

CHICAGO SKY'S SWIN CASH TALKS ABOUT GAY ATHLETES

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WINDY CITY TIMES

THE VOICE OF CHICAGO'S GAY, LESBIAN, BI AND TRANS COMMUNITY SINCE 1985

MAY 15, 2013
VOL 28, NO. 32

www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com



Black gay pastor starts Loop church

BY DERRICK CLIFTON

If you attempted to count the number of Chicago congregations led by openly gay, Black ministers, you'd probably struggle to get to 10. However, a new church in the South Loop will add to that number.

Lighthouse Church of Chicago recently launched Thursday Nights Together, a weekly meeting featuring music, worship, a brief sermon and breakout discussions. Otherwise known as TNT, the event is held every Thursday 7- 8:30 p.m. at the Daystar Center, 1550 S. State St. So far, Thursday Nights Together has averaged between 15 and 20 attendees since gatherings began in early April.

Jamie Frazier, Lighthouse Church of Chicago's founder and senior pastor, began planning the congregation last year after wishing to experience an open and inclusive congregation rooted in African-American church traditions. His vision informs the church's motto: "Passionate about Jesus. Serious about justice."

"Often I have found congregations that claimed to be dedicated to Jesus, but were silent on justice, or vice versa," he said. "I have long hungered for a place in which one could experience lively and spirited gospel music, prophetic preaching, and a loving community."

Although Chicago has a wide array of predominantly Black churches, Lighthouse Church of Chicago hopes to uniquely honor the Black Church tradition while incorporating additional elements of social



Rev. Jamie Frazier of the Lighthouse Church. Photo from Rafael Letzter

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MARRIAGE RALLIES TAKE PLACE IN SUBURBS

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WCT CONTINUES ITS CRIMINAL LEGAL SERIES

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AARON JACKSON SPEAKS AT LEGACY PROJECT'S SPRING GALA LUNCHEON

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Windy City Times talks with two icons who will be in town over the next few days: John Waters and Chaka Khan. Read their interviews on, respectively, page 20 and page 21. Publicity photos

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Photos on cover (left, from top): Photo of Swin Cash from the Chicago Sky; photo of marriage-equality backer at Chicago Heights rally by Kate Sosin; photo courtesy of Dejon; photo of Aaron Jackson by Hal Baim



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BY THE BROOKE

Top executive Beth Brooke (left) reflects on coming out of the closet.
Photo from Ernst & Young



Read about Make It Safe, which distributes LGBT-themed books to schools.
Photo of Make It Safe founder Amelia Roskin-Frazer



State Sen. Heather Steans was among those at Planned Parenthood of Illinois' (PPIL's) Generations Gala.
Photo from PPIL

TALK TALK

Read about forums that were part of the recent American Foundation for Suicide Prevention symposium at Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

ART OF WRITING

See photos from out chef Art Smith's signing of his latest book, Health Comfort.

ENTERTAINMENT NEWS

Find out the latest about Johnny Depp, Bravo's dispute and Liza Minnelli.

plus
DAILY BREAKING NEWS

UNITED IN SPIRIT



United Latin@ Pride unveiled its event line-up for this year.
Photo by Vern Hester

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Minnesota passes marriage equality

BY LISA KEEN
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

The Minnesota Senate gave final approval May 13 to a marriage-equality bill and the governor has indicated he will sign it, making Minnesota the 12th state to approve allowing same-sex couples to obtain marriage licenses the same as male-female couples. The vote also continues an unprecedented momentum toward marriage equality, with Minnesota being the sixth state to approve marriage equality in the past six months and the third to do so in the past two weeks.

Rhode Island's legislature and governor approved a marriage equality law there May 2. Delaware's legislature and governor did so May 7.

Meanwhile, time is running out for approval of a marriage-equality bill in Illinois this year. The Illinois Senate passed the bill in February but the House adjourns May 31 and the Chicago Sun-Times says supporters still need three to five votes. Supporters believe they will get those votes and that the House may take up the vote Wednesday or Thursday this week. Democratic Gov. Pat Quinn has been making a concerted push for votes.

For now, Minnesota's approval means that 18 percent of the U.S. population now lives in a state that provides marriage equality. Minnesota's Democratic governor, Mark Dayton, could sign as early as Tuesday; the law will go into effect on August 1.

The Senate, on a vote of 37-30, approved a version of the marriage equality bill approved by the House on May 9 by a vote of 75-59. Democratic Governor Mark Layton has said he will sign it.

State Sen. Scott Dibble of Minneapolis introduced the bill to the floor. He wrote a letter to his senate colleagues in February to acknowledge that he is gay and married his male partner in California in 2008 when same-sex couples could obtain marriage licenses there.

Sen. Terri Bonoff of Minnetonka spoke next, saying her brother acknowledged being gay several years ago and that her closest friend was a gay man who succumbed to AIDS some years ago. She also spoke about gay neighbors and a gay intern in her office.

One senator speaking in opposition to the bill was Republican Sen. Warren Limmer of Maple Grove, who expressed concerns about the bill's impact on religious freedom. Limmer said he believes the bill "tries to protect" religious practitioners but "doesn't go far enough."

Another Republican, Sen. Paul Gazelka of Nisswa, said people "trying to please their god," are asking them to "violate core principles." He offered an amendment to exempt not just religious entities from the law but also "entities in connection with religious entities" and their volunteers and employees, as well as private individuals who believe marriage is between a man and a woman only.

Interestingly, a straight Republican senator stood to oppose Limmer and Gazelka and their amendment, saying no member of the senate had spent more time on examining the threats to religious liberty than himself. Senator Branden Petersen of Andover said their concerns about the potential for infringement on religious liberties were simply "not true." Dibble called the amendment "breathtaking" in its attempt to gut the bill and the state's civil rights law, which prohibits discrimination based on all categories, including race.

"How could we possibly think about entertaining an amendment that contains the harshest religious discriminatory language?" asked Senator Patricia Torres Ray, a Democratic-Farmer-Labor member from Minneapolis. She said it would exempt hospitals, nurses, doctors, pharmacy workers, and "any private person" from serving a

gay person, claiming a religious belief to justify their discrimination.

The Senate rejected the amendment 26-41.

Sen. Torrey Westrom, a Republican from Elbow Lake, offered an amendment seeking to continue using the terms "mother" and "father" in relation to male-female marriages in state law. He said the marriage equality bill was using gender-neutral terms for same-sex couples but doesn't specify that male-female couples could continue using gender specific terms.

Dibbles spoke against the amendment, saying it was "completely and totally unnecessarily" because the bill does not prohibit the use of gender-specific terms in the case of male-female couples.

The Senate rejected the second amendment by a vote of 31-36.

Later in the discussion, Westrom spoke against the overall bill, saying that "just 16 years ago," the state had defined marriage as being only between one man and one woman.

"I think there are a lot of unintended consequences," he said, echoing a term that has been commonly raised during state legislative debates on marriage equality bills.

"If marriage is about who you love, where will that stop?" asked Westrom.

Many supporters of the bill talked about gay family members, friends, and colleagues, and about civil rights laws generally.

In a speech before the final vote on the bill, Sen. Jeff Hayden (D-Minneapolis), an African American, said his children urged him to vote yes and said they did so because they have known same-sex couples. He also referenced the *Loving v. Virginia* case that established the right of interracial couples to marry, noting that that decision enabled him to marry his wife, who is white.

And in one of the more emotional speeches of the debate, Senator Roger Reinert, his voice choking back tears, noted that his parents—who were watching from the gallery—had taught him to be tolerant. Reinert, a 43-year-old Democrat from Duluth, noted that he is single now but hopes to find someone who will love him. He said he would vote for the bill.

In the final speech, Senate Majority Leader Thomas Bakk spoke of a family Lutheran pastor who officiated over his marriage and that of many family members, but could not have a marriage for himself.

During debate, a large crowd of supporters rallied in the state capitol rotunda, singing songs and chanting. A small number of opponents, most of whom appeared elderly, held female-male "Defend Marriage" signs and stood quietly.

The debate in Minnesota House sounded often like debate last week in Delaware. There were the sounds of chants and singing of supporters heard in the hallways outside the chamber. There were several representatives who talked about the "unintended consequences" of allowing marriage for same-sex couples, about the possibility that it would lead to teaching young children in public school about homosexuality, and about the likely infringement on religious beliefs.

The bill on the House floor was introduced by long-time openly gay State Rep. Karen Clark who told other representatives of her parents support for her relationship and reminding the House that gay people pay taxes and vote like everyone else. Clark could was on the floor of the senate Monday when the bill passed the senate.

Rep. Tim Faust (DFL) said he would have voted "no" on the bill but for the many conversations he had with same-sex couples, many of who quoted from the bible to stand in favor of marriage equality.

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A Queer Agenda

BY ANDRÉ PÉREZ



Good news and bad news

After Cemija Acoff's brutal murdered, transgender activists stood up against inaccurate and insensitive reporting by Cleveland daily newspaper, *The Plain Dealer*. Reporter John Caniglia used the wrong pronoun for Acoff, called her feminine attire "odd," and referred to her body as "it." He then launched into a description of Acoff's arrest record, adding insult to injury by including her mug shot.

For decades, transgender murders were underrepresented because gender variance was concealed from the public and assumed sex workers were deemed unworthy of coverage. I came of age in the *Boys Don't Cry* era where victimization is a transgender archetype. Transgender women are especially linked with crime in the eyes of the media, whether characterized as deceptive perpetrators or tragic victims. Tragic trans women (invariably implied to be sex workers) came on every popular fiction and nonfiction crime show including *Law and Order*, *Crime Scene Investigators*, and *Cold Case*. Transgender advocates fought hard to win media attention for our issues only to find ourselves barraged by a media landscape where transgender victims outnumber transgender leaders ten to one.

Fanfare surrounding denunciations of Caniglia marks a turning point in the transgender community's relationship with news media. In 2008, the AP Style Guide, which lists professional standards

ing standards and holding news media accountable to them, I devised my own news analysis method by rating articles on a scale from -7 to +7. Every article starts at 0. Articles gain points for exploring themes that counteract prevalent stereotypes, showing trans people as agents of change in their own life or in society at large, supplying contextualizing information to help readers make sense of personal stories, featuring trans people speaking for themselves, featuring supportive friends, family or community members, and featuring trans people of color in respectful ways. Articles lose points for misgendering trans people, featuring a trans person as deceptive, criminal, or sexually deviant, and featuring strawman opinions, those of people with no stated or implied connection to transgender communities or issues. I evaluated the top fifteen google news search results for "transgender" on May 5th and found that:

- Vast majority used correct pronouns.
- One half featured transgender people speaking for themselves.
- 30% depicted trans people as deceptive, criminal, or sexually deviant.
- Two were strawman opinion columns.
- 7 were positive, 6 were decent, and 2 were negative.

Several "news" results were actually opinion articles. As trans folks become part of a national debate, people who have no connection to the trans community

feel entitled to comment on which civil rights and human decencies we deserve. On the other hand, these open discussions bring the issues I fear, hope, and dream into the realm of public debate and public policy. People have to argue why they think I do not deserve to play on a sports team or visit the restroom instead of expecting that everyone will understand their dis-

"For decades, transgender murders were underrepresented because gender variance was concealed from the public and assumed sex workers were deemed unworthy of coverage."

for journalists, reformed its policy towards transgender people. The guide advises reporters to investigate subjects' preferred pronouns, and when a person cannot be contacted, it offers reporters should "use the pronoun consistent with the way the individuals live publicly." Increasing community pressure towards large news organizations like New York Times is creating a paradigm shift wherein offensive reporting is unacceptable and detrimental to journalistic reputations. Ignorance is no longer a viable excuse with resources like GLAAD's guide for reporters entitled *Doubly Victimized: Reporting on Transgender Victims of Crime*.

Let's celebrate these accomplishments without falling into the "all news is good news" framework in which we are grateful for even the worst kind of representations. The subject, content, framing, and execution of a story matters. While GLAAD published a report evaluating ten years of transgender representation in entertainment television (2002-2012), I could not find similar attempts to review news coverage. In the spirit of develop-

comfort and support their bigotry.

After reading a weekend's worth of news, my takeaway is trans people change things. Trans people are fighters who are: protesting a bridal shop turning away a customer who wasn't women enough, challenging a historically women's colleges to broaden its understanding of female experience, calling on schools to support our children, and suing to be included in India's Civil Service sector. Trans people are fighting with lawyers in courtrooms, with picket signs on sidewalks, with family support in PTA meetings. We are everywhere and we are making demands.

Though generally positive, the news sampling was glaringly unrepresentative. All 15 articles reviewed focused on transgender women, but only 2 of 15 portrayed a trans woman of color in a positive light. Progress in this arena, as in so many others, has only reached the more privileged portions of our community.

It's up to us to figure out the difference between good news and bad news, and to let reporters know how they are doing.

André is the founder of the Trans Oral History Project, co-founder of Project Fierce Chicago, and a working board member of Orgullo en Accion. When André is not rabble-raising, educating, or building community, you can hire him to photograph events and portraits by contacting him at andrealanperez@gmail.com.

Beverly Citibank employee claims anti-gay bias

BY KATE SOSIN

A Citibank teller in Beverly, on Chicago's South-west Side, has hit her supervisor with an Illinois Department of Human Rights complaint after the bank manager allegedly passed her up for promotion because she is a lesbian.

Tiffany Maney-Green said she was more than qualified for a promotion from a part-time to a full-time teller position but that she was not considered for the job because she introduced the branch manager to her wife. The complaint hinges on allegations of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, marital status as well as sexual harassment.

Maney-Green's complaint, filed May 2, alleges that Kareem Trice, branch manager, met Maney-Green's wife, Yolanda Green, two days after she applied for the job.

"The look on his face, he was just in complete shock," Maney-Green told Windy City Times. "It made my wife feel uncomfortable."

Maney-Green's complaint states that Trice told her after, "You don't have to tell everyone you're gay. You don't have to show it around the office. Keep it to yourself."

Green and Maney-Green were married in February 2011 and then had an Illinois civil union in June of that year.

Maney-Green said she has never had a problem at her job and that a past supervisor encouraged her to apply for a full-time position. Another senior teller verbally recommended her for the job, she said. In early April, she was ranked among the top 10 Citibank tellers in the Chicago area, the complaint states.

Still, she said, Trice considered outside candidates and told her she was not right for the job.

"He stated I was too flamboyant for the position," Maney-Green said. "I know I'm qualified. I



Tiffany Maney-Green (front) and Yolanda Green. Photo courtesy of Green

know I'm well-qualified."

Maney-Green's attorney Betty Tsamis said that in her eyes, the situation is a straightforward case of discrimination.

"Why is this guy singling her out and saying, 'No, not you. I want to look at outside people?'" Tsamis asked.

Andrew Brent, a spokesperson for Citibank, said that company does not comment on "personal" matters involving employees but added that Citibank investigates complaints and does not tolerate discrimination.

"Citi has a long-standing commitment to pro-

viding all its employees with a professional and respectful workplace free of unlawful discrimination," Brent said in a statement to Windy City Times.

Citi has been ranked nationally among the most LGBT-friendly companies by the Human Rights Campaign, which scores companies in its annual Corporate Equality Index.

Norma Reyes dies

BY TRACY BAIM

Norma Reyes, who came out as a lesbian during an emotional speech at the 2010 Equality Illinois Justice for All gala, has died. She was 56. No cause of death has been reported.

Reyes was deputy chief of staff for Mayor Daley from 2001-2003 and commissioner of business affairs and consumer protection for the city starting in 2004. She retired in 2011.

Bernard Cherkasov, CEO of Equality Illinois, offered condolences: "We are deeply saddened by the passing of Norma Reyes, a woman whose vision of a just society extending equal rights to all of us infused every aspect of her life."

Windy City Times covered Reyes' EI speech in its Jan. 28, 2010 edition: "Speeches were generally brief, with the highlight being a moving tribute by MC Norma Reyes to her late partner. The couple fought a sudden, brief and devastating battle with cancer—and the medical and financial establishment—[in 2009] and the presentation emphasized the imperative for establishing full marriage equality and civil rights for the LGBT community."

Longtime lesbian activist Vernita Gray said that Reyes had never fully recovered from the sudden death of her partner Joan, a situation complicated by the fact that Joan's family treated Reyes so badly. "This is such a loss,"

Gray said.

"Norma's story resonated strongly with the audience, and we wish she could have seen the day when her vision of the freedom to marry is realized in Illinois, as it will be very soon," Cherkasov said. "Everyone who knew her felt her passion for justice. She was an exemplary public servant in the city of Chicago, and she also served the LGBT community with equal fervor. We extend our condolences to her family and friends. We will miss her."

The Chicago Tribune reported that Reyes "worked as a Cook County assistant state's attorney for nine years before becoming chief assistant corporation counsel and later the deputy corporation counsel for the city's Law Department."



Reyes at the 2010 EI gala. Photo by Kat Fitzgerald

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People on opposite sides of the marriage-equality bill clashed in Chicago Heights. Photo by Kate Sosin

Protesters spar over marriage bill in three suburbs

BY KATE SOSIN

The fight over legalizing same-sex marriage in Illinois escalated May 11 as protesters on both sides of the issue targeted three suburban representatives.

For the fourth week in a row, demonstrators yielding signs, banners and speakers faced off over SB 10, a bill that would bring equal marriage to Illinois.

The day saw three different demonstrations, organized by anti-gay group the Illinois Family Institute (IFI). Groups of pro-LGBT counterprotesters confronted them at each of the rallies.

In Aurora, demonstrators protested outside the office of state Rep. Stephanie Kifowit. At the height of that protest, approximately 200 demonstrated against same-sex marriage, while 55 had come to show support for the bill.

In Chicago Heights, approximately 60 came to show opposition for the bill, while about 15 demonstrated support for it. That group was targeting Democrat Anthony DeLuca.

Helen Sluis, a Mokena resident who opposes the bill, said that she feels her district does not

want DeLuca to vote yes.

"They would vote in favor of traditional marriage as the bedrock of society," she said.

Most of the pro-LGBT demonstrators reported they did not live in the district.

Gay Liberation Network (GLN), which organized the counterdemonstration in DeLuca's 80th district, has confronted other IFI rallies in recent weeks. Illinois Unites for Marriage, a coalition of groups, and The Civil Rights Agenda have also organized opposition to the rallies, which have tended to target undecided or wavering reps.

Andy Thayer, co-founder of GLN, acknowledged that the counter-protests were necessary even though he feels the bill should have been passed by now.

"I know that it's been very difficult coming out every weekend as many of you have," he told supporters.

Sponsors of the bill have been pushing for its passage since January, with supporters growing increasingly anxious. The bill passed the Senate in February and Gov. Pat Quinn has vowed to sign it.

Thayer called on House Democrats, especially

Speaker Mike Madigan, to call for a vote on the bill.

"It's crunch time now," he said.

IFI also demonstrated outside the office of Rep. Jim Durkin May 11. The Western Springs rally drew about 75 anti-gay demonstrators and a dozen pro-LGBT protesters according to Western Springs Patch.

There are many more photos online at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.

—Contributing: Tim Carroll

Man charged in attempted murder of ex-boyfriend

BY KATE SOSIN

A man is facing felony charges after allegedly stabbing his former boyfriend, according to the Chicago Sun-Times.

Ronald Smith, 49, was arrested for the May 1 stabbing on the 6200 block of South Cornell in Jackson Park. Police News Affairs Officer Jose Estrada said he could not confirm the relationship between Smith and the 38-year-old victim.

Smith faces charges of attempted first-degree murder and aggravated domestic battery, a spokesperson for the Cook County State's Attorney's office confirmed. The spokesperson would not confirm the relationship between Smith and the victim.

According to the Chicago Sun-Times, court testimony indicated that the two men had dated until April.

Local doctor launches Rainbow Reproduction

Chicago fertility doctor Laurence Jacobs, M.D., has started Rainbow Reproduction, a medical education website dedicated solely to family-building methods for same-sex couples, with a focus on LGBT family-building in Illinois, according to a Business Wire item.

Rainbow Reproduction is organized into several sections, including LGBT Family-Building in Illinois, LGBT Family-Building Methods, Family-Building for Gay Men and Family-Building for Lesbians.

See www.rainbowreproduction.com.

CHURCH from cover

justice advocacy.

"Often Black churches address racial injustice and economic equality, which we do as well, but stop short of addressing HIVphobia, transphobia, homophobia, xenophobia, and so forth," Frazier said. "The Lighthouse takes that justice to its logical conclusion—inclusion and liberation for all of God's children."

Thursday Nights Together acquaints potential members with such an approach. The weekly meetings began with a six-week series called "Family Matters," which will highlight biblical family relationships and applying the stories to various justice issues. At the most recent gathering, a number of attendees discussed how being openly gay caused further strains in adversarial family situations. Other attendees reflected upon having leadership positions in Black churches taken away after coming out.

For Frazier, being an out gay, Black minister presents challenges, especially as a number of Black pastors have recently expressed staunch opposition to marriage equality in Illinois. But he openly supports issues of LGBT equality and views his identity as an asset to his ministry work.

"I embody a shift that is happening across this country and within the Black Church because people are changing their attitudes about homosexuality," Frazier said. "My being a gay, or queer, person of color who pastors a church shows that it's possible to reconcile spirituality, sexuality and ethnicity."

A Vanderbilt University alumnus and native of Moncks Corner, S.C., Frazier began ministry work in spring 2005 as the founder of a Vanderbilt campus ministry group called Jeremiah Generation. Within a short time, the organization grew from an intimate gathering of six students to worship experiences with nearly 100 students regularly attending. At the time, Frazier dreamed of founding a church and conjured up the name "Lighthouse."

"God impressed that upon my heart and, more than seven years later, I understand why," Frazier said. "People can leave our events ready to face the rocky waves of life. And they can do this firm in the knowledge that there is a lighthouse nearby that will guide them home to a safe, welcoming shore."

Lighthouse Church of Chicago hopes to build a congregation of 100 regular attendees over the next few months, with Thursday Nights Together serving as a "first look." Led by a launch team of 14 members, the church will eventually transition into weekly Sunday worship services starting February 2014.

"Personally, I want to find every person that's been hurt and disenfranchised by other churches, their families, or their communities, said David Kinlow, director of business, operations and marketing for Lighthouse Church of Chicago. "I want to bring them in to come share some of their time with us and see how it makes a difference to be accepted."

For more information, visit the Lighthouse Church of Chicago's community page on Facebook. The church's full website will launch soon.

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Congregants at Lighthouse Church. Photo by Rafael Letzter



Victor Salvo (left) and guest speaker Aaron Jackson. Photo by Hal Baim

Legacy Project presents new plaque candidates at gala luncheon

BY MELISSA WASSERMAN

The Legacy Project held its spring gala luncheon in the Empire Room of the Palmer House Hilton May 10.

This year's luncheon theme, "The Legacy Project: Making a Difference in the Lives of LGBT Youth," was an introduction to the candidates nominated for the Legacy Walk's 2013 Phase II on the rainbow pylons of Halsted Street, and a promotion of the launch of the Legacy Project Education Initiative (LPEI). The event also served as a celebration of the October 2012 Dedication of Phase I of the Legacy Walk.

"The goal for us personally, is to give kids growing up today what we did not have growing up, and that was a sense of cultural relevance and a context for their lives for people like them. Because even still today in spite of all the changes we see around us, they still go through their entire school day and don't hear a single positive thing about any gay person," said Victor Salvo, Legacy Project founder and executive director.

"Whether they come to Halsted Street or they experience it virtually, to just come and explore, and actually see that people like them, almost all of them came from very difficult circumstances without the benefit of any kind of community around them still manage to overcome their circumstances and achieve. That's the message we want to send to those kids," Salvo said.

The Legacy Walk serves as an "outdoor classroom" celebrating the contributions LGBT people have made to history and culture throughout

the years.

Keeping with the educational theme, LPEI, which is co-sponsored by Illinois Safe Schools Alliance (ISSA), is part of a comprehensive effort to use the LGBT community's contributions to history to address LGBT youth self-esteem issues by challenging the ignorance from which anti-gay bullying is born.

"The truth of the matter is LGBTQ youth have very unique needs because not only do they have to deal with all the other high school stuff that everybody else has to deal with, but they have that added layer of social isolation placed upon them," said Salvo. "For every kid that's out there and proud, there are 20 that are struggling that are not coming out. We're only seeing the tip of the iceberg when we actually see gay kids. I think LGBT, they're incredibly underserved and this is not to take away anything from the challenges that school systems already have to deal with a whole variety of problems."

A display of bronze plaque mock-ups celebrating the 36 candidates for the next induction for the Phase II dedication of the Legacy Walk occurring next October lined The Empire Room.

"I love the idea of taking people who have committed so much of their own lives to create these legacies and then putting them on pylons," Salvo said. "It basically turns the pylons into totem poles and totem poles are celebrations in the Native American culture of your ancestors, so that's really what we're doing."

Sean Lewis of WGN-TV emceed the event. Legacy Project Board Treasurer Barb Silnes, 44th Ward Deputy Alderman Bennett Lawson, Legacy

Project Board President Ralph Kennedy, LPEI Co-Director Dr. Gerri Spinella, Lawrence Carter of ISSA and Legacy Project Plaque Sponsorship Committee Chair Amy Maggio all spoke at the podium throughout the luncheon.

Aaron Jackson, co-founder of Planting Peace, was the event's keynote speaker. Jackson, a straight ally, purchased the house across the street from anti-gay Fred Phelps's Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kan. Jackson decided to paint the house the colors of the gay rainbow flag, and Equality House was born. It reminds the Phelps family that their actions toward the LGBT community will not be tolerated.

"It's an incredible time for living," said Jackson. "I think roughly 83 percent of people under the age of 30 believe in marriage equality. Times are changing and changing fast. Especially with all these anti-bullying campaigns out there that are in our school system, I think people are recognizing that it really is time to change the message and that being gay or transgender, or whatever, we should just be accepting to all."

The house was established two months ago and Jackson's initial thought when painting it, he said, was that the house looks good, elaborating that he did not want to misrepresent the gay community.

"We're humbled by it," said Jackson. "Just all the people from around the world that have offered their support and good will whether it be financially, and or just a note saying, 'we believe in this; good job.' We receive letters every day. We didn't know the community itself would embrace it. Gay and straight alike—we're very humbled by that."

This event was the first time Jackson has formally spoken about Equality House at an LGBT event. His speaking engagements usually center on poverty and environmental issues as it relates to his organization Planting Peace, along with its deworming initiative, which sets out to deworm children in poverty stricken areas around the world. When invited to speak on behalf of Equality House, he said he was happy to offer his support, especially for a non-profit.

"To me, the whole, LGBTQ issue, the rights of the gay community, it's always been important to me," Jackson said. "I didn't necessarily know what I was going to do or what I could do, until the opportunity presented itself through the house. One thing I'm very passionate about—especially young gay youth that are ... killing themselves due to a message out there that they're less than and that really resonates with me. That's where I feel like our house, sending out a counter message, 'where there's hate, there's love' [fits in]. Just that forever, now, when a picture is taken of that church, there will be a picture taken of the pride house. So that's really important to me. I've been working on changing the message."

Salvo's inspiration for the Legacy Project came in the LGBT March on Washington in 1987. Through a combination of experiencing the march, seeing the AIDS Memorial Quilt the first time it was on display and being part of the first recognition of National Coming Out Day, Salvo was consumed with the idea he was living his

tory and it needed to be remembered along with who came before that time.

"History is not sexy," said Salvo. "For a lot of people, their high school experience kind of defined what their knowledge of history actually is and it's taught in such a horrific way. Especially older gay people, they've gone through an entire lifetime of schooling never actually having history contextualized in a personal way because anything that related to people like them was removed from the heading. What this project seeks to do is reinsert that sentence back into these biographies. We're not changing the accomplishments or anything that these people did. We're simply readjusting the lens on them to bring them into focus and in that way. It's not really about the history of gay people, it's about world history and what we've contributed to it because I think on that very fundamental level, as society advances, what we'll be missing ultimately is where we fit in history all along."

Salvo hopes the project begins to connect the dots at a fundamental level and events like this raise awareness and influence people to support the cause at hand.

"We hope that they're motivated by the education program because that's where the rubber meets the road," said Salvo. "It's when you really take this directly to youth and try to change their outlook, because they have their whole world ahead of them."

See more photos and a video of the event online at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.

Umpierre-Herrera at several Chicago venues

Dr. Luzma Umpierre-Herrera, a foremost figure within contemporary Puerto Rican literature and culture, will be in Chicago for several events next week.

Her most recent work is *I'm Still Standing: Treinta años de poesía / Thirty Years of Poetry*. This volume serves as a lasting proof of Umpierre Herrera's dedication to her life's work in the areas of poetry, immigration studies, LGBT advocacy, Caribbean, Latin American and Latino studies.

Umpierre-Herrera will be featured reading from her new book at the following venues and dates:

—Friday, May 17, at De Paul University Student Union, Room 312, 2550 N. Sheffield Ave., 6-8 p.m.

—Saturday, May 18, as part of the Butterfly Poetry Project at Calles y Suenos, 1900 S. Carpenter Ave., 2-4 p.m.

—Saturday, May 18, En Las Tablas Performing Arts Center, 4111 W. Armitage Ave., 1st floor, 7-9 p.m.

All three events are free and open to the public. Books will be available for purchase and signing.

For more information, call 773-998-8902.



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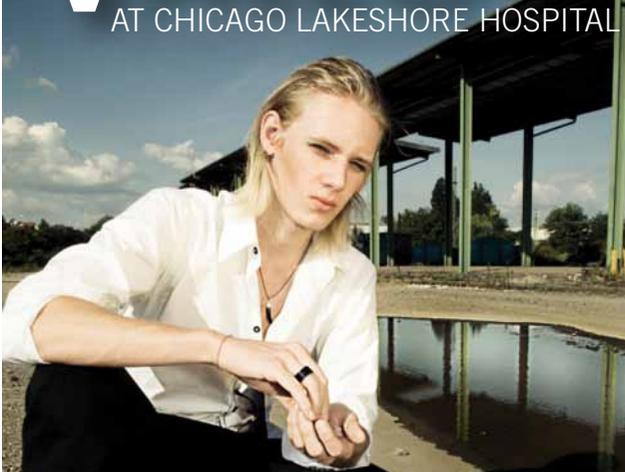
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LETTERS

WINDY CITY
TIMES

VOL. 28, No. 32, May 15, 2013

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

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 Community Marketing, Inc.

Angela's bashes

I gagged as I read Yasmin Nair's account of activist Angela Davis insulting LGBTs who desire the right to marry. Davis says these LGBTs are motivated by a desire for "bourgeois respectability."

But most equal marriage-rights activists I know simply desire the same rights that heterosexuals take for granted, rights that are particularly useful to working class LGBTs who can't afford specialized contracts drawn up by attorneys. Also, whether desiring marriage for themselves or not, they are intelligent enough to know that to tolerate the government dictating second class citizenship for anyone—defined as substandard legal rights—is demeaning and a mark of self-hatred.

How silly Davis' position is can be seen by analogy. Should African American activists of the 1950s and 60s have tolerated the often petty segregation of their time, such as separate drinking fountains and lunch counters? Should they have disparaged those who organized against these indignities? Or did most rightly see these measures as calculated insults to all African Americans, designed to buttress the more far-reaching and systematic oppression of their community?

Were those who organized against racial segregation necessarily "assimilationist" to white culture or seeking "bourgeois respectability?" Undoubtedly a minority of them were, but most weren't, and it would be insulting to that majority to cast the entire movement as such. The foremost Black radical of that era, Malcolm X, started out with a position similar to Davis', disparaging the movement against segregation, but then matured into an appreciation of it—without losing any of his revolutionary edge.

The reason why the anti-LGBT haters at the Illinois Family Institute fight tooth and nail against equal-marriage rights is not because they really give a damn whom any of us marry (or not), but because they see the unequal legal status of LGBTs as a bulwark to systematic homophobia and transphobia in society at large.

To the minority of LGBTs today who, like Davis, disparage the fight for equal-marriage rights, I would only ask, have you ever denounced your (presumably straight) parents or other close relatives for their marriages? Have you demanded that they divorce in solidarity with us, rather than pursue "bourgeois respectability?" Have you demanded the same of your straight comrades who are married?

Of course not. You disparage marriage rights ONLY when same-sex couples pursue the same rights as your straight friends and relatives. That double-standard sounds a lot like LGBT self-hatred to me. Moreover, for all of your radical posturing about "opposing assimilation," when you oppose the fight for the equal right to marry, you are unwittingly assimilating into the homophobic status quo.

Finally, for those who know her political history, it's a little bit rich for Davis to lecture us about the marriage rights movement being aimed at "bourgeois respectability." While she certainly has made valuable contributions to the movement for human freedom in other ways, when it comes to LGBT rights, for more than two decades she managed to be at peace—during Stonewall, during the height of the women's and gay liberation movements—in a political organization which described homosexuality itself as "a bourgeois deviation." Self-hatred indeed.

Right now Illinois's equal-marriage rights bill hangs in the balance. Those who oppose us are busy sponsoring weekly hate rallies around the Chicago area, whipping up homophobia and transphobia where they can. Those of us who care and can, are out in the streets opposing them.

Very soon the Supreme Court will issue its most significant LGBT decisions of the decade. Whether they were issuing decisions on equal marriage

rights, equal employment rights or whatever, on a basic level it really doesn't matter. What they're really doing is deigning to decide whether or not LGBTs will finally become citizens in this country.

And since the court's decisions are frequently influenced by public opinion and the potential for public outcry, what we do in the streets of our cities over the next several weeks really does matter. That's why those standing on the sidelines during this, while claiming to be "progressive," "radical" or whatever, are fiddling while Rome burns—the very antithesis of true activism.

Andy Thayer

Co-founder, Gay Liberation Network

Getting in on the acts

Dear Windy City Times,

Thank you for the excellent collection of archival materials and for discussing the verboten subject of the connection between homosexuality and the registry in the first set of articles in your Criminal Legal series. I look forward to seeing what you have in store in the next installments.

There is one important point to note. The article "Bars for Life" starts the history of the registry in 1994 with the passage of the Wetterling Act. However, the Wetterling Act was just the federal government getting in on the growth of state registries across the country that started in California in 1947. This was the McCarthy era and the registry was used throughout the 1950s and onward to harass homosexuals. Ninety percent of the people on the registry in that period were adult men convicted of engaging in or soliciting sexual activity with another adult man. With the decriminalization of sodomy in the late 1900s, culminating in the 2003 U.S. Supreme Court *Lawrence* decision, the focus of the registry gradually shifted from homosexuality to pedophilia. For more on the history of the registry and its homophobic roots, you may find my report on the subject of interest, at www.SOLresearch.org/SORorigin.

The "Bars" article also says that the Adam Walsh Act was also passed in 1994. This is obviously just a typo; the AWA was passed in 2006.

Again, these comments aside, thank you for your excellent investigative journalism.

Marshall Burns, Ph.D.

SOL Research

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Catholic controversy

I am responding to Dignity's President Chris Pett's letter to the editor in Windy City Times concerning tensions within AGLO over the cardinal's invitation.

I could not agree more with Chris' assessment that the situation at AGLO concerning Cardinal George raises some good questions. However, where I depart with him is in what those questions are.

The issue of AGLO's vision statement or its relationship to church authority was not the issue. The Rainbow Sash Movement's concern was over the decision to invite a man who has done so much harm to our community for its 25th anniversary. In our opinion, they could have respected not only our Roman Catholic community but the broader LGBT community, and found someone who does not have so much painful baggage.

On the whole, AGLO does a good job. It does not misrepresent itself as a Roman Catholic community. It attempts to bring the good news of the gospel to our community and encourages people to move deeper in their faith journey. However, we do have differences not only with the cardinal's invitation. Because of the church's teaching on women, many Catholic lesbians do not feel welcome and AGLO, for its part, has

done nothing to reach out to Catholic lesbian community. Members of the transgender community are not openly welcomed, either. I have only seen one transgender person present at the liturgy in the time I have been attending AGLO. Basically, AGLO is made up of manly white males who are comfortable with that situation.

This is not about whose ministry should or should not exist; it is about exercising some common sense in decision-making. We will continue support AGLO in a mature relationship. People of good will can have differences without picking up their bat ball and running every time they don't get their way.

Chris' reference to dialogue with the cardinal is a bit bizarre. I have had a private meeting with Cardinal George, unlike Frank DeBernardo or Chris—I don't think either have. I can assure you he believes that error has no rights. It is misleading to imply that the Rainbow Sash Movement is not about open dialogue. I can only attribute that to a good Catholic/bad Catholic mentality that some use to dismiss others.

In a Feb. 18, 2004, letter to the editor of Windy City Times, Jim Bussen spoke for Dignity and said of the cardinal's last visit to AGLO, "Anyone who would celebrate and defend this false teaching and the man who promulgates it is either incredibly naive, or self-loathing, or a betrayer of who they are as a person and a betrayer of their community." Chris, what has happened to change Dignity's opinion of this man? If anything, he has only gotten more homophobic.

AGLO's decision to invite Cardinal George for its 25th-anniversary Mass was imprudent. All we are asking for is a reasonable explanation of its decision-making process.

Joe Murray

Rainbow Sash Movement

Not mad about Madigan

Dear Windy City Times,

Failure to pass the Illinois same-sex marriage bill cannot be blamed on the Republican Party. It is largely irrelevant to this issue. In fact, two courageous Republican legislators back the bill, as do U.S. Sen. Mark Kirk and outgoing state party chair Pat Brady.

The problem, instead, is with the Democrats, who say they support us, have a 2-to-1 plurality in the House—and yet fail to act in our favor.

House Speaker Mike Madigan is the most powerful politician in the state. Anyone who knows anything about Illinois politics knows that when he truly wants a bill passed, his House Democratic caucus responds in lockstep. An example of his recent effectiveness is the pressure he exerted to pass, over stiff opposition, his odious pension bill, one that reduces the constitutionally mandated benefits of current and retired teachers and state workers.

Yet Madigan sits on the marriage-equality bill. Why? Why not the same sense of urgency, the same degree of pressure, for it that he shows in undermining the future income of Illinois teachers and government workers? Could it be that he doesn't want to put at risk his daughter's gubernatorial ambitions by appearing to fight too hard for marriage equality for thousands of Illinois LGBT people?

It is time to call out House Speaker Mike Madigan as the reason we don't have marriage equality in Illinois. Passage of the Illinois bill is particularly important now as a means of putting additional pressure on the Supreme Court to totally wipe away the anti-gay Clinton-era Defense of Marriage Act, as well as California's Proposition 8, when it rules sometime between now and late June.

The legislative session closes May 31. Speaker Madigan, now is the time to act!

Roger Fraser
 Rolling Meadows

GAY *in the*
LIFE
AJ Canzolino
TEXT AND PHOTOS BY ROSS FORMAN



Age
45

Relationship status
Single

Job title
Owner of Urban Athlete

Hobbies
Traveling, weight training, cooking and wine

Favorite pro sports team
Chicago Blackhawks

Favorite TV show
Modern Family

Little-known fact
"Until [age] 30, I never had a gym membership."

AJ Canzolino sat at a desk for 20 years working in the financial sector. He liked his job, though it was stressful and never truly was his passion.

"About five years ago I started to think about what I would do with my life if I had the opportunity, and owning a gym was at the top of that list," he said. "For the next five years I studied fitness and worked part-time at gyms to learn the industry."

Last fall, he opened Urban Athlete—and two more locations are scheduled to open later this year.

"The experience has been amazing," he said. "I tell everyone to follow their passion. Although the jump was scary, I am not looking back."

Canzolino stresses that fitness should be fun. "I try to insure that workouts challenge each individual to push their limit through exercises that combine both cardio and strength," he said. "I want my clients to have new experiences each time they are with me. This helps keep them engaged in their program."

Canzolino said opening a gym has given him the opportunity to share his passion for fitness and work with individuals on a daily basis.

"One of the toughest aspects of my job is keeping clients motivated to exercise and eat right over the long term," he said. "Life is unpredictable and people tend to find excuses for why they can't come to the gym. One of the biggest challenges in our industry is keeping clients motivated to stick to a routine. At Urban Athlete, we pride ourselves in our exceptional customer service. We know all of our clients by name and try to develop personal relationships with those clients over time. The best way to keep someone interested in coming back week in and week out is making them feel like you care about them. If you care about your clients and care about their results, success rates become much higher."

Canzolino meshes training and nutrition, tailored to his client's goals.

"No two clients are alike. The trainers spend time to understand their client's goals and physical limitations before engaging in the program. We continually monitor client progress to insure we are making progress towards these goals."

Urban Athlete has 11 different boot camps that offer a variety of options, with 22 boot camps a week to support the demand. Last year, Mens Book Chicago published Urban Athlete's boot camps as one of the toughest workouts in Chicago. "We want our clients to continually be pushed with new and innovative exercise programs," he said.



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CRIME

LGBTQs and the Criminal Legal System

OUT

When we talk about LGBTQ people and the courts today, we're often referring to the seemingly endless stream of LGBTQ victories coming out of judicial systems across the country.

But in the criminal courts, LGBTQ people have long faced a different reality. Perhaps nowhere has that been more visible than in Cook County,

historically a model for criminal legal systems throughout the country.

In the next four weeks, Windy City Times will take readers through that structure today as we look at how LGBTQ people get caught in the system and the challenges they face once there.

A Windy City Times Special Investigative Series: Week Two

Stranger danger: Pickup crimes in the gay community

BY ERICA DEMAREST

On April 15, 2010, a well-known Washington, D.C., school principal named Brian Betts was found murdered in his home.

In the weeks that followed, investigators learned that Betts, 42, had arranged a meeting with his attacker through a sex chat line a few hours before the murder.

Betts agreed to leave a door to his house unlocked so that 19-year-old Alante Saunders could enter discreetly, news reports said. But when the teen arrived, he brought along three other men. The group proceeded to rob Betts, kill him and steal his SUV.

ficer Jose Rios, the Chicago Police Department's LGBT liaison.

Many of the men arranging anonymous hookups are in the closet. Others have called escort services or used recreational drugs with their attackers and are fearful they'll be charged if they contact the police. Still others are crippled by shame.

"They feel like, 'I was doing something wrong in the first place,'" said Charles Nelson, a member of the Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus. "They feel like, 'I shouldn't have been in the park looking for some kind of a sexual relationship.' They're afraid of what's going to happen and how the police are going to respond to

This includes older men, African-American and Latino men, transgender people, closeted men, undocumented immigrants and people from lower-ranked socioeconomic groups.

"Definitely, the people who are victimized are the last people who should be victimized," Nelson said. "They already don't have anything. They don't have the resources, or they don't have the knowledge of the resources."

In African-American and Latino communities, where homophobia is often pervasive and many men are still in the closet, pickup crime is a major problem, activists said.

"On the South Side of Chicago, most gay men can't just walk into any venue, see another gay

pened to you, not because of you. But a lot of them are ashamed."

Undocumented immigrants face a particularly high risk, Rodriguez said. Many fled their native countries because of homophobic violence. In several Latin American nations, it's common for LGBT citizens to be murdered.

"The police department is probably more threatening to you [if you're undocumented] than it is to the perpetrator of the crime," Rodriguez said. "That person might get some time in jail—or a slap on the wrist or a court date. But for someone who is undocumented, it might actually mean you could start deportation proceedings."

Rodriguez estimates one-third of the city's Latino male population is in the U.S. illegally.

"If they call the police, the first thing they're going to say is, 'Where are you from? Where are your papers?'" Rodriguez said. "You're going to be victimized multiple times for something that wasn't even your fault."

GayLife Section X/Thursday, March 21, 1985 X7

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GayLife from March 31, 1985.

The brutal slaying sent shockwaves through D.C.'s gay community. Many believed Betts was the victim of a pickup crime—one of the least-discussed and least-reported types of crime that affect the gay community.

Pickup crime occurs when someone meets a potential date or sexual partner and is then victimized as a result, said Lisa Gilmore, director of education and victim advocacy at the Center on Halsted. Gay men are most likely to be targeted, and pickups can occur online, in bars, on the street or through phone lines.

"People will pretend that they want to hook up or go on a date with somebody in order to perpetrate some kind of crime or violence," Gilmore said.

Once a meeting is arranged or the victim is drawn away from a crowded environment, crimes committed can range from robbery to battery or sexual assault to—in extreme cases—murder.

While police, activists and victim advocates across the United States are aware that pickup crime exists, it is impossible to pinpoint exact data. When crimes are reported, Gilmore said, they're often filed under categories like "aggravated battery" or "sexual assault"—not "pickup crime."

But mostly, pickup victims simply don't report. "A lot of people are embarrassed because they feel like they should've known better," said Of-

them."

Rios said he has known about pickup crime for years but, in the first quarter of 2013, has seen only one set of incidents described.

In April 2013, five separate men called Rios—who is based in the Lakeview neighborhood's 19th (Town Hall) District but operates citywide in his liaison capacity—to talk about being victims of pickup crime.

Three of the men met their attackers in bars. Two were online hookups. All five said they were robbed, and one man claimed he had also been beaten for initially resisting the robbery. But none of the men filed official reports.

"Out of the five, four of them would not give me their names," Rios said. The men simply wanted to make Rios aware they had been targeted.

"If there's no [official] report, technically, it didn't happen," Rios said. "The problem is: There's not much we can do unless there's a report ... If you make a report to me, then that report gets assigned to a detective. That detective is going to investigate it."

The last people who should be victimized'

Those least likely to report pickup crimes are those most likely to be targeted, activists said.

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Mattachine Midwest newsletter from December 1973.

man, and be comfortable to socialize with him without fear of someone identifying them as gay," Nelson said. "It's hard for Black men to meet someone—period—because of the social stigma. You may not have as many social outlets."

As a result, many men turn to phone lines or online services such as Craigslist, Adam4Adam, Grindr, Black Gay Chat or even Facebook. While many of the users on these sites are legitimate, predators find it just as easy to create a profile.

Some of the predators are gay themselves and committing crimes of opportunity. Others are straight and actively targeting gay men—either out of homophobia or because it's easy.

"It's like you're in a store, and you know you want to steal something, but you don't know what," said Julio Rodríguez, board president of the Association of Latino Men for Action, or ALMA. "And all of a sudden something falls off a shelf and hits you in the head. That's sort of what the gay community has done for [predators]."

Because being closeted, fearful or ashamed is so pervasive in racial minority communities, Rodríguez said, attackers bank on the fact their crimes won't be reported.

"[The victims] think, 'OK, if I make an official report, then it's out there in the world [that I'm gay]," Rios said. "This is something that hap-

Ageism also comes into play, and the image-conscious nature of many in the gay male community could hurt men who aren't stereotypically attractive.

"In the gay community, as men age, they're no longer seen as worthy," Nelson said. "They learn: [These anonymous hookups] are the only way I can find intimacy."

Rios said most of the men who talk to him about pickup crime are "older gentlemen" who have been targeted by men in their 20s. The perpetrators span every race and come from the North, South and West sides. Many of the meet-ups are arranged online.

"We have an aging population that feels like, 'I'm too old to go to the bars,'" Nelson said. "They don't have many outlets to socialize. They've probably lost friends due to multiple reasons. They feel this is the only way they can socialize too."

'You knew he brought the wrong trade home'

Though the Internet has created novel opportunities for predators, pickup crime is far from new.

"This is something that's been going on as long as gay men and women have been in the city of Chicago," Nelson said.

A longtime Chicagoan, Nelson recalled numerous Hubbard Street beatings and Bronzeville attacks ("Before there was Boystown, there was Bronzeville") in the 1950s and 1960s. Men would cruise near the city's few gay bars, looking for people to target. And male sex workers often worried whether clients were legitimate.

"There was a time before HIV and AIDS that whenever you heard about any gay man dying, you knew he brought the wrong 'trade' home," Nelson said.

In the 1970s and 1980s or later, ads in gay publications such as GayLife offered "full body massage" or the chance to "stroke together." Though some ads led to safe encounters, others were ploys to isolate and attack gay men.

Phone lines were also targeted. "They were very dangerous," Nelson said. "Men of all ages would go on, and they would get stuck up [robbed]—or sometimes worse. We know a lot of men who have met men off the phone lines and died. And you just don't hear about it."

The Internet created countless opportunities for gay men to connect, but it has also given criminals unprecedented access to victims. Predators often create fake profiles on gay dating sites. References to "poppers" or other party drugs all but ensure victims won't report the crime, since calling the cops would be tantamount to admitting drug use.

"It's such an easy way to troll for people," Rodriguez said, shaking his head. "It doesn't take a lot of effort. You just have to sit and wait."

Gangs have noticed, the Center on Halsted's Gilmore added.

"They figure out what will make someone vulnerable," she said. Social networking sites and "down-low" hookup spots such as parks or non-descript bars are popular.

Rodriguez has heard reports of gang-related pickup crime in the neighborhoods of Humboldt Park, Little Village, Pilsen and South Chicago. Small Latino bars are hit hard because "the last thing anyone wants in a 'down-low' bar is the cops," he said.

"Gangs are sophisticated. They can push their homophobia aside because they're opportunistic by nature. Why try to break in, if one of 10 doors will be open?" Rodriguez said. "[These guys] know they're attractive ... They're like wolves. They know to pull somebody out of the [another] pack."

Nelson, who works as the MSM (men who have sex with men) project director for the South Side Help Center, has heard about similar incidents in parks across the South Side.

"For some of the initiations for certain gang members—why, I don't understand—they say, 'Go over there and rob or victimize these gay men,'" Nelson said. "They feel they own the area, and they don't want you there."

'Very little recourse'

When pickup crime happens, resources are limited.

Gilmore, who oversees the Center on Halsted's anti-violence project, recommends calling the center's 24-hour crisis hotline at 773-871-CARE. When asked about other resources, those interviewed drew a blank.

"[These victims] actually have, unfortunately, very little recourse," Rodriguez said. Many feel that calling the police will be futile, and the fear of law enforcement is widespread in the LGBT community.

"I think a lot of that is passed down culturally," Rios said. "You know: 'I had a bad experience with the police 10 years ago, so now every

police experience is bad.' But the Police Department from 20, 15 or 10 years ago is not the Police Department that's here now."

Rios, an out gay man, said he trains new cadets to leave their prejudices at home. Victims may also call him personally at 312-744-0615, even if they don't want to make an official report.

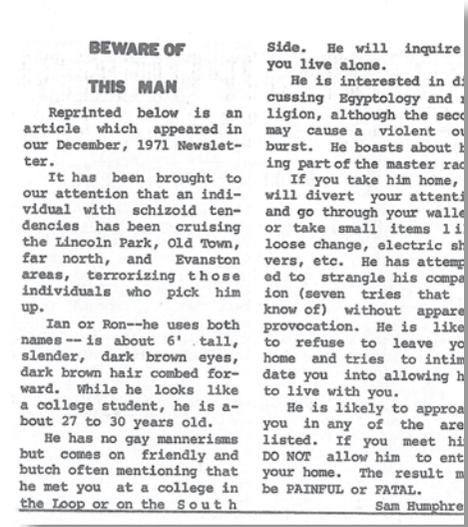
How police treat LGBT victims "depends on what district you're in," Nelson said. "In districts where there isn't a big gay presence, [the officers] have their own internalized homophobia. They use their badge as a form of dealing with that they think is wrong."

Ultimately, Gilmore said, it all comes back to shame.

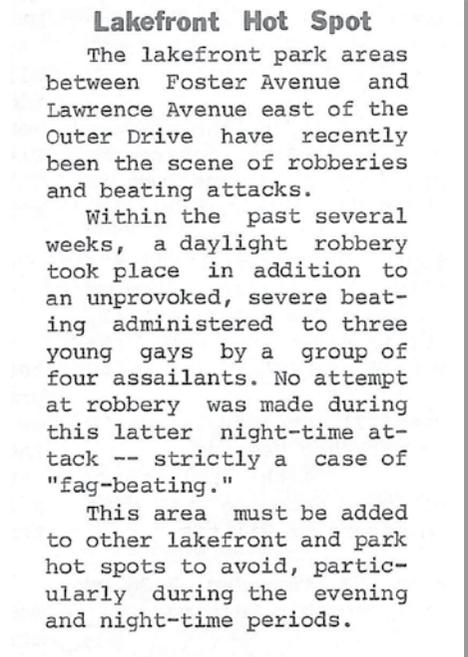
"There can be a lot of stigma related to hooking up for some people," she said. "They're ashamed of having sexual relationships or sexual activity with people they're not in a relationship with for some length of time."

More cultural competency among police and first responders would help, Gilmore said.

"But I wonder how much we might not want to talk about [pickup crime] because of how related it is to our LGBT identities," she said. "Particularly with online formats—[this type of crime] is directly related to how people are exploring or expressing their sexuality."

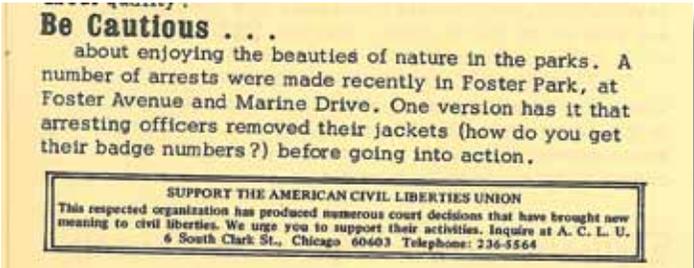


Mattachine Midwest newsletter August 1972.



Mattachine Midwest newsletter September 1972

Mattachine Midwest newsletter October 1968.



Dejon, 23. At right, Dejon is pictured in the hospital after being attacked in Boystown. Photos courtesy of Dejon.

Bruises left on Chicago's LGBTQ community by violence

BY MELISSA WASSERMAN

In March 2011, Dejon said good night to his friends and headed home from an evening out in Boystown. As he was walking down the sidewalk, a man wearing a ski mask got out of his car and charged toward him, screaming. Dejon was robbed, stabbed and left almost dead. He called for an ambulance.

"Having it happen to me then was really that eye-opener to change situations," Dejon, 23, said. "I feel like I was a very naïve child, walking through life with no care in the world and that situation opened my eyes that there's more going on out here and I have to be proactive and have to try and help change it. I take every situation as an inspiring situation, so if I can't learn a lesson or I can't help people learn from a situation, then I don't feel like it's a worthy situation."

Not long after Dejon's attack, four of his close friends were murdered because of their sexual orientation in a span of six months on the South Side, he said.

Those violent incidents were more difficult for Dejon as he realized he could have been the person in the casket and another number in the death count among LGBTQ youth. He also recounts numerous violent encounters he has seen at LGBTQ clubs.

"This was the major wake-up call for me," said Dejon. "These are intense things that happen to people, and for me to have experienced that and be able to see it happen to someone else and they didn't come out with the same result, it makes me grateful that I was able to make it through that situation, but it still makes me hurt because I feel horrible they had to get that final result."

"It gets to a point where I can't even watch the news because I see it happen so often. If there are no mortalities, then it's not a regular day. It's really tough, but the best way to make it through is to see that silver lining. To say, 'This is what the problem is, let's start looking for a solution. Who do we need to talk to? What do we need to do?'"

TJ Williams, an African-American LGBTQ activist, is heavily involved in the church and committed to amplifying the voices of Black gay preachers who support LGBTQ equality. Currently, he is a Master of Divinity student at New York Theological Seminary and a member of the

Riverside Church in New York City. Williams is insistent that issues of justice are diverse, and he pushes LGBTQ leaders to see how those issues affect the city as a whole.

"I am concerned that we are in the midst of a genocide, not just within the African-American community, but also among our children," said Williams. "When the most innocent of us have been taken away from us, it should prompt all of us to act, including LGBT leadership, that we cannot be silent on violence in this nation."

Violence against LGBT people can also come in the form of verbal violence.

Tre'Shon Davis experienced such violence in his home when he came out as gay and began dating his boyfriend soon after. The 18-year-old's mother, with whom he had what he described as "the perfect relationship," began verbally abusing him, calling him names and remarking on his sexual orientation.

After about seven months, Davis felt there was no other choice but to move in with his grandmother. Eventually, the contact between him and his mother ended completely.

"It made me stronger, it taught me not to harp on things," said Davis. "I know things are going to get tough and there's going to come a time that I'm going to experience something that's way more extreme than what I have been through. No matter what hard times you've been through, you can't let that tear you down, or you can't let that stress you. You can only look at that as an obstacle you overcame and an obstacle that has made you stronger."

Both men volunteer for National Youth Pride Services in Chicago and live on the South Side.

Founded in 2003, NYPS has approximately 1,500 members in 32 states, ranging from 13 to 24 years old. The organization trains, educates and develops future leaders with the overall mission "to meet and exceed the needs of African-American LGBTQ youth and those who provide resources to them," adopting the day-to-day motto "youth at hope; not at risk."

NYPS President/CEO and Founder Frank Walker created the group as a result of frustrations he heard while volunteering with youth, about the lack of programs led by Black LGBTQ youth geared toward Black LGBTQ youth. He describes the group as being disciplined and structured,

State's Attorney's LGBTQ/hate crime specialist talks crime and justice

BY STEVEN CHAITMAN

Anyone who identifies as LGBTQ has good reason to be wary of the criminal justice system, but the Cook County state's attorney's office has stocked the ranks of its victim assistance program with at least one ally.

Alicia Oeser is the state's attorney's LGBTQ and hate crimes specialist. When a case opens that clearly falls under either umbrella, it finds her desk. Oeser offers victims support and resources and helps walk them through the complicated legal process of the felony courts.

Oeser stepped into the position in September, following in the footsteps of Anne Huffman, who held the job for nine years.

Oeser was a sociology graduate student at DePaul University. She ran the rape crisis hotline for the YWCA Metropolitan Chicago and worked simultaneously as the sexual violence support services coordinator at DePaul. Most recently, she worked for Family Rescue, a domestic violence agency on the South Side.

Windy City Times sat down with Oeser to talk about her role, its challenges and how she supports victims in the criminal legal system.

Windy City Times: How is it that you discovered this position and why did you pursue it?

Alicia Oeser: This position was kind of an accident. I didn't mean to get into this. I've been doing rape crisis counseling work and domestic violence work, and it's not necessarily what I wanted to do forever. So having the opportunity to take this position that allows me to be more active in what I consider to be my community, needing advocacy services and that kind of representation—that was really exciting for me.

WCT: What were some of the driving factors that made it feel like this was the right position whether personally or professionally?

AO: Personally, being in the LGBT community, you see it every day, how much of a struggle it is to be received, like legitimately, in your experiences in non-LGBT communities, whether it's the doctor's office, the legal system, domestic violence shelters. Wherever you're going, you have to really push to be treated in a way that feels respectful to you ... I feel very strongly that speaking up and being able to make a negative experience any more positive is what I want to be doing—taking someone who's having this horrible situation and being able to walk them through it in a way that's as painless as possible, where they're getting as much respect as possible, because they deserve it.

WCT: What is one of the key components of your role?

AO: Having access to the right language to make sure I'm not accidentally alienating somebody by using terms with the wrong gender pronouns or anything like that. So that's kind of

my job, to make sure those conversations are happening with victims in a way that is totally sensitive to them. And that's always been true for me, regardless of my work, is letting [the victim] lead the conversation. I don't need to address somebody in my language. You go ahead and set that tone and I'll use your language, and that's cool. To me, that's just being a good advocate.

WCT: Are you someone that victims have to specifically request?

AO: If you don't disclose that you are a member of the LGBTQ community, then no, you're not necessarily getting referred to me, and that's cool, because you don't have to have the LGBTQ advocate just because you're part of our community. I'm here as an option for people, to give them a choice to know that they do have me as a resource.

That's my job, to have LGBT-specific referrals to other parts of our community, whether it's entertainment, or counseling, or civil litigation services, health services. To some extent we do expect people to be their own advocate and ask for that if necessary. There are some cases where they don't have to. If it is clear in the case summary that this was a romantic relationship between two same-sex people, that's automatically coming to me. And I don't need to make that a big deal. That's not the conversation we have to have. The conversation is about you and whatever services you need to feel supported. Sometimes that's going to be LGBT-specific, and sometimes that's not.

WCT: Is lack of disclosure one of the bigger roadblocks in your job that's beyond your control?

AO: I would say so, because we can only pursue cases that people tell us about. So, if somebody doesn't report the case to law enforcement, it will never get to me. I will only see it once it's charged, but if they don't want to report it, it's not going to come up, because it can't come through the court system without first stopping at the police station.

There are people who live in communities where they might feel like they're engaging in an activity that is not going to be approved of by a police officer. So, I don't want to go forward about this crime that happened to me if I'm worried that they're going to be like "well, why were you doing that anyway?" or "you shouldn't have been doing that anyway" or possibly "I might arrest you, anyway." There are so many concerns about just that initial step that, yeah, I certainly feel a little powerless to be able to move that forward, because I can't control what their experience is like at that level.

WCT: Talk about the one-on-one dynamic you have with the people that you're helping.

AO: There are things that are common across

all of these. The No. 1 most important thing I can do for anyone is listen to them, being able to let someone sit across from me as long as they need to, give me as much or as little information as they want, and I'm going to be able to provide them that space, judgment-free. And I think that that's incredibly useful for people who are feeling unsafe and possibly unwelcome where they're at. I want to look at it holistically, not just how is the gay part of them feeling about this.

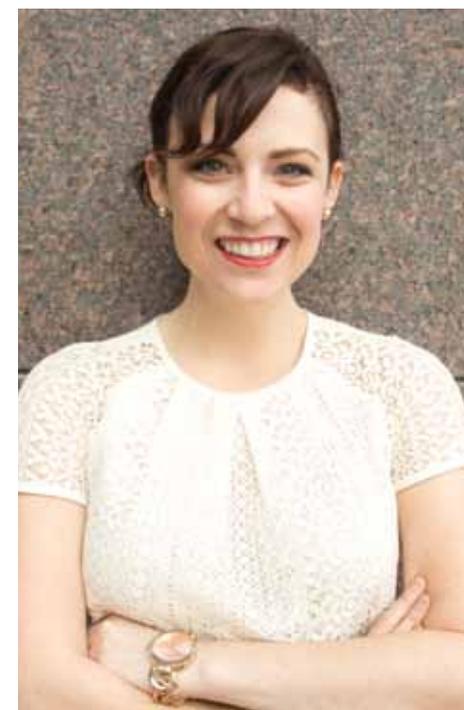
And then it's my job to give them options and say "here's what I hear you saying" and "I think this might be useful to you" and "would you be comfortable if I made this connection for you?" Giving them something, knowing that when they leave me they're not on their own, is my goal. But every situation ends up differently, because it really is based on what the person sitting across from me feels most comfortable with. Maybe today you don't want resources, but maybe in a couple weeks you will, and that's cool. I can check in with you, I can ask you, but at the end of the day I want it to be up to you, what you're getting out of this.

WCT: What are the biggest challenges that LGBTQ individuals face in the legal system?

AO: The legal system is going to be complicated for anyone, especially a victim of crime. I can't articulate how challenging it is to go through and not feel traumatized by your experience, not because people aren't doing a great job, that's not it at all. But the experience itself is daunting and you're kind of passed around all the way up the criminal justice system. So, that means you have to talk about what happened to you over and over again, and the way people respond to your story is not always going to be what feels best for you.

Then for people in the LGBTQ community, having to worry about—from the beginning all the way up—if people are going to take you seriously, if they're going to believe you, if they're going to harass you. What if they're homophobic? If you have to ask yourself all these questions, you're starting off feeling like, "I don't wanna be here." I can't blame anyone for coming in feeling like that, because at the end of the day, you shouldn't have to be here. This shouldn't have happened to you, period. And then to be passed from one person to the next to the next to the next, it continues to feel disempowering.

That's part of what I see my job to be, is being able to bring you back into this experience, so it's not just other people telling you what to do—it's up to you also. But I don't know that that's going to work for everyone. There are plenty of people who come in and aren't responsive, they don't want that. Because really, at the end of the day, I might just be another person they've been passed along to because



Alicia Oeser. Photo by Hayden Hinch

they didn't seek me out. I come to them, I say, "I'm here as an option." Some people will take me up on it and some people won't.

WCT: Has it been challenging for you to be part of a system that oftentimes doesn't work as it theoretically should?

AO: Yes, that's absolutely challenging to me. I don't know of a perfect system at this point, so it's hard to say what would be preferable. There are lots of things that give me pause in terms of how are we treating people, whether there is enough restorative justice going on, I absolutely think those conversations should be happening and are happening. It's not necessarily helpful to just lock that person up and throw away the key. It's never going to get better if we don't talk to people, if we don't come to a mutual understanding about respect and about our humanity. But I think the position I'm in and the position that our office is in is a piece, and it's meant to be a piece. I don't think it's meant to be the end of the line. I do think that there's some element up to us as being members of the community to take it beyond that.

WCT: Other than knowing that you're available if something should happen, how else can people use you as a resource?

AO: I'm available for questions, too. If somebody has a question about what do I do and maybe they don't feel comfortable talking to law enforcement right away, they can call me. I may not absolutely have the answer but I might be able to direct them to someone who can that I trust to answer that question. I want people in our community to be able to use me as a resource beyond just "something horrible has happened to me and now I am in need of your immediate assistance."

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VIOLENCE from page 11

which reflects his own upbringing.

“Everything was predominately on the North Side and predominately youth of color, but not run by people of color,” said Walker. “So we decided there needed to be something that youth led and had a say in and closer to the neighborhood with people that looked more like them that they can relate to.”

Currently, the Black LGBTQ community, Walker said, does not have an organized agenda. In his view, the agenda that is established among the mainstream LGBTQ community does not reflect

Cycle of Violence



A graphic used when the National Youth Pride Services TV channel was focusing partner violence from a Black LGBT perspective.

the needs of the non-mainstream and is not open to discussion.

“The powers that be in the LGBT community, they determine what the agenda is going to be. It usually does not actually reflect the actual immediate need of Black LGBT folks,” said Walker. “So that’s probably one of the biggest things that I have noticed as I travel from city to city. I believe people who are suffering daily to the point of death and suicide are more urgent than people who are not on the verge of death, or suicide, or depression. If we can save some lives, that should be the priority, in my opinion. I just believe you go by what’s more dire now. That should be on the agenda.”

Aisha Truss-Miller, program director of Affinity Community Services, sees various cases of violence that the Black female LGBTQ community faces, and not just interpersonal violence. She sees cases of self-inflicted personal violence, in which people inflict harm on themselves, and the structural violence that marginalizes people along with the violence imposed upon those people.

Self-harm, she explains, includes drug and tobacco use and failure to cope with mental and physical health issues because of lack of resources.

Alternatively, violence and discrimination among LGBTQ youth in particular come in the form of bullying from peers and teachers. Religious bullying is an issue that makes it difficult for people to find places to worship.

Additionally, she listed the trauma young people face in Chicago from community violence, in which she has seen young people who have been robbed, jumped and shot.

Among the Black LGBTQ youth he works with, Walker said the main forms of violence he sees are verbal abuse and physical abuse. Some of the

most common issues, such as lack of parental support, acceptance or basic rights, lead to violence. He is certain it develops from a combination of things that eventually boils over.

“I was always told growing up that hurt people hurt other people,” said Walker. “I used to wonder why so many LGBTQ youth were fighting each other, and it’s mainly because a lot of people—not all—who are always oppressed and have a lot of emotions don’t know how to express it and they don’t control their anger management, so they tend to go out and express that anger violently towards people they are around.”

Truss-Miller believes that violence has not made much of an impact on Chicago’s mainstream LGBTQ community, that it is not considered an LGBTQ issue as much as it is seen as a Black issue.

“I think violence in general within the LGBTQ community is on the back burner, and that is not a priority on the agenda,” said Truss-Miller. “It also helps create conflict, which breaks down the LGBTQ community by class and by race because then different communities have different agendas.”

She highlights what she sees as a difference in awareness of violence from the North Side to the South.

“The Black community is well aware of violence attacking their community,” said Truss-Miller. “But we’re at a point to where we are desensitized, and it’s become a normal way of life for us, and these are normal actions or deemed as normal actions. We’re also in mourning, so it’s hard to address something and try to heal from it at the same time. You’re angry that this issue isn’t an important issue to other people who are reaching out to you and calling you community. It’s a challenge, and I think we’re well aware of what the violence is doing to us in our communities, but if I go into the Loop or cross downtown and go north, people are aware if they hear the news, but because it doesn’t hit home for them it doesn’t matter.”

Dejon witnesses the difference, as he is a South Side resident who travels north to enjoy the nightlife.

“It’s tough,” he said. “Some people have to literally bring two separate clothing options. One for the travel to where they’re going and the other for when they get there, because they can be who they are when they get to where they’re going but on the way there, if they dress that way, they will not make it far. It doesn’t sit well with me. I don’t like that freedom of expression is limited [on the South Side].”

Truss-Miller insists the lack of a collective LGBT agenda or interest is the recipe for failure when it comes to issues of violence.

Williams wants to see national conversations between leaders after LGBTQ youth violence or deaths occur.

“If we get back to those old values that revolve around peace and justice, of children being able to be children and enjoy each other without visualizing blood and guts, we will begin to heal a next generation,” said Williams. “We have got to stop glorifying violent crimes. There has to be a collective outcry to that.”

Affinity aims to support survivors and victims of violence through speaking engagements, collaborating with other organizations and marginalized communities, and doing collective



Jadior Rodriguez, who died in 2012.

research.

The group has also pushed for anti-bullying legislation. The organization also supports the proposed Violence Against Women and Girls Act.

“Creating and sustaining safe spaces for community to develop and people to develop mentally, spiritually, emotionally, holistically—that’s our primary focus at Affinity because these things can be addressed,” said Truss-Miller. “It’s a safe space to have these conversations.”

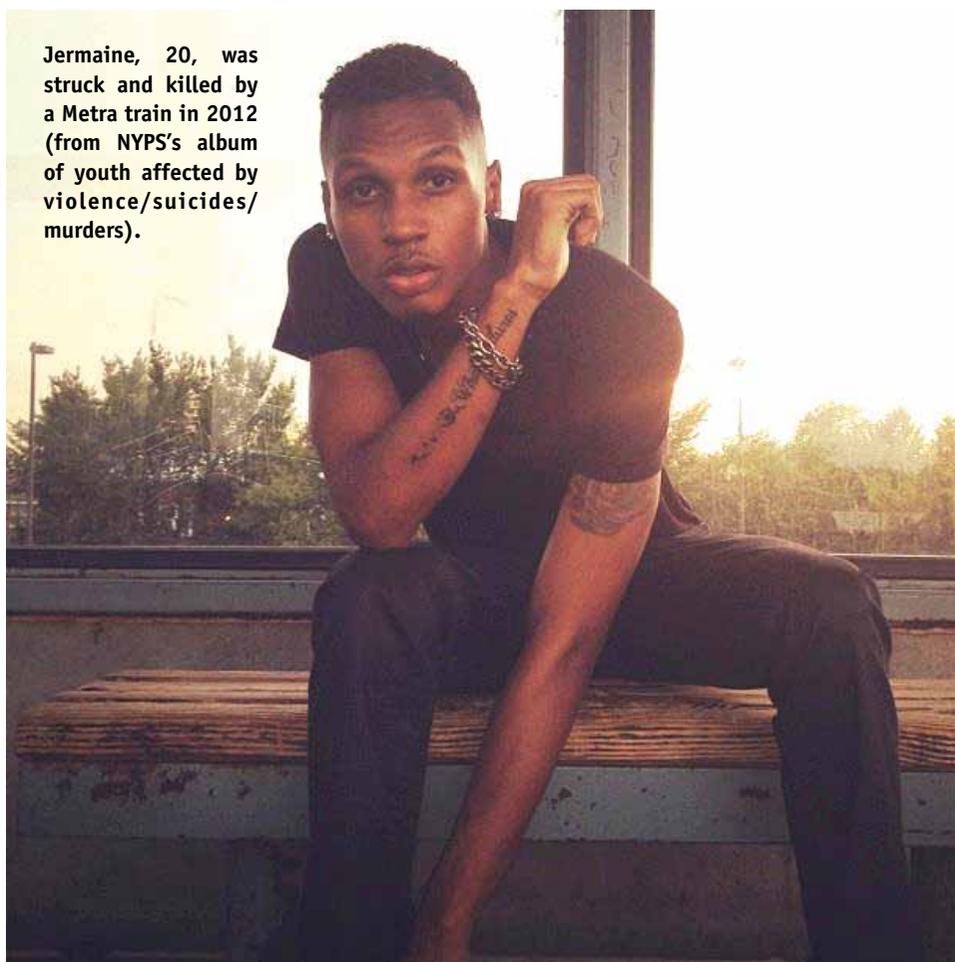
For Dejon, the violence he can encounter, and has seen head-on in the past, encourages him to try to be a model for other people.

“I feel I should be a great example for the homophobic, for the heterosexuals who have no understanding of our lifestyle or us as a people,” said Dejon. “I try to inspire people and tell peo-

ple that change is coming and you don’t have to stay in that mentality, and violence is not always the answer, especially in this situation.”

Dejon channels his heartbreak into music as he writes it and sings. He volunteers at a performing arts school. He wants to help give youth positive outlets and better opportunities.

“Just like that life-changing situation happened to me, I feel like something big has to happen and people are literally going to see the situation and be moved by it,” he said. “They’re going to return back to humanity. I know it won’t happen overnight. Until that big thing happens, I’d rather plant a lot of little seeds, especially in our youth to try and keep them growing in the right direction.”



Jermaine, 20, was struck and killed by a Metra train in 2012 (from NYPS’s album of youth affected by violence/suicides/murders).



Left: Image from NYPS’s Facebook page. Right: NYPS’s logo, which aids in encouraging people to increase visibility of the organization.



#blackgayyouth
CREATE SOME CHANGE. USE THE HASHTAG ON TWITTER AND GAIN VISIBILITY!

For justice or profit? The challenge for U.S. prisons

BY CLARK BAIM

What is prison for?

Even if you've never visited a prison—voluntarily or otherwise—you're likely to have an image of what prison is. You might have an image of bars, watchtowers, guards and clanging gates. Inmates, too, are stereotyped: tattooed, pumping iron, and razor-wire dangerous; a great mass of the bad, the mad and the risky to know.

When you work in prisons, you get a chance to meet people up close, to meet the person beneath the mask, so to speak. You also get the opportunity to ask the basic questions but in a more informed way—questions like, What is prison for? Are we making the best use of our time, money and ingenuity? What good can come of this?

Within its overarching mission of protecting and preserving a just society, prison is meant to serve five functions: to contain; to punish; to deter potential offenders; to rehabilitate; and to implement community restitution. Since the 1970s, America has added its own, sixth function: to make a profit; the amount of subsidized cheap labor now being exploited in American prisons challenges the reputation of Soviet gulags.

The rehabilitative function of prisons is the least understood and usually the first to go when prisons are overcrowded and budgets are tight. In the U.S., with far and away the highest rates of incarceration in the world (more than six times the per capita rate of Canada and three times the rate of Mexico, for example), the focus is on warehousing and containing inmates and, in private prisons, making a profit from them.

Prison resources are so stretched by the sheer volume of humanity they encounter that rehabilitation programs and creative approaches to restitution for victims and for communities fall by the wayside. For the majority of inmates, prison is a lonely, dangerous place that usually makes people worse. And there is increasing concern about the traumatic effects on other individuals, families, children and communities when you lock up whole sections of the population. The havoc wrought by America's wasteful overuse of prison is not just shocking, it's insane, and it undermines our national strength—not to mention our financial resources. As a society, we can do so much better.

Prison practices internationally vary a lot. In the U.K., where I live and work, prisons are at capacity but can still afford the "luxury" of rehabilitation programs—although these are under constant threat of erosion and cancellation. The statistics aren't great, and there are still major concerns that prison may be a university of crime. But much positive work is being done, and rehabilitation is still seen as a central goal.

We need to understand how we got here and to



Clark Baim (left) at a Johannesburg, South Africa prison in 2006, where he did a psychodrama training for prisoners and staff. Photo by Tracy Baim

find a way out. While prison is often necessary for violent and sexual offenders, dealing with drug offenses and nonviolent offenses without using prison is an important place to start. When nonviolent criminals are offered community-based interventions, this often serves as a much more cost-effective—and overall effective—way to give a sanction/punishment and also insist that the offender make restitution to the community. It can also involve attending rehabilitation programs such as drug-treatment, work-skills and behavioral-treatment programs. Then the costliest interventions, and the most resources, can be focused on the people who need them most and who pose the greatest risk to society. And how costly is costly? The average price for keeping a prisoner inside an American jail is \$31,000 per year, and in some states it is double that amount. What if you could get a better result for half the amount if you worked smarter?

As long as more people behind bars equals more votes and more profit for private corporations, we will continue down this insane route. Or maybe we will choose a different path and tell our elected officials that we want our criminal justice systems to be smart and changing systems, not just human warehouses, forced-labor camps and universities of crime.

So, where do we need to start? My sense, after working in the criminal justice field for 25 years, is to suggest, as with so many human problems, that we start with ourselves. When each of us acknowledges our own human complexity, the struggles we face internally and with others, when we can learn to accept that we share a common humanity—strengths, hopes, flaws and all—with all "criminals," then we may be less tempted to see offenders as carrying all the bad elements of the human psyche, those aspects of the self that we would prefer to deny. The

opportunity to reflect brings the opportunity to change one's mind, to see new possibilities and to change direction.

The reality is that you could lock up half the human population and you would still have crime. Our criminal justice system needs to draw from research and modernize, learning what works and what doesn't.

Clark Baim is from Chicago and now lives and works in the U.K. as a psychotherapist in prisons, probation settings and private practice. His most recent book, co-written with Tony Morrison, is *Attachment-Based Practice With Adults: Understanding Strategies and Promoting Positive Change*, published in Brighton, England, by Pavilion Publishers. He is the brother of Windy City Times Publisher Tracy Baim.

CRIME OUT

For the Windy City Times
Crime Out series, see
articles posted here:

www.windycitymediagroup.com/gaynewsarticles.php?k=Crime

GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION

Photo by
Liz
Lauren

REGARDING HENRY

Windy City Times reviews Chicago Shakespeare Theater's Henry VIII. See page 16.

DISH

Flan and games.
Page 26Photo of flan at Mas alla del Sol
by Meghan Streit

THEATER

'Seek' days.
Page 16Photo from Seek and Ye Shall Find
by Tom McGrath

SPORTS

Friendly Sky.
Page 27Photo of Pokey Chatman
from Chicago Sky

SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Looking at 'What's the T?' and 'BALL'

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

In the coming weeks, the upstairs venues at the Victory Gardens Theatre will soon be a hive of activity for LGBTQ shows. About Face Theatre is reviving its acclaimed Youth Theatre production of *What's the T?* and it also presents the Chicago premiere of British playwright Alexi Kaye Campbell's 2008 Olivier Award-winning drama *The Pride* about two gay love stories set 50 years apart.

Out performer Brian Lobel's *BALL* and *Other Funny Stories About Cancer* also comes to the Victory Gardens Theater as part of the 2013 *Bodies of Work* Festival dedicated to artists with disabilities.

Directing queer youth

Back in 2012, the final performance of *About Face* Youth Theatre's acclaimed drama *What's the T?* at Chicago's National Museum of Mexican Art was cancelled due to a power outage caused by a massive weather system that rolled through that day.

"It started a big conversation between the community and ticket holders who wanted to see the show and who were not able to make it because of the power outage or because it was only a three-weekend run," said About Face Theatre artistic associate and *What's the T?* director Eric Hoff. "There was a big outcry from the community to bring the show back and an angel backer amongst supporters of the Youth Theatre program presented some funds to do a remount."

What's the T? was remarkable for the way it allowed queer youth artists to help create the show with playwright Sara Kerastas over the

summer of 2011 and 2012 to address the very hot topics of minority and transgender youth trying (and sometimes failing) to find welcoming safe spaces in Chicago's Boystown neighborhood.

Many of the situations and characters in *What's the T?* became like a docudrama since the youth ensemble modeled plot points and characters on interviews with many of their peers and on controversies that erupted in Boystown those two summers. The show's emphasis on video and social media also made it a multimedia experience that felt very up-to-date.

"It was very fascinating to watch [Kerastas] stitch together in a quilt-like fashion a narrative out of these various true stories and then adapt it for the stage," Hoff said. "The youth come from all far reaches of Chicago and for this remount they're coming from even further. We're having some college students that are coming from as far as Berkeley, Calif., and Iowa and all over Illinois, so it's pretty exciting to bring a story that is so local and specific to a Chicago neighborhood bring together these outside resources and ideas together."

Hoff is staging *What's the T?* again after directing the off-Broadway transfer of Ike Holter semi-historical *Stonewall Riots* drama *Hit the Wall* earlier this year at New York's Barrow Street Theatre, located just blocks away from the Stonewall Inn. Though the show received rave reviews in Chicago, *Hit the Wall* divided the New York critics and its off-Broadway run ended earlier than expected in April.

"We're all still baffled as to why whatever marketing efforts and press efforts didn't help pick up an audience," Hoff said. "As for the mixed press, the reviews were all over the map and



BALL's Brian Lobel. Photo by Joel Fildes

pretty polarized. I've always been told that polarizing reviews are a sign that you're taking risks and people have split minds to something bold and daring—something of which I'm proud of."

What's the T? plays at Victory Gardens Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave., from Sunday, May 19, through Sunday, June 2. Performances are at 7 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays with 3 p.m. Sunday matinees (also 3 p.m. Saturday, June 1). Tickets are \$15, \$5 for youth and \$25 for About Face Youth Theater supporters. Tickets are available at the door or by visiting www.aboutface theatre.com.

Living queer and surviving cancer

U.S. health insurance challenges drove Chicago queer performance artist and cancer survivor Brian Lobel to pursue further schooling in the United Kingdom a few years ago. So Lobel, now a London resident, finds it slightly ironic that it was a Liverpool performance of his one-man show, *BALL* and *Other Funny Stories about Cancer*, that helped him become a part of Chicago's 2013 *Bodies of Work* Festival dedicated to disabled artists.

"It's kind of funny in that I used to live in Chicago and that some of the pieces in the show actually premiered in Chicago a few years ago," said Lobel, noting that it was UIC professor and *Bodies of Work* co-curator Carrie Sandahl who saw his show in England. "I think she programmed me there, and a lot of my work is about is about cancer and illness seen through a disability context, so that's how I became a part of the festival."

Lobel, a former Windy City Times "30 Under 30" award recipient, developed portions of his performance art piece *BALL...* at the former Chicago companies *Bailiwick Repertory* in 2006 and *Live Bait Theater* in 2009, then finally combined the two earlier works with a third piece to form his current show in 2011 in the U.K.

Lobel also cites famed queer and queer-friendly performance artists like Annie Sprinkle, Tim Miller and Holly Hughes as mentors and major inspirations for *BALL...*, which he says is a funny and poignant look at the intersection of mortality issues with queer life—particularly since Lobel was diagnosed at age 20 with testicular cancer before he had even lost his virginity.

"The lesbian community is very good about talking about breast cancer and the gay community is generally really great about talking on HIV/AIDS because they both have a long history with these two illnesses," Lobel said. "But the LGBT queer frame does change other experiences that are standard in life like getting sick and dealing with mortality. I'm glad to be a part of that conversation."

Brian Lobel's *BALL* and *Other Funny Stories About Cancer* plays 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 24, at the Victory Gardens Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave. Tickets are \$10. Call 773-871-3000 or visit www.victorygardens.org.

BALL is part of the 2013 *Bodies of Work* Festival featuring visual and performing arts highlighting the work of artists with disabilities, which runs from Wednesday, May 15, through Saturday, May 25, at venues throughout Chicago.

For works in the 2013 Bodies of Work Festival, visit www.bodiesofworkchicago.org.



TaRon Patton (left) and Tamberla Perry in *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*. Photo by Liz Lauren

THEATER REVIEW

By The Way, Meet Vera Stark

Playwright: Lynn Nottage

At: Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn St.

Tickets: 312-443-3800;

www.goodmantheatre.org; \$25-\$81

Runs through: June 2

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Cinema history, we are told, suffered a great loss in the fire destroying the Celestial Pictures studios in 1947, leaving only one film—an unremarkable 1933 melodrama titled *The Belle of New Orleans*, its screenplay based on a Bernard St. Simon novel (but suspiciously similar to Dion Boucicault's 1859 play, *The Octoroon*)—to witness our country's first glimpse of the talented African-American artist named Vera Stark. Though she would go on to appear in other movies, her troubled life would reflect the limited opportunities that marked the early days of motion pictures, even as it paved the way for such luminaries as Dorothy Dandridge and Diahann Carroll.

The hallmark of good parody is that you can hardly distinguish it from its source material. Lazy playgoers overlooking the teeny-tiny playbill footnote will likely go home thinking that they have seen an actual biodrama documenting the story of the mysterious woman whom cineastes would praise as a front-runner in the depiction of ethnic minorities in Hollywood and civil-rights activists would vilify as a barrier to progress. In fact, Vera Stark, and the people who figure in her career, are fictional characters created by playwright Lynn Nottage—generic representations of the players forced to endure personal humiliation in their quest during the Great Depression, not for stardom, but simply for any paying job.

Stark's peers include Black actresses who pose as hot-tamale Latinas, who deliberately overeat to qualify for "mammy" roles, and who self-consciously alter their voices and body language to mimic popular notions of antebellum slaves. White actresses, even those enjoying celebrity status, didn't have it much better. The clean and wholesome ingenue Gloria Mitchell—Stark's co-star, former employer and lifelong friend—also must guard her private past or risk losing her livelihood.

It's easy to imagine nervous actors hamming this material for the sake of cheap laughs, but

the production currently occupying the Goodman stage is chiefly characterized by its strict adherence to its satirical source, beginning with cinematography so artfully aged that you'd swear it was the real thing. The scholarly analyses promulgated by a panel of pundits (quoted in the show's publicity campaign) likewise mimics academic fashions to the last *ibid.* and *op.cit.* At the heart of Nottage's arguments, however, is the cast led by Tamberla Perry as the everywoman Vera Stark, whose persona and progress are guaranteed to awaken memories of their real-world counterparts (but how many of their names can *you* remember?).

CRITICS' PICKS

Comrades Mine, City Lit Theater at Edgewater Presbyterian Church, through May 19. Maureen Gallagher's bio-drama recounts the little-known story of the Civil War spy whom nobody suspected was a woman until she asked to be recognized by the government for her service. MSB

The Night of the Iguana, The Artistic Home, through May 25. Ensemble acting at its most exemplary is the key to this intimately articulate rendering of the Tennessee Williams classic, starring a mostly shirtless John Mossman as a tormented priest lost in a tropical Babylon. MSB

Oklahoma!, Lyric Opera of Chicago, through May 19. Despite the cavernous house and the odd sound dynamic, director Gary Griffin has produced a beautifully traditional staging of Rodgers and Hammerstein's landmark 1943 musical—complete with re-creations of Agnes de Mille's original choreography. SCM

Pal Joey, Porchlight Music Theatre at Stage 773, through May 26. It's a fast-paced staging of the 1940 Rodgers & Hart musical about a sexy cad hooper who courts two gals and gets his comeuppance. Snappy songs, cheesy chorus numbers and handsome Adrian Aguilar will bewitch (if not bother or bewilder) you. JA

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

THEATER REVIEW

Seek and Ye Shall Find

Playwright: Sentell Harper

At: Mortar Theatre Company at Apollo

Theater Studio, 2540 N. Lincoln Ave.

Tickets: 773-935-6100 or

www.mortartheatrecompany.org;

\$15 (\$10 for students)

Runs through: June 8

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Local actors currently in the process of creating a solo performance art piece should measure their efforts against the wowing high bar being set by Sentell Harper in his one-man show *Seek and Ye Shall Find*. Now being presented by Mortar Theatre after readings at Pegasus Players, *Seek and Ye Shall Find* continually dazzles with Harper's amazing all-around acting and writing abilities.

Now it must be said that things don't start off promisingly at the intimate Apollo Studio Theater. The recurring din of overhead rumbling CTA Red and Brown Line elevated trains audibly bleeds into the space.

However, Harper makes an asset of the noisy venue by prominently featuring a magical CTA train ride in his script. Those train sounds also tie simply and scenically into the show via set designers Robert S. Kuhn and Michelle Underwood's onstage chairs painted with multicolor CTA map patterns.

And what a comic and poignant ride Harper and director Stephanie Stroud take you on in *Seek and Ye Shall Find*. Harper's main axe to grind in his show is how his main character feels so disappointed and dispirited with of

his fellow peers in Chicago's gay African-American community. So when he gets stranded in a neighborhood populated entirely by gay Black men, Harper's leading man doesn't know if he's being cosmically punished or tested.

Lucky for us, that gives Harper the opportunity to portray a number of different gay Black men, ranging from the hilarious pop-culture obsessed coffee-shop employee "Tom-Tom" (named twice for a reason) to the sage-like older gentleman Willie (who makes a great analogy to modern jazz when evaluating the different approaches Black men take to expressing their homosexuality).

Harper is an astute observer, and his attention to physical and vocal details as he speeds through his many characters is positively astonishing and minutely specific. Though he doesn't change costumes, Harper is capable of letting you know in an instant of which character he's playing simply by a change in vocal inflection or physical stance (the spot-on work of lighting and sound designer Scott Pillsbury is also an invaluable aid to Harper's split-second morphing).

What Harper has to say frequently hits home, with topics including self-loathing, HIV-status bias and racial discrimination within the LGBTQ community. But whenever things get preachy, Harper isn't far behind with great dashes of truthful humor to bring home his characters' points.

Seek and Ye Shall Find is simultaneously critical and celebratory African-American gay males, giving a wonderful insight from one who questions his place in this specific and larger communities. And as far as a solo showcase for Harper, it's a deluxe dramatic and comic vehicle that allows him to constantly shine.

THEATER REVIEW

Henry VIII

Playwright: William Shakespeare

At: Chicago Shakespeare Theater

at Navy Pier, 800 E. Grand Ave.

Tickets: 312-595-5600;

www.chicagoshakes.com; \$58-\$78

Runs through: June 16

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The image of Henry VIII indelibly imprinted in American memory is that of the fat and hearty Charles Laughton in the 1933 film. The reason behind its persistence is that the final chapter in Shakespeare's history of English rule boasts no thrilling battle scenes, no bloody assassinations, no ghosts or witches, nor clowns recounting droll wisdom, or interrupting the action with a song. Oh, the text includes a few processions, a dream-sequence and a party, but the story of the six times-wedded monarch is nevertheless scarce on sex and violence, making it one of the Bard's most rarely performed plays.

So what do you do when your script lacks dazzle? You ramp up the spectacle, that's what. You need sex? When the married Henry meets the woman who will become his second wife, their chaste palm-to-palm dancing quickly progresses to groin-to-groin, and from there to fevered adagios. You want violence? The Cardinals Wolsey and Campeius are not above using literal "strong-arm" persuasion on the soon-to-be deposed queen Katherine, whose dying dreams are haunted by—you guessed it—ghostly visions of happier days with a loving and attentive husband. Oh, and since the REAL star of the show (at its premiere performance, anyway) would have been the newborn princess and future sovereign Elizabeth, you pour on the pageantry for the coronation of the royal mother and christening ceremonies of the royal infant, allowing their pomp to be perceived by modern audiences as ironic commentary on the underhanded methods employed in their accomplishment.

If director Barbara Gaines' solution succeeds in lending visual pizzazz to her prosaic tale of power-brokers behaving badly—did I mention



Gregory Wooddell in *Henry VIII*. Photo by Liz Lauren

the giant dumpster-like incinerator into whose fiery interior dissenters are escorted through ever-larger doors, or the scenic and costume design incorporating more flying silk than a parachuting tournament?—it also makes for a Henry VIII with curiously little Henry in it.

Surrounded by the muscular performances of Chicago's foremost character actors—Scott Jaeck as the scheming Wolsey; Ora Jones as the matronly Katherine; the trio of Mike Nussbaum, David Lively and Nathan M. Hosner as a classical-tragedy chorus of lords—Gregory Wooddell's Henry comes off as a slackerly stripling who parrots his elders while thinking with his, um, Richard the Third. Ultimately, our sympathies are reserved, not for the potentate striving to retain the family property, but for the hapless subordinates whose fortunes are tied to so mercurial a seeker.



The Lake Effect. Photo by Michael Brosilow

DOUBLE REVIEW

If You Split a Second

Playwright: Dana Lynn Formby
 At: Pegasus Players at Leo Lerner Theater, 4520 N. Beacon St.
 Tickets: 866-811-4111 or www.pegasusplayers.org; \$15-\$25
 Runs through: June 2

Just Another Love Story: ... Romeo and Juliet

Playwright: William Shakespeare, adapted by Zarinah Ali
 At: Realize Theatre Group and Earth Pearl Collective at Prop Thtr, 3502 N. Elston Ave.
 Tickets: <http://justanotherlovestory.bpt.me> or www.realizetheatregroup.com; \$20
 Runs through: May 25

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Unconvincingly delayed messages lead to tragic ends in two current Chicago productions: Dana Lynn Formby's world premiere drama *If You Split a Second* for Pegasus Players and Zarinah Ali's unwieldy-titled *Just Another Love Story: The Most Excellent and Lamentable Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* (an updated lesbian adaptation of Shakespeare's most famous romantic tragedy for Realize Theatre Group in collaboration with Earth Pearl Collective).

Unfortunately, major flaws in style and logic mar both scripts. But at least one production largely keeps you gripped to the unfolding plot, while the other prompts laughter at the unintentional absurdity of the archaic and modern mix of dialogue and situations.

Formby's *If You Split...* shows the tragic consequences of a moment of murderous rage and how that unleashes a cycle of violence and deception upon an extended and damaged Wyoming family. It's a full-blown soap opera: The heavily-tattooed dad Mick Johnson is in jail for murder. Mick's wife, Jane, rushes into an unsatisfying marriage with Mick's lawyer brother, Patrick. Mick's estranged teenage daughter, Geneva, rebels in dangerously sexual ways. (There's also some anti-gay bullying of Mick's musician son, David, but he's kept entirely off-stage.)

I'm not sure if it was Formby or director Ilesa Duncan's stylistic decision to have the very capable Dylan McGorty and Stephanie Chavara play all the characters. On one hand, it's a way to show off the chameleon character skills of the performers and to symbolically show the interconnectedness of the family members. But it also feels like a cost-cutting measure and it can be confusing when some costume transitions aren't crystal-clear.

But a major unconvincing trait about Formby's script is the constant character philosophizing on time intricacies and atom bombs. These thoughts are so articulate that they don't match Formby's lower-class characterizations. The delayed message at the end also feels very cloying as a plot device.

Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* also has a crucial delayed message that leads to tragedy. But what's most lamentable about Ali's *Just Another*

Love Story is her overall clueless approach to modernizing the Bard's text and her listless direction.

Ali's decision to mix Shakespeare's text with profanity and current slang (including a reference to global warming) is frequently laughable and inelegant. And if you're going to revise a Shakespeare play to speak to modern-day Chicago problems like homophobia and bullying, a radical reinvention like *West Side Story* makes much more sense (particularly when Ali has Romeo banished to Barrington, of all places, for Tybalt's murder).

By the time Lord Capulet says revised Shakespearean lines like, "Oh disobedient dyke!" or "Oh fuck! My daughter is dead!" toward the end of *Just Another Love Story*, the play degrades into an exercise in holding back inappropriate giggles.

Jillian Erickson at Prop Thtr in June

Performance artist, monologist, poet and writer Jillian Erickson will bring his show, 3:00 a.m., to Prop Thtr, 3502 N. Elston Ave., Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. June 7-29.

A press release states that "the performance is a menagerie of Erickson's life over the past years: from Colorado to Chicago... from Ralph Macchio to religion... from biological clocks to a Norwegian obsession."

Erickson is writer, performer and co-producer/director of *Beast Women*, which spotlights female artists through music, belly dancing, burlesque and sketch comedy.

Tickets are \$15 at the door or can be purchased at <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/382209>.



Jillian Erickson.

SPOTLIGHT



American Theater Company postponed its planned revival of the musical *Hair* this season when its acclaimed production of the revised *Columbus* was extended. So in place of *Hair*, a remounting of Stephen Karam's comic drama *Speech & Debate* was combed into the season. (American Theater Company previously staged a Jeff Award-winning production in 2008.) So if you previously missed this acclaimed play about three teenage misfits who have damaging suspicions about the drama teacher, now is your chance to see it. *Speech & Debate* continues through Sunday, June 23, at American Theater Company, 1909 W. Byron St. Performances are 8 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays, 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays, and 2 p.m. Sundays. Tickets are \$38-\$43; call 773-409-4125 or visit www.atcweb.org. Photo courtesy of American Theater Company

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THEATER REVIEW

Blood and Gifts

Playwright: J. T. Rogers

At: TimeLine Theatre, 615 W. Wellington Ave.

Tickets: 1-773-281-8463;

www.timelinetheatre.com; \$32-\$42

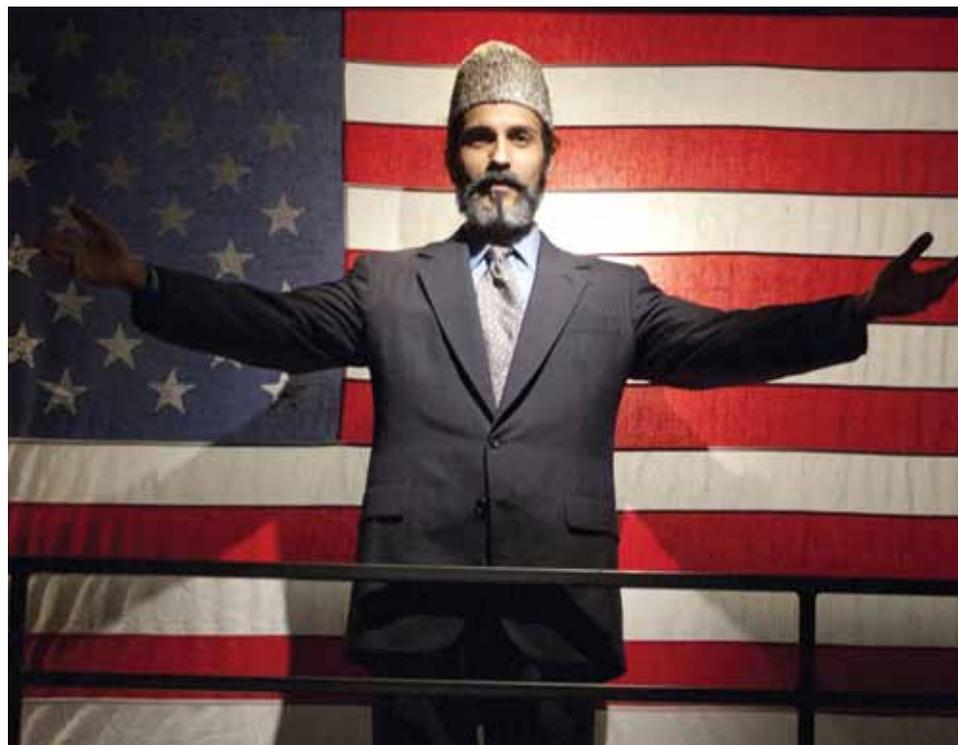
Runs through: July 28

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

"My enemy's enemy is my friend," is a cliché of global geopolitics, and perhaps it's never proved more accurate than in the quicksand morass of the Islamic world. The monumental schism of that world, Shi'a vs. Sunni, began with the death of The Prophet in 632, exacerbated much later by European colonial powers creating artificial nations across Islamic and ethnic lines. For more than 30 years now we've paid the piper for one such artificial nation, Afghanistan.

Blood and Gifts addresses recent Afghan history with a substantial shout-out to Pakistan as well, as seen via CIA operative James Warnock (played with greatly effective passionate sadness by Timothy Edward Kane). The nearly indecipherable regional politics are portrayed 1981-1991, when the Soviet Union had its Vietnam in Afghanistan, with the United States and Britain covertly supporting nationalist opposition through Pakistan and various tribal warlords. To hasten the Soviet defeat, we armed and trained the religious fighters known as Mujahedeen, some of whom became the Taliban.

Author J.T. Rogers—best-known for Mada-



Karen Bandy in Blood and Gifts. Photo by Lara Goetsch

gascar, a deeply meditative three-character play—this time around paints an enormous canvas requiring a cast of 15, locations on three

continents and smatterings of Russian, Farsi and Pashtun in addition to English. Combining cultural journey with political lesson, the mes-

sage of Blood and Gifts is for all of us right now, even though the setting is the near-past. Western policies must fail, Rogers implies, as long as family and traditional Islamic blood vengeance out-trump political loyalties or concepts of nationhood. Rogers humanizes this story through four principal characters: the U.S., British and Soviet agents in Pakistan and an Afghan warlord, united through discussions of children and family obligations. It's an effective technique although it cannot totally disguise Blood and Gifts as a tract play.

This is one of TimeLine's largest and most complex shows, and it's terribly important as well. Masterful veteran director Nick Bowling does not disappoint, handling with equal skill the complex physical logistics of the alley staging (audience on two sides, facing across the stage) and the high emotions of the characters. This is gangbusters theater with one of the finest casts currently onstage: Kane (Warnock), Raymond Fox (Brit agent Simon Craig), Terry Hamilton (cagey, avuncular Soviet Dmitri Gromov), Kareem Bandy (passionate warlord Abdullah Khan), with Anish Jethmalani, Behzad Dabu, Craig Spidle and David Parkes shining in crucial supporting roles.

The design team is stellar as well, especially Collette Pollard's massive environmental lobby and set, literally the unfinished walls of a disaster under construction, which is an apt description of the history still unfolding around us. Do see this show. Come early (or stay afterwards) to absorb the copious information in the lobby, and then weep for the world.

New gay screenplay dates back to the Great Depression

BY ROSS FORMAN

Martha Meyer and Rick Kinnebrew were in Spring Green, Wis., for their honeymoon, which ultimately and surprisingly led to a gay screenplay.

The two visited Taliesin and heard about Frank Lloyd Wright and his adultery, but that certainly was not the love story they wanted to hear. So they went to nearby Mineral Point and toured Pendarvis, one of 10 Wisconsin Historical Society Sites, where they learned of Bob Neal and Edgar Hellum.

Back in the Great Depression, Neal and Hellum paid \$10 for a crumbling stone house in Mineral Point. The house eventually became a restaurant before closing in 1970.

Meyer and Kinnebrew continued their research on Neal and Hellum—or Bob and Edgar, as they were known—and the result is *The Bachelors*, a new, true-life screenplay about the two.

There will be a reading of *The Bachelors* on May 29 at Stage 773, starting at 7 p.m., followed by a performance of the play in the historic Mineral Point Opera House on Sunday, June 2. Proceeds from the Chicago event will sponsor the second reading, produced by the Alley Stage. Tickets for the Mineral Point performance are available by calling 608-987-3292 or at www.shakeragalley.com/alley-stage.

"They essentially [were] in a gay marriage for 40 years, in plain sight, without it being an issue," Meyer said. "We thought it was stunning and amazing. Bob and Edgar were truly fascinating."

The Bachelors is about Neal, a London interior decorator who returns to his failing Wisconsin hometown of Mineral Point in 1934 and hires a local man, Hellum, to help him restore a historic rock cottage. It is a humorous and touching look at a life two men spend together, Meyer said. "Their restoration anchors what has become a thriving artistic community in Mineral Point today."

The Bachelors was a semifinalist in *Pride Films and Plays' Great Gay Screenplay Competition*. It



Real-life Bob Neal and Edgar Hellum circa 1939. Photo courtesy of the MPLA

features Nelson Rodriguez and Nicholas Stockwell as Bob Neal and Edgar Hellum, respectively. Others in the cast include Sam Button-Harrison, David Besky, Joan McGrath, Jamie Smith, Beth Richards, and Tom Chiola. Chuck Berglund directs, based on David Zak's original staging.

"The highlight of the play for us is the last line, when Edgar who is caring for Bob at this point, says: 'Bob, I lived with you for 40 years. I would crawl on my knees to care for you,'" Meyer said. "That was a direct quote and, to me, that is so beautiful, such a statement of love and what

marriage is supposed to be about. I thought that was gorgeous, a beacon, an emblem of how we someday hope our marriage will be looked back upon. I really thought it was lovely."

Meyer, 51, who lives in Evanston and is a mother to three, said she has gay family members and friends, so the gay screenplay certainly hits home.

"We both feel very deeply about the rights of all family and friends to marry who they love. [Same-sex marriage] is like the civil rights issue of our time; it's just something that needs to happen," Meyer said. "What we need is, models

of what it looks like to have a healthy, successful gay marriage over a long period of time. And, boy, are Bob and Edgar those models."

"We wrote this play so others might be able to draw strength and inspiration from them. We truly are excited that Bob and Edgar can live on for everyone."

Tickets are \$10 for the Chicago performance on May 29 at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave. Tickets can be purchased at www.brownpapertickets.com or by calling 800-838-3006.

Howlin' Wolf show at Black Ensemble

Black Ensemble Theater announces *Ain't No Crying the Blues* (In the Memory of Howlin' Wolf), written by Black Ensemble Theater Founder and CEO Jackie Taylor, directed by Associate Director Rueben Echoles and starring Rick Stone, one of the stars of the classic movie *Cooley High*.

Ain't No Crying the Blues will be presented at the new Black Ensemble Theater Cultural Center, 4450 N. Clark St., June 1-Aug. 11. Black Ensemble Theater performance times are Wednesdays and Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Sundays at 3 p.m.

Ticket prices are \$45 (previews)-\$55; call 773-769-4451 or visit www.blackensemble.org.

Center's ArtOUT Gallery to feature Marshall, Kemp

On Friday, May 17, at 7 p.m., Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., will host an opening reception at its second and third floor art galleries to feature the works of artists Kathleen Ellen Marshall and Christopher Kemp.

The opening reception and galleries are open to the public, with a suggested \$5 donation. These artwork installations will continue until July 3. Every six weeks, curator David Joseph rotates the exhibits, which display the works of local LGBTQ community artists.

See www.CenterOnHalsted.org.

Silk Road's 'Invasion!' starts July 30

Silk Road Rising co-founders, Artistic Director Jamil Khoury and Executive Director Malik Gillani, will present the Midwest premiere of Jonas Hassen Khemiri's *Invasion!* July 30-Sept. 3.

According to a press release, "this deeply subversive play deconstructs a threatening identity—the Arabic male—and forces us to confront our own cultural identity."

All performances will be presented in the company's venue in Pierce Hall at the Chicago Temple, 77 W. Washington St.

Tickets are \$25 (previews)-\$35; visit www.silkroadrising.org, or call 312-857-1234, ext. 201.

About Face presenting 'The Pride' June 6

About Face Theatre will kick off LGBTQ Pride Month with the Chicago premiere of the Olivier Award-winning drama *The Pride* by Alexi Kaye Campbell June 6-July 13 at Victory Gardens Richard Christiansen Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.

Artistic Director Bonnie Metzgar will direct.

"The Pride maps the progression of the gay-rights movement from the repression of the fifties to the freedom of today through the fate of two twisted love triangles," according to a press release.

Tickets are \$15 (students)-\$30; visit www.aboutface theatre.com or call 773-871-3000.

KNIGHT AT THE MOVIES

BY
RICHARD
KNIGHT, JR.

The Great Gatsby; Scatter My Ashes; film notes

F. Scott Fitzgerald's 1925 classic novel **The Great Gatsby** has been a staple of high school English lit classes for decades. And though scores of folks have no doubt been moved by Fitzgerald's story of the fragile Southern belle Daisy—married to the wealthy brute Tom Buchanan—and her obsession for her onetime lover, the elusive mega rich Jay Gatsby, the movies have not had much luck capturing the novel's potent delicacy.

It's been more than 30 years since an attempt has been made. That would be the 1974, in the appropriately lavish though leaden version co-starring Robert Redford as a nearly somnambulant Gatsby and Mia Farrow as an ethereal but not-quite-of-this-Earth Daisy.

Gorgeous and vapid, director Jack Clayton's movie looked pretty and sounded right (Francis Ford Coppola did the adaptation) but never really caught fire emotionally and seemed to drown in its own good taste.

That criticism is unlikely to ever be lobbed at Baz Luhrmann's frenzied new version of the novel, a movie that taps into the director's excesses for both better (the 3-D really does look sensational for once) and for worse (the madcap, non-stop parties at Gatsby's Long Island estate wear out their welcome faster than the tempo of one of Jay-Z's rap songs on the soundtrack). It really is Luhrmann's frenetic, twitchy *Moulin Rouge* all over again, albeit this time it's set in the 1920s. When Nick Carraway (Tobey Maguire) comments that one of Gatsby's over-the-top bashes is "like an amusement park," he's describing the movie, too.

The effect of all those extras gyrating like mad, diving in Gatsby's pool, drinking all that bootleg whiskey and groping each other indis-



Leonardo DiCaprio and Carey Mulligan in *The Great Gatsby*. Photo courtesy of Warner Bros.

criminally is of such bacchanalian proportions that it requires an act of will to sit there passively as the senses are not merely assaulted but pummeled into submission. It's akin to watching a play staged on a carousel. Ironically, when the movie finally slows down for the romance between Daisy and Gatsby, it starts to come to life.

Leonardo DiCaprio retains just enough of his baby-faced innocence, combined with a somber gravitas, to make his lovelorn, desperate Gatsby that much more tragic. I wish that Carey Mulligan, who has a lovely entrance, was a better physical match up for him. Mulligan doesn't have either the breathtaking beauty or the elusive qualities of Fitzgerald's creation, and it's hard to believe this Daisy would ignite the imagination of both Gatsby and Joel Edgerton as a very brutish Buchanan, the conservative WASP who has claimed her thanks to his vast fortune. Ma-

guire—as Daisy's poor cousin, who watches on the sidelines—is his usual sad-sack self, forced to narrate the film in Luhrmann's negligible, invented framing device.

Perhaps Fitzgerald's novel—with its lyrical dexterity that makes one put the book down to momentarily ponder its gorgeous, insightful descriptions—will never get the film adaptation that it deserves. Luhrmann's movie, valiant attempt that it is, never gets past his ultimately uncomfortable, hybrid conception of mixing old and new. This *Great Gatsby* has moments of spectacular beauty, some bewitching visuals and even its share of scenes with actors getting at the heart of the material—but on the whole it never hangs together, hamstrung by the director's crazy-quilt, rather ill-conceived approach that can't make up its mind about how to look or feel. In short, the movie is Daisy incarnate.

We've had a plethora of documentaries on fashion designers and the fabulous folks who cover their creations—and now there's **Scatter My Ashes At Bergdorf's**, a movie that focuses exclusively on Manhattan's one-of-a-kind department store that showcases its high-end wares. The film, which Matthew Miele directs, is a feast for fashionistas and not—unlike the myriad of fashion-themed flicks that have come before it—the high-wattage personalities often eclipse the electrifying clothes, shoes and accessories they're all so mad for.

The unique Bergdorf-Goodman emporium is a New York institution that, for more than a century, has prided itself on its outré clientele and outrageously expensive offerings. The film can't help but pick up the theme of conspicuous consumption that's the given mindset of both store employees and its customers. (This ain't a place for bargains, folks.) No criticism by outsiders (heaven forbid) of the obscene amounts spent in the store is allowed to sully this portrait of this couture department store. Instead, the day-to-day behind-the-scenes on the various floors of the oh-so-tasteful store and in the justly famed windows beckoning tourists and, one presumes, dreamers alike are explored in the movie's zippy 90 minutes.

In between a quick overview of the history of the store, we meet various department

heads—all stylishly dressed, of course—as they go about the business of sizing new potential designers, imparting a few secrets to staying on top as a personal shopper and, most delightfully, revealing the insanely meticulous detail that goes into crafting the store windows. Dishy and fun (it's revealed that Yoko Ono, on one Christmas Eve, stocked up on more than 70 fur coats for family members), *Scatter My Ashes At Bergdorf's* is close to hagiography—but who cares when faced with such an entertaining valentine as this.

Scatter My Ashes At Bergdorf's opens Friday, May 17, exclusively playing in Chicago at AMC, 600 N. Michigan Ave.

Film notes:

—Julie Dash, who has the distinction of being the first female African-American director of a feature film, 1991's **Daughters of the Dust**, will be the guest at a screening of the movie (featuring a new 35mm print) on Tuesday, May 21 at 7 p.m. at the Logan Center Performance Hall at the University of Chicago, 5811 South Ellis Ave., Cobb Hall 306. The film, a revelatory historical drama, will be preceded by Dash's 1977 short film *The Diary of An African Nun* (also screened in a restored version). The event is part of a celebratory screening series titled "L.A. Rebellion: Creating a New Black Cinema," which focuses on the works of pioneering African-American filmmakers. Jacqueline Stewart will provide the introduction. <http://filmstudiescenter.uchicago.edu/events/2013/daughters-dust>

—The Chicago-based Wachowski siblings (Andy and Lana, who recently transitioned to female) co-directed the sprawling sci-fi epic **Cloud Atlas**, which spans eons of time, countries and cultures in an attempt to prove we're all connected. Starring Tom Hanks, Halle Berry and Susan Sarandon, as well as Ben Whishaw and James D'Arcy as gay lovers whose romance provides the connecting device (via their love letters) between all the disparate elements, the movie is now on Blu-ray and DVD. Based on a best-seller, the three-hour film didn't connect with mainstream audiences but will hopefully do so in this feature-packed home release. It's a gorgeous, thought-provoking movie that rewards long after it's over.



Fashion designer Isaac Mizrahi in *Scatter My Ashes At Bergdorf's*. Photo from 2013 Entertainment One Films US

NUNN ON ONE

John Waters:

Icon talks poppers, new show, Johnny Depp



BY JERRY NUNN

Born in Baltimore, John Waters rose to fame as a cult icon. He has worn many hats over the years including journalist, film director, author, screenwriter and, now, spoken-word comedian.

He has ignited the careers of such performers as Ricki Lake, Divine, Mink Stole, Traci Lords and Johnny Depp.

Known for his pencil moustache and his reputation the king of camp, Waters continues to push the boundaries of "normal" behavior with his sarcastic wit and biting sense of humor.

He brings all of that including much more with his one-man show entitled "This Filthy World" to the Harris Theater to entertain Chicago audiences.

Windy City Times: Last time we saw each other was at the Music Box book-signing for Role Models.

John Waters: Right, here I come again!

WCT: Coming back to Chicago.

JW: I'm looking forward to it.

WCT: I really loved the Christmas show at the same Harris Theater space. Tell people about This Filthy World.

JW: It is a spoken-word act that is completely updated and rehearsed. I update it all the time. It is about everything, not so much about my movies even. I use my movies and experiences of making them as a springboard to talk about true crime, fashion, what shocks me, how to get along with your parents even if you are insane or they are insane. It's about education and how to get through life these days, to be true to yourself and be a happy neurotic.

I always say it is a self-help speech for people that don't really need help. It is mainly to help everyone to be insane together. That has always been my message.

WCT: These stories go back through your whole life?

JW: Everything from kindergarten to yesterday will be covered, yes! [Laughs]

WCT: What will the set be like?

JW: It's just me and a stool. There won't be dancing kangaroos or anything! Sometimes I am lucky and they do some flowers. It is very sparse. Think of Lenny Bruce in the early days. Do people with a spoken word show usually have a set?

WCT: Sometimes they bring clips with a movie screen.

JW: No, none of that. I just have it memorized with no cheat sheets.

WCT: Will there be a Q&A?

JW: Yes.

WCT: I will tell people to bring their questions, then.

JW: Yes, tell them to bring some new ones. I don't mind the old ones but I will just try to think up a different answer. How many questions can people ask? I've been doing this for 50 years!

WCT: Do you talk about poppers in this show, like in the past?

JW: I might talk about them a little but I go into new drugs. I try to be up-to-date.

WCT: Who knew poppers would be so popular even today?

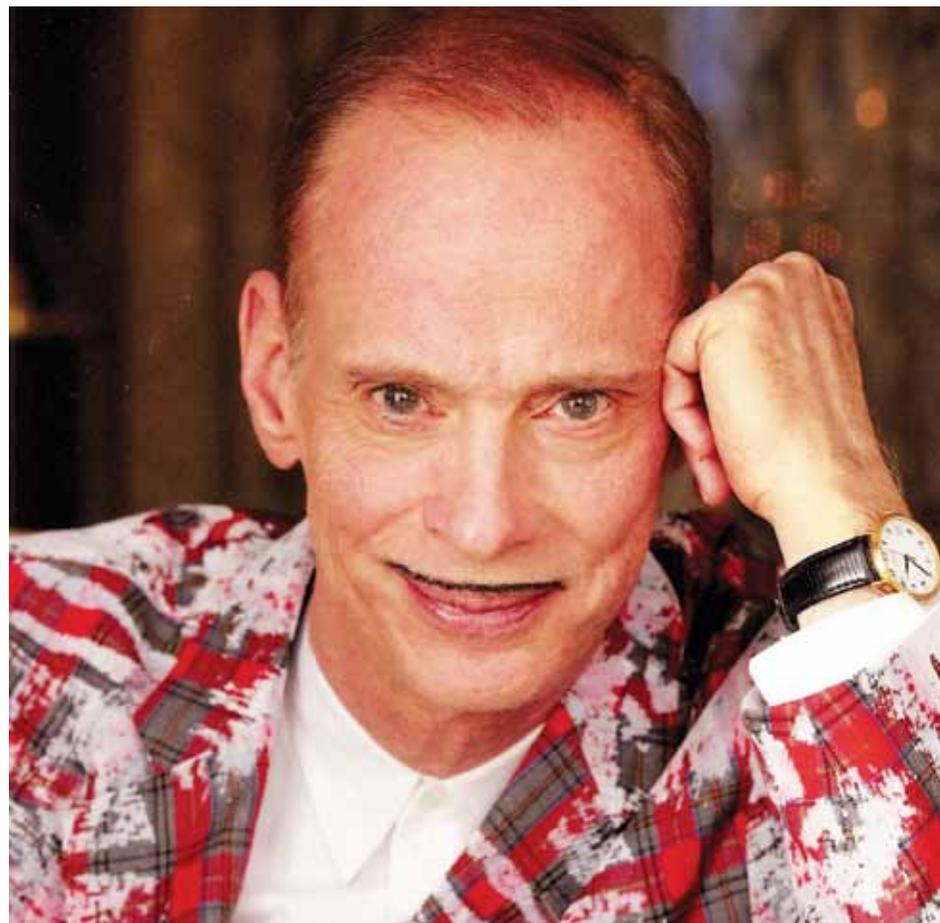
JW: They still are. You know I got a lifetime supply of them from a company. The most embarrassing thing is that I am almost out!

WCT: Oh no! I read that you knew you were gay since you first saw Elvis Presley.

JW: That is true. I don't know if that is in this piece but I do talk about the duties of being gay and the very fact that people are allowed to come in. I think we have enough gay people sometimes I think people should have to audition. I am sorry to get snobby about it but I think they should try out for the part of being gay. Then we could give a gay ID for the people that have been approved.

WCT: It used to be so rare and now everyone is doing it. So trendy!

JW: Now there is trisexual. They have to really be gay.



John Waters. Publicity photo

I am all for people falling off the wagon of heterosexuality. I think that is fun too.

WCT: What do you think about the current state of gay marriage?

JW: I'm for gay marriage. Why would anyone be against that? I want alimony! I've never been in love with a rich person unfortunately. That is something lacking in me. I want to start being a gold-digger at 67. Now people are my age; there is not even a stretch anymore. I wouldn't be like Anna Nicole Smith; I would be dating age-appropriately if I was a gold-digger. But a wrinkle queen I am not. I am still looking for one. If anyone asks you what a wrinkle queen is, it is someone with a sexual attraction to old people.

WCT: Is there a new celebrity that you are into?

JW: I always like Justin Bieber and I talk a lot about him. He's one that is lasting I think. I'm all for Justin. I am his top Belieber.

WCT: You have been called the "Pope of Trash."

JW: That is an old term but nobody has come up with a better one. The real reason is because William Burroughs called me that. That is like being ordained from the heavens above. It is a beatnikism. I don't think I will ever be topped for that.

WCT: What did you think about the new pope?

JW: I fucking hate him! He said that gay marriage is the work of the devil. Those are hating words to me. Move to Uganda then. That is where he ought to be living. Do you believe that shit? I think the church is our enemy. I am a catholic basher. They will bash me so fuck them.

WCT: With my last name being Nunn, I run all over the city being a gay nun.

JW: There are the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence too. I don't think there has been anything still as rude as the scene in Multiple Maniacs with my rosary job. That is when I thought I had gotten Catholicism out of my system—until they keep rearing their ugly heads! They bait me with ridiculous statements.

Shrimping [toe-sucking] prisoners—that was my favorite picture of this year when he was washing and kissing the feet of prisoners. He's a shrimper. That is what we call it. He's allowed to shrimp and we are not allowed to get married?

WCT: Good point. Do you think it is harder to shock people these days?

JW: I never tried to shock people so I don't know. Hollywood does that now.

Vincent Price's career because now I appear at these conventions. People always ask if I made any horror films and I say, "My mother thinks they are horror-ible!" I think that qualifies me...

WCT: What do you have on the chopping block this year?

JW: The main thing is my book Carsick, which is about me hitchhiking across the United States. I hitchhiked across America by myself last year.

WCT: Are people still hitchhiking these days?

JW: Well, no, but I did. [Both laugh.]

WCT: I bet you have some good stories.

JW: You have to read the book to get them, but yeah. I am on my tenth draft. I work on it every day.

WCT: Any movie projects?

JW: I have been trying to make this movie, Fruit Cake. I have talked about it for five years and you know what it is. I don't still go to meetings and waste my time. I can't do movies that cost a million dollars. I did that, and worked with unions and movie stars. I'm fine with my other projects.

WCT: It must be rewarding to see people you worked with in the past like Johnny Depp to have done so well with character roles over the years.

JW: Are you kidding? He's one of the best American actors we have today. He's a friend and remembers his past. He keeps in touch and is a great guy.

WCT: Anything else about the show?

JW: Come and see it. I love the buildings in Chicago. I want to jump off of them like Superman. People always complain about the severe weather there. I love cold weather. It is nice there.

WCT: If you need anything while you are in town just let me know.

JW: Alright. I am in town for 24 hours so my needs will be minor, but thank you.

Welcome to Waters World at the Harris Theater, 205 E. Randolph St., on Tuesday, May 21, at 7:30 p.m.

A special afterparty with dinner and drinks follows with a limited \$100 ticket. Visit www.harristheaterchicago.org.

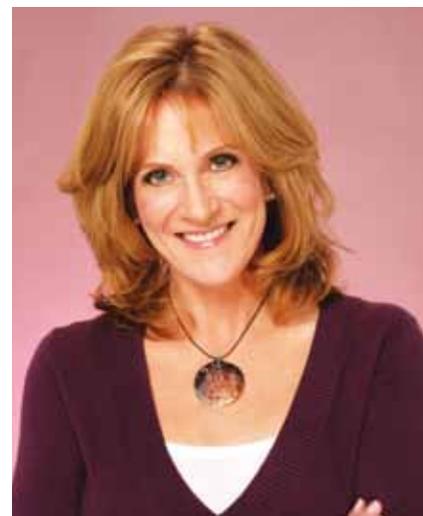
Carol Leifer featured in May 19 event

Lesbian comedian/producer Carol Leifer will headline a May 19 event at Glencoe's North Shore Congregation Israel, 1185 Sheridan Rd., at 5 p.m.

Her one-woman show is entitled "Judaism Is in My DNA."

Leifer has worked for such shows as Saturday Night Live, Seinfeld, The Larry Sanders Show, and the Emmy-winning Modern Family, for which she won a 2012 Writers Guild Award; she also served as a head writer for the 2012 Academy Awards.

Tickets are \$72 (\$82 at the door); visit www.nsci.org/Events/Comedy_Tonight.



Carol Leifer. Publicity photo

WCT: What has been the latest book that you have read?

JW: I am reading James McCourt's book called Lasting City: The Anatomy of Nostalgia. It is not out yet. I'm a huge fan of his. He's a great queer writer.

I just finished David Sedaris' new book Let's Explore Diabetes With Owls. He's the best selling comic writer there is so you better read him. I laughed out loud.

WCT: He was just in town. Traci Lords was, too.

JW: It is her birthday today.

WCT: Well, happy birthday to her! She told me that you were in a film with her recently.

JW: It was a film called Excision. I played a priest and she played an uptight mother, which really proves times have changed.

I also appeared with her at two different horror conventions. I have weirdly appropriated

NUNN ON ONE: MUSIC

'Through the Fire' with Chaka Khan

BY JERRY NUNN

With a career that is now spanning four decades, singer Chaka Khan has never been easy to fit into a box. A Chicago native, she began her career as the front woman for Rufus then broke out on her own with such hits as "Through the Fire" "I'm Every Woman" and "I Feel for You."

She has worked with many music icons such as Miles Davis, Mary J. Blige and Prince.

Khan went on Broadway for *The Color Purple* playing the role of Sofia and gambled on a Stevie Wonder musical—Signed, Sealed, Delivered—in Vegas.

This year is proving to be a very busy year with the chanteuse being inducted into the Apollo Legends Hall of Fame. A series of albums will be released one this July entitled *The iKhan Project: Alive* that will also include an *I'm Every Woman* Tour.

Lucky for our community Center on Halsted has her first and we got a chance to talk about it.

Windy City Times: Hi, Chaka. You are coming back to your hometown again.

Chaka Khan: Well, I don't get home often enough. I come in town for the Taste of Chicago and an occasional gig. I don't get back as often as I should or as I would like to.

WCT: With Center on Halsted's gala, this will be a chance to see many of your LGBT following.

CK: I am really looking forward to it. I love my people!

WCT: This following must have started back with Rufus.

CK: Oh, yeah—back in the day.

WCT: After a 40-year career, how do you protect your voice all of this time?

CK: Sleep. It's a muscle. You have to rest it. That is not to say that I have not been a bad girl, too. I am not an opera singer. I am really blessed to have a voice at this point because it could have easily gone the other way. I could have lost it a couple of times. I am a living state of grace. By the grace of God, here I am!

WCT: Your latest album is coming out in the next few months.

CK: Yes, I am finishing it up right now.

WCT: Did you collaborate with anyone on it?

CK: A few friends mostly, like Sheila E. There will also be some newer artists, like the Dirty Loops and acts like that. I prefer sometimes working with young people.

WCT: Speaking of young, I asked Sheila E. one time how she stays looking so young and she said she cakes on the moisturizer.

CK: Her skin is fabulous. I think it might be good genes, too.

WCT: How do you pick a set list for a gala like this?

CK: It is the hardest thing in the world and with great duress, but I live with duress. It is tough. There will be some songs I will be singing

until I die. The good thing is that I have such a large repertoire that I can go back and forth. I can pull songs that people know but haven't heard a lot.

WCT: We can look forward to some new songs?

CK: There will be a couple of new ones in there, yeah.

WCT: I want to try some of these Chakalates.

CK: Then just go to www.chakakhan.com, darling, and do get you some chocolates and please pick up some Khana Sutra candles.

WCT: I heard you are going to be on a reality show called *L.A. Hair*.

CK: No, I am not. They wanted me to, but I am not. I don't do reality. I am realistically living.

WCT: Speaking of hair, how big is your hair going to be for this event?

CK: I don't know—big enough! I don't plan those kinds of things I just got to be me. I'm gonna look good, okay? Does that work for you? [Laughs]

WCT: I'm sure you will. After being on shows like *VH1's Divas Live*, do you consider yourself a diva?

CK: No, I don't. You can call me what you want. I don't care, just call me! The thing is that I have always seen a diva as a negative thing. In the opera they don't want someone to smoke around them or curse around them or even talk to them, that kind of crap. I am not that kind of vibe. You know what I mean? I am just a chick trying to break mine off, baby. You dig?

WCT: Sometimes being a diva is a good thing because it can mean a woman that knows what she wants.

CK: Okay then, well, I know what I don't want. So maybe then I am really not a diva!

WCT: This upcoming tour that you are embarking on—"I'm Every Woman"—is an anniversary tour?

CK: You can call it that if you like. I would like it to be like *Lilith Fair* only I want to be an equal opportunity employer. You know what I mean?

WCT: Yes, so maybe a variety of artists on the tour to support it. Who are you listening to these days?

CK: I don't listen to a lot of music. I listen to talk radio—XM talk radio, mostly. If I do listen to music, then it is jazz. I also love country music.

WCT: Do you?

CK: I do, baby! I just don't know everybody's names.

WCT: Being from Tennessee, I like the old-school artists like Dolly Parton and Loretta Lynn.

CK: Go on, now! Yes, honey!!!

WCT: I thought it was interesting that you lived in Germany, as I was just there. What part?

CK: I was in the south of Germany. I lived in a little village then, in Mannheim. I also had a residence in London. The world is my home.

WCT: Do you ever get tired of the traveling?

CK: Yes, very much so. That is the part that I hate the most. Hurry up and wait, it is hard and tough.

WCT: The last time I interviewed you was for the Palm Springs Dinah event.

CK: Yeah, yeah, that was fun. I had a good-ass time on that night. I had on my Spider-Woman dress. The dress was long with spider webs and I had my whip. Yes, child...

WCT: I can hardly wait to see what you are going to wear for Center on Halsted's event!

CK: Well, I am going to do something. [Laughs] I don't know exactly what. Maybe if you have ideas...

WCT: I can tweet you some ideas.

CK: Please do. Do you think I should bring my whip anyway?

WCT: I think so. Why leave home without it?

CK: Yeah, then I will bring it.

WCT: It is a pretty formal evening, though.

CK: It won't be raunchy because my whip has all kinds of stones in it. I can keep it classy, if that is what they want...

WCT: I love it. There will be tons of gay fans there.

CK: I know and I am so thankful. I feel so blessed and lucky, trust. I find my gay and lesbian fans to be my least fickle of everybody. They stand by you. I mean really. I appreciate everybody. I don't know why I am so loved. Maybe it is the butch in me...

WCT: I think it's because of the music.

CK: Oh good, okay! Whatever it is I don't look a gift horse in the mouth. I'm just trying to do what I do and do the best that I can.

One thing is for sure: "Ain't Nobody" like Chaka Khan! Don't miss the Human First Gala Saturday, May 18, at the Hilton Towers Chicago, 720 S. Michigan Ave. For tickets, visit www.centeronhalsted.org.



Chaka Khan. Publicity photo

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Out choral director to receive award

The Grant Park Music Festival has announced that chorus director Christopher Bell will receive the 2013 Michael Korn Founders Award given by Chorus America.

Bell has served as director of the Grant Park Chorus since 2001, and led the chorus through its 50th anniversary last season with a series of special events, including the release of its first-ever *a cappella* recording entitled *Songs of Smaller Creatures* and other Ameri-

can Choral Works. In addition to their regular performances at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion this summer, Bell and the chorus will reach new audiences with "Songs of Praise and Passion," a program of *a cappella* music at the South Shore Cultural Center on July 30 and at the Columbus Park Refectory on Aug. 1 at 7 p.m.

The Michael Korn Founders Award will be presented to Bell at Chorus America's 36th Annual Conference in Seattle June 12-15.

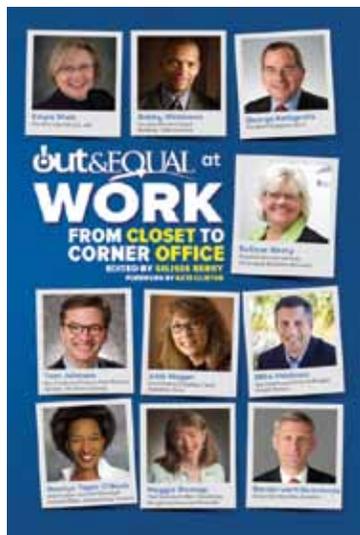
Bookshelf

BY TRACY BAIM

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

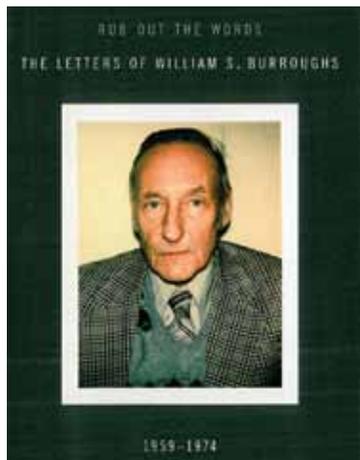
Non-Fiction

Thirty-six stories from LGBT and allied business leaders make up the anthology **Out & Equal at Work: From Closet to Corner Office from Out & Equal Workplace Advocates**. The group's founding executive director, Selisse Berry, edited the anthology. She said the book is a reminder that "it really does get better. Out & Equal at Work is the first time that business leaders, including C-Suite executives from Fortune 500 companies, have come together to share their per-



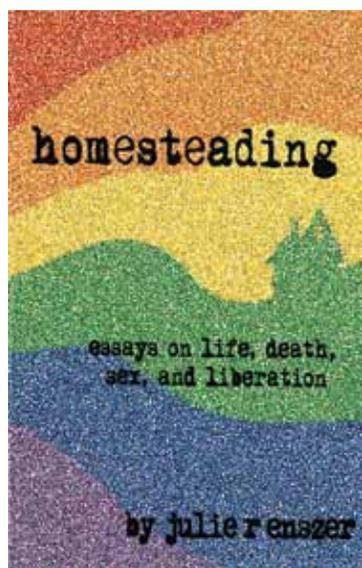
sonal stories of facing discrimination and forwarding LGBT equality in the workplace." Berry said some of the contributors lost their jobs, family, friends and some even nearly their lives. "But by being their authentic selves at work, many saw their careers—and companies—blossom," according to a press release for the book. Chicago-area resident Lori Fox writes about her life as a transgender woman working on corporate diversity issues. Other contributors include Kayla Shell of Dell, Maggie Stump of Prudential, George Kalogridis of Disneyland Resort, Rosalyn Taylor O'Neale of Campbell Soup, and Deborah Dagit of Merck. Some of these people write about their multiple barriers beyond LGBT issues. This is a very important book for LGBTs in the corporate workforce.

Rub Out the Words: The Letters of William S. Burroughs (1959-1974),



edited by Bill Morgan (Ecco Books), was published in 2012. It's a lengthy hardcover providing a close-up look at this Beat Generation gay icon. The 300 letters are by Burroughs to friends, family and colleagues, and they expand beyond his early Beat days to later years when he had links around the world.

Homesteading: Essays on Life, Death, Sex, and Liberation, by Julie E. Enszer (One Spirit Press), features the poet's essays from 1992 to 2008.



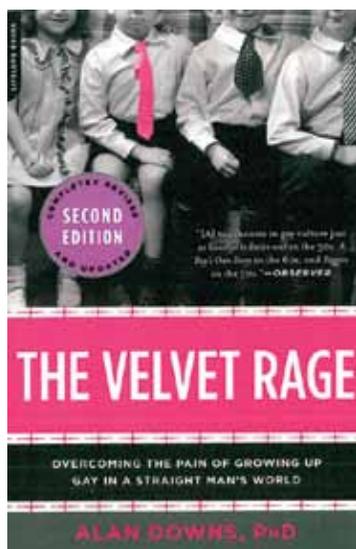
Enszer worked part of this time on LGBT rights in Ferndale, Mich., and for national groups. She speaks of compromise and coalitions, organizations and changing fashions (between the activist and corporate worlds), and much more.

The New Erotic Photography 2, from world-renowned Taschen publishers, doesn't disappoint. It features the work of 50 photographers from around the world. Among the models are erotic film star Kimberly Kane, Colombian expat Alejandra



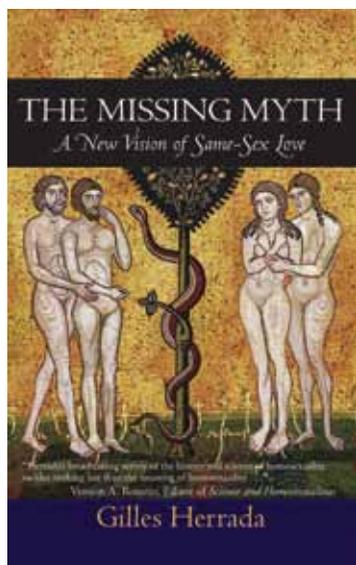
Guerrero, skate-boarder and heavy metal rocker Magdalena Wosinska, self-portraitist Erica Simone and Liz Earls. It's meant to be erotic, and seems to also have an eye for straight male lovers of lesbians (and the majority of the photographers are male), but the book also does a great job of featuring women of diverse age, size and color. More female contributors would make the third volume much better.

The Velvet Rage, first published in 2006, has been revised and reissued in a second edition from Da Capo Press. Clinical psychologist Alan Downs addresses the questions of



growing up gay in a straight man's world, especially from a psychological perspective.

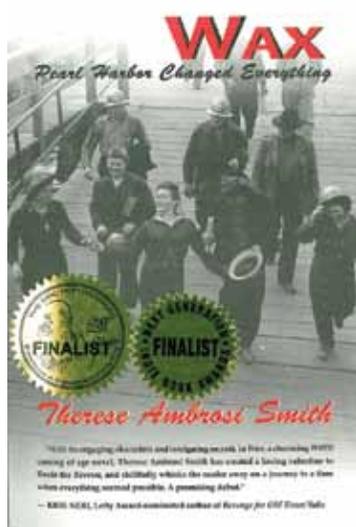
The Missing Myth: A New Vision of Same-Sex Love, by Gilles Herrada, is available now from Select Books, www.themissingmyth.com. Herrada looks at the role homosexuality has played in the evolution of humans. The book asks if "homo-



sexual behavior is an aberration from the standpoint of reproduction, why is it widespread among humans, primates—and a myriad of other animal species—and why has it been favored by evolution?" It also investigates prohibitions against homosexuality, and how the community finally began to fight back. It is a dense book full of much information, but it will open your mind to a variety of new concepts.

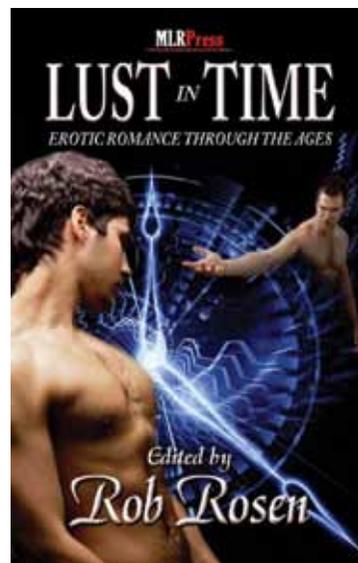
Fiction

Wax by Therese Ambrosi Smith (Blue Star Books) is a fantastic imagining of women helping their country in the nation's industrial workforce after the attack on Pearl Harbor that began U.S. intervention in World War



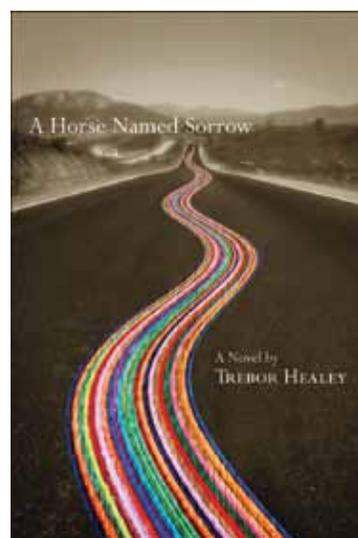
II. The book follows three young women as they challenge themselves and take the risk of joining other "Rosie the Riveters." One of the three comes out as a lesbian, and the others also face their own struggles. Many of these women were forced back into stereotypical roles after the war. Smith does a great job of helping us remember the women who helped the nation in so many ways. "I wanted a book that would engage, entertain and inform," Smith said. "Our grandmothers were the home half of the Greatest Generation."

Lust in Time: Erotic Romance Through the Ages, edited by Rob Rosen, is a collection of stories from modern writers which moves in chronological order from 1000 B.C. to 1969 A.D. From ancient Israel and



Greece and Rome, to the time of the Vikings, the Wild West, Woodstock, and all points in between, witness the steamy encounters, lurid battles, raucous clashes, and tender moments of couples who span the centuries. Get swept up in the lives of the biblical David, Emperor Hadrian, barbarians from Britannia, a 19th Century physician, Jewish immigrants, cowboys and Indians, Billy the Kid, Civil War and World War I soldiers, hippies, and more. Authors: C.C. Williams, Kayla Jameth, Tilly Hunter, Julian Siminski, Stevie Woods, Jeff Mann, Kenzie Mathews, James Thorpby, K. Vale, Michael Roberts, Salome Wilde, Steve Rudd, Barry Brennessel, Richard May, Landon Dixon and Rob Rosen. See www.mlpress.com.

A Horse Named Sorrow, by Trebor Healey (University of Wisconsin) is a story of love and profound loss, set in San Francisco of the 1980s and 1990s. Seamus Blake, 21, meets Jimmy, a Buffalo, NY, native who came to San Francisco via a very long bicycle ride. But Jimmy dies of AIDS complications and Seamus has to fulfill his



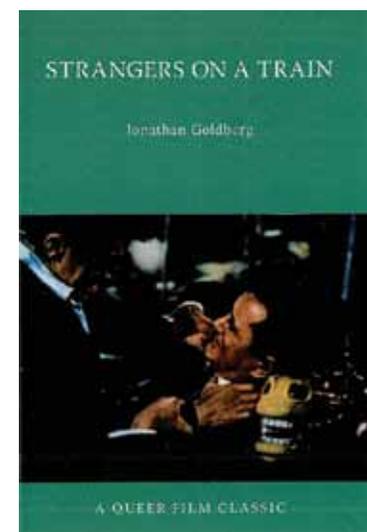
promise to Jimmy, riding with his ashes via bicycle all the way to the East Coast. Acclaimed author Maureen Seaton writes of the book: "A Horse Named Sorrow is simply, inexorably beautiful. It is sexy, cinematic, the prose itself an absolute joy to read, and often funny as holy hell. It is, at the same time, one of the saddest works I have ever read; piercing, poignant, and memorable."

Maxie Mainwaring, Lesbian Dilettante, by Monica Nolan (Kensington Publishing) has a pulp novel cover in keeping with Nolan's other campy lesbian novels Lois Lenz, Lesbian Sec-



retary and Bobby Blanchard, Lesbian Gym Teacher. In this newest book, Nolan writes of a "dilettante debutante" trying to learn enough skills to hold down a real job. The reason she has to earn a living? She was caught fooling around with another female during the Daughters of the American Pioneers Annual Tea.

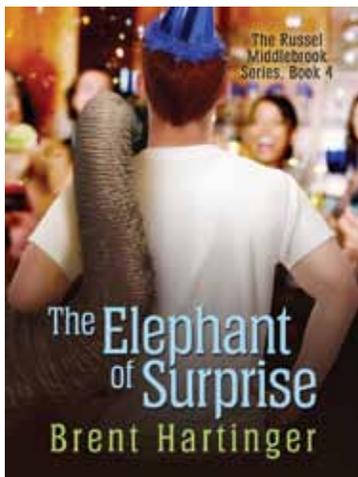
Arsenal Pulp Press has a Queer Film Classic monograph series, the latest being **Strangers on a Train: A Queer Film Classic** by Jonathan Goldberg. In the slim volume, Goldberg explores the homoerotic undertones between



the two male characters (played by Farley Granger and Robert Walker) in Alfred Hitchcock's 1951 film, which was based on lesbian writer Patricia Highsmith's novel.

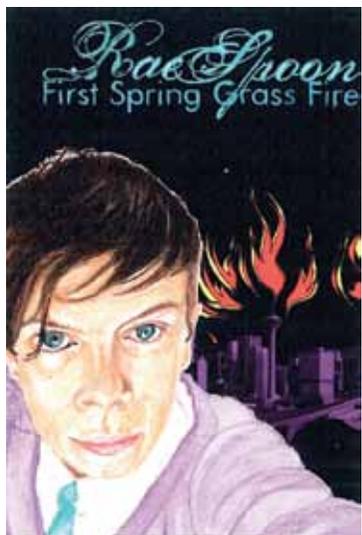
Teen Life

Brent Hartinger released a groundbreaking gay teen novel, the Geography Club, 10 years ago. That book sold well and was optioned for a film—which is finally expected to be out this year (with stars Scott Bakula and Nikki Blonsky). Hartinger has now released a third sequel to that book, **The Elephant of Surprise** (Buddha Kitty Books). The Russel Middlebook Series follows teen Russell again as he copes with love and life. The title



is about the “love that dare not speak its name” times two—a gay high school student is mentored by his math teacher, and they are increasingly drawn to one another. The book deals with the many nuances of this difficult subject (difficult no matter the genders). The book is especially detailed about the complexities of a teenage gay boy’s life.

Canadian transgender electronic singer-songwriter Rae Spoon is branching out to the printed page

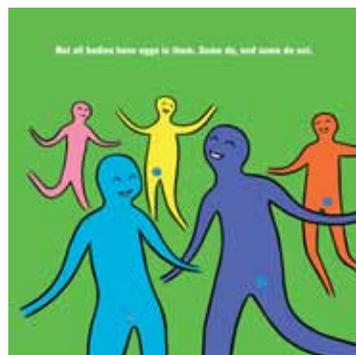
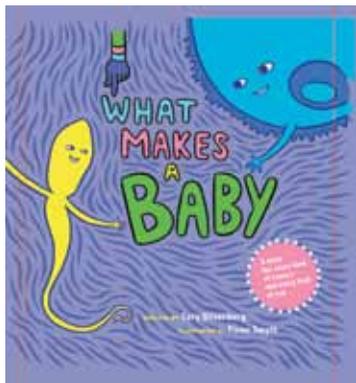
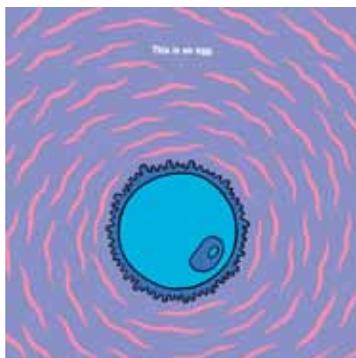


with **First Spring Grass Fire** (Arsenal Pulp Press). The book follows a young person growing up queer in a Pentecostal Midwestern family. Author Ivan E. Coyote called the book “brave and blasphemous.”

Children’s Books

What Makes a Baby (Triangle Square Books for Young Readers) is a very specific kids book about how

babies are made and born. It does not shy away from calling a vagina a vagina, and a sperm a sperm. Written by sexuality educator Cory Silverberg



and illustrated by award-winning Canadian artist Fiona Smyth, **What Makes a Baby** is also very inclusive of different family types (yes, LGBT) and races. It is for kids pre-school to 8 years old, and starts at the basics of sperms and eggs, and moves on to conception, gestation and birth. The story doesn’t gender people or body parts, “so most parents and families will find that it leaves room for them to educate their child without having to erase their own experience,” the author stated. See www.youtube.com/watch?v=RgL6YzQaNjc.

DVDs

If you are a fan of old movies and TV shows, **The Loretta Young Show: Best of The Complete Series—100th Birthday Edition** is for you. This 17-DVD set is jam-packed with

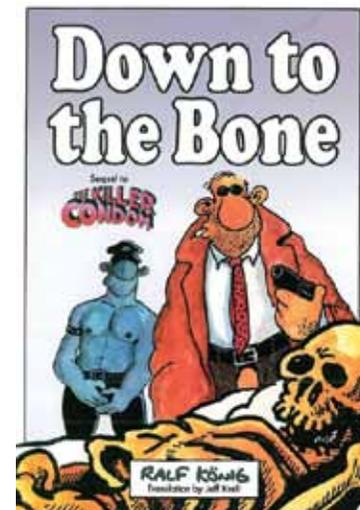


not just her TV series, but home movies, interviews and more. Young was a child actor in silent movies and tran-

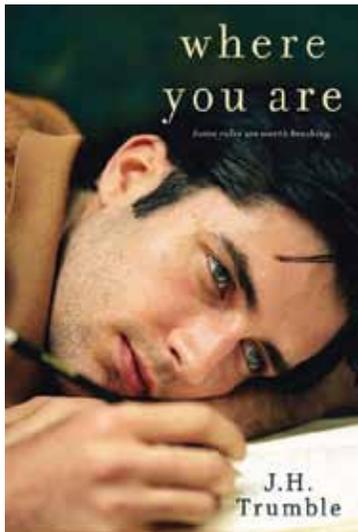
sitioned to an adult star—she was in more than 100 movies. She won an Academy Award for best actress for *The Farmer’s Daughter*. The *Loretta Young Show* launched in September 1953 and ran until 1961.

Graphic Novels

Down to the Bone is Ralf König’s sequel to *The Killer Condom*, from Ignite! Entertainment. The story is presented as a movie on the page, with translation by Jeff Krell. It’s an imag-



inative universe of gay men navigating their sex and sexuality, amidst the murder of a leather bar owner and other gay men. It’s quite creepy and explicit, and not for everyone, but well executed (so to speak).



The *Elephant of Surprise* is based on the “tendency for life to never turn out as expected.” And the characters in the book certainly find out how true that is.

Where You Are is the newest novel by J.H. Trumble, author of *Don’t Let Me Go*. Published by Kensington, this

nightspots

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NUNN ON ONE

Thom Filicia on reality television, growing empire

BY JERRY NUNN

Thom Filicia shot into the spotlight as the interior designer on *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*. Afterwards he began his writing career with a book from the series and now is out promoting his latest *American Beauty*.

He has had several successful television shows on the Style Network including *Dress My Nest* and *Tacky House*. He is the featured talent on the HGTV Network.

Filicia heads his own company Thom Filicia, Inc in New York City.



Thom Filicia. Publicity photo

Windy City Times grabbed a chance to interview him while at a book-signing in the Merchandise Mart at Kohler.

Windy City Times: It's the Thom and Jerry Show!

Thom Filicia: People always say T-h-o-m is so pretentious. This is the true story. My brother's name is Julius. He is older than me and when he was a little kid we called him "Julie," then later "Jules." We were walking through the mall and I told him not to call me "Tommy" anymore—that I want to be called "Tom." He thought that was lame and boring so he pointed at the Thom McAn Shoe Store and told me to spell it that way.

There is nothing pretentious about my name. Its origins go back to the mall! I think my brother wanted my name to be as equally dysfunctional as his. [Laughs] Afterwards I started signing my name like that in school.

WCT: Well then, tell our readers about your school background.

TF: I studied interior design at Syracuse University, where I got my degree in Bachelor of Fine Arts in interior design. I worked for Parish-Hadley, then Robert Metzger, then Bihuber & Associates. I opened my own company in 1998. I have had my company ever since so we are getting up there in years.

Queer Eye for the Straight Guy happened in 2001. I kept my business moving forward while I was filming the show for four years. When *Queer Eye* moved to Style Network then I was there for another three and a half years. I did a year with HGTV and now we are producing a couple of shows and offshoots that are in conjunction with some of my projects. I am doing books, this is my second book and I am already talking about doing a third, which is exciting. Tina Fey did the intro to this one.

WCT: I saw that.

TF: She's awesome and great. I am now doing some residential and townhouses to very modern country houses. We are doing a big initiative with Delta Airlines.

On product, I am doing a furniture line with Vanguard. Kravet has a line of my textiles. I have a window treatment line that I sell through Calico Corners. We have three or four licensed partners that we meeting with while I am in Chicago like bedding and bath. We are finalizing our lighting as well.

WCT: Wow, you are busy.

TF: Yes, it is crazy but its good. Then there is also this book tour. We did two big signings in New York, two in Connecticut, three in California. We also went to Seattle, Florida, and Texas. Now we are in Chicago and Minneapolis.

WCT: You are fortunate to go on a book tour because they are a rarity now.

TF: Yes. When I did the book I thought it was really important to do a tour because no one does them anymore. I think there is a need for it and people are excited about it.

Kohler was great to work with and we used a lot of their product in the house. It was a great relationship not only using their product but also traveling to do events with them. We are doing another one in Boston in May. It is a wonderful way to cross-pollinate.

WCT: Would you ever open a store in Chicago?

TF: I would, actually. We were just talking about it. I am opening a tour de trade store called Sedgwick & Brattle in New York City. I have been thinking that could be a great product for Chicago.

Chicago is beautiful. If you want to see an amazing American city people should go to Chicago. New York is more of an international city. Chicago represents the U.S. in probably the best way.

WCT: Will there be more of Tacky House? I loved that show.

TF: I did too, but no. It didn't have a long life because it was very repetitious. We wanted to do one more season but it didn't happen.

WCT: Do you want to do more television projects?

TF: Yes, I actually am. We are developing two TV projects right now. So TV will always be there at some level. It has been great to focus on the book and my office. I like having the balance between television and my real job. It felt a little top heavy before when it was off balance. I have been able to do a lot more in the last year and a half since I have pulled back from TV a little bit.

Television is not a lot about design these days but more about real estate. I think it is more dramatic than design driven. Everything goes through cycles. I think people will be interested in design soon. The economy is improving so that will help also.

WCT: Do you watch Million Dollar Decorators

on Bravo?

TF: You know what is funny? I just talked to Mary McDonald. We were just corresponding since we were friends. I think this might have been their last season.

WCT: I have interview Martyn Lawrence Bulard a few times.

TF: Martyn is fun. I also like Kathy Ireland. I have had dinner with her. I have told them before that they make the design world look not so bright. I am joking with them but I think they should watch how they are positioned by the network. They should hold their ground and

make it about design.

WCT: I know what you are saying. They drop things...

TF: And things are missing. They drink while they are working. On *Queer Eye* we weren't working when we had a cocktail.

WCT: Do you still talk to the Queer Eye guys?

TF: Yes, and it will be the tenth anniversary this summer so things have started to percolate in terms of doing something. So we will see.

For more on Filicia, visit www.thomfilicia.com.

NUNN ON ONE: TELEVISION

Dulé Hill talks 'Psych' tap-dancing, intolerance

BY JERRY NUNN

The USA Network has another hit on its hands with *Psych*, a detective comedy with a twist. The show stars James Roday as a police consultant who solves crimes with his powers of observation making others believe he is psychic.

Dulé Hill plays his best friend, Burton "Gus" Guster. Hill is also known for his tap-dancing skills and his role as a presidential aide on *The West Wing*. He studied ballet at a young age before understudying for Savion Glover on Broadway for *Bring in 'da Noise, Bring in 'da Funk*.

Windy City Times: Hey, Dulé. When did you first start tap-dancing?

Dulé Hill: I started at the age of three. I went to dance school in East Orange, New Jersey at the Marie Wildey School of Dance. My brothers and cousins went there. My mother was a teacher there. I went to the school to be around my family.

WCT: So you have performed ever since?

DH: I was doing recitals at the age of 10 for a show called *The Tap Dance Kid*. There was a call to my school, I auditioned, and the next thing I knew I was understudying for Savion Glover on Broadway. Then after that I was touring around the country in a show with Harold Nicholas from the Nicholas Brothers.

WCT: Not a bad start.

DH: That is what got me into show business. I didn't have a goal to be in show business. It was a gift given to me really.

WCT: You get to incorporate your tap-dancing into Psych now. Did they write that in for you?

DH: Yes, they did. Before I even started they said they wanted to have me dance on the show. I was down for it but I wanted to bring along at least one of my friends. I am a tap dancer but there are so many more amazing tap dancers even right here in Chicago.

A friend of mine Jason Samuels Smith is one of the great ones and they allowed him to come on the show and put down the choreography.

WCT: Are you similar to your character Gus on the show?

DH: It has to come from somewhere so there has to be some relation. He's way more quirkier than I am. He's more anal too. There must be something...we both like to eat! We are fans of delicious flavor.

WCT: What is your favorite part of being on Psych?

DH: The laughs. We laugh so much. The fact that I get paid to go to a job and laugh all day is great. The camaraderie also, we love each other and have a good time.

I like the interaction with the fans. With this show there is a fluid back and forth. Some of the fans I actually feel like I know now. They come to Comic Con and we have talked on Twitter. They came to see when I did a Broadway show last year. I get to know them.

WCT: How is the new season shaping up?



Dulé Hill. Photo courtesy of USA Network

DH: Fasten your seatbelts there is going to be a lot of laughs. Use the bathroom ahead of time because you are going to be laughing so much you will have to use the bathroom!

The Clue episode is one of my favorites with Christopher Lloyd, Lesley Ann Warren, and Martin Mull. We are doing a Clue-esque episode and 100th episode.

WCT: I was going to ask you about guest stars so that sounds great.

DH: We have Jeffrey Tambor, Garcelle Beauvais, and WWE superstar Big Show. We have had a lot of really good guest stars this year.

WCT: Very impressive. How did you become involved with USA Network's Character Unite?

DH: I have been involved with Character Unite since its initial beginning back in 2009. As time has gone I tried to see what I could do to be a part of it. When asked if I would do this campaign I Won't Stand For... I jumped on it. I first did a PSA in Los Angeles. I was asked to come to Chicago so I said, "Why not?" It is good to be involved and a little step can go a very long way. I have been able to talk to students and inspiring people to make their own shirts and wear it. Someone can walk down the street and see that. It is a domino effect. We all don't have to do major things to make a change.

A little something can make a change. That is what its about. That's why I am here. Coming to Chicago for one day is not like I am moving heaven and earth. I don't mind coming out to make a big difference.

WCT: How has the reaction been?

DH: Great. I have always loved interacting with fans. I appreciate the love and I am glad they support what I do. Especially in a situation like this that is even beyond a TV show. It is going more into life and community. Tearing down walls is something I like.

No matter how big a fan of *Psych* or Dulé Hill you still have to have a connection to come out to this. Hopefully it leads to a conversation about what people won't stand for.

Look for Dule Hill on Psych on Wednesdays, with past episodes viewable at www.usanetwork.com.

AIDS Legal Council marks 25 years with benefit

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

About 200 people attended AIDS Legal Council of Chicago's (ALCC) 25th anniversary "A Salute to ALCC" benefit at Kirkland and Ellis LLP on May 9.

ALCC supporters, past and present board members, staff, interns, and individual and corporate sponsors gathered to celebrate ALCC's accomplishments, hear remarks by ALCC staffers, nosh on food and beverages provided by Kirkland and Ellis' in-house caterer and enjoy floral arrangements by Marguerite Gardens.

Ricardo Cifuentes, ALCC director of development, provided words of welcome and recognized a number of individuals in attendance as well as the event's sponsors. Following Cifuentes' remarks; Kevin Mork, ALCC director of community relations, shared that May 9, 2013 was designated as ALCC Day by the state of Illinois with a proclamation by Governor Pat Quinn.

Then Justin Hayford, ALCC case manager,

and a \$25 gift card to Sofo Tap, and a \$50 gift card to Taverna 750.

Sponsors for the evening included Kirkland & Ellis, Sidley Austin, Winston & Strawn, McDermott Will & Emery, Jenner & Block, DLA Piper, Mayer Brown, Schiff Hardin, Marshall Gerstein & Borun, Clark Hill, Wintersteen & Dunning, Reed Smith, Sidetrack, BestGayChicago.com, ChicagoPride.com, The L Stop and Windy City Media Group.

According to its website, "The ALCC exists to preserve, promote and protect the legal rights of men, women and children in the metropolitan Chicago area impacted by HIV. The council provides direct legal services to people in need, educates the public about HIV-related legal issues, and advocates for social policies that ensure fair treatment for all people affected by HIV/AIDS."

See www.aidslegal.com for more information.



Attendees at the event. Photo courtesy of the ALCC



AIDS Legal Council of Chicago Executive Director Ann Hilton Fisher. Photo courtesy of ALCC

spoke about the early days of the ALCC when the HIV/AIDS epidemic was rampant and widespread. Things are very different, Hayford noted, "so now rather than preparing people for a dignified death we are helping people build better lives." Hayford explained that their clients are still on a precipice so the ALCC's job is to stand between their clients and the precipice so they don't fall into the abyss.

A video presentation featuring ALCC staff members speaking about ALCC's work and what it means to them followed Hayford's remarks. Then Jeffrey, one of ALCC's clients, shared his story and the importance that the ALCC plays in his life. "I can't possibly follow that (speech) and fortunately I don't have to, I just get to say thank you (to everyone involved with the ALCC)," said ALCC Executive Director Ann Hilton Fisher.

Raffle drawings included a one night stay at Hotel Allegro and two tickets to Flashdance, a one night stay at Hilton Chicago, two deluxe wine baskets, two tickets to Once, the Musical, two \$50 gift cards to Bar 1 Events, \$75 gift card to O'Brien's Restaurant, a \$25 gift card to Crew

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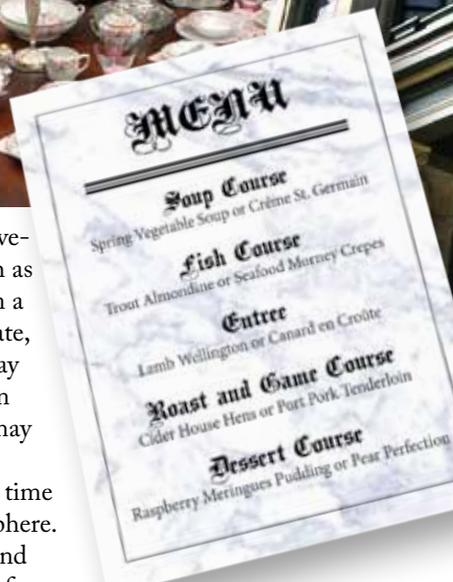
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WEEKLY DINING GUIDE IN WINDY CITY TIMES



Mas alla del Sol

BY MEGHAN STREIT

I have a major thing for Los Nopales, a hidden gem on Western Ave. in Lincoln Square that I believe serves up some of the best authentic Mexican comfort food in this whole town. So, I was thrilled when I discovered that the folks behind Los Nopales opened a new restaurant in Edgewater – not only so I could check out the cuisine, but also so I could stop trying to get people to accompany me to Los Nopales with somewhat startling frequency.

Mas alla del Sol, I'm pleased to report, is a hidden gem in its own right. The restaurant is located on a ho hum stretch of Broadway Ave. While the surrounding neighborhood isn't much to get excited about, once you step into Mas alla del Sol, things look much brighter. This restaurant feels a bit more upscale than Los Nopales. The walls are painted in vibrant primary colors, which provide nice contrast to the urbane pol-

ished concrete floors.

Whereas Los Nopales is BYOB (which I love), Mas alla del Sol pays serious attention to cocktails. No run-of-the-mill margaritas here. Instead you'll find libations made with intriguing ingredients like chile- or chamomile-infused tequila, agave nectar, fresh fruit and jalapeño. The liquors are infused in-house and my friendly and knowledgeable server was on hand to tell me all about how the cocktails are made.

I started with the pina ahumada. Mint, lime and agave nectar are mixed with vanilla bean- and pineapple-infused mezcal, a tequila-like liquor made with agave and aged in oak or mesquite. As a result of the aging process, the mezcal has a smoky flavor, which can take some getting used to in a cocktail. While I didn't posi-

tively love my first drink, I certainly appreciated the craftsmanship that went into making it. For something a bit sweeter, I recommend the frambuesa fizz, a delightful concoction of rum, raspberries, lemon and ginger-lavender syrup topped off with bubbly. The drink prices may give you a bit of sticker shock. None cost less than \$9, which I guess is the going rate for an expertly-made craft cocktail in Chicago, but the rate seemed a little out of sync with the neighborhood (especially if you're used to BYOBing a bottle of Skinny Girl margarita to Los Nopales).

One of the things I love most about Los Nopales are the to-die-for sopes. So, I was relieved to see that while Mas alla del Sol didn't have them on the menu as an entrée, I could get my hands on a mini version as an appetizer. As I ex-

pected, they were superb. Thick and savory fried corn cakes are topped with your choice of meat, sprinkled with Mexican cheese and tomatoes and drizzled with sour cream. Fortunately, I had the sopes to curb my appetite because the chips and salsa left a little to be desired. The chips are fine, just as they are at Los Nopales, but neither restaurant offers a tortilla chip that's too good to resist. At Los Nopales, the salsa is good enough to make entire baskets of average chips disappear. But, that's not the case at Mas alla del Sol. Some people may enjoy this salsa, but I found it too spicy to even eat.

Just like the cocktails and the interior, the cuisine at Mas alla del Sol is a bit more upscale than its predecessor. There's certainly some

Turn to page 29

CLASSIFIEDS

ARTISTS

CALL FOR ARTISTS: SKOKIE ART GUILD'S 52nd ANNUAL ART FAIR. July 13th & 14th, 2013. Fine art. Prizes and awards. Held on the Village Green, 5211 W. Oakton St., downtown Skokie, IL. APPLY NOW. For applications or information: skokieart@aol.com or 847-677-8163. www.skokieartguild.org (7/3/13)

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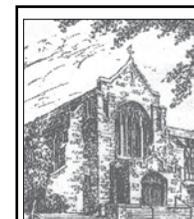
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WNBA stars, coach discuss out players

BY ROSS FORMAN

Swin Cash knows she has played with and against gay players during her illustrious basketball career that includes 11 seasons in the WNBA, including three All-Star seasons, and two National Championship seasons for the University of Connecticut before turning pro.

Some have been open about their sexual orientation, others haven't. Even one of her closest friends in the sport came out to her, though wanting to remain silent about her orientation.

None have impacted Cash.

She even laughs at the question.

"At the end of the day, the bottom line is, can you help us win?" said Cash, now in her second season playing for the Chicago Sky. "Respect is the key. I know I have played with several [gay players], and [it has] never been an issue. I had a player tell me that they are gay, one of my closest friends. She just doesn't want to be public about it. In fact, there are a lot of players who don't come out because that's their personal life.

"I just want to win, and if you can help in any way, I want you on the team; I don't care what you do [off the court.] We have a saying in sports ... When it comes to in between these [in-play] lines, leave everything else [off the playing surface]. Males and females, everyone will say the same thing."

Gays in mainstream sports, particularly basketball, have never been more high profile than in April.

Brittney Griner, the No. 1 pick in the 2013 WNBA Draft by the Phoenix Mercury, had a record-setting career at Baylor University. She confirmed to Sports Illustrated on April 17 that she is gay and was bullied as a child.

Less than two weeks later, NBA veteran Jason Collins revealed to Sports Illustrated that he too is gay, thus becoming the first active male athlete from one of the four major team sports to come out.

Griner's coming-out shocked no one and drew limited mainstream media coverage.

Collins' coming-out landed on the cover of Sports Illustrated, a sit-down Collins' family interview with Oprah, and a phone call from President Obama to Collins.

"In our league, [being gay] is not that big of a deal, whereas, for men, there might be some homophobia or some lack of open mindedness to embrace [gay players,]" said veteran WNBA player Ruth Riley, who played at Notre Dame before turning pro and is in her second season with the Chicago Sky, her 13th overall in the WNBA.

Riley admitted she was "surprised" how much publicity Collins' coming-out received, and added that it will be interesting, long-term, to watch and gauge what impact Collins' revelation truly has.

Riley said there is a "different mindset in male sports that probably doesn't need to be there; I think it's pretty narrow-minded."

Riley said she has played with and against gay players, and it's never been an issue, she said.

"I don't see what the huge deal is," said Allie Quigley, a guard for the Chicago Sky who previously played at DePaul University and hails from Joliet. "I guess people don't care too much when a woman [in sports] comes out ... because it is a woman, and I guess it's just accepted more."

Sylvia Fowles has been an All-Star in the WNBA and was an Olympic gold medal winner. She is in her sixth season with the Chicago Sky.

"My thing is, you are who you are—and people just have to deal with it," Fowles said. "I don't feel people should have to hide who they are, and we should love them for who they are, and then make them feel comfortable. I think it was a good thing that [Collins] came out."



Chicago Sky coach Pokey Chatman. Photo from the Chicago Sky

Being openly gay in the WNBA is not a big deal among women, "because we don't care," about others' orientation, Fowles said. "At the end of the day, if that's who you are and you don't cross any boundaries or disrespect me, then I don't care what you do [in your personal life.]"

Pokey Chatman, in her third season as the Sky head coach, was not surprised at the difference of media coverage given to Collins and Griner; that's just the landscape of the world, she said. The coverage mirrors society on many issues, she added. "Nor do I take offense to it."

"For me, I'm hoping [someone's coming-out] is not the big story," Chatman said. "The goal should be that [a coming-out] is not that big of a news story, and maybe because of Jason that [subject] will start to fade to black."

Chatman said she annually will talk to players about equality, but not just on the sexual orientation front. That also includes players with different religions and varying off-the-court interests.

"Girls are a lot different; they are more accepting," Chatman said.

Cash said the media circus surrounding Collins' coming-out was driven by, the media—not fellow players or coaches.

"For me, whatever your [sexual] orientation is, it has no bearing on our ability as a team, in the locker room or on the court, to do our job," Cash said. "I think it's good for Jason to now feel free, to be who he is."

Cash said locker-room talk is mostly sports-related, or about current events, such as the three women rescued in Cleveland—not about a teammate's sexual orientation.

But is a women's locker room different from a men's locker room? That's the question.

Another key question is Collins' future in the NBA. Will a team sign him now that he is a free agent, knowing he is gay?

Just as interesting, Cash noted, is if a team keeps Collins on the roster, as opposed to cutting him, just because he is gay and any potential backlash of the perception it could offer, even if all of the other players on the team truly were better than Collins.

"One thing that frustrates me is, people cannot agree to disagree, and still be loving human beings to one another," Cash said. "I have friends who are Jewish, Muslim, Black, white,

Hispanic, Middle Eastern, etc. There are things that we agree about. There also are things that we do not agree about—at all. But, we love one another as human beings.

"Even some of my friends in the NBA who I had conversations with [after Collins came out] had the same opinion. They were like, 'All right, so what? We're here to play ball.'"

Shay Murphy, who is in her third season for the Chicago Sky and her seventh WNBA season overall, said she wasn't surprised so much media covered Collins' coming-out, unlike that of Griner. It's how it is," she said.

Still, Murphy said she was surprised how big the Collins story has been.

"I think we've come a long way with race, gender, [and] sexual orientation," Murphy said. "I think it's huge when you have people like President Obama and Kobe Bryant supporting Jason. They are world-famous, and to support someone like Jason for coming out, I think it helps limit closed-mindedness."

Playing with and against gay players is not an issue to Murphy—at all.

"I love learning about different cultures, religions, orientations—because I'm so open, from how I was raised," said Murphy, who attended USC. "As long as you're happy and not hurting anyone, I support you and am all for you—and it doesn't matter if you're Black, white, Asian, Latin, Muslim, gay, straight, whatever. I think our country is built on the fact that we're a melting pot."

Both Collins and Griner will have lasting impact on the younger generation, many Sky players said. Griner, for instance, has an endorsement deal with Nike, which wasn't affected at all by her coming-out.

"I think it's great, huge that Nike is saying [and] showing, 'Hey, we support you,'" Murphy said. "It's taking the right steps to the future. We've had a history of being discriminatory in this country, but these are the proper baby-steps to have a brighter future so everyone feels accepted."

And that's regardless of sexual orientation.

Gay soccer player meets with Chicago Fire

BY ROSS FORMAN

Robbie Rogers met with representatives of the Chicago Fire May 8, team officials confirmed—and Rogers also tweeted favorably about the get-together, despite recent comments he's made that, if he returns to pro soccer, he does not want to play for the Fire, which own his rights.



Robbie Rogers. Photo from Chicago Fire

Rogers, who turned 26 on May 12, announced in February that he is gay and, surprisingly, retiring from the sport. He played for the Columbus Crew of Major League Soccer (MLS) from 2007-2011, and then took his game overseas to play internationally.

Rogers practiced with the MLS' Los Angeles Galaxy May 1 as a special guest of Galaxy coach Bruce Arena. To play for Los Angeles, the team would have to acquire his rights from Chicago.

Dan Lohring, senior director of communications for the Fire, said Thursday that the meeting had been planned, but had limited information about what was discussed. Lohring said the meeting was held in the Los Angeles area with team owner Andrew Hauptman, president of soccer operations Javier Leon, Rogers and his agent.

Leon and Hauptman were unavailable for comment Thursday morning.

The Fire will have its second Pride Initiative Game on Saturday, Sept. 28, at Toyota Park in Bridgeview when Chicago plays host to Montreal. Details on the pride initiative are now in the planning phases, Lohring said.

Lohring also confirmed that the Fire again will be involved in the annual Gay Pride Parade "in some capacity." He said specifics are "in the planning mode." As for Fire players appearing in the Parade, Lohring said, "I cannot confirm that yet."

News of the meeting with Rogers comes just a day after Lohring announced that the Fire were backing a Chicago City Council resolution that calls on major sports commissioners to support LGBT male athletes.

"MLS is one of the most diverse leagues in professional sports, Chicago Fire in particular," said Lohring, testifying before the city's Committee on Human Relations.

The LGBT sports resolution was adopted May 8.

Dayton skeptical of Kluwe cut

Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton is among those who believe that the NFL's Minnesota Vikings cut punter Chris Kluwe for reasons not related to football, Advocate.com reported. Dayton, among other things, criticized the Vikings' management for what he perceived as blatant dishonesty: "I just think sports officials ought to be honest about what the heck is going on." Kluwe is an outspoken supporter of the LGBT community.

"Great meeting with the owner and president of Chicago today. Genuine and amazing people," Rogers tweeted Wednesday.

On May 6, meanwhile, Rogers tweeted, "No disrespect to the Fire or any1 in Chicago. I'm against playing there because I need to be near my fam at this time. Please respect that."

calendar

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Wed., May 15

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Every Wednesday without charge, regardless of age, ability to pay or residency. The process, from completing the consent paperwork to getting the results, takes 45 minutes. Counselors are available to review the results and provide referrals, as necessary. 12pm-4pm, CALOR, 3220 W Armitage Ave, www.calor.org

Columbia College Chicago Manifest 2013

Celebrating the work of 2,000+ graduating students with thought-provoking and playful art, music, visuals, art exhibitions, readings, original designs, singer showcases, student bands. Free, all-day event. 12pm-10pm, 312-369-7383, Columbia College Chicago, http://www.colum.edu/manifest-2013/index.php

Festival of Disability Arts and Culture

Opening Celebration Bodies of Work is an eleven day, multi-venue Chicago event featuring visual and performing arts that highlight the work of artists with disabilities. Opening is hosted by the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs; 5pm-9pm, Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E Randolph St., Preston Bradley Hall, http://www.bodiesofworkchicago.org

Women in Leadership Making the Case for Equality

Lambda Legal Chicago Leadership Council Inaugural Salon. Keynote speaker Fay Clayton, highlighted guests Kim Hunt, Mona Noriega, Lark Mulligan, Laura Szumowski, Camilla Taylor, and per-

formances by Rebecca Kling and KOKUMO. \$35 in advance, available online. \$40 at the door. 5:30pm-8:30pm, Douglas Dawson Gallery, 400 N. Morgan St., www.lambdalegal.org/leadingchicago

Humans Being II

Curated by Riva Lehrer as part of the Bodies of Work Festival. This exhibit focuses on the experience of disability as explored through contemporary art. Through June 20. 6pm-9pm, Woman Made Gallery, 685 N. Milwaukee Ave., http://gopride.com/z888

Thursday, May 16

The Wire's Sonja Sohn Featured speaker at Facing History and Ourselves' 22nd Annual Chicago Benefit Dinner focusing on youth violence prevention; 5:30pm, 312-345-3232, Hyatt Regency Chicago, 151 E Wacker Dr., Tickets: http://www.facinghistory.org

2013 IFH Annual Gala: Get Your Kicks

on Route 66 NBC 5 News Anchor Dick Johnson, exceeds this fabulous evening of food, drinks, and dancing. Funds raised go to the LGBT supporting work of Interfaith House in its reach to the Chicago homeless. http://www.interfaithhouse.org; 6pm-11pm, Germania Place 108 W. Germania Pl., www.interfaithhouse.org

Fierce & Fabulous: A New Look at the

Ebony Fashion Fair Explore how African American and LGBT histories mix through fashion, influenced by the famed Ebony Fashion Fair. Exhibition Inspiring Beauty: 50 Years of Ebony Fashion Fair will be

open during the cocktail hour. \$15, \$10 members and students. 5:30pm Reception; 6:30pm, Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clar St., www.chicagohs.org

11th Annual Windy City Gay Idol

Windy City Gay Idol searches for the best amateur GLBT singers in the Chicago area. Competition continues through June in Chicago's bars and clubs. 8pm sign up, 9pm start. 8pm, DS Tequila Company, 3352 N. Halsted St., http://gopride.com/z81w

Femme Fest 2013

Why aren't there more women in rock and why don't women get the same respect? Punk-inspired shredder guitarist The Fabulous Miss Wendy, a Hollywood rocker as seen on tour with Slash, is challenging the rules and co-headlining. \$10. 8:30pm, 630-962-7000, The Arcada Theater, St. Charles, Ill., http://thefabulousmisswendy.com; Tickets: http://gopride.com/z85m

Friday, May 17

The Improvised Sondheim Project Completely improvised, spontaneous musicals in the style of composer Stephen Sondheim with a suggestion from the audience and the muse of Mr. Sondheim to guide them. \$15. 10:30am, Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave., www.stage773.com

Yo-Yo Ma, Arts Alliance Illinois' Luncheon, Voices of a Creative State

Benefit luncheon featuring world-renowned cellist and Chicago Symphony Orchestra Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant Yo-Yo Ma about the powerful role that the arts can and should play in the civic life of Illinois. 12pm-1:30pm, Chicago Hilton, 720 S. Michigan Ave., www.artsalliance.org/luncheon

Pride Films and Plays Gay Play Weekend

opens with Red Train Five exciting and vastly different new works in development in enhanced staged readings. Through May 19. Each performance \$10. 7pm-7:30pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., www.brownpapertickets.com

Just Another Love Story: The Most Excellent and Lamentable Tragedy of

Romeo and Juliet A modern take on an age old love story. In this adaptation,

Realize Theatre Group portrays the passionate relationship and suicide of two teenage women. Runs through May 25, 2013, Fridays, Saturdays. 8pm-10pm, 847.769.4961, Prop Thtr, 3502 N. Elston Ave. Chicago, https://www.facebook.com/events/370799769701931/; Tickets: http://justanotherlovestory.bpt.me

Neverland presents Japanimation

takes over Sanctuary Nightclub on the opening night of the Anime Central Midwest Anime Convention (acen.org). \$10, \$15 online pre-sale. Free party limo making from Halsted & Roscoe at 10:30pm, 11:15pm, midnight, and 1am. 10pm, Excalibur Nightclub, 632 N Dearborn St., Tickets: http://japanimation.brownpapertickets.com/

Saturday, May 18

Nettelhorst French Market

Enjoy the freshest flowers, vegetables, fruits, breads, meats, and crafts from local farmers, at this weekly farmers market in the heart of Boystown. 8am-2pm, Chicago Nettelhorst French Market, 3252 N Broadway, www.bensidounusa.com

Skokie Art Walk

showcases the works of professional and student artists in restaurants and businesses during the entire month of May. Free. 12pm-5pm, 224-592-5824, Oakton St. and Lincoln Ave., Skokie, http://www.anatomicallycorrect.org/skokieartwalk.htm

Human First Gala

Center on Halsted hosts its annual Human First Gala to recognize individuals, businesses, and organizations who have contributed to building and strengthening the LGBTQ community in Chicago. Featuring singing sensation and Chicago native, Chaka Khan. 5:30pm-11pm, 773-472-6469, Chicago Hilton and Towers, 720 S Michigan Ave., www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?id=5410; Tickets: https://community.centeronhalsted.org/human_2

Ashley Morgan presents Once Upon A



A NATE DEAL

Sunday, May 19

Out pundit Nate Silver will be at the Spertus Institute, 610 S. Michigan Ave.

Photo courtesy of Spertus Institute

Time Join Ashley, The Call Queens and King for their monthly benefit drag review, bringing to life some of favorite storybook characters. \$5 donation at the door is suggested to benefit the Team To End AIDS (T2 Chicago). Raffles and surprises; 9:30pm, The Call (Chicago), 1547 W Bryn Mawr Ave.

Sunday, May 19

Urban Village Church Spiritual worship is about coming together as community to make space for God to move in us. It's a place to receive God's grace and love

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Get calendar online  WindyCityMediaGroup.com ChicagoPride.com

BOOK REVIEW

Stuck in the Middle with You

by Jennifer Finney Boylan
\$24; Crown; 288 pages
BY TERRI SCHLICHMEYER



Jennifer Finney Boylan. Photo by Jim Bowdoin

When you were younger, you wanted nothing to do with parenthood.

Life was a party then and having a family was the farthest thing from your mind. Kids changed people and who wants that? Being a parent was something that happened to somebody else.

Once upon a time, Jennifer Finney Boylan thought that, too. But then she became a father. And then she became a woman and in her new memoir, "Stuck in the Middle with You" she writes about finding love, discovering life's sweet spot, and being a mommy and a daddy.

Well over 25 years ago, James Boylan fell in love at first sight.

He remembered seeing Deirdre's blue eyes from the audience as she performed onstage. He knew he had to ask her out, that he wanted to be her boyfriend. After she finally said yes to a date, it wasn't long before she said yes to marriage and yes to a family. They welcomed son Zach first, and Sean a few years later.

And then James Boylan told his wife something that he'd been struggling with for his entire life: deep inside, he was really a woman. He could no longer tolerate life in hiding. After six years of being a father, James needed to live as Jennifer.

So how does a woman teach her son about being a man? Would the boys be teased, ostracized, or ashamed? Would they feel as though they lost a parent?

"What kind of men would my children be-

anything extraordinary about our family."

Today, Boylan is still married to her wife of a quarter-century. It's as "nontraditional" a union as you can imagine but then again, "traditional" families are no longer the norm anyhow. And besides, says Deirdre, "No matter what else you say about my husband, she's an amazing woman."

And though parenting memoirs replicate like rabbits these days, "Stuck in the Middle with You" is a pretty amazing book.

With her slightly askew humor and a grateful sense of awe for her family's relative ease in her transition, author Jennifer Finney Boylan writes from the heart on the subjects of being father and mother, son and daughter. Those four roles were obviously played out by the same

person, but it's interesting to note how Boylan sees herself differently (and similarly) in each of them, pre- and post-transition. I also enjoyed her observations on connections between past and present, which nicely accompany interviews with friends and colleagues about family, children, and being a child.

Readers looking for scandal won't find it here, but if you want something that'll bring you to the brink of tears again and again, this is your book. Wanting "Stuck in the Middle with You" should be apparent.

Want more? Look for She's Not There: A Life in Two Genders or I'm Looking Through You: Growing Up Haunted, both by Jennifer Finney Boylan.

Lambda Literary Awards finalist reading May 22

Chicago will host a reading of nine finalists for the 2013 Lambda Literary Awards Wed., May 22 at 7 p.m. The event will be at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St.

The readers will be Anne Laughlin (Runaway), Marty McConnell (wine for a shotgun), Lania Knight (Three Cubic Feet), E.M. Kokie (Personal Effects), Ramón H. Rivera-Servera (Performing Queer Latinidad: Dance, Sexuality, Politics), Chris Paynter (Survived by Her Longtime Companion), C.P. Rowlands (Jacob's War), Lewis Wallace, and Windy City Times Publisher Tracy Baim (Gay Press, Gay Power: The Growth of LGBT Community Newspapers in America).

Each author will read from their nominated book and have books for sale and signing.

See www.lambdaliterary.org.

'Cleopatra' in theaters, on Blu-ray in May

Cinemark Holdings, Inc. has announced special in-theater performances of the 1963 Twentieth Century Fox film Cleopatra in more than 120 Cinemark theaters across the country as part of Cinemark's Classic Series. Performances will be Wed., May 22, at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., with an additional Sunday matinee on May 26 at 2 p.m.

Twentieth Century Fox has meticulously restored the 243-minute original theatrical version of Cleopatra, starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton, to commemorate the film's 50th anniversary.

In addition, the movie will make its Blu-ray debut in a two-disc 50th-anniversary edition May 28. Bonus materials include never-before-seen exclusive content, including Cleopatra's lost footage; commentary from Chris Mankiewicz, Tom Mankiewicz, Martin Landau and Jack Brodsky; behind-the-scenes featurettes; and more.

Chicago City Council adopts LGBT sports resolution

BY KATE SOSIN

The Chicago City Council wants major sports commissioners to embrace LGBT athletes.

The council adopted a resolution May 8, calling on Major League Baseball, National Football League, National Basketball Association, National Hockey League and Major League Soccer commissioners to publicly state support for LGBT athletes.

The resolution asks commissioners to sanction athletes who use anti-gay slurs and to say they would embrace openly LGBT players.

The resolution was adopted without opposition in both the Committee on Human Relations May 7 and in the City Council May 8.

Ald. Joe Moore, who introduced the resolution, told reporters at a press conference before the Wednesday City Council meeting that he felt it was "vital" that professional sports prepare for more athletes to come out, after Washington Wizards center Jason Collins came out as gay recently.

"These walls are tumbling down," Moore said. "Those closet doors are opening."

Chicago is the second city to adopt such a resolution after San Francisco. LGBT sports organization The Last Closet pushed for both resolutions.

Fawn Yacker, project director of The Last Closet, said the group wants to see an out LGBT athlete in every major sport.

Openly gay Aids. James Cappleman and Tom Tunney were among the resolution's three main sponsors, in addition to Moore.

Cappleman spoke in favor of the resolution, arguing that despite progress on LGBT rights, sports was "the last area where there is still so much discrimination."

More than a dozen community leaders, athletes, politicians and service providers testified in favor of the resolution before the city's Committee on Human Relations May 7.

The resolution, introduced April 10, will be sent to Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig, Football Commissioner Roger Goodell, Basketball Commissioner David Stern, Hockey Commissioner Gary Bettman and Soccer Commissioner Don Garber.

Moore said he hopes the Chicago resolution can inspire action in other cities.

"Our youth need gay sports heroes," said Moore during the committee meeting.

"It is fitting that Chicago, as a progressive LGBT-friendly city, that hosts several professional teams, assumes a leadership role on this important issue," he added later.

Fallon Fox, the first out transgender MMA fighter, recounted her own experience coming out earlier this year.

"After I came out, I was able to talk, as I am now, about the painful reality of being an athlete that feels she must remain in the closet and the nightmare of feeling she has no support, Fox said. "I am also able to talk about how I am just as valuable and worthy of respect as any other woman on the face of the earth. I am now visible. My visibility is needed in our society and should be used as a model of acceptance and tolerance."



Transgender writer Christina Kahrl spoke in favor of the resolution. Photo by Kate Sosin

Expressing support for the resolution were openly gay Aids. Tom Tunney and James Cappleman. Other backers included Aids. Michele Smith, Scott Waguespack and Roberto Maldonado.

Mona Noriega, chairman of the Commission on Human Relations, said her support for the resolution came down to a value of human dignity and respect for civil rights.

"Change is not easy, we all understand that," she said. "But we also know from history that recognizing the diversity of the athletes has only expanded the audience who love professional sports. We have seen this with the inclusion of African Americans and with the inclusion of women athletes."

Yacker argued that out professional athletes could have a profound impact on LGBTQ youth.

"Athletes are our national heroes and slowly but surely, the LGBT community is gathering their own," Yacker said.

Also throwing weight behind the proposal was Dan Lobring, senior director of communications for Chicago Fire Soccer Club. Lobring cited the team's past support on LGBT issues and said his club supports the resolution.

Local transgender activists and ESPN writer/editor Christina Kahrl noted that professional sports have tended to embrace LGBT people like herself off the field.

"If people in sports working off the field can be out, then people on the field should enjoy the same freedom and same right to do their job," Kahrl said.

Vincent Pryor, owner of Chicago eatery Fatty Burgers & More, recounted his days as a Division I football player at Texas Christian University (TCU), where his secrecy about his sexual orientation held him back on the playing field.

"It pits a dark hole inside you," Pryor said. "You feel empty on the inside, and I remember thinking to myself, 'What's the point?'"

Pryor said that after he came out at TCU and his teammates and coaches supported him, he was able to give 100 percent on the field for the first time.

Consideration of the resolution came just days after Jason Collins, a center with the Washington Wizards, made history as the first professional male athlete in a major sport to come out as a gay.

On May 7, committee members adopted an updated resolution to reflect that news.

Of more than a dozen who spoke on the resolution, no one rose to testify against the measure.

Other speakers included Kyle Chang of Team Chicago Athletics and Culture, Loren Linder of the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance, Ruth Giles-Ott of Chicago Smelts, Thom Parrott-Sheffer of PFLAG, Caroline Staerk of Equality Illinois, Bill Gubrud of the National Gay and Lesbian Sports Hall of Fame, Tom Elliott of Center on Halsted and Lisa Gilmore of Center on Halsted. Retired NFL player Esera Tuaolo had been scheduled to speak but was unable to due to an emergency.

Jim Christian, media relations manager for Chicago Bears Football Club, submitted a written statement. Other written statements came from Alison Doefler of Ben Cohen StandUp Foundation, Brian F. Harrison, a Ph.D. student at Northwestern. Statements of support from Shane Windemeyer of Campus Pride and Helen Carroll of the National Center for Lesbian Rights were also expected.

The resolution passed committee with unanimous support.

See more photos and video from the hearing at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.



Ald. James Cappleman listened as people testified in favor of the resolution. Photo by Kate Sosin

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The benefit of joint tenancy ownership is that when one owner dies, title to the property transfers automatically to the surviving owner. As opposed to tenancy in common where if one owner dies their interest goes to their family or passes under the terms of their will. The couple is better protected because the property passes to the surviving owner outside of probate. Joint tenancy helps protect the couple's primary asset even if the decedent's family challenges the will. It is also a cheaper alternative than creating a trust to own the property.

It is a common misconception, however, that joint tenancy is always the best answer for LGBT couples.

Adding a partner's name to the title, however, renders it subject to that person's creditors. The property will also be considered an asset for other purposes, such as qualifying for Medicaid or other public benefits.

The "due on sale" clause in a mortgage can be triggered if the parties do not refinance or obtain the lender's consent to the transfer.

Since both parties own the property, both must agree on its sale. Jointly owning real estate is another excellent reason for the couple to discuss and execute a written domestic partnership agreement.

If one partner owns the property and decides to add the other partner's name, the owner must understand that she is giving up exclusive rights to the property and control over it.

Adding the name of another to a property's title can be considered a gift under the I.R.C. gift tax section. Proving the contribution of each party to the property's purchase works to rebut this presumption.

Each person is entitled to a set limit lifetime exemption for gifts. Any amount over the annual allowance is subtracted from the lifetime exemption amount. The giftor may be required to file a gift tax return with the I.R.S.

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CALENDAR from page 28

and to give of ourselves, as well. LGBT welcoming worship services at Urban Village Church are eclectic and experiential, practical and intelligent, relevant and, hopefully, inspiring. 10:15am-11:30am, Spertus Institute 610 S. Michigan Ave., www.urbanvillage-church.org

Mate Silver The statistician who gained worldwide recognition for the accuracy of his predictions during the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections will speak on *The Signal and the Noise: Why So Many Predictions Fail—But Some Don't*; 1pm, Spertus Institute, 610 S Michigan Ave., http://spertus.edu

NewTown Writers Spring Raffle Fundraiser Free BBQ with drink purchase. Drop a dollar and win prizes to support NTW's 35-year old mission of fostering LGBT literature through free workshops and performances for the community and beyond. 1:45pm, Big Chicks, 5024 N Sheridan Rd., www.newtownwriters.com

Out at Wrigley National Anthem Contest Sing the National Anthem at Wrigley this summer. Out at Wrigley presents the annual National Anthem Contest. Arrive by 8pm to sign up. Free to enter. 9pm-10pm, Spin

Nightclub, 800 W. Belmont Ave, Chicago, http://www.outatwrigley.com

Monday, May 20

TPAN Complimentary Therapy Programs Reiki is offered the second and fourth Mondays of the month from 1pm to 3pm on a first come first serve basis. 1pm-3pm, TPAN, 5537 N. Broadway, www.tpan.com

Modern Vintage Spring Fashion and Jewelry Exploration Two days. 10am-5pm, 1340 W. Washington St., www.modernvintagechicago.com

Coming Out Group Ten-week support group for individuals exploring sexual orientation or wanting a safe space to discuss, explore, and gain support around the struggles related to coming out. Pre-registration is required. Open to ages 18+ \$10 per session. Register with Lucas Swenink lswenink@centeronhalsted.org; 7pm-8:15pm, 773-472-6469x453, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., www.centeronhalsted.org

Tuesday, May 21

Intersex Peer Group Intersex? Between male and female check boxes? Peer-lead casual conversation

group, significant others, family, friends, allies, or anyone with questions. First Tuesday of every month. Free. More info from intersexchicago@gmail.com; 6:30pm-9pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted, Chicago, http://www.centeronhalsted.org more information

John Waters: This Filthy World Director, writer, actor, and originator of the Hairspray dynasty performs his critically acclaimed one-man show focusing on his early negative influences, fascination with true crime, exploitation films, fashion lunacy, extremes of the art world, Catholicism, sexual deviancy, and his love of reading. Post-show benefit reception on the stage with Waters. \$100; 7:30pm-9pm, 312-334-7777, Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E Randolph St., www.harristheaterchicago.org/events/2012-2013-season/john-waters

Wed., May 22

Lambda Literary Awards finalist reading Nine finalists for the 2013 Lambda Literary Awards will read from their work: Anne Laughlin (*Runaway*), Marty McConnell (*wine for a shotgun*), Lania Knight (*Three Cubic Feet*), E.M. Kokie (*Personal Effects*), Ramon H. Rivera-Servera (*Performing Queer Latinidad: Dance,*

Sexuality, Politics), Chris Paynter (*Survived by Her Longtime Companion*), C.P. Rowlands (*Jacob's War*), Lewis Wallace, and Windy City Times Publisher Tracy Baim (*Gay Press, Gay Power: The Growth of LGBT Community Newspapers in America*). 7pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., Chicago, http://www.lambdaliterary.org

Can a Pill Revolutionize Sex for Gay and SGL Men? Social guru David Dodd, award winning vlogger Ken Like Barbie. All-ages, interactive, free community talk show to discuss sex, love, lust, relationships, a fresh, safer-sex option. Featuring ButtaFlySouL. Appetizers from the Hearty Boys! 6pm-9pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., http://gopride.com/z865

Roast & Toast: A 30th Birthday Variety Show benefiting Equality Illinois You're invited to an evening of live music, comedy, drag performances and the birthday roast of LGBT community friend, Tommy Holl. 7pm-10pm, Sidetrack, 3349 N Halsted St.

CONNEXIONS

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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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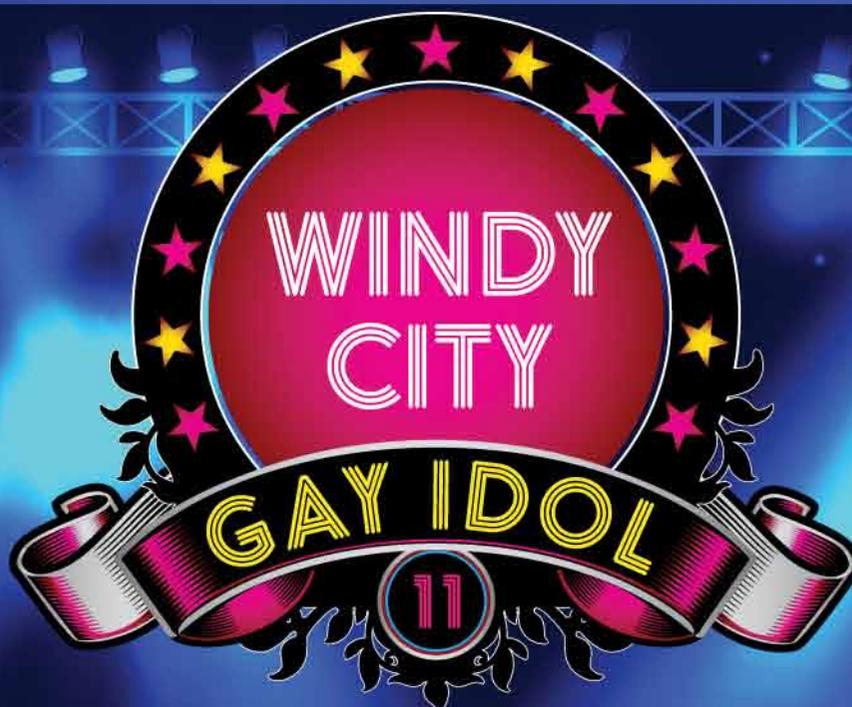
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