitute bowlers are welcome and encouraged to come out to the lanes. 9pm, River Rand Bowl, Des Plaines, [www.facebook.com/pages/9-to-12-bowling/150981275086?fref=ts](http://www.facebook.com/pages/9-to-12-bowling/150981275086?fref=ts)

**LittleQFilmFest: Facing Mirrors** Drama, 102 min, Iran. Rana and Adineh, two women of opposite background and social class are accidentally brought together to share a journey. \$9 online; \$14 at the door; 7pm-9pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., [www.littlequeerfilmfest.org](http://www.littlequeerfilmfest.org); Tickets: <http://facingmirrors.brownpapertickets.com/>

## Sunday, Feb. 3

**Urban Village: Wicker Park Service** LGBT-welcoming worship services at Urban Village Church are eclectic and experiential, practical and intelligent, relevant and, hopefully, inspiring. 10:30am-11:45am, Chopin Theatre, 1543 W. Division St., [www.urbanvillagechurch.org/wicker-park/](http://www.urbanvillagechurch.org/wicker-park/)

**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 involved in the community! 10:30am-11:45am, Bethany Retirement Center, 1602 W. Ainslie St. (at Ashland), [www.newchicagochurch.com](http://www.newchicagochurch.com)

**Curious Coffee Klatsch** Continuing in the Curious and Prop Thtr tradition of Church of the New Play, sip a cup and talk about the work they have seen in the festival with a knowledgeable facilitator who has seen the work and will invite other thoughtful, knowledgeable people and the maker of the work to informally present about the work and lead a discussion with whoever is there. 11am, Prop Theater, 3502 N. Elston Ave., [http://rhinofest.com/events/curious\\_coffee\\_klatsch.php](http://rhinofest.com/events/curious_coffee_klatsch.php)

**LittleQFilmFest: Lesbian Factory** Documentary, 56 min, Taiwan. Love story and documentary about a social movement and labor dispute of female Philippine migrant workers, in jeopardy of losing their jobs due to the factory closure and embezzlement by their boss. \$9 online; \$14 at the door; 11am, Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, Chicago, <http://www.littlequeerfilmfest.org>; Tickets: <http://http://lesbianfactory.brownpapertickets.com/>

**Joe Green's Superbowl Bash** Presented by Green Team Properties. Featuring Beyonce's Halftime extravaganza. \$5 cover includes two drinks and super buffet, \$10 Miller Lite and Coors Light pitchers. Doors open at 4:30 pm. 4:30pm-10:15pm, Spin Nightclub, 800 W. Belmont Ave., [www.spin-nightclub.com](http://www.spin-nightclub.com)

## Monday, Feb. 4

**i2i new API Coming Out Group** Open to



## STRING THEORY

Tuesday, Feb. 5

The Lakeside Pride Symphony Orchestra will perform at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St.

Photo by Susan Mattes

lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, and queer APIs. Adoptees, hapas, and multiracial folks welcome too. First Monday of every month. Free. Snacks. More info: [chicago2i@yahoo.com](mailto:chicago2i@yahoo.com); 6pm-7:30pm, Asian Human Services, 7th flr conference room, 4753 N. Broadway

## Tuesday, Feb. 5

**Lakeside Pride Symphony Orchestra: Music from the Inside Out - Elgar's Enigma** Lakeside Pride Symphony Orchestra brings members and friends of the LGBT community together through a diverse repertoire that spans from music solely for strings to standard works in the grand tradition of orchestral music. 7:30pm-9:30pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., [www.lakesidepride.org](http://www.lakesidepride.org)

## Wed., Feb. 6

**TV Reruns: Love The Ones You're With** TV Reruns presented on the first Wednesday of every month by A Reasonable Facsimile Theatre Company. 7:30pm-9:30pm, Mary's Attic, 5400 N. Clark St.

## Thursday, Feb. 7

**Triton College's National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day** Community event will offer free HIV/AIDS rapid testing, information and literature about HIV/AIDS, STI counselors on site, HIV/AIDS housing information, referrals, resources; 10am-3pm, 708-779-4664, 2000 Fifth Ave., River Grove

**Chicago Gay Men's Chorus "Deep Love"** Featuring 18 members of the chorus, the best of Broadway, the American songbook and cabaret. Romantic, fun, a little naughty. Doors 6:30 for pre-show dinner, drinks. 312-787-2200 to arrange for pre-show dining. Valet \$13. 8pm, Palm Court, Drake Hotel, 140 E. Walton Pl., [www.cgmc.org](http://www.cgmc.org)

## Saturday, Feb. 9

**Queer Black History: Leaving the Shadows Behind** Affinity and Morten Group celebrate Black History with a screening of "Leaving the Shadows Behind," which features Black LGBT activists from the '90s. Free. Reception is from 4 - 4:30pm. RSVP online. 4pm-6pm, Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts, 915 E. 60th St., Tickets: <http://queerblackhistory.eventbrite.com>

**Equality Illinois "Justice for All" Gala** Equality Illinois and event Chairs, Chef Art Smith and Artist Jesus Salgueiro, invite you to join them Saturday, February 9th, for the Equality Illinois Justice for All Gala. 6pm-11:45pm, Chicago Hilton and Towers, 720 S. Michigan Ave, Chicago, <http://www.eqil.org/gala2/gala2.html>; Tickets: <http://goprider.com/z7ts>



## MADE IN THE 'SHADES'

Thursday, Jan. 31

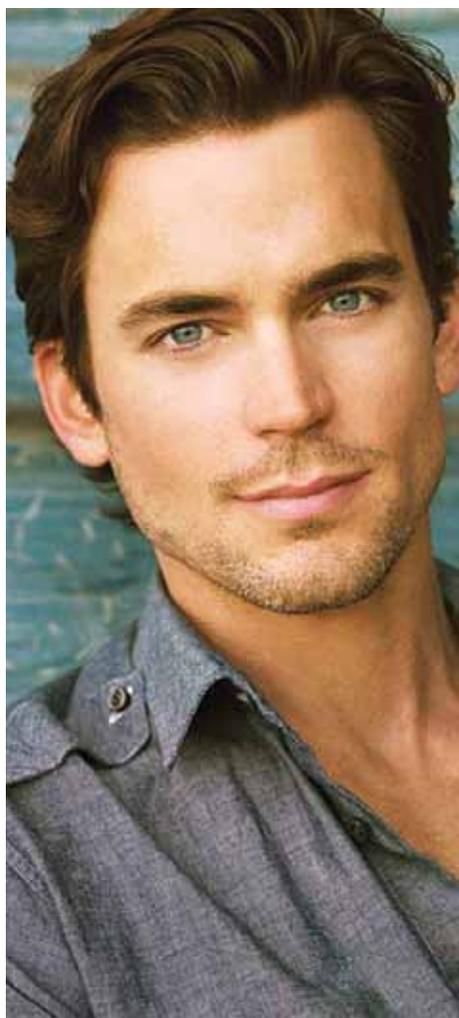
Sharon Bridgeforth (above) is one of the presenters at "50 Shades of Blues" at the Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark St.

Photo by Linda "Kizzy" Ramos

# BILLY MASTERS

"My favorite place to perform is London, because I have never seen more gay people in my whole life."—Miley Cyrus tells "Bang Showbiz" how far out-of-step America is when it comes to sexuality. Of course, she also likes to wear barely-there shirts that show lots of side-boob. If she wants to combine the two, she should do a show at GayDays Anaheim!

Every once in a while, I like to shake things up and try something new. So, I recently went to one of those autograph shows where you can buy memorabilia and meet celebrities from days gone by—like the second Lurch or the original Chris Partridge. Since this particular show was in Hollywood, it featured more "names" than usual. For those of you who don't know, you can meet the stars for free after paying to get in. But if you want an autograph, it's extra. If you want a photo with them, it's extra. If you want ... well, you get the idea. But nobody told me that you can't take a candid photo of someone while you walk by—well, nobody until Lesley Ann Warren!



**Matt Bomer is one busy little bee.**

Aside from that, it was a pleasant afternoon that included a celebration of the 30th anniversary of my beloved Grease 2. Before you ask, no Pfeiffer. But Adrian Zmed, Maxwell Caulfield and Connie Stevens showed up.

Sure, we all laugh when Barbara Walters mispronounces a name or treats Whoopi like she's really Miss Celie. But we're gonna miss that crazy 83-year-old lady when she's gone—and that could be any day now. Last week, she landed in the hospital after tripping inside the residence of the British ambassador in Washington, D.C. I dunno what was worse: falling at a party full of people, or knowing that you'd miss the inauguration (the first she's missed since Lincoln). Although she didn't break a hip, she did require stitches in her forehead, a stay in a hospital and a week away from The View. Strike that—two weeks. Aside from a video chat from home, she'll be off this week, too.

Remember when I told you that hunky Scott

Evans (the gay brother of the even hunkier Chris Evans) was arrested for attempting to buy a controlled substance from an undercover cop? Turns out that he was trying to buy cocaine and was arrested. Although he originally pled not guilty, a deal was in place by the time he was in front of a judge. In return for pleading no contest, he was sentenced to attend 60 Narcotics Anonymous meetings. And if he completes all of the meetings within six months, the entire case will be thrown out.

At least he's also working. You might have seen Evans last week when he turned up again on White Collar to tangle with Matthew Bomer—someone who has more jobs than he knows what to do with. Bomer just filmed a sci-fi dramedy called Space Station 76, which was directed and written by our *bon ami* Jack Plotnick, and co-stars Jerry O'Connell and Liv Tyler. And, while Matt didn't get to play Superman on the big screen, he is the voice of the Man of Steel in the animated feature Superman: Unbound. In addition to all that, this summer he'll be filming the HBO film version of The Normal Heart. Coincidentally, he just played Andrew Rannells' ex-boyfriend on Ryan Murphy's sitcom The New Normal. So I guess coming out really didn't hurt his career. Although it could be argued he's mostly playing gay ... and for Ryan Murphy!

Another gay actor who's mighty busy is Sean Hayes. In addition to being an executive producer of Hot in Cleveland, he'll also turn up on Smash, where he'll star alongside Megan Hilty in Liaisons—a musical version of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. (We have the photos of them in costume on BillyMasters.com.) And it looks like we may see him in a new sitcom next season. NBC just picked up his untitled pilot about a single gay dad trying to raise the 14-year-old daughter he just met. And if that's not enough, he's also starring in a film version of the play "Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks" opposite Gena Rowlands.

This week's "Ask Billy" question comes from Jeremy in Baltimore: "You seem to always know about English hunks. Who is the rugby player who is also an underwear model? I just saw pics of him—he's amazing!"

I suspect you're talking about the almost unbearably hot Thom Evans, who has had quite a diverse career, indeed. In addition to playing rugby (which ended three years ago on my birthday), he also was part of a short-lived British boyband, Twen2y4Se7en (yes, that's how they spelled it—amazing they didn't make it). This underwear campaign has certainly raised the profile of the 27-year-old hunk. It's also raised some eyebrows—well, I think they were eyebrows—when it was revealed that the D. Hedral line includes the special "Leon" briefs. These undies are designed to "boost" men's bottoms with special Anglefit technology—or, as some call it, "bum-enhancing technology". Of course, Thom's bum doesn't need much help, as we saw when he posed *au naturel* with his equally hunky rugby-playing brother, Max Evans, for the "Dieux du Stade" calendar. Happily, we have nude photos of them both—along with video from the shoot—on our very own BillyMasters.com.

When Barbara Walters could sue ABC for elder abuse, it's definitely time to end yet another column. Is Barbara losing it? Is it time to retire? Who knows—but every time she pats Whoopi on the head and calls her "My Whoopi," I wonder if she dozed off during the civil-rights movement. You certainly won't miss any big news like that on www.BillyMasters.com—the site that's not only *au naturel* but also *au courant*. If you want us to look into something, send a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before Whoopi bakes Babs a chocolate pie! Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

## STAMOS from page 18

here!" I've never played that guy that you couldn't tell where he was at because, again nowadays—I mean it's so unfair and I think that's the point of the episode, which is that gaydar doesn't work anymore.

The rules don't apply any more. And I think that's what we were trying to get at. It was a very difficult line to walk because as it turns out he's not gay.

I had to sort of give the impression that I was but I didn't want to play into any of the stereotypical things there are that people think of gay men and women.

I wanted to get it right and, thankfully, they gave me the right amount of time. I really gave it a lot of thought because I care about it and I don't want to be flip. I don't want to be simple about it because it's not.

**WCT: This could really open up some doors for you. This shows your support for the gay community that some people may not know about, and it's important.**

JS: I agree. When I was 18 my first publicist was gay. His name was Greg Olipolis, rest in peace. I loved that man so much and he taught me so much. I came from a very conservative Orange County where I didn't understand it growing up.

It's funny because I was at Disney World a couple weeks ago and I saw a kid that I grew up with; I guess he turned out to be gay but he had sort of a feminine thing about him, and kids would beat him up and make fun of him.

He told me this at Disney World the other day. He said, "Boy, you protected me and you said I'm just like everybody else." I don't know where I got that but I know it was solidified later when my publicist said something very simple to me that I'll never forget.

He said, "You see that girl over there." I said, "Yes." "You see that feeling you get when you think about kissing her and you get excited about talking to her or asking her on a date?" I said, "Yeah." He goes, "That's what I feel when I see a guy." I said, "Oh. Okay. I get it." And that was that.

**WCT: Have you ever been mistaken for gay maybe before you were famous?**

JS: I'm sure Ryan could have called up another guy and got him in a few seconds but I hope I was the first call for this because I am the perfect example.

I grew up with musical theater and [I played] with puppets. I liked magic but I liked all the arts and I loved doing makeup. Halloween was my favorite time of the year. I was quite good. I was a good makeup artist. I tried out for a lot of musicals. I'm such a shitty singer. I mean later in life I guess I got a little better, but not much.

I wanted to be in musicals so bad; I studied singing and it's not my favorite thing to do. But I can sort of get through a song if it's in a musical theater setting I can play the character. I even think my father at some point thought, "Well, okay, he's gay, who cares?" So yes, I guess, I have been mistaken.

**WCT: How do you stay looking so young?**

JS: I'm very flattered when people say that. I think good genes and, truthfully, I do take care of myself in a sense. If there's any secret, I sleep a lot. I try to go to bed early.

**WCT: Now that you have been on Ryan Murphy's shows Glee and The New Normal, are you going to talk to him about being on American Horror Story?**

JS: I haven't, but I am going to call him right after this.

**The New Normal airs every Tuesday on NBC.**

# Chicago performs well at Sin City Shootout

BY ROSS FORMAN

LAS VEGAS—Tony Tiet was on the championship-winning ice-hockey team in the 6th annual Sin City Shootout Sports Festival, held here Jan. 19-21. Hockey was one of the 12 sports/events in the annual event that attracted about 5,271 worldwide LGBT athletes, including more than 100 from Chicago.

Tiet skated for the Red Cosmos, which defeated the Black Russians 6-3 in the championship game, played at the SOBE Ice Arena inside the Fiesta Rancho Hotel. Tiet celebrated his championship with linemate Pavel Nadin of St. Louis, who has skated for the Chicago Gay Hockey Association (CGHA) in the past.

Tiet, one of the top forwards for the CGHA, skated in the championship game against Don Marzolf and Nathan Allen, who also have worn the CGHA uniform for games/tournaments. Meanwhile, CGHA members Andrew Sobotka, Scott Mix and Brian Hull watched the championship game as a trio of cheerleaders, sans the pom-poms—the trio had their championship game aspirations stopped in the semi-finals.

"The level of play [in the tournament] was really competitive," Tiet said. "Going into the playoffs, it could have been any of the four teams that stole the championship.

"[My team] had a few [moments] throughout the weekend where we worried that we might not win, but we pulled out all the stops and were able to win.

"It was great to see so many gay athletes and allies from around the world all coming together for one big sports festival."

Sobotka, the president of the CGHA, added: "Hockey was [one of] the most intimate sports

at the Sin City Shootout. While there were thousands of softball players, we only had about 50 hockey players, which was nice. As always, we love seeing our hockey friends from around the U.S. and Canada. The organizers did a great job coordinating and splitting the teams up to make sure everyone had fun and the games were balanced."

There were 56 hockey players here, including a goalie from France, and this was the first time hockey was offered at the Sin City Shootout. Hockey coordinator Brynne Van Putten, who skated for the Blue Adios in the tournament, said hockey likely will be expanded in 2014, perhaps to as many as eight teams, likely with two skill-based divisions.

"The hockey was great; I think everyone who played really loved it," Van Putten said of the co-ed sport, which was mostly gay men from such cities as New York, Boston, Chicago and Los Angeles.

The hockey players were placed on teams, thus all Chicagoans were not teammates.

"It was great that this tournament was drop-in style," Hull said. "It's always fun the play hockey with different guys and gals than you normally play with. It's a great way to make friends and build connections with other gay hockey organizations."

The hockey competition was well balanced, with each of the four teams having a legitimate shot at claiming the championship.

"I really thought it was a phenomenal event, on and off the ice, and I really think everyone had a great time," said Van Putten, of Laguna Beach, Calif. She skates for the gay Los Angeles Blades. "The Sin City Shootout is quickly becoming a mini Gay Games—there really were a ton



Chicago's championship hockey team at the Sin City Shootout Sports Festival. Photo by Ross Forman

of LGBT athletes at this event."

Event organizers were pleased with the 2013 edition and already looking ahead to 2014, when multiple sports will, likely, be added to the offering—including flag football, ballroom dancing, and others.

Chicago was also represented well on the softball fields, with multiple teams in multiple divisions. The Chicago Menace went 3-2 in the tournament, finishing in fourth-place in the top-tiered A-Division.

"We were 2-0 in pool play, which landed us the No. 1 seed and a first-round bye in elimination play," said Menace player-coach Cameron Turner. "We played the Long Beach Rounders in our first game of elimination play, and we had previously beaten them 14-8 in pool play. Unfortunately, they got on a hot streak and jumped out to a 13-1 lead in the game. We battled back nicely, but lost a nail biter, 17-16. That sent us into the loser's bracket. We won our next game against Los Angeles DTS, 20-7, but then were eliminated by the Phoenix Toros, who went on to take second-place in the tournament.

"I was very impressed overall with how we played in this tournament. We were missing several key players who just weren't able to make it for various reasons. We actually only had 10 players for this tournament, which of course limited our lineup options and flexibility. None of us had played softball since the Gay Softball World Series [last] August, so we just weren't sure what to expect. But, we scored nearly 80 runs [combined] in the five games we played, which is pretty good."

Turner said Joe Bland, Charles Piper and Kevin Ball each had great offensive tournaments. Bland had four home runs, including two grand slams.

"Thieu Brown, our newest player, played very well and showed he is going to be a nice addition to the team," Turner said.

The Chicago Knockouts, playing softball in the D1 Division, claimed third-place, finishing with a 4-3 record.

"It was an absolute blast, a great event," said Josh Bradley, player-coach for the Knockouts, a mix of players from two teams that played in 2012 in the Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA) Open Sunday Softball division, along with four pick-up players.

"Everyone was a bit rusty, [not having played since August], but we all came together and made it happen."

Bradley, 24, who lives in Chicago's Uptown neighborhood, smacked three home runs and played first base. He was joined on the field by his dad, Tom, who lives in Las Vegas. Bradley's mom, Audra, was one of several cheering the team throughout.

"We lost our last game of the tournament 25-2; we got crushed. But, as was our philosophy throughout, we wanted to have fun—and did.

The last two plays before the game was called [due to] time limit were home runs. We were going crazy, [despite the score,] Bradley said.

The Chicago Blaze captured third place in soccer, with its team of 10.

"We have some experienced players (on the team), but we don't play together back home," said Marco Castillo of the Blaze. "The overall Sin City Shootout was a lot of fun, regardless of how we finished.

"It's great getting to meet people from all over the country, and getting to meet other (LGBT people) from other sports can really broaden you."

Castillo, 39, who lives in Old Irving Park, said he will be back in Las Vegas for the 2014 event. "It was fun," he said.

James Simmons was one of about 12 Chicagoans playing basketball in Las Vegas.

"Everyone seemed to have a really good time and the overall event is really well run," Simmons said. "There really was no overly dominant team, which is good because then everyone truly believes they have a chance to win."

Simmons, who played for the Hollywood Blindside, said the Sin City Shootout was a perfect scouting trip for potential challengers he'll face at the annual Coady Classic this spring in Chicago.

So what was the Sin City highlight?

"What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas," Simmons said, laughing. "It was a great tournament and everyone really seemed to have great spirit and energy.

"Truthfully, I'm surprised more Chicagoans don't come out for the Sin City Shootout, whether it's [to play] basketball or any other sport. Hey, it's Las Vegas in January."

CMSA President Brian Kupersmit played C-Division softball in Vegas, and had nothing but praise for the multi-day event.

"The Sin City Shootout is an amazing tournament experience and a celebration of how far gay sports have come over the last several years," Kupersmit said. "Having gone to the tournament each of the last four years, Shootout director Eric Ryan and his team have created a destination event. Their breakthrough concept of a mega tournament with the backdrop of Las Vegas serves as [an] inspiration to me as to what's possible for the future of gay athletics. I'm excited to bring back the energy and passion of this tournament to CMSA."

Kupersmit and the Chicago Chargers were not able to improve on their top five finish in each of the last three years. Still, he said, "It was an awesome time as I got the opportunity to play with great friends and partake in this amazing tournament experience."

The 2014 Sin City Shootout Sports Festival will be bigger and better than 2013—and no doubt with even more Chicagoans participating.

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## WHO PAYS THE BILLS WHEN SOMEONE DIES?

**Q. When my partner died I discovered that he owed \$75,000 in charge card bills and \$110,000 in unpaid hospital bills. Everything that he owned (the house and the bank accounts) was held in joint tenancy with myself. He also had several life insurance policies and IRA accounts which named his children as beneficiaries of these accounts. Do I have to sell the house to pay my lover's bills? Do his children have to use the money from the life insurance and IRA accounts to pay their father's bills?**

A. First, the law says that a person can't transfer their property to defraud their creditors or get out of paying their bills. If, however, you and your partner owned the house and bank accounts in joint tenancy before the debts arose then that property will pass to you as the surviving joint tenant owner without deduction for payment of your lover's bills.

Creditors of a deceased person may only go after property in the deceased person's probate estate, which means property your partner owned in his name alone, and does not include joint tenancy property. Also benefits paid under a life insurance policy or IRA account with a named beneficiary is not considered part of someone's probate estate and is not subject to the claims of creditors. Accordingly, the life insurance and IRA money would go to your partner's children and would not have to be used to pay creditors.

If you and your lover have entered into a Civil Union, my answer would change depending upon the nature of the debt. Illinois Civil Union Couples would be subject to "Family Statutes" 750 ILCS 65/5 and 750 ILCS 65/15 (also known as the Family Expense Act). They provide that spouses (after a Civil Union your partner is now considered your spouse) are not generally liable for one another's debt. The statute states also that your wages, earnings and separate property are not liable for the separate debts of your spouse. However, 65/15 does hold both spouses jointly and separately liable for the "expenses of the family."

The law defines such "expenses" to include medical and funeral expenses, as well as many other services and goods that benefit the family. Therefore any medical bills, including those from a hospital, doctor, clinic, laboratory, etc. would be chargeable upon your property if the creditors look to you for payment.

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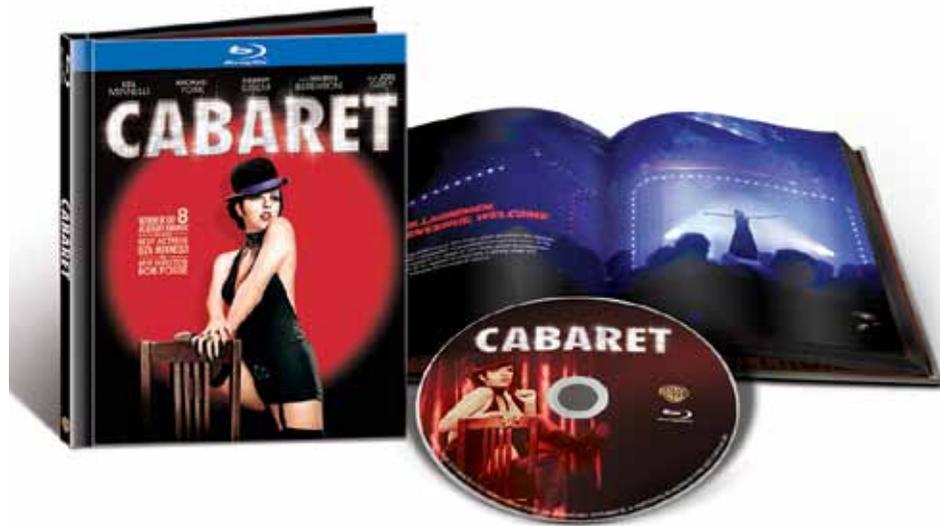
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## Cabaret on Blu-ray Feb. 5

Cabaret—Bob Fosse’s Oscar-winning musical drama starring Liza Minnelli (Arthur, The Sterile Cuckoo), Michael York (the Austin Powers films) and Joel Grey (TV’s Oz)—celebrates its 40th anniversary with a Blu-ray debut on Feb. 5.

Winner of eight Academy Awards, the film will be offered in a premium Blu-ray Book format (\$27.98 SRP) that contains 40 pages of photos and text. Special features include items such as “Cabaret: A Legend in the Meaning” as well as Grey and Minnelli recalling aspects of filming.

Cabaret was adapted from the Tony-winning stage production, and that was, in turn, inspired by Christopher Isherwood’s Berlin Stories and the play and movie I Am a Camera.



## Alvin Ailey returns to Chicago March 8-17

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater will return to Chicago with a March 8-17 stand at the Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, 50 E. Congress Pkwy.

The program will include such pieces as the world premiere of Kyle Abraham’s “Another Night” and the classic “Revelations.”

Tickets (\$32-\$92) are on sale now and available online at [www.ticketmaster.com/auditorium](http://www.ticketmaster.com/auditorium); at 800-982-ARTS (2787); or at the Auditorium Theatre box office.

In addition, two student matinee performances will take place March 14-15, open to any elementary through high school for \$12 each; call 312-341-2357.

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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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