

AIDS RUN & WALK  
DRAWS THOUSANDS

PAGE 24



# WINDY CITY TIMES

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

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**URBAN LEAGUE'S  
RODERICK  
HAWKINS LINKS  
CIVIL AND  
GAY RIGHTS**  
PAGE 10

# Gay-marriage push may change course

BY KATE SOSIN

It's a matter of strategy and not an issue of support, say advocates, but sponsors and leaders might wait to call for a vote on marriage equality until winter, despite promises to push for this fall.

John Kohlhepp, campaign manager for Illinois Unites for Marriage, told Windy City Times that leaders have their sights set on the fall veto session. But he added that the team is also debating holding off on a vote until January, a move that would give the bill an earlier effective date but might raise eyebrows among supporters who expected to see a vote sooner.

"Everything in our whole strategy is pushing for a vote in veto session," Kohlhepp said. But, he added, coalition leaders have not ruled out push during regular session.

If passed during the legislature's veto session, SB10, the marriage equality bill, would not take effect until June. But if sponsors pass it in January during regular session, it can go into effect the following month. That could mean fewer months of waiting for same-sex couples anxious to see marriage in Illinois.

Waiting on a vote, however, would be controversial. A shortfall of support in May that delayed a vote already sparked outcry and backlash against sponsors who opted to wait until the bill had votes rather than see it fail. Chief sponsor Rep. Greg Harris stated then that his colleagues assured him they would come ready to vote on the bill in November, during the legislature's veto session.

Harris has since repeatedly declined to give a timeline or vote count on the bill but said that growing support is sending the right message to lawmakers.

"People wanted to hear from their constituents, and they're hearing from their constituents," Harris said.

Following the May shortfall, the Illinois Unites coalition hired Kohlhepp to oversee the campaign. Kohlhepp then announced an ambitious strategy to pursue 71 votes (it needs 60 to pass) during veto session, a vote count that would allow sponsors to amend the effective date to earlier without waiting until January.

But despite months of organizing and hundreds of thousands of dollars poured into the campaign, not a single new lawmaker has come out for the bill publicly. That leaves room for many backers to pull support on the controversial vote, especially as lawmakers fear primary challenges over the bill.

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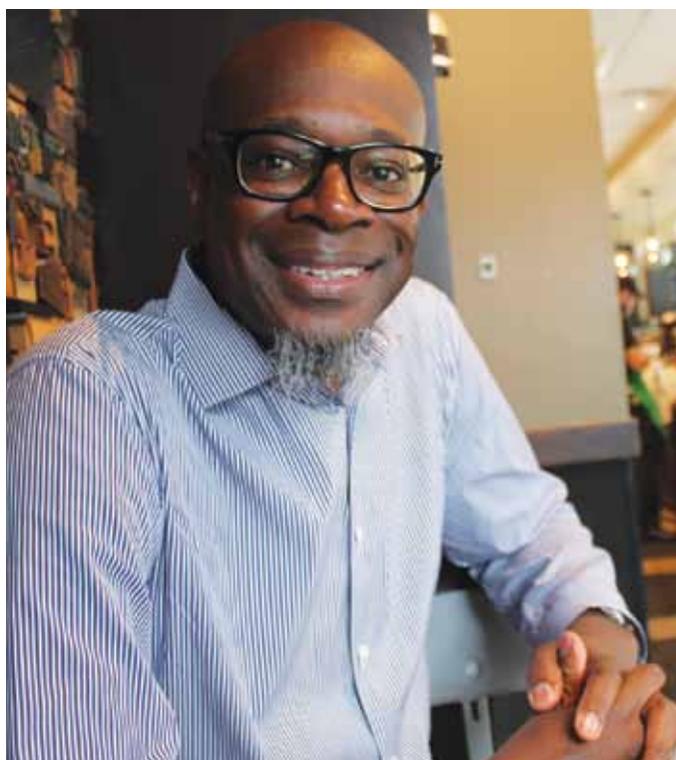


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IAN ROBERTS**  
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## JOINING THE FIGHT



**MATTILDA  
BERNSTEIN  
SYCAMORE TALKS  
FAGGOTRY AND  
SAN FRANCISCO**  
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Leading up to the Oct. 22 March on Springfield, WCT interviews new Equality Illinois field director Patty Dillon and out gay minister Benjamin Reynolds about their roles in the push for marriage equality in this state. Reynolds is on page 11, Dillon on 12. Photo of Dillon courtesy of Equality Illinois; image of Reynolds by Kate Sosin

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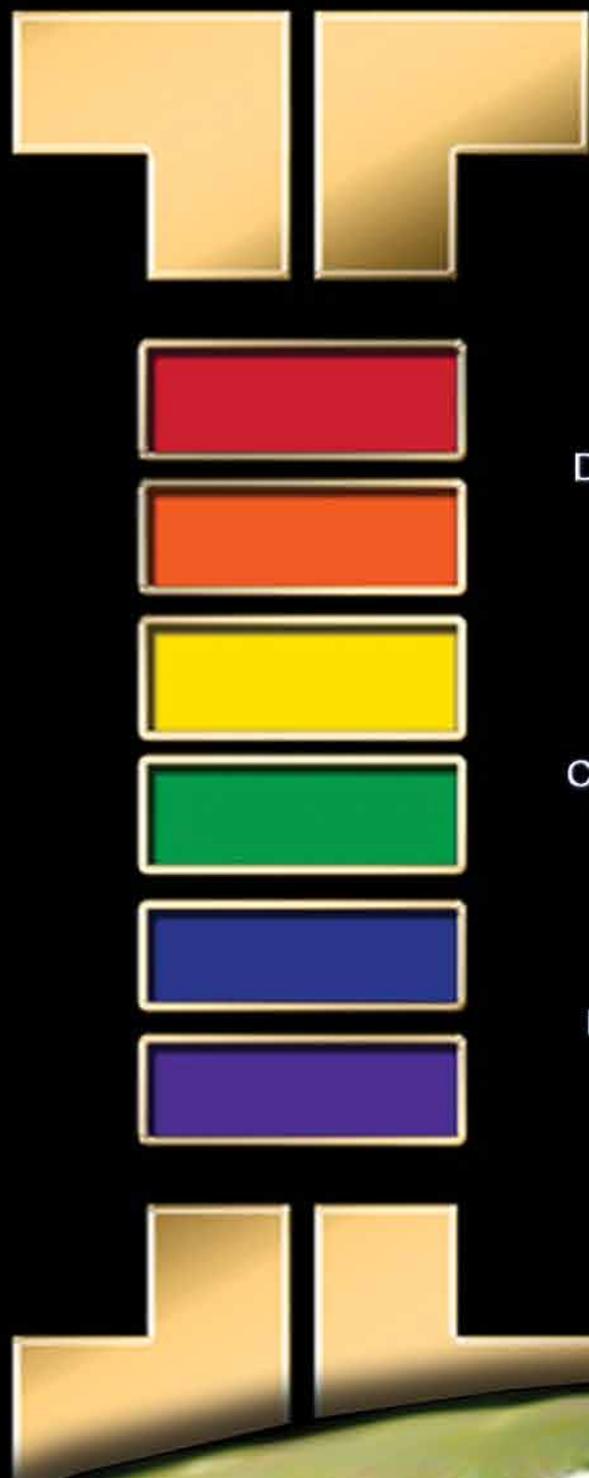


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Photos on cover (left, from top): AIDS Run & Walk pic by Tracy Baim; photo of Roderick Hawkins by Victor Powell; publicity photo of Ian Roberts; photo of Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore by Gina Carducci



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### PUTTING ON A SHOW

Jesus Salgueiro held his "Going Gaga for Love Mandalas" show recently. Photo by Ed Negron



Trans activist Dean Spade spoke recently at DePaul. Photo by Yasmin Nair



Reality show's Big Ang talks about her new show, Miami Monkey. Photo by Piotr Sikora/VH1

### SHE'S A BRAINIAC...

WCT profiles local lesbian genius Melanie McAllen.

### OH HAPPY DAY

Out jazz singer Spencer Day riffs on musical influences and a gaffe he made in Brazil.

### THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

Find out the latest about Sir Ian McKellen, Bernadette Peters and Rihanna.

plus DAILY BREAKING NEWS

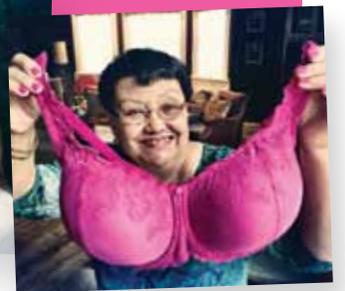
### SHOCK AND AWE



The musical act Pet Shop Boys brought its "Electric" tour to Chicago. Photo by Jerry Nunn



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## GAY HISTORY MONTH PROFILE

# Henry Gerber: Ahead of his time

BY ST. SUKIE DE LA CROIX

On May 15, 1871, the German Criminal Code was revised to include Paragraph 175, a law making sexual acts between males illegal. The first challenge to the law came in 1897 when Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld founded the gay organization Wissenschaftlich-humanitäres Komitee (Scientific-Humanitarian Committee). Its first action was to draft a petition against Paragraph 175 with 6,000 signatures of prominent people in the arts, politics and the medical profession; it failed to have any effect.

One American inspired by the work of Hirschfeld was Henry Gerber, who in 1924 was granted an official charter by the state of Illinois for the Society for Human Rights, the first gay-rights organization in the United States, which he ran from his home on Crilly Court in Chicago.

Gerber was born Josef Henry Dittmar on June 29, 1892, in Passau, Bavaria, Germany. On Oct. 27, 1913, Gerber (still called Dittmar at the time) arrived at New York's Ellis Island on the SS George Washington and then traveled west to Chicago, where he worked briefly for Montgomery Ward's mail-order house. His first known address in the United States was 507 Stone St., Joliet, Ill., from where he enlisted in the Army on Jan. 26, 1914. In his military documents, he described himself as 5-foot-7 and one-half, 180 pounds, with blue eyes and brown hair. He changed his name to Gerber afterward—though he was still using the name Joseph Henry Dittmar on his June 5, 1917, draft registration card, which described him as 5-foot-8, slender, with blue eyes and blond hair. On it, he mentioned prior military service but now claimed exemption on grounds of conscientious objection to war.

On April 6, 1917, the United States declared war on Germany, and the newspapers became filled with lurid tales of German spies. As a result, the United States opened internment camps; 50,000 unnaturalized aliens of German birth were now "alien enemies," and 8,000 were detained using presidential arrest warrants. Gerber was "offered internment," which he accepted, as it guaranteed three meals a day. After the war, he re-enlisted in the Army on Oct. 2, 1919, at Jefferson Barracks, near Lemay, Mo., a training and recruitment center for soldiers being sent to fight in Europe, or, in Gerber's case, to join a regiment of the American Forces in Germany, where he was part of a company engaged in publishing the daily AMAROC News for troops.

It was while serving in Koblenz that Gerber found Hirschfeld's Scientific-Humanitarian Committee. He wrote later: "In Coblenz on the Rhine, I had subscribed to German homophile magazines and made several trips to Berlin, which was then not occupied by American forces. I had always bitterly felt the injustice with which my own American society accused the homosexual of 'immoral acts.'"

"What could be done about it, I thought. Unlike Germany, where the homosexual was partially organized and where sex legislation was uniform for the whole country, the United States was in a condition of chaos and misunderstanding concerning its sex laws, and no one was trying to unravel the tangle and bring relief to the abused."

Gerber returned to Chicago, took up residence at 1710 N. Crilly Ct. and began work for the Post Office Department. In the spring of 1924, he formed SHR with a handful of friends. Gerber's strategy was to network and gain support from other "sex reform" leaders, including Margaret Sanger, the American birth-control advocate, but nobody seemed interested. Undeterred, he decided to go it alone. Through a lawyer, SHR applied for and received a charter from the state of Illinois on Dec. 10, 1924. It is thought the



Henry Gerber.

group never had more than 10 members. Gerber elected himself secretary; president was the Rev. John T. Graves, "a preacher who preached brotherly love to small groups of Negroes"; vice president was Al Meininger, an "indigent laundry queen"; and treasurer was Ralph Ellsworth Booher, whose job with a railroad was threatened when his homosexuality became known. Throughout the rest of his life, Gerber lamented that SHR failed to attract "men of good reputation." In Germany, the homophile movement included enlightened politicians, doctors and scientists, as well as those in the arts, but in the United States nobody was willing to stick a neck out for homosexuals.

Gerber produced two issues of the SHR newsletter *Friendship and Freedom*, of which no known copies exist, although in "Paris Gay 1925" (1981), a French book co-written by Gilles Barbedette and Michel Carassou, is reprinted a review of *Friendship and Freedom*, written by Clarens and published in the magazine *L'amitié* in 1925. (See this author's "Chicago Whispers: A History of LGBT Chicago Before Stonewall" for translation.)

The SHR was short-lived. In July 1925, the group was raided and the headline in the *Chicago Examiner* read "Strange Sex Cult Exposed." Even though the case was thrown out of court, Gerber was suspended from the post office.

After the demise of SHR, Gerber became despondent about homosexuals. He later wrote, "I have absolutely no confidence in the Dorian crowd, mostly a bunch of selfish, uncultured, ignorant egoists who have nothing for the ideal side of life." Gerber re-enlisted in the Army, serving another 17 years; in 1945, he retired with an honorable discharge and a \$100-a-month pension. As late as 1942, his primary World War II draft registration was still under the name Joseph H. Dittmar, though the records also contain a cross-reference from the name Henry Gerber; by then, "Gerber" appears to have been how he was known to the military.

Gerber spent his twilight years in the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home in Washington, D.C., where he died from pneumonia on Dec. 31, 1972, age 80.

Gerber was posthumously inducted into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame in 1992 and the Henry Gerber House, located at 1710 N. Crilly Ct., was designated a Chicago Landmark on June 1, 2001.

*The above article is an abbreviated version of the chapter "Henry Gerber and the German Sex Reformers" in St. Sukie de la Croix's book "Chicago Whispers: A History of LGBT Chicago Before Stonewall," published in 2012 by the University of Wisconsin Press.*

## Open To Thinking

BY NICK PATRICCA



### The Vatican Bank Follies

Institute for the Works of Religion, the proper name for 'The Vatican Bank,' was created in June 1942 by Pope Pius XII to deal with the money crises caused by WW2, to prepare for post-war recovery efforts, and to work against communist takeovers, especially in Italy and France.

The IOR (its Italian acronym) is not a division of the Vatican City State; nor is it an office of the Catholic Church's organizational and curial structures. It is an independent 'charitable institute,' run by a board of supervisors (usually laymen), overseen by a committee of cardinals under papal direction.

*The principal purpose of the IOR is to promote acts of charity inspired by the Christian faith.*

Of course, the Vatican had been in the banking business for a very long time prior to 1942. During the Avignon Papacy (1309–1378), bereft of its financial base in Rome and in the Papal States and ever at odds with Kings and Emperors, the papacy developed an extensive banking system in order to support its centralization of church authority and administration and to free itself from

zero, Illinois as president of the Vatican Bank for 18 years from 1971 to 1989. (It is alleged that Marcinkus and Cody made frequent trips between Chicago and Rome carrying suitcases full of cash.)

Under the Marcinkus presidency the Vatican Bank suffered many obscene catastrophes. To mention just two: 1) the employment of Roberto Calvi, 'God's Banker' made famous by *Godfather 3* and other movies, as chief financial advisor. Calvi advised the Vatican to invest in Banco Ambrosiano, of which he was chairman and the Vatican became the principal shareholder. In 1981 Calvi was convicted of money laundering but given a four year suspended sentence. Calvi hung himself (or was hung) from Blackfriars Bridge in London on 17 June 1982. 18 June 1982 his secretary Graziella Corrocher jumped out of (or was thrown out of) her office window in Milan. Two days later Banco Ambrosiano collapsed, leaving its shareholders and depositors out in the cold. Out of a sense of 'moral obligation,' the Vatican paid out 250,000,000.00 USD to the outraged depositors; and 2) as if they had learned

nothing from the Calvi fiasco, the Bank employed Michele Sindona as chief financial advisor. In addition to laundering Mafia funds, Sindona assisted the Vatican in making shady investments leading to the collapse of his USA based Franklin National Bank in 1974, costing the Vatican over 40 million USD. In March

"One would think that with so much experience with money, power, and organization, the papacy would be competent to run a bank. Nothing could be farther from the truth."

secular control, thus playing a crucial role in the rapid rise of banking in our modern sense.

One would think that with so much experience with money, power, and organization, the papacy would be competent to run a bank. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The administration of the Vatican Bank has been so unbelievably sordid and incompetent that it defies a rational presentation, giving rise to conspiracy theories (IN HIS NAME, Yallop, 1984) and conspiracy theories about conspiracy theories (A THIEF IN THE NIGHT, Cornwell, 1989).

**THE CHICAGO CONNECTION.** Although the Vatican is rich in real property holdings and art treasures, it is seriously and chronically short of cash. In 1032 the Norse King Canute imposed a tax (Peter's Pence) upon all his subjects in the British Isles to assist the pope. This tax quickly developed into an independent revenue-stream for the direct support of the reigning pope and his projects, such as, protecting pilgrims and building St Peter's Basilica. Among the biggest contributors of all time to the Vatican were Cardinal Spellman (+ December, 1967) of New York and Cardinal Cody (+ April 1982) of Chicago, giving these donors enormous credit with the pope. This credit led to the appointment of Archbishop Paul Marcinkus (+ February 2006) of Ci-

1986, Sindona was poisoned in a Milan prison while awaiting trial for his crimes.

Pope John Paul I (elected 26 August 1978, dying under suspicious circumstances 33 days later) did his best to free the Vatican Bank from Marcinkus and a group called P2, a renegade and illegal Masonic Lodge headed by Licio Gelli (a dedicated Fascist) and peopled by such outstanding characters as Berlusconi, Calvi, Sindona, Marcinkus, and a host of prominent Italians. To avoid prosecution in the Banco Ambrosiano affair, Licio Gelli escaped to Switzerland where he was arrested. But, *mirabile dictu*, he managed to escape from a modern Swiss prison in Geneva and flee to South America. Sadly, after the sudden death of John Paul I, John Paul II (+ 02 April 2005), turned a blind eye and a deaf ear to all indications regarding the criminal activities of the Vatican Bank.

Marcinkus was indicted but given diplomatic immunity by the Vatican.

Criminal charges against the Vatican Bank continue to this very day.

HOPE: In June 2013, Pope Francis appointed a commission with full powers to investigate the Vatican Bank and to recommend reforms, even its termination. Harvard Professor Mary Ann Glendon heads the commission.

© nicholas.patricca@gmail.com

Nick Patricca is professor emeritus at Loyola University Chicago, president of Chicago Network and playwright emeritus at Victory Gardens Theater.

# Senate confirms first gay to fed appeals court

BY LISA KEEN  
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

The U.S. Senate voted Sept. 24 to confirm openly gay nominee Todd Hughes to serve on the U.S. Circuit Court for the Federal Circuit. The 98-0 vote makes Hughes the first openly gay nominee to be confirmed for a federal circuit position.

The confirmation came just one week after the Senate confirmed Elaine Kaplan to serve as a judge on the U.S. Court of Federal Claims. Kaplan was approved by a vote of 64 to 35, the fourth closest margin out of 19 roll calls on judicial nominees this year. All 35 "No" votes were Republicans, including both Texas senators and reported presidential aspirant Marco Rubio of Florida. But 11 Republicans voted for Kaplan, including both senators from Tennessee and reported presidential aspirants Rob Portman of Ohio.

In opening debate over Hughes' nomination, Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy noted that Hughes would become the first openly gay judge in history to serve on a federal appellate court and asked that his other remarks be inserted into the Congressional Record. Then, Leahy used his time to speak against efforts to cut food stamps to people with low incomes. No other senator spoke before the roll call.

A native of Ohio, Hughes, 47, graduated from Harvard College and then Duke Law School and, since 1994, has served in the Commercial Litigation Branch of the Department of Justice Civil Division. His questionnaire to the Senate Judiciary Committee indicated he was a member for one year (2010-11) in the National LGBT Bar Association and the GLBT Attorneys of Washington. He also volunteered legal advice on a variety of issues at the LGBT-run Whitman-Walker Clinic in Washington, D.C., for people with HIV-related legal issues.

Kaplan, a 58-year-old native of Brooklyn, N.Y., graduated from the State University of New York-Binghamton and Georgetown University Law Center. She served as general counsel to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management since 2009, and as its acting director since April, when openly gay OPM Director John Berry resigned. Kaplan also served as head of the U.S. Office of Special Counsel under President Clinton. She also noted her membership (from 1995 to 1997) in the Gay and Lesbian Attorneys of Washington, D.C. group, and brief memberships in Gay and Lesbian Parents International, the Human Rights Campaign Fund, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, and Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.

Kaplan's questionnaire to the Senate Judiciary Committee noted that she participated in numerous LGBT-related panel discussions, including last year's White House LGBT Youth Conference and its LGBT Conference on Families. She also participated in a panel at an Out and Equal Conference in Baltimore last October and at a forum of the American Bar Association concerning benefits to federal employees with same-sex domestic partners.

The Senate Judiciary Committee advanced the nominations of both Kaplan and Hughes without asking them gay-specific questions—a practice

of committee minority leader Charles Grassley (R-Iowa) with many gay nominees.

The confirmations of Hughes and Kaplan bring to eight the number of openly gay candidates confirmed to the federal bench during the Obama administration. President Obama initially nominated Washington, D.C., attorney Ed DuMont to the Federal Circuit appeals court, but Republicans on the Senate Judiciary Committee blocked DuMont's nomination and DuMont withdrew his nomination.

Hughes now becomes a member of one of the nation's 13 federal appeals courts. While 12 of those have specific geographical jurisdiction, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, which has 12 judges, deals specifically with disputes involving international trade, government contracts, and federal personnel, among other things.

Kaplan becomes one of 16 judges on the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, each with a 15-year term of office. The court is one of several courts of special jurisdiction. The Federal Claims court addresses cases involving lawsuits against the federal government involving such matters as tax refunds, federal contracts and federal takings of private property.

Kaplan currently serves as general counsel and acting director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

The Senate approved three other openly gay judicial nominees this year were confirmed on voice votes, as well as openly gay nominee Stuart Delery to serve as assistant attorney general in the Department of Justice's civil division.

Only two nominations are still pending among President Obama's openly gay nominees for the federal bench. One is William Thomas for a seat to the U.S. District Court in Miami. The other is Judith Levy to a seat on the federal district court for the Eastern District of Michigan (Detroit).

Thomas, 46 and a native of Pennsylvania now working in Miami, was originally nominated in November 2012. A majority of an American Bar Association committee that vets nominees voted him to be well qualified. An openly gay African American, Thomas was recommended by the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund's Presidential Appointments Project.

President Obama nominated Levy, 55, in July of this year. She served as an intern at Lambda Legal Defense during the summer of 1994, is a member of the board of directors for DOJ Pride and the Human Rights Campaign. She received a scholarship from Parents and Friends of LGB Students and has spoken on a number of panels concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act and its application to people with HIV. She also spoke at a White House Conference on Homelessness in LGBT Communities and at a University of Michigan Women Lawyers Association forum, "Multiple Layers of Identity: Being a Minority, Gay or Transgender Woman in the Workplace." A native of Indiana, she has a B.S. and a law degree from the University of Michigan. She currently works in the U.S. Attorney's Office in Detroit as chief of its Civil Rights Unit.

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## Anti-gay comments have activists saying 'pasta la vista' to Barilla

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The chair of Parma, Italy-based Barilla Group—a company with Illinois ties—said Sept. 25 that his company would not feature gay couples in its ads, and that if gays didn't like it, they could "eat someone else's pasta."

So many activists have launched a boycott against Barilla, whose U.S. headquarters are in suburban Bannockburn.

Gruppo Barilla Chairman Guido Barilla was interviewed on the Italian radio program La Zanzara and was asked why no gay couples were featured in the company's advertising.

"We have a slightly different culture," replied Barilla in the interview, which was translated by Huffington Post. "For us, the 'sacral family' remains one of the company's core values. Our family is a traditional family. If gays like our pasta and our advertisements, they will eat our pasta; if they don't like that, they will eat someone else's pasta. You can't always please everyone not to displease anyone. I would not do a commercial with a homosexual family, not for lack of respect toward homosexuals—who have the right to do whatever they want without disturbing others—but because I don't agree with them, and I think we want to talk to traditional families. The women are crucial in this."

"I respect same-sex marriage because that concerns people who want to contract marriage, but I absolutely don't respect adoptions in gay families, because that concerns a person who is not the people who decide," Barilla added.

Barilla later attempted to issue an apology on Twitter, writing, "I apologize very much for having offended the sensibilities of many. I have the deepest respect for all the people without distinction."

On Sept. 26, Barilla USA posted a message from Guido Barilla on its website: "With reference to remarks made yesterday to an Italian radio program, I apologize if my words have generated controversy or misunderstanding, or if they hurt someone's sensitivity."

But Italian LGBT activists had already rallied behind the idea of boycotting Barilla. Equality Italia President Aurelio Mancuso told *Gazzetta del Sud*, "We accept his invitation to not eat his pasta."

"Here we have another example of homophobia, Italian style," added Alessandro Zan, an LGBT activist and member of the Italian Chamber of Deputies. "I'm boycotting Barilla and I invite other MPs ... to do the same. I've already changed pasta brands."

The company sent out an additional apology through a public relations firm that evening: "At Barilla, we consider it our mission to treat our consumers and partners as our neighbors—with love and respect—and to deliver the very best products possible. We take this responsibility seriously and consider it a core part of who we are as a family-owned company. While we can't undo recent remarks, we can apologize. To all of our friends, family, employees, and partners that we have hurt or offended, we are deeply sorry," read the statement.



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**Gathering Honey:**

**Oral Histories of Black Southern Women Who Love Women**

E. Patrick Johnson is the Carlos Montezuma Professor in the Department of Performance Studies and African American Studies, Northwestern University. As a follow-up to *Sweet Tea: Black Gay Men of the South—An Oral History*, E. Patrick Johnson has begun working on a new oral history on black lesbians of the South, tentatively entitled, *Honey: Black Southern Women Who Love Women—An Oral History*. In his presentation, Johnson will discuss the challenges to conducting oral histories of black same-gender-loving women based not only on gender differences between his subjects and himself, but also the content of their stories. In addition, Johnson will share some of the women's stories through performance.

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Working For Queer Acceptance: Finding Love Amongst the Religious Right

SAT., 12/7/13

Owen Daniel-McCarter

Constitutional Law as it Applies to Transgender Prisoners

SAT., 1/4/14

Hyacinth Piel

Ethical Problems in Gender Identity Construction

SAT., 2/1/14

Beth Richie

Arrested Justice: Black Women, Violence and America's Prison Nation

SAT., 3/1/14

Lourdes Torres

Making Familia from Scratch: Towards a History of Latina Lesbian Organizing in Chicago

SAT., 4/5/14

Anne Balay

Steel Closets: Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Steelworkers

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# AFC helping public navigate Obama marketplace

BY MATT SIMONETTE

AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) is putting the finishing touches on a program it hopes will help LGBT Chicagoans better understand and utilize the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

AFC is one of 44 Illinois organizations taking part in the In Person Counselor Grant Program, designed to help uninsured residents navigate their new healthcare options under ACA. The program was made possible by a \$650,000 grant awarded in July; AFC is working in tandem with AIDS Legal Council of Chicago, Chicago House, Howard Brown Health Center, Thresholds and the HIV Care Program of the Michael Reese Research & Education Foundation.

The ACA's insurance marketplace launched Oct. 1. According to Daliah Mehdi, chief clinical officer at AFC, that should open up healthcare opportunities for gays and lesbians who have previously been shut out of the insurance market.

"Many people could be denied coverage because of a pre-existing condition, including HIV, and many still can't obtain insurance benefits through a partner because they are not legally married," Mehdi said.

LGBTs often struggle with physicians who might be unfamiliar with their needs or even hostile to them; Mehdi added that the situation can be even worse if the patient is trans. But while the ACA obviously makes no guarantees about the core competencies or sensitivities of doctors, Mehdi did think that the more LGBT patients come through the door, the more comfortable physicians will be treating them.

Many Illinoisans with HIV/AIDS have often been able to utilize funds from the Ryan White Care Act and ADAP to obtain in-office procedures and medications, but "where people run into problems was with out of office stuff such as colonoscopies or emergency room visits," Mehdi said. "The difference now is, (the ACA) means full coverage for them."

A formidable obstacle facing the ACA's stakeholders, however, is that the federal government has released so few details about how the marketplace works or what it will make available. Few people know the intricacies of the plans, or even how many plans there will be. "From what we can tell, it will be anywhere between 60 and 160," Mehdi said.

As such, IPC counselors will have to spend the first few weeks of October studying the logistics of the marketplace. "We'll be looking at them mainly through the lens of an HIV-positive patient and what is best for them," she said. "Our goal obviously is to get it done very quickly."

Thirteen full-time counselors will be deployed to locations throughout the city in order to inform the public of their options and get them enrolled on the spot. The counselors "will be trained above and beyond the state and federal requirements for knowledge about ACA, and those are considerable," Mehdi said.

Among the locations Mehdi said to expect counselors to visit would be Howard Brown



Daliah Mehdi. Photo by Yasmin Nair

Health Center, HIV and STI clinics, state legislator events, testing events and bathhouses, among other locations. "We're looking for anyone who needs us," she added. "Even if someone is holding a house party, we're willing to go to that."

AFC's goal is to enroll at least 8,000 people, and Mehdi said that "the lion's share of the grant funds are going to the counselors' salaries." Open enrollment lasts through March 31, 2014.

Beyond actually enrolling participants, a second challenge is making sure those participants know to actually use the benefits. Mehdi said people who go without insurance for a long time often will need to be prodded to see a doctor even when they finally have available benefits.

The ACA "is about preventive care. Preventive care cannot cost you anything out-of-pocket under this—we want to be sure people know that," she added.

Once the marketplace begins, people interested in utilizing the enrollment counselors should phone 312-784-9060; someone will be able to direct them to a convenient enrollment event, Mehdi said. Because the counselors will be fairly mobile, AFC won't be able to maintain a calendar of their whereabouts online. Mehdi recommended waiting a few weeks so that AFC officials and counselors had time to become familiar with the myriad options.

The marketplace would likely launch with some hassles but Mehdi was confident that over time the kinks will be ironed out. She predicted that ACA will ultimately have a revolutionary impact on the health of the country, reducing stress about health expenses, for example, and freeing people from holding down unsuitable jobs just to maintain coverage.

"We haven't even really begun to think about the ramifications of a citizenry that has widespread access to healthcare," said Mehdi.

## PASSAGES

### Jeff Netz

Jeff Netz, of Naperville, passed away Sept. 25. He was 52.

Visitation was held at Blake-Lamb Funeral Home (5015 Lincoln St., Lisle, Ill.) on Sunday, Sept. 29.

Jeff was an assistant manager/chef at Catering by Knight in Oak Brook. He is survived by his parents, William and Shirley Netz of Hendersonville, N.C.; two brothers, Rob (Amy) Netz of Graylake, Ill.; and Chris Netz of Lisle, Ill.; nephews, Trevor and Nicholas Netz and extended family in North Carolina and Minnesota. He is loved and will be deeply missed by all his family and friends.



Above: CNOW board members with Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle. Below: The board with Teatro Luna. Photos by Andres Aguirre

## Chicago NOW celebrates 'Women Who Dared'

The Chicago chapter of the National Organization for Women (CNOW) hosted its annual Women Who Dared fundraiser Sept. 24.

The members honored Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle and Teatro Luna Theater Group.

Preckwinkle has been active in supporting women issues and family issues in her more than 20 years of public service as an elected official. Teatro Luna is the only pan-Latina theatre troupe in the country.

CNOW focuses on reproductive rights, women's health, ending violence against women, economic equality and lesbian rights.



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# Legacy Project names 2013 inductees

BY MATTHEW C. CLARK

The Legacy Project—the organization that oversees the Legacy Walk, the only outdoor museum walk dedicated to famous LGBT individuals throughout history—announced its five 2013 inductees to Windy City Times.

Ruth Ellis, Lorraine Hansberry, Walt Whitman, Tom Waddell and Frank Kameny will be joining the other 18 individuals who have already had their faces and biographies cast on bronze plaques and installed on the rainbow pylons that line North Halsted Street.

On Oct. 11, National Coming Out Day, each individual being honored will have a ceremony revealing his or her plaque, facilitated by youth from the Legacy Project's Education Initiative, a program dedicated to touring the Legacy Walk with youth and creating classroom curriculum around the individuals for schools and teachers. The event is free and open to the public, and will be followed by an all-ages celebration at the Center on Halsted.

On Oct. 12, there will be a celebratory reception at Sidetrack bar, with more details to come.

Inductees were selected from a pool of nominated individuals who are then reviewed by a Selection Committee of 28 activists, academics and historians. Nominees are broken down into several categories including race/ethnicity, gender, orientation and gender identity, as well as field of contribution and nation of origin. Once the reviews have been processed and the nominees selected, the Legacy Walk's board of directors does outreach to identify sponsors and individuals who can lead sponsorship drives.

Lesbian activist Ellis, sponsored by Fifth Third Bank, was born in 1899 and came out at the age of 15. She became the first African-American woman to own an off-set printing business, in Detroit in the 1930s. Decades before Stonewall, Ellis' home was known as the "gay spot" for young gays and lesbians, at a time when many gay bars were not integrated.

"We are proud to continue our support of The Legacy Project because of the meaningful impact the organization has on celebrating and honoring those who came before and contributed significantly to our community," spokesperson Andrew Hayes told Windy City Times. "My life, and many of my colleagues at the bank, have benefitted from the sacrifices and contributions of those honored by the plaques."

"We are proud to know that [Ellis'] legacy carries on through her namesake Detroit charity that helps more than 4,000 homeless, run away and at-risk lesbian, gay, bi-attractional, transgender and questioning [LGBTQ] youth annually. In sponsoring her plaque we honor her curiosity and all the contributions that resulted and positively impact our community," he said.

Chicago playwright and lesbian Hansberry, sponsored by BMO Harris Bank, is best known for her play *A Raisin in the Sun*, which addresses racial housing discrimination and segregation in Chicago and was the first production on Broadway written by an African-American. Identifying herself as a lesbian and feminist in the 1950s, Hansberry was one of the earliest members of the Daughters of Bilitis.

"BMO-Harris Bank is honored to sponsor the Lorraine Hansberry Plaque for the Legacy Walk. Ms. Hansberry's contributions as an African-American playwright and writer continue to touch the hearts and minds of countless generations through her writings," said David E. Martin, bank manager, vice-president and chair of BMO-Harris Pride. "Ms. Hansberry was an extraordinary individual that exemplifies the values and beliefs of diversity and inclusion that we also share at BMO-Harris Bank."

Whitman, a well-known poet, sponsored by a consortium of individuals and organizations headed by Legacy Walk Board Member Paul High-



Lorraine Hansberry is one of the Legacy Walk inductees this year. Image courtesy of Victor Salvo

field, is best known for *Leaves of Grass*, a collection of uniquely American poems that is almost universally interpreted for its sexual expression and homoeroticism. Known as the father of free verse, evidence supports the long-held notion that Whitman was gay.

Highfield, who sponsored Keith Haring and Frida Kahlo in 2012, and was instrumental in securing funding for three other plaques from Levi Strauss & Co. (the company Highfield works for), had experience fundraising for AIDS walks in San Francisco before moving to Chicago and joining Legacy Walk. He told Windy City Times that, given Levi's history with Whitman and the use of his recording in a 2009 ad campaign, it seemed like a natural fit.

"Once you find someone that really resonates with you and what you believe in ... I think that inspires people when they see it. The money comes in," he said.

Highfield said the biggest impact is had by showing people the actual monuments, and letting them see the enthusiasm you have.

"There is a passion in the community for this project," he said.

Waddell, a gay Olympian sponsored by a consortium of individuals headed by Chicago gay athlete and activist Dick Uyvari, is the founder of the Gay Games and placed sixth amongst 33 competitors in the 1968 Mexico City Olympics.

Uyvari, who first met Waddell at the first Gay Games in 1982, told Windy City Times that without Waddell the event wouldn't exist today.

"Tom got it started and it is still there. It's gone through its ups and downs and tribulations but it's still there 30 years later," he said. "I wish he could see how it evolved over the years, through the whole world." Waddell died from AIDS-related illnesses in 1987.

Uyvari said the Legacy Project needs individuals dedicated to raising funds for the plaques.

"You need a point man like you need a point guard in basketball. You need a guy who can kind of bring people together, to coalesce whatever it is you're trying to do," he said.

LGBT civil-rights pioneer Kameny, sponsored by a consortium of individuals headed by activist and gay military history Michael Bedwell and Chip Arndt, is probably best known for coining the slogan "Gay is Good." Nominated by friend of Kameny and lesbian photojournalist Kay Lahunen, in 1971 he became the first openly gay person to run for Congress.

Bedwell recruited out gay 2003 Amazing Race winner Arndt to help raise funds. Thanks to Arndt, many national LGBT institutions are beginning to recognize the Legacy Project, includ-

ing the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, an organization Kameny helped found.

In a statement to Legacy Walk Executive Director Victor Salvo, Arndt said that it was through receiving thank you letters from kids around the world that he realized the importance of gay role models.

"That's why the Legacy Project is so important to me beyond honoring Frank and others—helping LGBT kids grow into themselves through learning," Arndt wrote.

Bedwell, who was a close friend of 2012 inductee gay veteran Leonard Matlovich, said there wouldn't have been a Matlovich case challenging the military's ban on gays and lesbians had it not been for Kameny.

"Frank was Leonard's inspiration," he said.

Bedwell said Kameny deserves the bulk of the credit for the progress made for LGBT people in that time. He said if not for the Legacy Project, Kameny, who passed away in 2011, would have been forgotten.

"Each generation, they simply don't know,"

he said. "I really believe that along with telling emerging LGBT people that it will get better, if they understand how deep our history goes... that will empower them too."

Bedwell said the Legacy Project's commitment to teaching everyone about the contributions of LGBT-individuals is essential to the continued progress of the community.

"We need to take every opportunity to reinforce to the non-LGBT public that we are everywhere and we always have been," he said

**For more information and updates on the 2013 induction ceremony, visit the Legacy Project website at [www. http://legacyprojectchicago.org/](http://legacyprojectchicago.org/).**

**The dedication ceremony (free to the public) will take place at 5:50 p.m. A celebration reception will take place Saturday, Oct. 12, at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St., 3-6 p.m. The latter event will feature entertainment, raffle prizes and a silent auction; tickets are \$50-\$100 each.**



From left: James Elvord of RBC; Wanda Brackins, RBC-Head of Diversity, Global Wealth Management; Justin Nelson of the NGLCC; Carol Attak, manager of Accenture's supplier diversity program and serves as the NGLCC procurement council chair. Photo by Tracy Baim

## Event looks at LGBT businesses in the midst of change

BY MELISSA WASSERMAN

Mapping out business in the LGBT community, Lakeview's Center on Halsted housed the event "Navigating Your Business Through a Sea of Change," in its Hoover-Leppen Theatre Sept. 25.

RBC Wealth Management partnered with Windy City Times, Center on Halsted, and The Chicago Area Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce to host the LGBT-focused business networking reception and event.

Following the evening's opening reception, RBC Wealth Management First Vice President/Financial Advisor James E. Elvord delivered the program's introduction and welcomed to the stage Center on Halsted's Community and Cultural Programs Coordinator Em VanderLinden, Chicago Area Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce President/CEO Christina Pinson and Windy City Media Group Publisher and Executive Editor Tracy Baim for brief remarks.

"There's a very strong synergy among all of us," Elvord said of the collaboration between the four organizations. "We realized as a group we're very strong. It's one thing to have three of us on a stool, but to have a bench with four legs, we can't begin to tell you how much stronger that is."

President and co-founder of the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC) Justin G. Nelson was the event's keynote speaker.

"He's a dynamic speaker who really is grounded in the facts of what today's business climate is all about," said Elvord. "It's nice to be able to have somebody whose

roots are in the community being able to be an advocate."

Nelson's lecture included an overview of NGLCC, DOMA's impacts on small and large businesses, information regarding current Supreme Court decisions and how the LGBT community along with its businesses will be affected. Nelson additionally talked about solutions to building solid relationships with allies to build and maintain strong business.

"The big thing that I wanted to get across was the importance of economic impact of the LGBT community," said Nelson. "I think impressing upon people in the audience tonight that there are real economic benefits of marriage equality, it is something important for this state. This state is leaving \$800,000 a day in economic impact on the table, by not having marriage equality."

"Any member of the state legislature should be ashamed of themselves if they are not looking at the way that they can continue to increase revenues for the state, for the businesses, for small businesses and local governments, school districts, all of those folks that would benefit from the economic impact of marriage equality."

The discussion also focused on the impact of the government and the Supreme Court Cases, while explaining their link to partner benefits and taxes among other financial concerns occurring in businesses.

To view Nelson's remarks visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9sNWdXm2VDs&feature=youtu.be>.

**Read the entire account at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).**

# Illinois marriage vote: Courage, not delay

VIEWPOINT BY TRACY BAIM

There is a lot of buzz about the timing of the push for a vote on the Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act, otherwise known as the marriage equality bill in Illinois.

The question is, who controls the strategy? Is there any way to know for sure what the "community" wants? No, not really. Getting consensus in our community is worse than herding feral cats. But based on the push for a vote in May, and the increasing pressure for a vote from leaders and activists all summer—and now into the fall veto session of the state legislature—there appears to be a critical mass of Illinois citizens who want a vote sooner, not later.

Some people say don't push the vote until we know for sure it will pass. On an emotional social justice issue, sometimes people will not commit until they are forced to choose which side of history they want to be on. So until the vote, we may not know who is for us, against us, or who will simply never commit either way.

That's why this issue is so complicated. You can't know the true vote until the vote is called. Thus, our elected officials can't make any promises on the bill passing later. They can claim that they have the votes in January—even though they do not know where they truly stand this fall. A vote in the hand is worth far more than what any two politicians can promise us in the bush.

Yes, a January vote could mean faster implementation of state marriage rights for same-sex couples (unless they had enough votes this fall to move up the start date). But what happens if they keep the delay going, until everyone is "safe" from a political challenge? With the Illinois primary season so many months ahead of the general election, that means representatives are basically always running for re-election. The "safety" zone is small—and there are very few examples of successful challenges to elected officials who back LGBT and marriage equality. Actually, it's the other way around—legislators have lost because of their anti-LGBT votes.

It also means the community will continue to spend money and time on an issue that should have been resolved earlier this year. We have a lot of issues that need attention, and marriage really should be settled by now. Illinois became a majority Democratic state in part because of the party's claims to be pro-LGBT; well, the Democrats are losing major credibility on a variety of fronts, including on this issue.

While there is a slight chance that passage in January could be guaranteed, there are far more upsides to voting on marriage equality this fall. Here are a few reasons why we should vote, and why we are operating from a position of strength in doing so:

—Knowing who is a firm "yes" will help focus efforts on lobbying for the next round.

—Because of the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling eliminating one section of the Defense of Marriage Act, the federal government has started to approve federal benefits LGBTs have been seeking for decades. That means Illinois couples can go to other states to get married now and at least get federal benefits (and some state ones).

—There is a strong legal case working through the Illinois courts seeking marriage equality in Illinois.

—Many corporations are starting to fall in line with federal marriage equality.

—Realistically, with the filing deadline for candidates just a short time after the final day of the scheduled fall veto session, there are few truly at-risk incumbent politicians, and certainly most Democrats are not really at risk on this vote. Their party leadership should be able to give "cover" to those at risk, if there really are any. And those that voted yes will have strong backing from LGBTs and allies.

If ever there was a time to press hardest for a

vote, it is now. We have all the power, we have the momentum, and we have fallbacks to get people covered while we wait for Illinois legislators to catch up to history.

I also propose a strategy if the vote does not happen this fall:

—We start a bus brigade of couples going to Iowa and Minnesota for marriage to happen weekly in those states until Illinois gets marriage equality.

—If opposition candidates in a few key districts can't be organized by the filing deadline, a few write-in candidates should be backed for 2014—the general election is not until November, which leaves time to mount targeted campaigns against anti-LGBT or neutral incumbents.

A lot of people have called me naïve (and worse) when it comes to pushing for a vote in May—and now. But I am not alone in wanting to know where people stand. They do not need more time to decide if they have courage. You either have it or you don't. If your career is more important than your integrity, or than doing what is right, than maybe you are in the wrong profession. In the 1980s Chicago City Council, the community pressed multiple times for a vote on the gay-rights law, and each time more politicians joined the side of justice. But we had to start with a vote to know where to press for change.

I leave our politicians with these quotes on courage: *"Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage. If you want to conquer fear, do not sit home and think about it. Go out and get busy."*—Dale Carnegie.

*"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear."*—Nelson Mandela

Let me be clear: There is a lot more to lose here if they delay a vote than if they lose a vote. There is far more courage in fighting for what is right and losing than staying on the sidelines. If we lose, we will fight another day (and encourage people to get married in other states in the meantime). And if a similar bill returns next spring, and passes after a lot more work, it would start the same time as if it were to have passed this fall with a simple majority. But we do not want that.

What do we want? A vote. When do we want it? This fall.

**Tracy Baim is founder and co-chair of the March on Springfield for Marriage Equality, and Publisher of Windy City Times.**

See <http://db2.windycitymediagroup.com/gay/lesbian/news/ARTICLE.php?AID=44550>.

## March on Springfield organizers offering bus rides

Organizers behind the Oct. 22 March on Springfield and their partners have announced the first of several privately organized buses available for people who want to travel to Springfield for the marriage-equality rally.

Details are on the March website at [www.MarchOnSpringfield.org](http://www.MarchOnSpringfield.org); visitors can then click "Travel."

Dozens of buses are being organized by churches, organizations, corporations and activists to help get people to Springfield from all over Illinois. Roundtrip travel on six (6) of those buses originating in Chicago can now be booked online at <http://www.marchonspringfield.org/transport.php>. These six buses will pick up people in Andersonville, Chatham, Lakeview, Pilsen and Rogers Park the morning of Oct. 22 and return them that evening. Roundtrip travel is available for about \$30, with discounts for low-income individuals. Pickup addresses and times are on the

website.

More buses for the public will be announced in coming weeks from Chicago, its suburbs and other statewide locations, including some free travel for LGBTQ youth. Travel is also being coordinated by almost 50 "March Captains" throughout Illinois.

## AFL-CIO passes pro-marriage resolution

The executive board of the Illinois Chapter of American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) passed a resolution supporting the freedom to marry and urged the Illinois House of Representatives to pass Senate Bill 10: the Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act, a press release stated.

The resolution states "the Illinois AFL-CIO joins with leaders from the faith community, civil rights organizations, President Obama, our own unions and a growing majority of Americans in supporting marriage equality legislation that effectively protects religious freedom."

"As an organization, we speak out for fairness and justice where it is most needed. Gay and lesbian couples in Illinois shouldn't have to wait another moment to be afforded the tools they need to protect their families," said Michael Carrigan, president of the Illinois AFL-CIO. "It is time we pass the freedom to marry for all."

## N.J. court rules in favor of same-sex marriage

A New Jersey state court judge ruled that the state must permit same-sex couples to get married, according to NBC News.

The Sept. 27 ruling resulted from a lawsuit six same-sex couples brought. They contended it was unfair to allow them to only enter into civil unions, now that the U.S. Supreme Court has decided the federal government must recognize same-sex marriages in the states where they are legal.

The decision, by Judge Mary Jacobson of Mercer County Superior Court, picks up where the New Jersey Supreme Court left off in 2006, when it ruled that same-sex couples were entitled to all the rights and benefits that opposite-sex couples get.

Republican N.J. Gov. Chris Christie's press secretary released this statement: "Governor Christie has always maintained that he would abide by the will of the voters on the issue of marriage

equality and called for it to be on the ballot this Election Day. Since the legislature refused to allow the people to decide expeditiously, we will let the Supreme Court make this constitutional determination."

Pro-LGBT groups hailed the decision. "The Supreme Court opened the door to federal benefits, and now the Court in New Jersey has ruled that same-sex couples must be allowed to marry. This news is thrilling. We argued that limiting lesbians and gay men to civil union is unfair and unconstitutional, and now the Court has agreed," said Lambda Legal Deputy Legal Director Hayley Gorenberg in a statement.

## Campus Pride college fair, Prep Day Oct. 5

The Campus Pride National College Fair Program will take place Saturday, Oct. 5, 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m., at Roosevelt University's Fainman Lounge, 430 S. Michigan Ave.

The event is specifically designed for addressing the concerns of LGBT and ally students when it comes to academics, student life and campus safety. The college fair program works in tandem with the Campus Pride Index ([www.CampusPrideIndex.org](http://www.CampusPrideIndex.org)) which provides the only national online listing of LGBT-Friendly colleges and universities.

RSVP at [info@campuspride.org](mailto:info@campuspride.org).

## HBHC opens Aris Health

Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC) has announced the opening of Aris Health by Howard Brown Health Center, a new facility that a press release says will provide "comprehensive, primary healthcare and support services for the entire community—regardless of its ability to pay."

Located in Lakeview at 3245 N. Halsted St., Aris Health offers 9 exam rooms, and increase accessibility as a standalone, street-level building with free on-site parking. There will also be new technology and an on-site Walgreens pharmacy.

Aris Health will be open Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Tuesdays 10 a.m.-7 p.m. The pharmacy will also operate during these times. For more information, call 773-296-8400.




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# Roderick Hawkins: Building sustainable communities

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Roderick Hawkins, a native of Baton Rouge, La., "was raised by a family who were very clear about my being involved and connected with my community and culture." His family stressed engagement with his church, school and community, so he grew up with sense of the importance of giving back.

He's been with Chicago Urban League (CUL) since 2007. As vice-president of external affairs for the organization, Hawkins' duties are mainly marketing, communications and civic and community engagement. His job, he said is getting the message out about the work CUL does.

"When this opportunity presented itself to work in the African-American community, I knew I wanted to take that chance to give back to the community that helped raise and shape me," said Hawkins, who is gay.

"If it's a response to violence issues, or advocacy in response to education's discriminatory funding system, or sharing research in the community about the power of black consumers, we work on it," he added. "Obviously marriage equality falls in that area too."

CUL, which has an annual budget of about \$7 million, is part of the Illinois Unites for Marriage coalition working on bringing marriage equality to the state. "We support both the Lambda Legal lawsuit and the legislative effort," Hawkins said, adding that CUL has provided office space and hosted events for the coalition. He has lobbied in Springfield on the marriage bill's behalf as well.

"Chicago Urban League been around since 1916," he added. "What we do has obviously changed and advanced with the times, but at

our core we are a civil-rights organization focusing on empowering the communities that we serve. We're here about economic, education, and social empowerment."

Hawkins sees a clear connection between the struggles for equal rights for both persons of color and the LGBT community. "The connection is fighting for freedom," he said.

Hawkins also acknowledged that "we are not a monolithic community and there are varying voices—I respect that. It challenges those of us who are supporting marriage. The important thing to remember is making sure that [LGBT activists] keep talking to the African-American community."

The main reason for the slow progression towards marriage equality, he added, is a lack of political will for change. It's a common reason for many of the state's problems, he said. CUL has long been involved in a lawsuit, for example, that says state funding formulas for schools are discriminatory. The state has never bothered to change these formulas, Hawkins said, because of that lack of will.

But education is an important piece of CUL's mission to create sustainable urban communities. "If young people have the foundation for a solid education, they can compete and they can do well," Hawkins said.

For example, CUL arranges for a number of summer internships for young people, Hawkins added. He enthusiastically described one who had been placed with Hyatt Hotels. "We have some interns over there—one of those interns impressed them so much they wanted her back for the next summer and they may even have a job opportunity for her when she graduates from college."



Roderick Hawkins. Photo by Victor Powell

"Our key areas are education, human empowerment, entrepreneurship, developing human capital and housing," he added. "From our standpoint, if communities of individuals are moving forward in those areas, then it leads to stronger standing of communities."

## COURSE from cover

Kohlhepp said that his campaign is designed to get the bill passed, and that it remains on track.

"I can say the program we built is incredibly strong," said Kohlhepp.

According to Kohlhepp, the consideration over waiting came in the wake of a video put out by the coalition that details one couple's dashed dreams over their inability to marry.

That video tells the story of Steven Rynes, whose wish to marry his partner Robert Smith, fell short when Rynes passed away. Kohlhepp said that story drove home the consequences of passing a bill that would have a later effective date. He denied that consideration to postpone a vote was a delay tactic as organizers struggle to pull in the final votes.

Still, organizers say their sights are set on veto session.

Jim Bennett, chair of the coalition and Midwest regional director for Lambda Legal, said he is uncomfortable with any revisions to the plan that do not include community input.

"My feelings are veto session," Bennett said. "When we left [the Capitol] on May 31, that was the promise that Greg's colleagues made to him, and that's what we're working toward. ... It's always easier to push it down the road than it is to act. ... I want the vote."

Rick Garcia, policy advisor for The Civil Rights Agenda, said his stance is that the bill should be called when it has the 60 votes it needs to pass, not before and not after.

"If the votes are not there, we don't call the bill," he said. "Call it when the votes are there."

Pressure will be on lawmakers to vote this fall, however.

A group of independent activists, including Windy City Times Publisher Tracy Baim, has organized a Springfield rally at noon on Oct. 22, the first day of veto session. The March on Springfield for Marriage Equality is expected to draw thousands, and it is aiming, at least in part, to hold feet the fire over promises made in May.

"The focus of the march is holding people accountable for what was said on the 31st [of May]," said Kim Hunt, executive director of Affinity Community Services and March co-chair. "This is also just a demonstration of the power of the LGBT community."

The Catholic Conference of Illinois has organized a response lobby day against the bill the following day. The "Defend Marriage Lobby Day" is sponsored by anti-gay organization the Illinois Family Institute.

The push for equal marriage in Illinois has gained momentum in recent weeks. A Cook County judge's refusal to dismiss lawsuits seeking marriage equality in Illinois has heartened LGBT activists in the state, and a positive ruling on equal marriage in New Jersey suggests a quickening national trend towards equal marriage.

In Illinois, the push is also bolstered by support from Illinois Chapter of American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), which announced that it passed a resolution backing the bill.

"Gay and lesbian couples in Illinois shouldn't have to wait another moment to be afforded the tools they need to protect their families," said Michael Carrigan, president of the Illinois AFL-CIO, in a statement. "It is time we pass the freedom to marry for all."

Still, sponsors face high hurdles in passing the bill as the state continues to grapple with its pension crisis and reps. stare down primary elections. Those challenges have sponsors doubling down on a familiar old line. If you've called or written your legislator, Harris said, "It's time to call or write again."

## Judge allows state marriage case to move forward

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A Cook County judge ruled Sept. 27 that a lawsuit filed on behalf of several Cook County same-sex couples wishing to marry can proceed.

Ruling on a motion to dismiss *Darby v. Orr* and *Lazaro v. Orr*, Judge Sophia Hall dismissed three of the five claims, but allowed two—claims to violation of equal protection as well as due process—to stay. The court will reconvene Oct. 8.

The lawsuits were filed against Cook County Clerk David Orr in mid-2012. The plaintiffs in the case are being represented by Lambda Legal and ACLU Illinois. Orr, who is in favor of marriage equality, has refused to defend the state's marriage ban, so the Thomas More Society, a conservative law firm, is representing five opposing county clerks in the matter.

Marriage-equality advocates were confident from the ruling.

Camilla Taylor, marriage project director for Lambda Legal Midwest, said, "This is a fantastic day for the plaintiffs in the lawsuits, and for lesbian and gay couples, and their children around this state. The court has allowed this lawsuit to go forward."

Taylor added that the remaining claims were the most fundamental to the suit. "That is the most important thing—getting to the merits of the unconstitutionality of the marriage ban."

Ed Yohnka of ACLU Illinois said that the core of the lawsuit remained. "We look at this as a great victory. You have to get over this step to get to presenting the evidence and we think we have great evidence. The equal protection claim was at the core of what was decided in Windsor, so the fact that that was a claim that prevailed really gives us a great basis to move forward."

John Knight, director of the LGBT Project at the ACLU of Illinois, added in a statement, "This ruling is a big step forward in putting an end to government-sanctioned discrimination against same-sex couples and their families in Illinois, but we must continue to push forward until loving lesbian and gay couples have the freedom to marry here in Illinois."

Hall dismissed claims based on violations of privacy and sex, as well as special legislation.



From left: Plaintiffs Danielle Cook, Suzie Hutton, Patrick Bova and Jim Darby. Photo by Matt Simonette



Benjamin Reynolds. Photo by Kate Sosin

# Gay pastor finds new ministry in marriage fight

BY KATE SOSIN

He left before they had a chance to ask him to. He was a same-sex-loving man, he told his congregation, and he was resigning his post as their pastor.

Seven years later, Benjamin Reynolds sat in a Starbucks at Dearborn and Harrison in Chicago. He's at his usual table, the high round one in the front corner.

This has been his "office" since July when he signed on as the faith director for Illinois Unites for Marriage, the coalition trying to pass an equal marriage bill in Illinois. He takes his meetings here, working to build support among faith communities and African Americans.

Lately, he has wondered what would have happened if he stayed on as the pastor at Emmanuel Missionary Baptist Church, the Colorado Springs church his parents helped charter. The congregation might have embraced him. Nearly everyone else—from his family to his religious mentors—affirmed him when he came out. But he needed to chart his own course, and he wanted to give his church permission to stay theirs.

There was no missed opportunity in leaving. "I think that life is a series of calls," Reynolds said. "We're not called to just do one thing. We're called to many things over the course of our lives."

Reynolds' sexual orientation had always been an issue. As a child, he struggled to conform to male gender roles, much to the chagrin of his father.

"It was the things that I enjoyed—playing with dolls, whether it was my sister's Barbie dolls or my G.I. Joe," Reynolds recalled. "It was my mother's high heels. It was wearing my brother's choir robe, watching my mother cook and participating with that."

But Reynolds couldn't be gay, he told himself. His religious upbringing didn't allow it. He had always been in the church, and he had a gift for ministering, giving his first sermon at age 14.

He built a traditional life for himself.

He attended the University of Denver, and took a job as a court reporter in Dallas, Texas. He continued ministering on the side.

In 1991, the pastor at Emmanuel Missionary Baptist died, and the church sought out Reynolds to replace him. He returned home to Colo-

rado Springs for the job. He married a woman and adopted her daughter.

In 1999, he began seminary at the Iliff School of Theology.

"I think that's where things began to bubble up in me," he recalled.

Seminary was about deconstruction, a journey towards being more open. The more Reynolds opened himself up, the more he came to terms with being gay.

For the first time, he accepted himself. He and his wife separated.

"But I still had this congregation who did not know, or I didn't think they knew," Reynolds said.

In 2000, Reynolds began weekly discussions in his church about Black sexuality, holding talks about sexual health, HIV/AIDS and LGBT issues. In the eighth week, they started talking about homosexuality. The responses were not positive, Reynolds remembered.

"So the work was to help us see it differently, and I think we did," he said. "We had wonderful discussions, had wonderful opportunities for guest speakers to talk to the congregation, and I thought we were there."

In 2006, Colorado voters found themselves facing a referendum to offer domestic partner benefits to same-sex couples.

"I'm hearing reports about this, and I'm like, 'This is the face of God,'" said Reynolds. "If we cannot as a society give people who love each other that right, we have no idea who God is. I got so convicted by that, I became so passionate about it that I agreed to be one of the clergy who would speak out on it."

Reynolds voiced support for the referendum at a press conference. The next day, his face was on the cover of *The Denver Post*.

He returned home to a congregation full of questions. Was Emmanuel becoming a gay church? What direction was the church going?

During that time, Reynolds had come out to a few colleagues, including Vincent Harding, his college mentor.

"I think the message was very clear to me from him that one has to take their own story and tell it," Reynolds said. "You cannot wait for someone else to tell your story, or you cannot allow someone else to tell your story. That meant I needed to be able to say who I was before these

pressures of speaking out publicly as a minister then becomes a standard."

On Sept. 29, 2006, a 45-year-old Reynolds stood up in front of his congregation, came out and resigned. It was a solemn night, he recalls. There were a lot of tears.

Reynolds took a year off and then moved to Chicago in 2008. He started a Ph.D. program at Chicago Theological Seminary, where he eventually became the director of the LGBTQ Religious Studies Center.

He and his partner, Bruce, met in 2011.

A couple months ago, a friend told him over dinner that the Holy Spirit spoke to him about Reynolds applying for a job. Reynolds did not take it seriously until the Human Rights Campaign called him from Washington D.C. shortly after.

Reynolds accepted the offer as faith director for the Illinois Unites for Marriage, the coalition pushing for the passage of same-sex marriage in Illinois. He now primarily works with African Americans of faith, seeking out support for marriage equality among those who have yet to be

vocal on the issue.

The media, said Reynolds, has largely painted Black faith communities as a monolithic mass, staunchly against equal marriage due to religious conviction.

"I respect those that may have their opinions about it, but there are other voices," said Reynolds. "This is the truth that I know from my work and from my experience. I think the media has captured just a few voices."

But so far, Reynolds says, he has yet to have a conversation with anyone who is against the bill. And he has been thinking back to his own experiences coming out in the church.

Before he came out publicly, nearly everyone close to him embraced him, from his family to his colleagues in the church. But Reynolds left before his own congregation could weigh-in.

"In recent days, I have been prone to think about, 'what if I did not resign?'" Reynolds said. "What if they had said, 'Pastor, we want you to stay?' Because they could have said that, but I really didn't keep a window open for that to happen."

## Local organizations join forces in strategy program

The AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) has announced that Howard Brown Health Center, Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health, Mount Sinai Hospital, Project VIDA and South Side Help Center will participate in its Sustainable Strategy Program.

The program is an intensive workshop series that will assist leaders in sustaining their organizations' work through the changing landscape of health care reform.

The series will include four workshops each led by Mark Light, PhD, MBA, and key members of each organization's leadership staff will participate.

## CJR honoring 'Warriors' Oct. 11

The Coalition for Justice and Respect announced its third annual Community Warrior Recognition Awardees.

The 2013 honorees include Alicia Matthews, Judy Rice, Thomas Sampson, Lenox Magee, Waldo Johnson, Kokumo Kinetic, Alex Perez, Darrick Tovar-Murphy, Dwight A. McBride, Daniel Hale Williams, Christine Belue and Calvin Holmes, among others. Bishop Carlton Pearson will receive the Bayard Rustin Award.

The event will take place Oct. 11 in Deacon Hall at Our Lady of Peace Parish, 7851 S. Jeffrey Blvd. For more information, visit [cjrchicago.net](http://cjrchicago.net).

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<b>Feast of St. Sergius and Bacchus</b>	<b>Sun. 10/13</b> 5PM
<b>March on Springfield for Marriage Equality</b>	<b>Tue. 10/22</b> all day



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Patty Dillon. Photo courtesy of Equality Illinois

# New Equality Illinois field director on the push for marriage

BY KATE SOSIN

In July, Equality Illinois Field Director Caroline Staerk stunned many when, in the midst of a push to pass equal marriage in Illinois, she resigned her post.

Staerk had been seen as instrumental to the effort, working across the state with a team of organizers to build support for the bill. (She said she left the job to spend more time with family.)

Filling those big shoes now is Patty Dillon, an Illinois native with a history of organizing around progressive causes, such as reproductive rights and President Obama's re-election.

Windy City Times caught up with Dillon and asked her how she sees equal marriage passing in Illinois and what strategic changes could be afloat for that effort.

**Windy City Times: So you were with Planned Parenthood in North Carolina before coming here to Chicago.**

Patty Dillon: I was, yes. I worked with Planned Parenthood Health Systems, and I was based in Raleigh, and our affiliate actually oversaw the operations in four states—North Carolina, South Carolina, West Virginia and Virginia. I was the field coordinator for the state of North Carolina.

**WCT: What did your job entail?**

PD: We had seen a switch in the legislature from a primarily pro-choice majority to a pretty negatively anti-choice majority. So, our priority was to really put pressure on the speaker of the house—his district was in Mecklenburg County, where Charlotte is based—as well as just rally our supportive strategically where we had health centers and where we had people who were positively affected by our services and could be a voice for the work we were doing in those areas throughout the state.

**WCT: You attended college at Miami of Ohio.**

PD: I did. I graduated in 2009. I feel like each area I've lived in has had [its] own unique situation. I think southwest Ohio is so interesting because of the dynamics. There's a very strong progressive urban core in Cincinnati and then there's a stark difference if you go like 20 miles anywhere outside of Cincinnati.

So it was very interesting to be there both in college when I was at Miami, and then [I] also returned there in 2012 to work on President Obama's reelection campaign. I was the regional field director for Butler county, which just so

happens to be John Boehner's district.

**WCT: Did you work on LGBT issues at all?**

PD: As a part of Planned Parenthood's focus, our main mission was to provide high-quality healthcare to men and women and teens throughout the state. What we saw was that everywhere in the state and primarily on a college campuses where we had younger folks, we saw these opportunities for education around LGBT issues and also just around having high quality healthcare and keeping individuals safe and taking ownership over one's own sexual health.

And so my department, the public policy department, worked very closely with our education department to seek out opportunities to talk to youth and individuals around being an advocate for your own sexual health. So at that point, it overlaps. And we worked actually pretty closely with equality North Carolina, and we were seeing at the legislature a lot of attacks on healthcare services but also just basic civil rights for LGBT communities. So we worked pretty closely with them to try to fight the pretty egregious amendment to the constitution that unfortunately ended up passing.

**WCT: What is it like for you to go from working there to working in Illinois and Chicago trying to pass equal marriage?**

PD: I am originally from the Chicagoland area, and so I thought when I moved to North Carolina it would be a bit of a culture shock. There are definitely things about the south and the North Carolina vibe that is different from what I was used to growing up. But so many people that I met in North Carolina have the very same core values that I do. So, it was very easy transition because we're all working on the same thing together. So I consider it a second home. It's full of amazing people.

I have learned about how to navigate difficult strategic issues in the legislature and what to do about cultivating constituent support to really push the legislators to do the right thing. And that's transferrable to any legislature in the country. So I am so excited to transfer my skills to here in Illinois to help us pass marriage.

**WCT: What do you want to accomplish here to day-to-day, and are you changing strategies from what we've seen in the past on the marriage bill?**

PD: I think my predecessor really built a very solid foundation. I think that all of the really

amazing things that have happened so far in cultivating relationships with state leaders was something that she focused on very heavily, and I will continue to carry that torch.

In addition, I will focus on building a network all over the state, and really giving resources and support to supporters outside of the Chicagoland area and really help to train and create advocates. I would love to see more activation, more support around towns with college communities.

**WCT: We've seen these consistently resistant Democrats, especially outside of Chicago. I am wondering how much work in moving them will rest on the field team and how much of that battle is going to be purely political and based on factors in Springfield. What is the strategy there?**

PD: I was actually most recently in Michigan, and I see a lot of parallels between the political makeup of Michigan and Illinois. There's a very large urban center and a couple of areas throughout the state with a similar makeup. As I mentioned, there are advocates everywhere. So it's important to use the tools that we have to continue to seek out those advocates and give them proper training.

I really do believe that members of legislature want to act in the best interest of their constituents, and so it's really our goal as the field to push as many of our folks out there to step up, take action and keep a steady drum beat.

**WCT: What is your connection with the LGBT community? Why is this issue important for you?**

PD: I am a native Illinoisan. There reason I am here, the reason I am working at Equality Illinois is because I believe that every single individual has the right to love whoever they want and be able to share commitment in the form of marriage no matter who they are and who they love. ... This is something that I want to see for my state.

**WCT: There is not a single additional "yes" vote that we have on record that was not present in May. What are the next steps in terms of firming up those last couple of votes?**

PD: There's really no way of knowing until the last moment, until it's done, where people are going to vote. I think that's what we learned in May. The important thing is focusing on what we can really control and that is that we're continuing to push our supporters to keep reaching out until the very last second. We are going to continue that drumbeat. That drumbeat is going to get very loud.

**WCT: But one of the problems with May seemed to be that there were reps who were expected to support this but were not on record, not in the media or elsewhere as being "yes" votes. And they were able to back out at the last minute because of that. Is it part of the field team strategy to get people on record as "yes" votes before this comes up? Or are there strategic reasons why that doesn't work?**

PD: I think that is something that will be a focus. It's just another strategic tool ... to have our constituents ask that question. I wouldn't say that this is any sort of strategy one way or the other, but that will absolutely be a tool that we use, asking constituents to be clear and ask the question point-blank of legislators.

**WCT: And obviously, your job is not limited to passing the marriage bill. What other issues are excited about working on at Equality Illinois and where do you see your work going after marriage equality comes to Illinois?**

PD: What I'm most excited about is the continuing to build coalition relationships, not only with other progressive organizations and non-profits throughout the state but also with state leaders, with individuals. I think that going forward that will still be something we focus really hard on, reaching minority communities and helping individuals take advantage and utilize that has legislation that has passed.

Also, we're going to be pushing for equality for transgender individuals. Also, we want to make sure that same-sex couples have the same equal ability to adopt and have a family. So those are some of the things I am very excited to jump into.

## Foundations support organizations denied Catholic Campaign funding

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Several immigration-advocacy groups that lost funding from Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) because of their support for marriage equality in Illinois will receive support from a special emergency fund administered by several local foundations, according to a statement issued Sept. 25.

Among the foundations involved in the new fund are Crossroads Fund, Alphawood Foundation, Chicago Foundation for Women, Gill Foundation and the Pierce Family Foundation.

The new fund, which is to be named the Solidarity Fund, will be housed at the Crossroads Fund of Chicago; the initial fundraising goal is \$300,000, which is the approximate amount of funding withheld by CCHD.

"Our community has come together with an urgent response to replace critical funding for several important groups that advance the causes of immigration fairness and reform, and serve as catalysts for social change. We are confident that our goal is achievable by the end of 2013," said Jeanne Kracher, executive director of Crossroads Fund, in the statement.

"The local Catholic community has called upon its leadership to reverse the decision to punish immigrants and the groups that serve them because of their affiliation with a coalition that supports marriage equality in Illinois. These courageous members of the Church also called upon the local philanthropic community to make sure that these

organizations do not suffer financially because of this action by the CCHD. The fund that we have created is intended to prevent any such harm," added Jim McDonough, executive director of Alphawood Foundation.

CCDH pulled funding from the immigration organizations due to their support of marriage equality, on the grounds that they were pursuing an agenda contrary to Church teachings.

On July 29, a group of Catholic elected officials, among them Ald. Proco Joe Moreno (1st Ward) and James Cappelman (46th Ward) and Cook County Commissioners John Fritchey (D-12th District) and Larry Suffredin (D-13th District), published an open letter in Chicago Tribune urging Cardinal Francis George to rethink the matter.

George responded with his own statement July 29 that the immigration coalition was using the poor as pawns to further their political agenda. "You can't play off the pastoral concern of the church for the poor against the church's teaching," George said. "That's exactly what was done, that's a cynical move, and I'm sorry that it was done."

Many gay-rights advocates were encouraged by an interview with Pope Francis published online Sept. 19 said that the Church was becoming too "obsessed" with gays. George praised the Pope's "message of love" July 20, but remained silent about the policy issues the pope discussed.

For information on Solidarity Fund, visit [www.crossroadsfund.org/solidarityfund](http://www.crossroadsfund.org/solidarityfund).

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7:30 p.m.  
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**GAY** *in the*  
**LIFE**  
**Candace Sims &  
Chaunita  
Johnson-Sims**  
BY ROSS FORMAN

**Hobbies**

Candace: Traveling and listening to music.

Chaunita: Reading, going to the movies, traveling, and playing Candy Crush

**Favorite professional sports team(s)**

Candace: Chicago Bulls and Miami Heat  
Chaunita: Chicago Bulls

**Favorite movies**

Candace: The Color Purple and Titanic  
Chaunita: The Color Purple and The Wizard of Oz

**Favorite TV shows**

Candace: 19 Kids & Counting, 6 Little McGhees  
Chaunita: Pretty Little Liars and Scandal

**Little-known fact**

Candace: "I am very outgoing, but I have a shy alter-ego sometimes."  
Chaunita: "I enjoy listening to others and offering assistance in working through challenges in their lives; I really should have been a therapist."

They met when both were undergraduate students at Illinois State University in 2003 and simply were friends for quite some time, ultimately losing contact for about two years.

Fate, both say, brought the two back together during the summer of 2005, when Candace Sims and her now-wife Chaunita Johnson-Sims ended up at the same party in Normal, Ill.

By January 2006, they were en route to being a loving, committed couple.

And in July 2011, the two were legally married in Iowa.

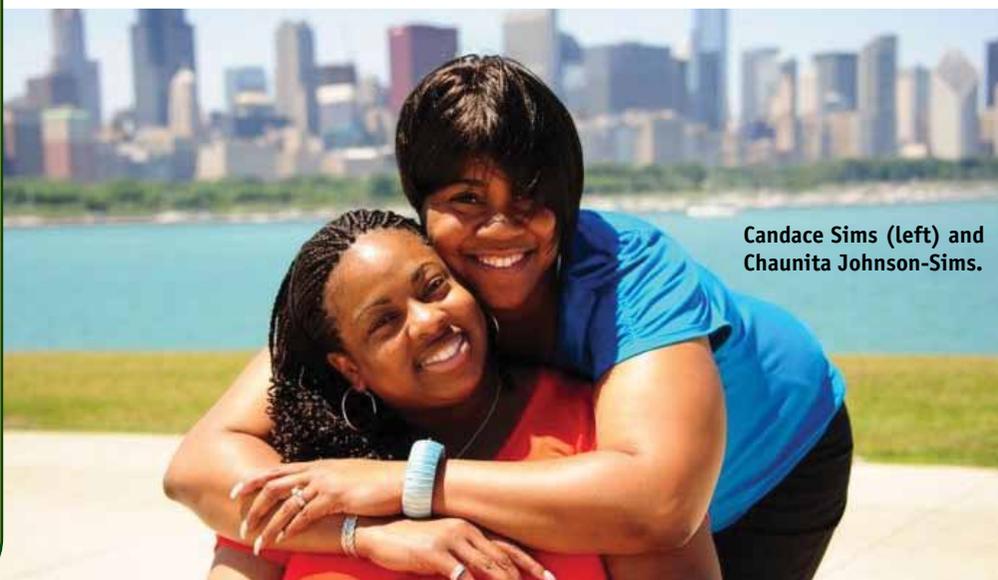
"We never had a true 'first date,' but every time we think back on it, we always say that our first date was when we met up in Borders Bookstore in Normal, where we went to Illinois State University," Sims said. "Love, communication and trust are three of the fundamentals that keep us together."

"Aside from being lifelong partners, we are lifelong friends, sorority sisters and soon-to-be parents of newborn twins. We have been together for every milestone of our lives. We hold true to the values that we hold about marriage. We also lean on our history as a couple to help us weather challenging times. I can truly say that I have the pleasure of being married to, and in love with, my very best friend."

Sims, 30, is a State Farm agent and owner of Sims State Farm Agency. Johnson-Sims, 33, is the office manager at Sims State Farm Agency. They live together in Shorewood, near Joliet.

The two are expecting twins in November, with Sims giving birth.

"The best part of our story is that it is just beginning," Johnson-Sims said. "We serve as encouragement to all couples that we meet. If you're willing to work hard and love your partner as you love yourself, then there is no limit to the amount of happiness that you can experience."



Candace Sims (left) and Chaunita Johnson-Sims.

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The March on Springfield for Marriage Equality will take place on Oct. 22, 2013, the scheduled first day of the fall veto session of the Illinois state legislature. The "March on Springfield" is part of a broad grassroots strategy to secure final passage of Senate Bill 10, the "Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act," already approved by the Illinois Senate.

Once adopted, Illinois will become the 14th state plus the District of Columbia, to treat all of its citizens equally under state marriage laws.

## VIEWPOINTS

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ERIK R.  
PETERSONWalking in  
Sylvia's pumps

Forty-three years ago, Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries—or STAR—was co-founded in New York City by trans activists Sylvia Rivera, Marsha P. Johnson and Bubbles Rose Lee.

Rivera and Johnson were best friends, veterans of the Stonewall Rebellion of 1969 (Johnson is said to have been the first to physically resist the police), among the founders of the Gay Activists Alliance, Gay Liberation Front and organizers of the first Gay Pride March.

STAR was, "... an organization designed to achieve rights for [mainly the trans-]community, and provide social services to this largely ignored and stigmatized group," wrote Bebe Scarpinato and Rusty Moore in the Sylvia Rivera Law Project Notes.

It pains me to iterate to younger readers who walk into the wonderland of ghettoized gay privilege with overinflated senses of entitlement that the *pro bono* social, legal and medical services available to queer and trans peoples did not magically fall from the sky.

Violent and impulsive acts of civil disobedience and direct actions were often performed to radically dismantle the status quo. Pre-bureaucratic activists knowingly risked police-sanctioned civilian abuse, brutal police treatment, arrests on ludicrous charges (e.g., lesbians wearing trousers could be incarcerated for "impersonating a man"), repeated jailhouse beatings and rape, compulsory dismissal from jobs as well as general public humiliation. An exceedingly high level of dedication led many—including Rivera—to willingly give up paying day jobs, be routinely arrested thus becoming homeless as a gesture of solidarity to the cause. Pride celebrations were not plastic, corporate-sponsored global circuses.

By 1973, Rivera and Johnson had created STAR House. They "...had managed to get some small

time mobster who ran a porno store in the Lower East Side in some slum building [640 East 12th St., Apt. 14] which, for a few months, they operated as a shelter for homeless transgendered youth. And they felt that was one of their great accomplishments in life. That has ended up going into the history books 'cause it was really the first time anyone had tried to make an outreach to the homeless transgendered community," said Randolfe Wicker, Marsha P. Johnson's friend and housemate of 12 years, in *Pay It No Mind*, a documentary on Johnson.

"Lack of funds and problems with the certificate of occupancy for S.T.A.R. House, forced the abandonment of the venture at that time, but Rivera never lost the dream of creating a supportive and safe living space for young transgender people," wrote Scarpinato and Moore.

In 1993, one of Rivera's "children," Chelsea Goodwin, and her partner Rusty Mae Moore used STAR House as a conceptual blueprint when they converted their Brooklyn graystone into an experimental queer communal residence nicknamed Transy House. Rivera joined the collective where she worked as house mother, counselor and financial aid officer to homeless people in the process of gender transition from 1997 until her death in 2002.

New York City social workers began sending hard-to-place trans people to reside in Transy House resulting in overcrowding and problems with insubordination. Goodwin and Moore closed Transy House in 2008. During its 15-year operation as a shelter, it housed up to 13 at once.

In July 2013—STAR House's 40th-anniversary year—Chicago House opened the TransLife Center (TLC). I want to make it clear that current transgender housing and service solutions are rooted in a legacy of work that predates TLC by decades. With the aid of the Internet, the histories of these once-obscure initiatives are easily accessible to everyone.

It is indisputable that STAR House, Transy House and TransLife Center share an identical ideological germ built around the mission of safely sheltering a centralized group. The additional tiers of service TLC promises (legal, medical, employment training) are cherries on the sundae. These cherries simply did not exist in 1973. It was part of the intention of Rivera and Johnson for Street Transvestite Action Revo-

lutionaries to be a platform for the invention and implementation of stratagem for productive trans-inclusion in the world at-large. It is irrelevant at this point if in the past, those cherries were fully realized, lived as attempts or merely as part of a dream. Rivera's projects and TLC share the same goal.

I believe it is the responsibility of the community to make sure the history of transgender activism and culture is not the history that got away.

Throughout her life, Rivera was abused by the same white male power base she fought for. "In the early days of the gay civil rights movement Rivera was repeatedly used to front possibly dangerous demonstrations, and then shunted aside by assimilationist 'leaders' when the press appeared. ... Rivera was greatly disillusioned with the desire of many early gay and lesbian activists to distance the gay movement from transvestites, drag queens, and other gender variant people, in spite of the fact that these people were often the 'shock troops' for the entire gay community," wrote Scarpinato and Moore.

I wonder if it's not the same opportunistic, bait and switch mentality that forces Rivera to continue to ride at the back of the bus in death, suggests Jesse Gan in an article for *Centro Journal* in 2007.

Johnson and Rivera were both people of color and sex workers. Rivera did have alcohol and substance abuse problems. Neither had formal education. This background does not make these iconoclastic insurrectionists ineligible for equal consideration by the modern LGBTQ movement, which walks in their pumps.

The spirit of this work in 2013, at TransLife Center and across the country, will feel exponentially more authentic when it allows itself to be connected to the STAR House legacy.

To learn more about trans activism, visit <http://tagzeen.com/tagged/Trans%20Activism>.

**Erik R. Peterson is a mixed-media artist who has also worked across the disciplines of photography, installation and performance. He exhibits in his native Chicago; Benton Harbor, Mich.; New York; and London. Erik is a freelance curator and writes about art and culture. He is also co-founder and publisher of TAG Zine ([tagzeen.com](http://tagzeen.com)), a queer art, culture and sex guide.**

## LETTERS

## A call to state Rep. Harris

To the editor:

It pains me to have to write this letter because I am sure state Rep. Greg Harris is sincere in his efforts to work for LGBT marriage in Illinois. However, we need more than his sincerity to move same-sex marriage forward. He must honor his word to the LGBT community about introducing the gay-marriage bill this fall.

He did not call for a vote in May of this year because he said his colleagues asked him to wait until the fall, after making a commitment to the LGBT community to call for a vote in May. The failure to call for a vote in May was met with a loud voice of dismay from many community members. It sparked a call for a March on Springfield Oct. 22.

Now he is saying there is a possibility that the vote will not take place until next year. Sadly, this has been his history with the marriage bill.

It pains me because if this is the case then perhaps it is time for us to be looking for another major sponsor of our bill. I realize some will respond to this suggestion by saying Harris has shepherded this bill this far, and we should allow him to complete it to its natural conclusion.

I would disagree with this sentiment. This legislation belongs to no one; if it belongs to anyone I would suggest it belongs to the LGBT community. Harris' apparent lack of leadership skills to get this legislation passed can only suggest to reasonable people that it would be prudent on our part to consider a course correction.

Joe Murray  
 Chicago

## Focusing on marriage

To the editor:

With the Illinois legislature convening in some three weeks for its fall "veto session," it appears as if the stage is being set for yet another delay on the marriage equality bill until January, 2014 or even later.

Since the striking down of the federal DOMA (Defense of Marriage Act), Illinois' discriminatory law now more than ever keeps LGBTs from accessing numerous federal benefits accorded to married people. Any delay is both unconscionable and unnecessary.

Sounding very uncertain this time around, and leaving the door open to a vote sometime in the indefinite future, bill sponsor Greg Harris is also mum about his colleagues' alleged prom-

ises to vote for the bill this fall which he touted when he postponed the vote in May. "The key is to continually evaluate and re-evaluate," Harris said enigmatically.

The "key" is not counting heads and hidden maneuvering. The key to passage of the marriage bill is putting real heat on powerful House Speaker Mike Madigan to make it happen, rather than making excuses for him and his underlings. Every Democrat in Springfield—including Greg Harris—and every lobbyist and marriage equality organizer knows, or should know, that bills pass the House at Madigan's command.

Greg Harris, Kelly Cassidy and all House Democrats who support the marriage equality bill need to screw up their courage and publicly demand that Madigan muscle the bill through to passage. (Now wouldn't that be a role reversal!) Everyone on the marriage equality team needs to demand that the Speaker use his power and the nearly two-to-one Democratic majority to deliver on marriage equality in Illinois. As we work the phones and surround the capitol at the March on Springfield Oct. 22, Madigan needs to be our focus.

Gay Liberation Network

## GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION

Photo by  
Michael  
Brosilow

## JOAN OF CONTENTION

Award-winning actress Joan Allen is featured in Steppenwolf Theater's *The Wheel*. See page 18.

## DISH

A bounty of goodness.  
Page 26Photo of dish at Bountiful Eatery  
by Meghan Streit

## THEATER

'Life' as we know it.  
Page 18Photo from *Signs of Life*  
by Michael Brosilow

## SPORTS

Running for a cause.  
Page 24Photo from AIDS Run/Walk Chicago  
by Melissa Wasserman

## SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

'Apparently Dead,'  
but not zombies

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Out playwright Martin Casella's forthcoming new play *Directions for Restoring the Apparently Dead* may sound like he's jumping on the zombie zeitgeist bandwagon. The advertising art of a levitating and shirtless prone body for Pride Films and Plays' world premiere production at Stage 773 also might give that wrong impression.

"There's no zombies at all—only an emotional zombie if you put it that way," said Casella during a telephone interview from Jersey City, N.J. "It's a drama about two old friends who are in their late forties who have not seen each other in a while and get together. Normally when we see plays like this it's women that it's happening to, but in this case it's two guys who grew up together and who stayed very close."

Casella based his time-shifting play in part from one of his own experiences of renting an English cottage and inviting a straight friend along. Where the play gets its title from is an old British Humane Society pamphlet that Casella saw in a museum that included a list of ways to aid people who may have suffered a narcotic overdose, an attempted drowning or asphyxiation.

"As the play goes on, you see [the play's title] as a kind of metaphor for what the two guys are going through in their own lives," Casella said.

*Directions for Restoring the Apparently Dead* returns to Chicago as the grand-prize winner of Pride Films and Plays' Great Gay Play Contest of 2013, when it was originally performed in a staged reading last May at the Center on Halsted's Hoover-Leppen Theatre.

"It's a much more personal play for Martin and it's a very interesting piece," said Pride Films and Plays founder and executive director David Zak, also agreeing about potential confusion surrounding the play's title.

"Sometimes you think that all gay theater literature is about young people, and that would be true of all the underwear plays and *Naked Boys Singing* and all the coming out shows, so it's really interesting to deal with a play about a gay man turning 50 and his friendship with his longtime friend," said Zak, who was recently inducted into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame. "People that age need to see themselves onstage, too, and it's a play about joy and regrets and how life takes odd paths and I'm excited to produce it."

Casella most recently teamed with Zak when he directed on the 2010 London premiere of Casella's most famous play called *The Irish Curse*, which is about a support group for smaller-endowed men. Despite successful productions in many other major cities (including the off-Broadway production that starred out actor Dan Butler), *The Irish Curse* oddly hasn't played in Chicago—a fact that has both Casella and Zak wondering why.

"It only has one gay character, but it's not necessarily a 'gay play'—it's a men's play," Zak said about *The Irish Curse*. "It would be great to see in Chicago at one point. It's really funny."

Aside from his forthcoming world premiere, Casella has had quite a few of his works performed in Chicago, including the musical *Taking Care of Mrs. Carol* at the former Bailiwick Repertory Theatre and works like *Saint Heven* and *Doo Dah!* for the former STAGES musical festival at

Patrick Gannon (left) and Patrick Rybarczyk of *Directions for Restoring the Apparently Dead*. Photo by David Zak

the former Theatre Building Chicago (now Stage 773).

Casella heeded Zak's call to enter a new play of his in Pride Films and Plays' Great Gay Play Contest of 2013, and he was pleasantly surprised to not only be selected as a finalist, but to win the grand prize as well.

"I was kind of astonished when they called my name at the end of the weekend," Casella said about attending his first Great Gay Play Contest and participating in all of the competing play readings. To have Zak directing a fully staged production of *Directions for Restoring the Apparently Dead* so soon after the contest has made Casella very happy.

"This is my fifth play that I've had done in Chicago and I always have a good time there and the audience response is always fantastic,"

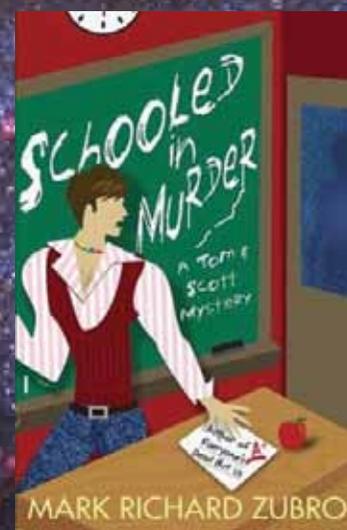
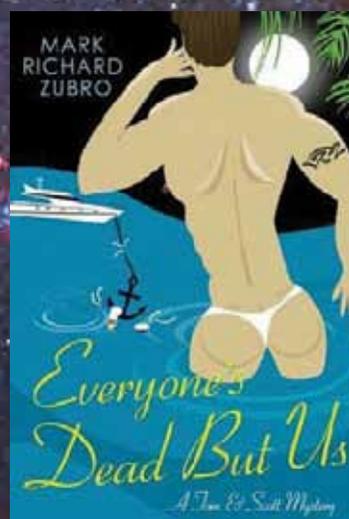
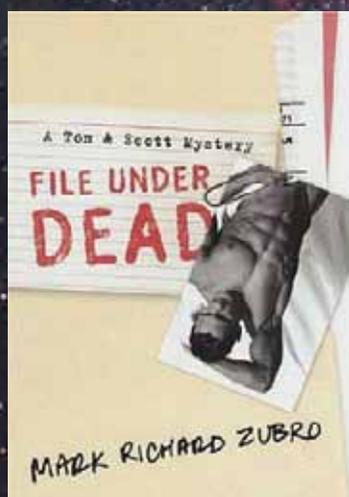
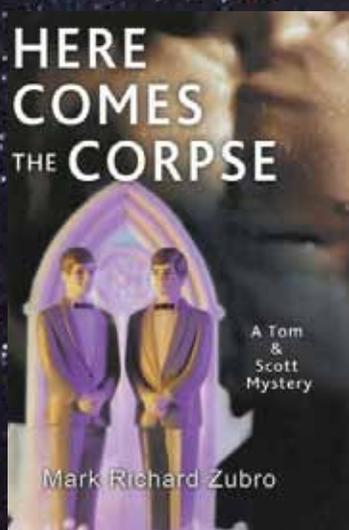
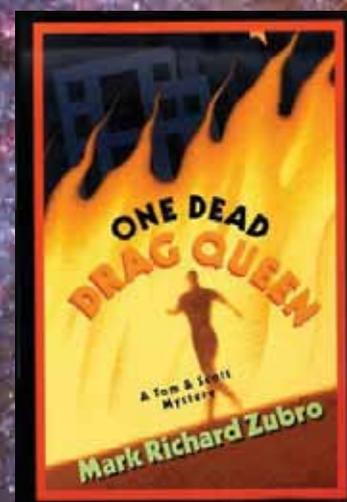
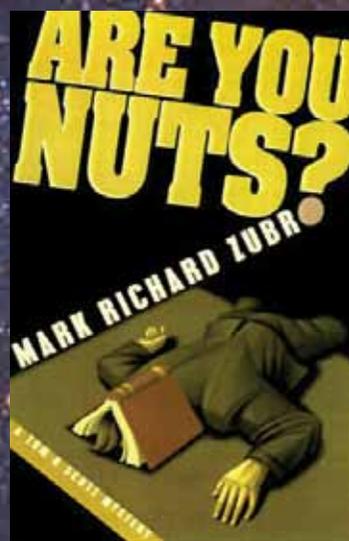
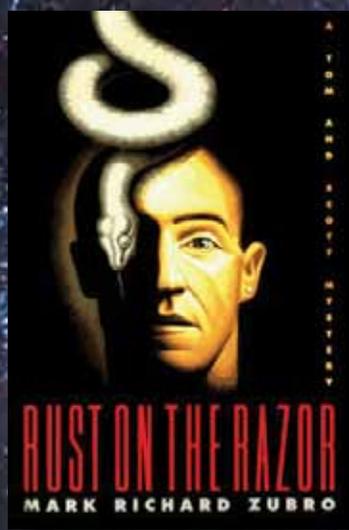
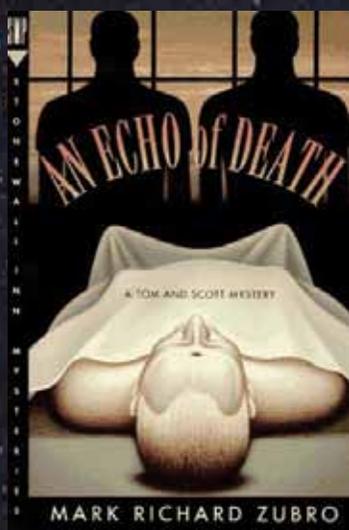
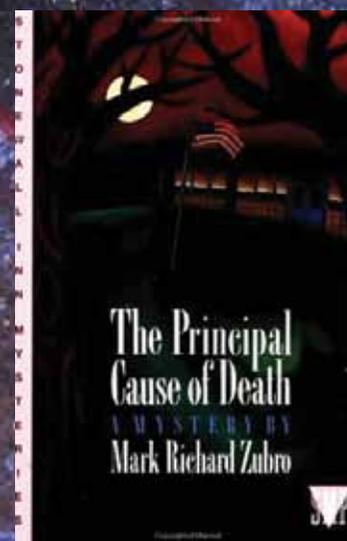
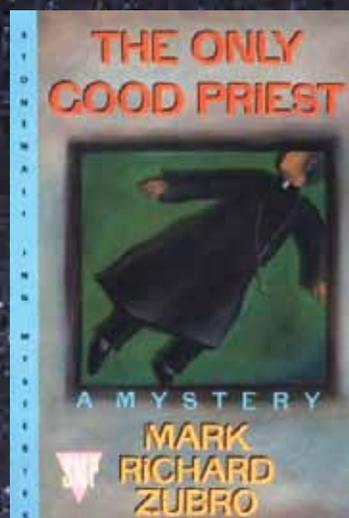
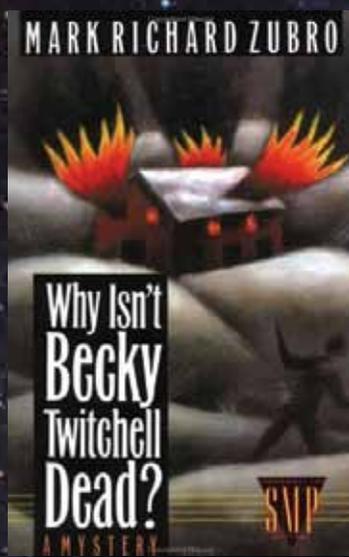
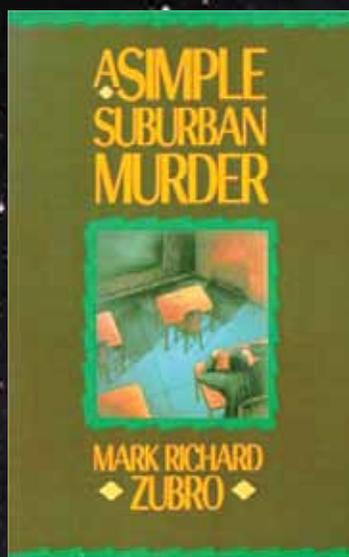
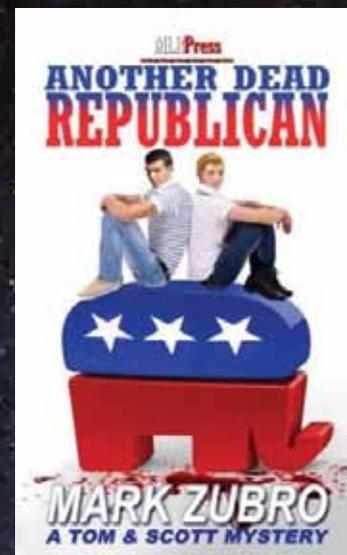
Casella said. "The Chicago theater community is, the few times that I've been there with my plays, so generous and kind."

Pride Films and Plays' world premiere of Martin Casella's *Directions for Restoring the Apparently Dead* plays at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave. Previews run from Friday, Oct. 4, through Sunday, Oct. 6, with an official press opening at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 8. The regular run is 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays with 3 p.m. Sunday matinees.

Tickets are \$20 for previews, \$30 for opening night and reception, and \$25-\$30 for the regular run. There is a \$5 discount for seniors and students. Call 773-327-5252 or visit [www.pridefilmsandplays.com](http://www.pridefilmsandplays.com).

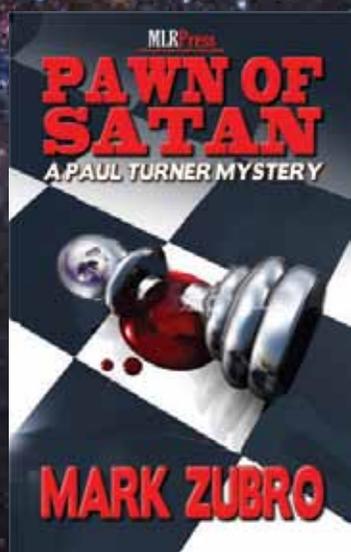
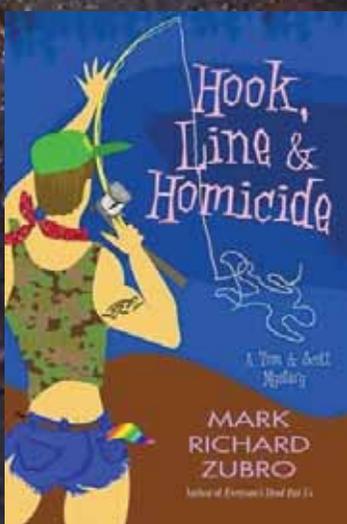
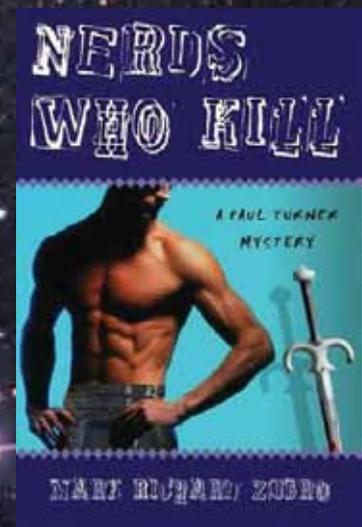
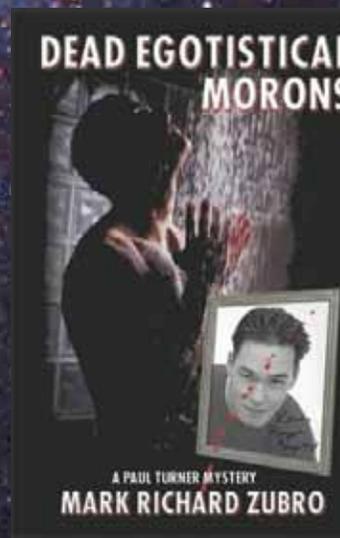
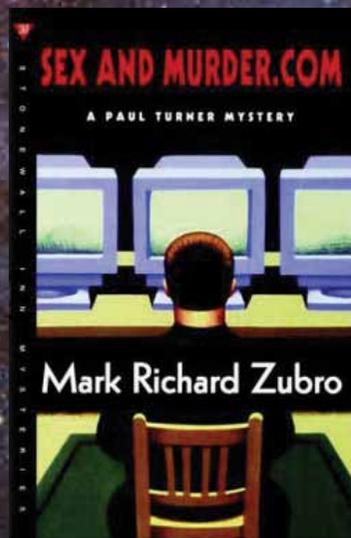
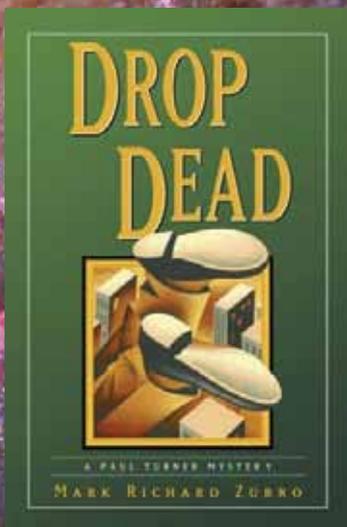
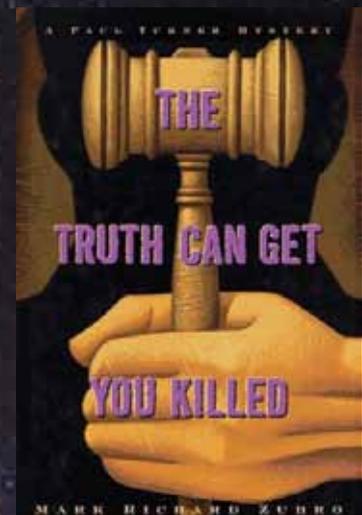
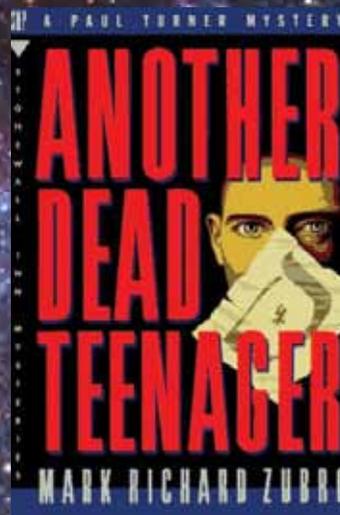
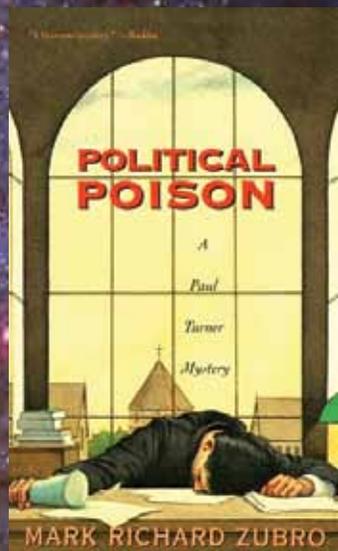
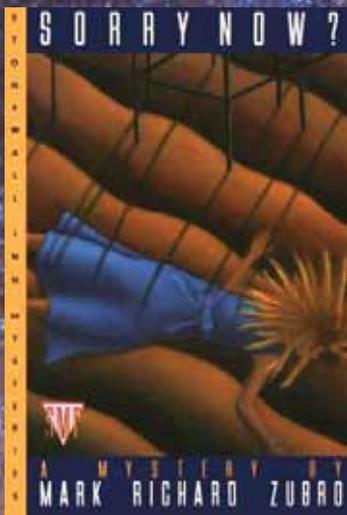
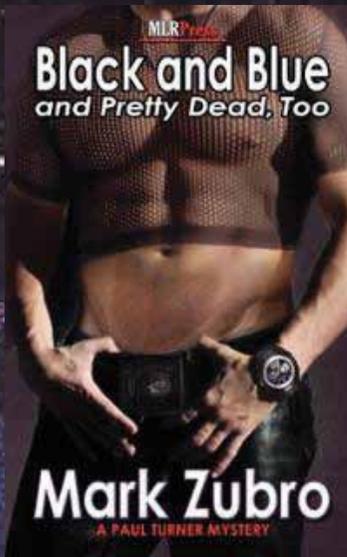
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From left: Emma Gordon, Joan Allen and Mark L. Montgomery in *The Wheel*. Photo by Michael Brosilow

## THEATER REVIEW

### The Wheel

Playwright: Zinnie Harris

At: Steppenwolf Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted St.

Tickets: 312-335-1650; \$20-\$82

Runs through Nov. 10

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

It has been more than 20 years since Tony Award-winner and three-time Academy Award-nominee Joan Allen has performed as an ensemble member at Steppenwolf Theatre. So Allen's return to Steppenwolf in the American premiere of Zinnie Harris' *The Wheel* is an occasion in itself.

And Allen doesn't disappoint with her layered and commanding performance in director Tina Landau's imaginatively staged and song-punctuated production. On the other hand, the vehicle that Allen and Landau have chosen is likely to divide opinion.

*The Wheel* begins in 19th-century Spain with Beatriz (Allen) helping to prepare for the wedding of her sister, Rosa (Charon Cross). But things go awry when a ragtag band of soldiers invade their farm, causing Beatriz to journey to reunite a mysterious girl (Emma Gordon) with her recently exiled father (Scott Stangland).

What follows is a magical realist time-traveling journey through a catalogue of war zones with Beatriz always struggling to find her basic humanity toward others amid horrific wartime conditions. Harris is heavy-handedly hammering home the fact that peoples' struggles in time of crisis and war are universal and unending, no matter the time or place. But just how and why all this is happening to Beatriz and her various charges is never satisfactorily explained, or fully fleshed out.

Given all the unmistakable references to Brecht plays like *Mother Courage and her Children* and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* in *The Wheel*, you do start to wonder why Allen and Landau didn't tackle one of those more established works. Perhaps the newness and the staging challenges of *The Wheel* were a draw, and Allen and Landau do their utmost to keep it spinning, even if its fragmentary nature confounds more than it illuminates.

Landau has a strong multiethnic ensemble (many of whom also playing multiple music instruments throughout) to flesh out the character contours of *The Wheel*. Ensemble members Yasen Peyankov, Ora Jones and Tim Hopper in particular all doing great work respectively as an easily corruptible army sergeant, an avaricious doctor's wife and a wounded soldier clinging to

supernatural rumors to survive.

The look of the production is suggestively sketched in both period and modern approaches, suiting the play's shifting nature. Set designer Blythe R.D. Quinlan symbolically extends the theater's balcony boxes on one side onstage to connect the audience through the proscenium (as if to implicate that we're participants in the horror onstage). Lighting designer Scott Zielinski and sound designer/music director Kevin O'Donnell also do great atmospheric work.

*The Wheel* is worth seeing thanks to the staging work of Landau and the star turn of Joan Allen, but without their contributions the play doesn't satisfy. So welcome Allen back and hope that the time between her next Steppenwolf appearances won't be as long.

## CRITICS' PICKS

**The Book of Mormon**, Bank of America Theatre, through Oct. 6. This wildly acclaimed hit 2011 Broadway musical tour leaves Chicago for Denver in a few days time. Don't miss this outrageously irreverent and smart show that not only takes pot-shots at some of the weirder aspects of Mormonism, but also celebrates the importance of faith to rally people behind a larger cause. SCM

**First Class**, Urban Theatre, through Oct. 22. Two ex-gangbangers encamped on a traffic island may not sound like an engaging evening at the theater, but Hank Hilbert and Ivan Vega make their struggle to flee the mean streets into an odyssey of poetic proportions. MSB

**Next to Normal**, Drury Lane Theatre, Oakbrook Terrace, through Oct. 6. This potent musical drama takes an unsentimental look at mental illness and its impact on a seemingly-normal suburban family. An eclectic easy-rock score and dazzling performances sell the unexpected subject matter. JA

**Terminus**, Interrobang Theatre Project at the Athenaeum, through Oct. 6. A crisis-line volunteer, a mousy clerk and a serial killer stepped out once on a dreary Dublin evening and Mark O'Rowe turned their adventures into a ballad of Grand Guignol-hobgoblin horror. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

## THEATER REVIEW

### Signs of Life

Playwright: Peter Ullian (book), Len Schiff (lyrics), Joel Derfner (music)

At: Victory Gardens Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.

Tickets: 1-773-871-3000;

www.victorygardens.org; \$45-\$65

Runs through: Oct. 27

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Chicago has seen two shows since August about Terezin, the Nazi concentration camp which was located near Prague (Czech Republic). Terezin wasn't a death camp, but conditions were so appalling that one in four inmates died before being shipped (as eventually they were) to killing camps such as Auschwitz. The Nazis declared Terezin a model city for Jews, and an artists' colony where creative expression was tolerated up to a point. The two Terezin shows derive from that artistic legacy.

*The Last Cyclist* (see Aug. 28 review) actually was written and rehearsed by Terezin inmates in 1943, although it wasn't performed due to its political content. Years later it was reconstructed from memory by the sole surviving cast member, with new material written to fill in memory gaps. *Signs of Life* is a contemporary American musical revolving around Terezin artist-inmates in 1944.

While I have reservations about *The Last Cyclist*, it's a vehicle which celebrates its theatricality and serves as witness to the vitality and even joy of those who lived and created art in the shadow of death. By contrast, *Signs*

of *Life* is solemn, plodding and predictable. Both shows over-explain everything, *The Last Cyclist* through the new material supplementing the original, and *Signs of Life* by wearing its heart far too obviously on its sleeve.

Here's the real difference, though: *The Last Cyclist* is of and by Terezin inmates but isn't about Terezin so its story indulges in flights of theatrical fancy, while *Signs of Life* is about Terezin and is earthbound, literal and earnest from its stereotypical Nazi villains, to the young lovers, to the woman who protests she's not a Jew. *Signs of Life* wants to convey something important: how artist-inmates risked their lives to sketch, paint and document the realities of Terezin under Nazi noses, and reconfirm their humanity in the process. But take away the art part, and these characters could fit neatly into dozens of Holocaust dramas.

Program materials suggest that the chief producer commissioned a play based on a story she wanted to tell, and later hired a composer and lyricist to add songs. That's not how effective musicals are created. Indeed, *Signs of Life* really is a play with songs which only once or twice uses musical theater techniques to advance the story in imaginative ways (for example, the Act I finale, "A City for the Jews").

Joel Derfner's lovely music is richly contrapuntal with fugue figures and close harmonies and Len Schiff's lyrics are intelligent if sometimes too literal. The mostly Chicago cast sings admirably and acts strongly within the two-dimensional characters given them. But music, lyrics and singing cannot make *Signs of Life* something it is not: a well-conceived and exciting musical-theater piece.



It's All-Right to Have a Good Time: *The Story of Curtis Mayfield*. Photo by Danny Nicholas

## THEATER REVIEW

### It's All-Right To Have A Good Time: The Story of Curtis Mayfield

Playwright: book by Jackie Taylor, music & lyrics by Curtis Mayfield et al.

At: Black Ensemble Theater, 4450 N. Clark St.

Tickets: 773-769-4451;

www.blackensembletheater.com; \$55-\$65

Runs through: open run

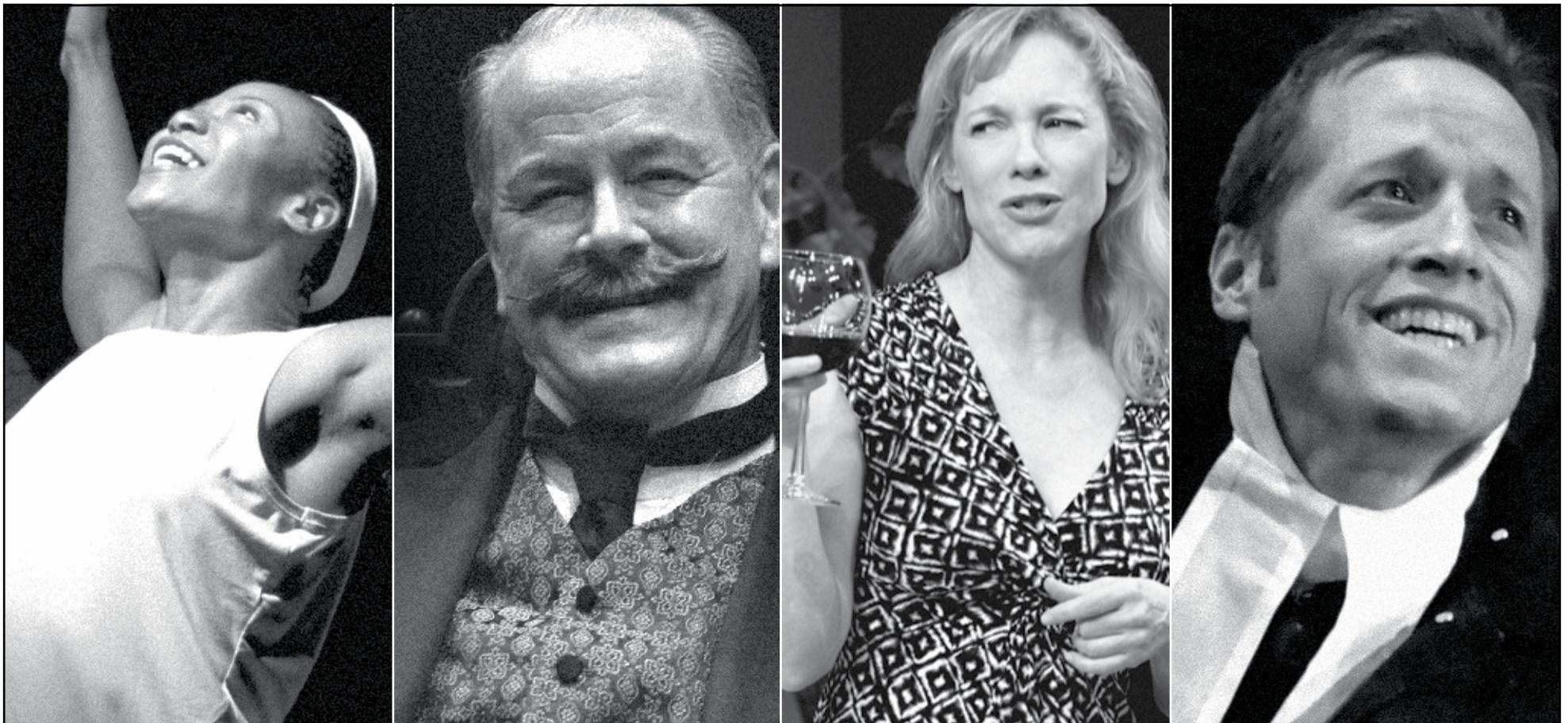
BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

When you've come to see a pop-concert musical, it can be startling for the first scene to reveal a man immobilized on a reclining slab. You register your shock and wait for him to laugh and stand up—"I was just messin' with you-all"—but he doesn't. Instead, he explains the miracle of nature that allows him to breathe, and thus speak. We are relieved when he later addresses us from a wheelchair because by then, we realize that he is Curtis Mayfield, whose successful career as a composer/musician met its sole setback in 1990 when an accident at an outdoor concert left his 48-year-old body paralyzed.

Youngsters nowadays (and many oldsters, too) might remember Mayfield in connection with the 1972 action-movie, *Superfly*, for which he wrote

the score (after the film producers agreed to let him retain copyright thereon). Others may associate him with the civil-rights anthems "People Get Ready" and "Choice of Colors." Few people recall that he also wrote Jerry Butler's breakthrough hit "He Will Break Your Heart;" introduced a dance to the American repertoire with Major Lance's "Monkey Time;" and implemented Hollywood actor Sidney Poitier's singing debut with the gospel anthem "Amen" in the award-winning film *Lilies of the Field*. Indeed, for most of the 1960s and '70s, there was hardly a radio station where you couldn't hear a Curtis Mayfield composition, whether "Gypsy Woman" on top 40 radio or "This is My Country" on underground FM.

Since this is a Black Ensemble production, audiences know to expect a spartan text, but making music our biodrama's predominant vehicle is not inappropriate for an artist whose work so closely reflected his own consciousness. Reginald E. Torian renders the inert Mayfield's reminiscences so charmingly serene—winking at a mossy "that reminds me of a song" intro or crooning a sweetly poignant "I'm So Proud" to his caregiving wife—that we eagerly anticipate his every appearance. In the role of the young Curtis, Cecil Jones is no slacker, but can't help but be eclipsed by Rueben D. Echoles' dazzling urban-violence ballets and Robert Reddrick's stage band, located at floor-level so that we can marvel at the genius of each chord's construction from wah-wah backbeat to falsetto descant.



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E. Faye Butler (center) in Pullman Porter Blues. Photo by Liz Lauren

## THEATER REVIEW

### Pullman Porter Blues

Playwright: Cheryl L. West

At: Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn St.

Tickets: 312-443-3800;

www.goodmantheatre.org; \$25-\$75

Runs through: Oct. 20

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

As microcosmic narrative locales go, way-stations are considerably less restrictive than prisons or hospitals, allowing the author a wider

range of demographic representation while still invoking the claustrophobic ambience necessary to engender interpersonal tensions. Hotels and depots also hint at the romance of travel, albeit within boundaries safer than open-road excursions, and when the action incorporates scenes of actual transit, what you have is a universe rife with opportunities for adventure.

Of course, for the African-American service providers staffing the overnight trains that spanned America before the proliferation of air traffic, the railroad's promise was of a steady job—especially for those employed aboard the luxurious sleeper cars supplied by Chicago's Pullman company. Cheryl L. West's account of this chapter

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## SPOTLIGHT



The dysfunctional ancient Greek House of Atreus gets another modernized interpretation in **The Water's Edge** by Theresa Rebeck, the playwright best-known nowadays as the creator and executive producer of the late NBC-TV show *Smash*. So see what tragic consequences are in store when a scorned husband and father returns home after a 17-year absence to face his unforgiving ex-wife. The Chicago premiere of *The Water's Edge* continues in a production by AstonRep Theatre through Saturday, Oct. 26, at the Raven Theatre, 6157 N. Clark St. Performances are 8 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays with 3:30 p.m. matinees Sundays. Tickets are \$20, \$10-\$15 for seniors and students. For more information, call 773-828-9129 or www.astonrep.com. Photo by Emily Schwartz

in economic history is viewed through the eyes of three generations of porters toiling on the Panama Limited (a forerunner of the City of New Orleans route still operating to this day).

Our departure date is June 22, 1937, the night that "brown bomber" Joe Louis would defeat Jim Braddock for the heavyweight title. Senior porter Monroe Sykes, whose own father sweated on the chain-gang that built the railroads, smuggles copies of *The Defender* into the segregated southern states, even as he cajoles his alcoholic white supervisor. Monroe's son, Sylvester, subverts the status quo through union agitation, while HIS son, Cephas, has recently left medical school for some bonding with his too-often-absent sires. Other transients include a teenage stowaway who secures the protection of the Sykes kinsmen, and a former Pullman maid turned Blues singer who is happy to sit in with the club-car band. When Sylvester begins to distribute pro-labor flyers, and Cephas befriends the itinerant waif, and the train leaves Cairo, bound for the deep South, we anticipate trouble.

West's panoramic view of her milieu exhibits the seductive contrivance of a Grand Hotel on wheels, its running time extended by musical interludes—some performed by the redoubtable E. Faye Butler in her role as the touring warbler, but mostly the kind of spontaneous vocalizing frequently heard among lonely men whose own voices are their only comfort. Under the deft direction of Chuck Smith, a skillfully matched cast brings depth and individuality to their archetypal characters in quantities to keep us spellbound right up to our saga's triumphant conclusion and to send us home wishing for a sequel.

### About Face names new staff members

About Face Theatre Company (AFT) has appointed three new staff members in key leadership roles.

Corinne Neal will be the company's managing director and Cara Thaxton the development director; both are newly created positions. Ali Hoefnagel will succeed Sara Kerastas as AFT's education and outreach director.

Additionally, AFT has added six new members to its board of directors: Amy Hutchinson, Betsy Sylvester, Kent Watkins, Michael Maultz, Paul Winberg and former Executive Director Jason Held.

### 'Sondheim' returns to Stage 773

The ensemble The Improvised Sondheim Project returns for an eight-week run of performances at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave., Thursdays at 8 p.m. Oct. 3-Nov. 21.

The Improvised Sondheim Project is a theater ensemble that performs completely improvised, spontaneous musicals in the style of composer and lyricist Stephen Sondheim.

Tickets are \$15; visit [www.stage773.com](http://www.stage773.com) or call the box office at 773-327-5252. For more info, see [www.improvisedsondheim.com](http://www.improvisedsondheim.com).

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# Ian Roberts: Gay icon tackles movies

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Before the several out professional athletes the world knows of today, Ian Roberts made his sexuality known to the public.

In the mid-'90s in his native Australia, the now-former rugby star let the world know he's gay. (At that time, there were only a few openly LGBT sports figures, such as Billie Jean King and Martina Navratilova.) Since then, he's made the transition to films, appearing in such movies as Hate Crime, Saltwater, Kiss Me Deadly, Superman Returns and Nazithon: Decadence and Destruction.

Windy City Times talked with the gay icon and marriage-equality advocate recently as he traveled between auditions.

**Windy City Times: Another audition... You constantly have to be on the move in L.A., of course.**

IR: I could always be a lot busier. I'm staying busy while I'm waiting for THAT call. It'd be great to work regularly.

**WCT: By the way, Ron Oliver [who directed Roberts in Kiss Me Deadly] sends his love.**

IR: Oh, I love Ron Oliver. If I was only 30 years younger, I think we'd be an item. [Laughs]

**WCT: I've seen a few rugby matches. That sport is no joke.**

IR: Well, the game is hard to describe. It's the most watched professional sport back [in Australia]. I'm not sure how it compares with American football because they're two vastly different games; it's like trying to compare volleyball with basketball. You play with a round ball, but there are so many differences. There's an extraordinary skill involved.

**WCT: And you were out in the mid-'90s, correct?**

IR: Yes, 1994.

**WCT: I read a transcript of an interview you did a few years ago, and you said that you hate the term "coming out."**

IR: It's not so much that I hate it. We're always coming out—to our family, to our friends, at work and to people we meet. What I meant all those years ago is just that it'd be nice if we didn't have to go public about being who we are. But 20 years ago I wasn't as appreciative of what I'd done as I am now.

I must admit, Andrew, I didn't think it'd be so many years before another high-profile male on a professional sports team came out. It kind of blew my mind when [rugby player] Gareth Thomas came out a couple years ago. I didn't think it'd take that long. Then, there's the NBA player Jason Collins came out this year.

I don't know if it's a sad reflection. It's always going to be a slow process in that man's world. [Starts singing a little bit of James Brown's "It's a Man's Man's Man's World"]

**WCT: For a second there, I thought you were going to serenade me.**

IR: [Laughs] Listen, if I had to sing for my living I'd go very hungry. However, Daniel [Roberts' partner] has a wonderful voice; he's a school-teacher. He's the brains of this outfit.

**WCT: Going back to sports figures, Martina Navratilova went public in the '80s.**

IR: She really did change everything. She's such a hero of mine. Boy George is a hero of mine as well [for what he did back then]. I met him once in a club in London. I was so humbled that he knew me; it was so flattering. It wasn't just him coming out; he had the drug issues, too, and he was so straightforward and honest about it.

**WCT: Let's talk about your screen work. How**



Ian Roberts. Publicity photo

**did you make the transition from sports to films and television?**

IR: I was in an acting ensemble growing up; then sports took off for me. When I retired from rugby at 34, it just seemed natural to get back into acting—although sports has a certain level of acting in it. It just seemed like a natural progression.

**WCT: I've seen you in several projects, such as Superman Returns, Kiss Me Deadly and Saltwater. Saltwater was quite a different role for you, wasn't it?**

IR: Oh, yeah. I was a romantic lead in a drama/comedy. Because of my size—and I'm bigger than your average bear [6'5"]—I get cast as the guy with the bad attitude or the killer who cuts people up. I get that, but Saltwater was definitely nice. Ronnie Kerr, the other lead in Saltwater, is a good friend of mine; he's quite talented.

**WCT: There has been some controversy because you have a role in the movie Nazithon: Decadence and Destruction [which came out recently on DVD].**

IR: I can guarantee you that no one who is criticizing that film has seen it. It's in that genre of Mel Brooks' To Be or Not to Be or the British show 'Allo 'Allo!

It was a 30-second grab, as it's being played up. Full Moon [the production company behind the film] has utilized that piece of footage beyond belief. It was me playing a fool; I was basically a moving prop. I got the call the day before because the guy who was going to do it had dropped out. They've utilized it so much—and good luck to them. But I can promise you that whoever has criticized it hasn't watched it. People report on something they haven't seen.

To be quite honest, I'm not even worried about it; the situation is what the situation is. But it's just so preposterous.

**WCT: Of course, you're known for your physique. What is your workout regimen like?**

IR: Being a gay man, we generally have a little bit more free time to look after ourselves. I don't do a crazy regime like I used to, partially because I'm 48. I have the luxury of doing some sort of physical exercise every day. I don't do the crazy lifting that I used to do. It's my stress reliever, though; I don't know how I'd do if I didn't train at least every other day.

**To read the entire interview, visit [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).**

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# KNIGHT AT THE MOVIES

BY  
RICHARD  
KNIGHT JR.

## Concussion; Gravity

Between the sensational, career-defining performance by Robin Weigert in the lesbian-themed **Concussion** and the galvanizing one given by Sandra Bullock in the crowd-pleasing **Gravity**, it's not just a great week for women at the cinema—it's an extraordinary one.

Out writer-director Stacie Passon based her relationship drama, *Concussion*, on an incident that happened to her in real life. Unlike Passon, when upper-middle-class New Jersey housewife Abby (Weigert) gets hit in the head with a baseball by her son, the accident has the effect of awakening her to the realization that she's not just bored with life in the suburbs—she's middle-aged crazy about it. Sex with her pretty but distracted career-oriented wife Kate (Julie Fain Lawrence) is perfunctory at best; shuttling the kids to and from their various lessons, the drudgery of housekeeping chores and the infrequent get-togethers with the neighbors is Dullsville deluxe.

Through a set of circumstances that aren't quiet believable (but, hey, it's a movie), Abby's renovation of a Manhattan loft, a project that alleviates some of her routine boredom, leads to her spending afternoons as a high priced lesbian escort she dubs Eleanor. If this sounds like a lesbian-themed *Belle du Jour* with more than a dash of *Diary of a Mad Housewife* and the recent *Afternoon Delight* thrown in, that's because it should. That's to remind audiences that Passon's film—which was produced by Rose Troche of the queer cinema classic *Go Fish*—is in good company.

It's also more than a little refreshing to have a lesbian character explore her sexual desires exclusively with other women. I get that gender



Sandra Bullock in *Gravity*.

boundaries can ebb and flow given the situation (something that *Afternoon Delight* briefly explored and *The Kids Are All Right* at length) but Abby's firm stance to Justin, her handsome handyman/quasi-pimp (nicely underplayed by the hunky Johnathan Tchaikovsky), about only accepting female clients felt like a small but important victory at the movies for *Our People*.

And what a sensational crop of women! Abby—as essayed by Weigert makes 42 seem like the new 20 (talk about sensual allure)—doesn't hesitate once she begins bedding the various women that Justin finds for her. Meeting each woman first for coffee allows Abby (and the audience) to take the emotional temperature of her clients, who range from a shy, overweight, grad student to a tattooed sexual barracuda to a hesitant businesswoman. When one of the housewives from Abby's circle shows up, the movie goes even deeper into questions of fidelity versus freedom.

*Concussion* is a very subtle, sophisticated take on modern relationships driven, naturally, by Weigert's nuanced, hard edged performance. Abby isn't easy to warm up to and Weigert isn't afraid to let the bitterness and cynicism show through, even as she's expressing her loneliness and frustration. She's a really complex woman and Weigert gifts her with full dimensionality.

The film's one misstep is in not changing the defining incident of the head injury, which seems to lead directly to Abby turning into the sexually voracious Eleanor. It's uncomfortably close to *A Dirty Shame*, John Waters' comedic film that used a similar experience as its starting point. That's unfortunate, as the two films could not be more different, and it should be discounted before seeing *Concussion*. The film is playing in theaters in New York and LA and is available in Chicago either through VOD or iTunes.

Sandra Bullock—our latter-day June Allyson-Doris Day, girl-next-door movie star who defines “niceness” in cinema—is back in a big way. After kicking butt at the box office this summer with co-star Melissa McCarthy in the predictable but crowd-pleasing *The Heat*, Bullock is once again going to earn her reported multimillion-dollar salary with *Gravity*.

Alfonso Cuarón's film, which he co-wrote with his son Jonas, is surely going to join the ranks as one of the greatest man-versus-nature movies in cinematic history. And Bullock's performance is similarly going to be cherished right along with it. The movie's storyline couldn't be more familiar—a lone individual facing the harsh elements must race against the clock to stay alive. But in setting this always welcome plotline in space, Cuarón literally expands its horizons to jaw-dropping proportions. It's one thing to be stuck in the wilderness (*127 Hours*), marooned

on a desert isle (*Cast Away*) or lost in the Alaskan tundra (*Into the Wild*) but pit those puny expanses with the vastness of outer space and you begin to get the idea.

At *Gravity*'s outset Bullock's Dr. Ryan Stone, a medical engineer, is on her first space shuttle mission. Six hundred thousand feet above the earth's surface, she and her fellow astronaut, veteran Matt Kowalski (George Clooney), and a third officer are outside the shuttle walking in space when debris from a Russian satellite crash slams into them, sending them hurtling into the eerie, silent void. The debris knocks out other satellites, preventing any communication with earth and the possibility of a rescue. It's up to the survivors to figure out a way to save themselves.

Fifteen minutes in and with all stories of this ilk, Cuarón has his audience wondering where the heck we'll go from here. The range of emotions that Bullock's terrified Ryan goes through in the next 75 minutes mirrors the obstacle course she'll be forced to face down as the mov-

ie plays itself out. (The character's increasingly desperate situation aptly recalls Thelma Ritter's famous line in *All About Eve*: “Everything but the bloodhounds snappin' at her rear end.”)

Bullock's compelling performance and Clooney's typical warm, reassuring one are supported by the seamless, dazzling special effects. The movie—shot digitally by Emmanuel Lubezki—is stunning visually, filled with elegant, long tracking shots, judicious though emotive close-ups and awe-inspiring wide-angle shots. (It's a must see at the IMAX.) Considering those visuals, Steven Price's eloquent yet simple musical score is almost another character.

*Gravity* is that rare movie that can truly be called a cinematic experience—a breathtaking one. Robert Redford is set to perform the same man-versus-nature trick in the forthcoming *All Is Lost*, where he is adrift at sea in a sailboat. Won't it be a delicious irony if both he and Bullock are found in the winner's circle come Oscar time?

### 'Black and Tan Supper Club' Oct. 11

About Face Presents The Black and Tan Supper Club Friday, Oct. 11, 7-10 p.m.

This throwback to Chicago's “black-and-tan” nightclubs of the 1920s will take place at secret venue revealed just one week prior to the event.

Tickets are \$250 each; visit [www.aboutface-theatre.com](http://www.aboutface-theatre.com) or call 773-784-8565.

### Three gay men get MacArthur grants

Three gay men—playwright Tarell Alvin McCraney, pianist/writer Jeremy Denk and dancer-choreographer Kyle Abraham—are among those who received MacArthur “Genius” Grants, one of the most prestigious fellowships in the country, *Out.com* reported.

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's grants are often termed the “genius grants,” but it's also essential for progress in creative and scientific fields since it comes with a no-strings-attached stipend of \$650,000.

Chicago has strong ties with McCraney, especially since he was asked to become an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company in 2010. The invitation came right after Steppenwolf produced the Chicago debut of McCraney's acclaimed trilogy *The Brother/Sister Plays* in its upstairs theater space.

A profile of McCraney that ran in April is at [www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Tarell-Alvin-McCraney-On-the-road-again-/42229.html](http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Tarell-Alvin-McCraney-On-the-road-again-/42229.html).

### Six cities holding 'Skip Ender's Game' events

Geeks OUT, the NYC-based nonprofit dedicated to rallying, empowering, and promoting the queer geek community announced the culmination of its year-long Skip Ender's Game campaign, six separate events in cities across the United States on the film's opening night, Nov. 1, including New York, Orlando, Dallas, Chicago, Seattle and San Francisco, according to a press release.

Noted anti-gay activist and former board member of the National Organization for Marriage Orson Scott Card is a credited producer on Lions Gate Entertainment's upcoming adaptation of Card's most famous novel.

In Chicago, the event will take place at Spin Nightclub, 800 W. Belmont Ave., 7 p.m.-12 a.m.; there will be dancing, drink specials, big-screen gaming and a screening of *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World*.

Geeks OUT's pledge to Skip Ender's Game in theaters as well as all parts of the movie's merchandising has gained more than 10,000 signatures on [MoveOn.org](http://MoveOn.org).

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## MOVIES

# Robin Weigert weighs in on 'Concussion' role and Catherine Deneuve

BY RICHARD KNIGHT JR.

Before **Concussion**, the lesbian-themed movie from out writer-director Stacie Passon and producer Rose Troche, audiences have been most familiar with actor Robin Weigert through her role as the hard-living, cursing Calamity Jane in HBO's *Deadwood*.

But Weigert's starring role in *Concussion* is about to change all that. As Abby, the middle-aged, upper-middle-class New Jersey lesbian housewife whose way of dealing with a midlife crisis is to become a high-priced escort for women during her free afternoons, Weigert turns in a nuanced performance of a really complicated character.

Abby—smart, sophisticated and cynical—isn't easy to love and neither is the uber-sexy Eleanor. But both sides of this multifaceted woman are also vulnerable and recognizably human. *Concussion*, which debuted last January at Sundance and has had a critically lauded run on the LGBT film fest circuit, opens this week in New York and LA. Chicago audiences will be able to see it via iTunes and VOD. Windy City Times sat down to discuss the film with Weigert.

**Note:** The following conversation contains spoilers.

**Windy City Times:** You're probably sick of hearing how many times *Concussion* is like a lesbian variation on the Bunuel classic *Belle de Jour*.

Robin Weigert: I have definitely heard that before but it's funny because it's such a different movie than that. Even her way of being a prostitute is entirely different. She's so much more of a subject than Catherine Deneuve's character was—who made herself very much of an object. But I completely get the comparison—the housewife-turned-prostitute. It was so funny because when we took the film to Frameline—which was such a great experience—there was a young woman who came to me (*laughs*) and she said, "You know you could do this; people would pay," which I found hilarious. But then I did have the thought, "I wonder if anyone ever said that to Catherine Deneuve?! I don't think so." [*Laughs*]

**WCT:** That's like the ultimate compliment.

RW: It was a huge compliment but how do you respond to that (*laughs*)? Do you just say "Thank you?" I guess if the acting gig doesn't work out I always have something to fall back on.

**WCT:** And yet, Abby and Deneuve's character do share that same impenetrable aspect—you know—what's going on behind those eyes.

RW: Yeah, yeah.

**WCT:** Which you see early on during that party scene in the suburbs. It must have seemed like such a gift to be handed such an interesting role. But I think you brought such complexity to a character we've seen many, many times in the movies. I'm very much in awe of your work.

RW: Thank you, thank you so much.

**WCT:** I've read that, ironically, you had never done a sex scene before this?

RW: It really was like going into the deep end of the pool. I had never done a sex scene but I had played a couple of strippers but it is rather different. I wasn't a complete virgin to the experience of having my clothes off I guess and then there were, of course, a couple of rather unflattering bathing scenes in *Deadwood*—one of those things where you're just horrified at the end of the day. But no, I'd never been between the sheets before which was strange when you think about it and there's quite a lot about it in this movie.

But strangely, those scenes were very much like any other acting scene which is to say that

you're working with what's going on between the two people and its energies and all of that. It's really not that dissimilar. I know I'm supposed to say that it was all terrifying and stuff but it wasn't really. It was sort of nice to be able to enter in to what the purest form of relating would be which is physical and non-verbal. I didn't have any huge obstacles in those scenes.

**WCT:** I'm going to guess that beforehand the director must have created a safe place on the set—an environment that felt really protected, right?

RW: There definitely was a safe space and one of the surprising sources of safety was this 25-year-old DP [David Kruta] who was absolutely the Rock of Gibraltar. He was so steady and so mature and I trusted his eye completely and he was so young.

**WCT:** One thing that is a bit problematic is the idea that Abby's getting hit on the head is what leads her directly down this path—she literally gets the sense knocked out of her. [*Laughs*]

RW: That is a bit of a misread. It's understandable. I mean some of the taglines that have been attached to the movie have made it absolutely sound cause and effect like that which is unfortunate. It's sort of any unjarring incident might have thrown her off balance enough to go in that direction. It just happens to be a head injury. It's certainly not that the circuitry in her brain is rewired toward sex because she gets hit by a baseball!

**WCT:** I'm curious—once Kate, her wife, catches on to what's going on, Abby retreats. If that hadn't happened, do you think Abby would have kept going, acting on her sexual fantasies?

RW: I think it's an open-ended question whether she would or would not even after that event. The ending of the film doesn't dictate the future of what will go on for these two women and it's not at all clear to me as a viewer what they'll be like in five years—if they'll be together, whether Abby will have found more avenues to continue to do this or not. I think it's deliberately open-ended.

What is attained at the end of the film that wasn't there at the beginning is that these two women know each other much, much better. The truth of their natures is on the table between them and they understand each other more deeply. The question is: what do they do with their new knowledge of each other. Unlike so many other films that deal with this subject, there's no judgment.

**WCT:** I'm going to ask you to theorize for a moment. There's been a lot of talk about *Blue Is the Warmest Color* with a man directing two women in these intimate scenes. Here, you have a woman directing women. Would you suspect that because there was a woman on set with you that maybe there was a difference in the way this is going to be received perhaps by the lesbian community or women in general?

RW: I wish I had seen *Blue Is the Warmest Color* so I could speak to that.

**WCT:** I haven't either, yet! I'm asking you to speculate, which is terribly unfair ... but can you guess?

RW: I wonder? I feel like people tend to be more responsive to what is in front of the camera than what they imagine to be behind it. I think they will be responding to what they see and if that story feels relatable and human to them, I don't know that they would judge it any differently than this one because its director was male. But I don't know—I can't speak for an entire segment of the population. [*Laughs*]

**WCT:** Has this changed your perspective on



Robin Weigert (right) and Maggie Siff in *Concussion*.

relationship boundary lines?

RW: I think it puts a bright mark on the fact that this is a negotiation between any two people who are in a committed relationship with each other and that there's probably a lot of variety out there [*laughs*] in terms of how the issue gets resolved. I don't know that there's anybody who's undertaken a long, monogamous

relationship who hasn't grappled with some of the issues that are in the film. They probably haven't gone in the direction the character has necessarily but monogamy for many people is a struggle. I think at the very least it will bring up questions for people about their own choices and other people's choices.

Visit [www.concussionmovie.com](http://www.concussionmovie.com).



Photos by Melissa Wasserman and Tracy Baim. More photos online at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com)

## 3,500 take part in AIDS Run & Walk

BY MELISSA WASSERMAN

They tied up their shoelaces, hydrated and did the proper stretches and then, with the blast of the air horn, more than 3,500 Chicago runners and walkers took action in the fight against HIV/AIDS with the 12th annual AIDS Run and Walk Chicago at Soldier Field on Sept. 28.

More than 4,500 people were in attendance at AIDS Foundation of Chicago's (AFC) fundraiser, which included friends and family and 328 event volunteers helping to run the event. Approximately 169 teams participated along with individual runners and walkers who followed a 5K or 10K course winding along the lakeshore.

The event's end saw a total of \$404,362.72 raised in funds. Fundraising will continue through October with the goal amount being half a million dollars. AFC was not the only organization to benefit from the day's activities. With the CommunityDirect program, the event's flagship partnership program, 35 other Chicago-based HIV organizations were also able to raise funds for their own programs and services.

"We're thrilled that the AIDS Run & Walk is in its 12th year," said AFC's Director of Fundraising Events Rhett Lindsay. "At the heart of this event is raising awareness and erasing stigma. Everybody is connected to HIV/AIDS somehow, through someone. The AIDS Run & Walk brings people together to participate in a healthy activity, raise money for a life-giving cause, and actively fight this epidemic."

This year's event arrived at a pertinent time, as open enrollment for the Affordable Care Act was slated to begin Oct. 1. AIDS Foundation of Chicago President/CEO David Ernesto Munar said AFC is one of the state grantees to enroll people in the new health care option.

"Without ready access to prevention, care services and treatment, people have not received the testing they need, the prevention education, or the medical care if they're living with HIV and that's why the epidemic continues to perpetuate," said Munar. "More than half the people with HIV are not receiving ongoing medical care to meet their healthcare needs, which is a tragedy because we have state of the art powerful medications."

Munar added there are 17,000 deaths a year in the United States, 50,000 new infections and thousands of new infections in Illinois due to more than half the people with HIV not having care and therefore not controlling viral replication.

"It's bad for them, it's bad for their partners, and we also have about 20 percent of people living with HIV are estimated to not know they're infected and inadvertently spreading it to others," Munar said. "The epidemic is far from over. We have better options to control it and better tools, but we have to deliver those tools. We've made great strides in 30 years, but this epidemic is still with us. It is a different day. We are helping tens of thousands of people in the Chicago region live well and live healthy, better, longer rewarding lives with HIV. That also wasn't available in the '80s and '90s."

AIDS Memorial Quilt panels were on display in an area of the campus and free HIV testing was available among other information offered at various tents.

Illinois Department of Public Health HIV/AIDS Section Chief Dr. Mildred Williamson, Chicago Department of Public Health First Deputy Commissioner Joe Hol-

endonner and Illinois House Representative of the 13th District Greg Harris were also in attendance. WGN film critic, entertainment reporter and radio host Dean Richards also assisted Munar with kicking things off at the starting line. Post-race entertainment included '90s singing icon CeCe Peniston, who sang her famous dance hit "Finally."

"Chicago's coming together to show its support for the fights against AIDS and we couldn't be more thrilled," said Munar. "It's rewarding to be out on a glorious day, on a nice walk and a good run. We can celebrate we are doing good work and we are helping people improve the quality of their lives. We are rallying visibility for this cause."

This year was AFC Director of Donor Engagements Rachael Marusarz's seventh AIDS Run and Walk Chicago. As a volunteer, she said the event is one of the few opportunities she gets to see this many grantees and organizations AFC supports from the community.

"For me, it's a chance to see people doing the work and people who are personally affected who just care a lot about helping others," said Marusarz. "I get to connect with people who are affected today who are now advocating for themselves and I get to be reminded of some of the legacy from when I was a teenager when we didn't have the medication. So, I love this event. There's a lot of energy in the air because we have new opportunities to get people linked into healthcare this year that we haven't had before and there's a lot of anticipation."

The event also unites Chicago residents as they team up to run or walk for various personal reasons. Most runners sported red shirts, while others wore team T-shirts or personal style.

Gil Zamora, a Chicago resident, ran the 10K course. Tired and hot by the end, this marked his fourth year with the Team to End AIDS (T2), an AFC endurance training program. Zamora originally took part in AIDS Run and Walk Chicago to prepare for the Chicago Half Marathon and eventually the Chicago Marathon. He said the race is about finishing and having fun. He said he continues to do the event with T2 each year as there is a variety of people and different organizations participating all supporting AFC and its work.

"The Chicago AIDS foundation does a lot of really great work and really helping people struggling with AIDS," said Zamora. "I've been with Team to End AIDS program for a few years now and it's a wonderful experience. You meet great people, the run, the exercise, there are so many great reasons to do it, I can't think of one reason not to. This is all about finishing and having fun."

Chicago resident Marissa Panganiban signed up independently with her friend, Mike. Explaining they were starting their bucket lists by running various races, this 10K was a logical next step.

"It's a great cause and it's a nice day and a lot of people are really positive at this race and you get a big turnout," said Panganiban. "It was quite hot, but because of the energy we were able to keep going."

**For more information or to donate, visit [AIDSrunwalk.org](http://AIDSrunwalk.org).**

**Find video links online at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com) and on Windy City Times' YouTube channel.**



CeCe Peniston.



## BOOKS

# Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore talks faggotry and San Francisco

BY YASMIN NAIR

Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore is one of the most well-known anti-assimilationist queers working and publishing today. Long connected to San Francisco, the writer and activist recently left the city that has formed queer consciousness for decades. Her memoir, *The End of San Francisco*, is both paean to and a dirge about the city. But before that, the prolific writer also published her fifth anthology, *Why Are Faggots So Afraid of Faggots?* A collection of essays by writers like Lewis Wallace, till recently a Chicago writer, Chris Bartlett, and Gina de Vries, the book considers the meanings of faggotry which, Sycamore argues, is a radical underside to gay mainstream politics.

Windy City Times interviewed Sycamore about her recent work, the potency of “faggot” as a word, the end of San Francisco, and why faggots are still so afraid of faggots.

Disclosure: This reporter is a friend and associate of Sycamore.

**Windy City Times: The title of your anthology, *Why Do Faggots Hate Faggots?* uses a provocative word that still causes anger amongst a lot of LGBTQ people, perhaps even more so than “queer.” What was behind your choice of that word?**

Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore: “Faggot” to me is a beautiful word. “Gay,” to me, is an identity based on craving straight acceptance at every turn. Faggot re-invokes the radical, liberatory outsider, the people who can’t and/or won’t conform to mainstream standards of acceptability, the flamers, the geeks, the sissies, the sluts, the ones sitting for hours at the glory hole or diving through the thrift store bins for the perfect ragged dress. Faggot is a word used to police [sexuality] among straight men in particular, obviously, but also now among gay men, as in “At least I’m not a faggot.” So I want to ask, why are those faggots so afraid of these faggots? I mean, honey look in the mirror [laughs].

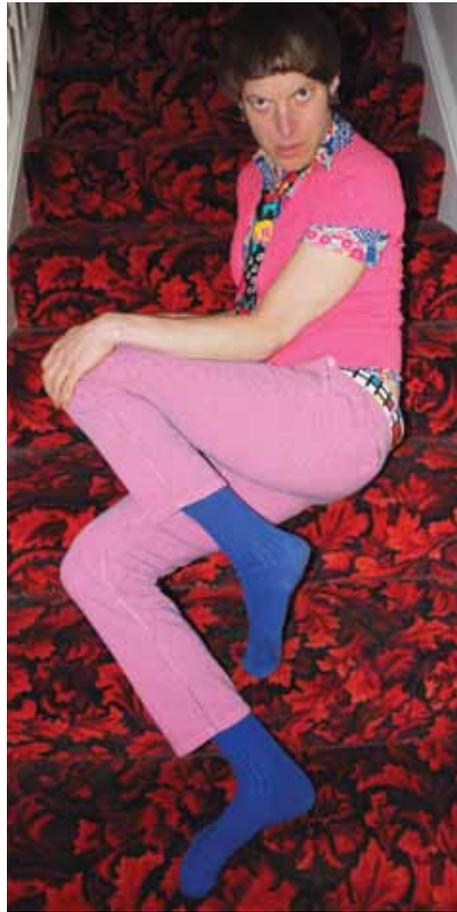
When I was first envisioning the title of the book I did at some point have some version that included the word gay, and I really struggled with it because I thought, “Wait, gay is what this book is fighting against, the hegemony of the straight-laced vision of normalcy, the phrases like “no femmes or fatties,” or “no Blacks or Asians,” which, to me, are the hallmarks of gay identity: Buying the right clothes, drinking all the right cocktails, living in the right neighborhoods, and keeping all the “wrong” people out. Faggots to me are the people being kept out, and I want to bring them back to the center.

**WCT: HIV/AIDS is a dominant theme in this book, with people are writing about maneuvering unstable lives but also trying to figure out what their relationship is to the disease. The essays also address the topic of barebacking, which has become another way to demonize a certain class of gay men.**

MBS: Right, how could I do a book about faggots without HIV/AIDS, which has disappeared from the public discourse of what it means to be gay or queer. But it’s a specter that underlies everything. At the same time and I wanted to present pieces that talked about HIV and AIDS that really complicated the issues in maybe contradictory ways.

People are talking about trying to stay safe, trying to create sexual lives that are meaningful and full of possibility but we all know that we fail just as much as we succeed. This idea of barebacking has become the sexual bogeyman.

Gay men are already stigmatized and pathologized but then you have the pathologized among the pathologized. It’s interesting that in some reviews where people love the book over-



Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore. Photo by Charlie Stephens

all, the piece about barebacking they say made them uncomfortable.

Shepperton Jones, in *The Unlikely Barebacker*, writes about being a white, queeny fag deliberately approaching Asian men for bareback sex because he thinks they’re low-risk for HIV. That piece doesn’t shy away from issues about race and sexual choice. But he doesn’t say “Well, I’ve now figured out how not to be that way” [and that makes for a more complicated piece]. Similarly there’s a piece by Francisco Ibanez-Carrasco, *Rehab for the Unrepentant*, about being HIV-positive and doing crystal and barebacking and being an HIV educator, and all those contradictions.

Drugs are also demonized. One of the questions he asks is, for HIV positive people doing drugs all the time, how is it possible for people to not do drugs? You can’t have the drugs that make you high but you can do the drugs that are making you vomit all night and shit in your bed. He also writes about being in a relationship with a long term partner, but the relationship he discusses in his piece is with a straight truck driver, and about the two of them shooting crystal together and trying to negotiate intimacy and sexual communication on many levels.

**WCT: Gender and gender identity come up often here, which raises the question: Can a woman be a faggot?**

MBS: One of the things I wanted to show in this book is the potential for faggotry to be something that is chosen, negotiated, claimed, made and remade, so that does open the possibility for a faggotry outside those who were socialized as male, or designated male at birth, exhibiting a certain kind of flamboyance.

The final piece in the book by Kristen Stoeckler, *Something Resembling Power*, I actually have at the end of the book because it asks that very question. It’s about a faggotry outside of the places where we expect it and it ends with invoking this performance by a drag king who, at the end, throws off the entire outfit. That asks Kristen to feel kind of embodied in a fag-

gotry that’s outside of these definitions. Kristen is asking about bodies, about breasts and cunts and boys and girls and fat and skinny and femininity and masculinity and the possibility of embodying all of that. I found that questioning really beautiful and I want the book to ask that question as a whole.

**WCT: Your new book, *The End of San Francisco* is a memoir about the city but also about the dissolution of a radical queer politics, without being the usual romanticized “end of an era” narrative. San Francisco might be considered the epicenter of the faggotry that’s discussed in your last book. What is it about the city that it became, for you, a place for the faggotry you spoke of earlier?**

MBS: I first moved to San Francisco in 1992, when I was 19. I was searching for radical queer possibilities to counter the annihilation of childhood and the violence of my parents and everything I was supposed to be. It’s where I learned to create my own politics, communities, cultures, sexuality, where I found other outsider freaks, sluts, queers, queens, anarchists, vegans, incest survivors, whores, direct action activists, druggies and dropouts trying desperately to take care of one another and challenge the violence of the world around us.

It’s where I first learned to call myself a faggot, to reject the terms of gay and straight normalcy. It’s also the place that has let me down the most, and that’s what I want to explore in the book—not just the annihilation of radical outsider cultures due to AIDS, gentrification and assimilation—but also the more personal story of the places where everything I’ve believed in have let me down, over and over, and what does that mean.

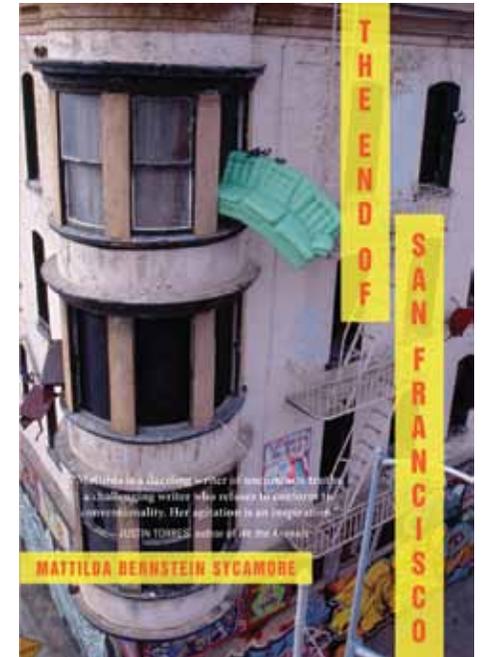
**WCT: What made you want to write about San Francisco now, and why as a memoir and not, say, as another anthology or as a work of cultural analysis?**

MBS: As an abused kid growing up in a world that wanted me to die or disappear, I needed to learn how to project a sense of invulnerability in order to survive, and in order to find others

like me. But now I think it’s vulnerability that will save me. That’s why I chose to write a memoir—but I think conventional memoir has the amazing ability to take the most complicated, multifaceted messy lives and turn them into laminated timelines.

With this book, I want to reimagine memoir as an active process of remembering, an investigation, an instigation—stylistically and structurally, as well as politically and intimately. The book is structured by emotion—writing about the places and people and moments in connection and disconnection that have made and unmade me, that’s what drives the narrative, rather than a conventional plot structure. I think that allows for more emotional intimacy.

**Bernstein Sycamore will be appearing at Women and Children First, at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 7. A full schedule of her Fall Tour can be found at her website. <http://www.mattildabernsteinsycamore.com/events.html>.**





## Bountiful Eatery

BY MEGHAN STREIT

Grabbing a healthy bite on the go in Boystown got a lot easier (and tastier) in July. That's when **Bountiful Eatery** moved into a storefront on Broadway Ave.

At first glance, the restaurant appears to be your typical wraps/salads/smoothie kind of café. It's bright and well lit, you order at the counter, and the food is affordable—but that is where Bountiful's similarities to a typical fast food joint end. For starters, the entire menu is gluten-free and many of the offerings are vegan. What's more, most of the eats are surprisingly low-cal, with several coming in around 300 calories. And, this is one place where carnivores and vegans can peacefully co-exist. Vegans can delight in things like portabella kale salad with almonds and cranberries while meat eaters chow down on bison burgers.

I thought I would be at risk for leaving hungry because everything on the menu sounded so darn healthy, so I was pleasantly surprised by how tasty and filling the food was. The turkey, bacon and avocado wrap was simple but delicious. Juicy strips of turkey, a couple of crisp pieces of turkey bacon and the better part of a whole avocado are drizzled in a tangy lime dressing and stuffed in a way-above-average pita. The pita elevated this wrap into repeat-order territory. It was soft and warm, tasted fresh baked and was dusted with just the right amount of sea salt. This pita defies the stereotype that gluten-free bread products are dry or flavorless.

For an even heartier meal in the same delicious pita, the bison burger is a solid option. The dense meat is seasoned nicely and topped with a cool, creamy yogurt sauce. Like many of the other selections, the bison burger comes with a heaping handful of fresh spinach—another reminder that you're not at a greasy fast-food spot.

Light options include a rotating selection of daily soups and several protein-packed salads. I tried the chicken rice soup, which was filling and flavorful, but not quite as memorable as some of the other items I sampled. The quinoa salad is perfect for a small lunch or as a side dish to accompany a wrap or burger. The quinoa is



Bountiful Eatery's turkey, bacon and avocado wrap. Photo by Meghan Streit

light and fluffy, seasoned with good stuff like olive oil, lemon, mint and scallions. Clean living on a plate! The black bean salad was another straightforward but tasty dish. Chipotle and cilantro give the cold beans and tomatoes some heat. My favorite salad was the chickpea. Tiny bits of dried apricots and raisins lend a subtle

sweetness that is balanced by paprika, mint and cumin.

If you're in a salad kind of mood, you can order a trio of the quinoa, black bean and chickpea salads. The three colorful salads are served atop a mound of fresh spinach, making this a plate that will keep you full for hours.

You can round out your meal with a gluten-free sweets like cupcakes and brownies from specialty bakeries. Or, opt for a fresh smoothie. Make your own from a selection of fruits, milks and supplements like protein or calorie burner or opt for one of the house specialties. The peanut butter and banana muscle builder had good flavor and a nice milkshake-like consistency. But, for almost 500 calories, I'll take a cupcake any day.

If I worked or lived near Bountiful, I'd be a regular for light lunches and low-calorie takeout dinners. It's a straightforward place that takes the guesswork out of healthy eating and does it without making you feel like you are dieting or missing out.

**Bountiful Eatery is located at 3312 N. Broadway Ave.; call 773-687-9811 or visit [www.bountifuleatery.com](http://www.bountifuleatery.com).**

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

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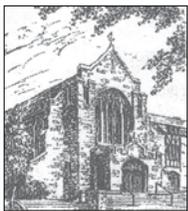


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# CALENDAR

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## Wed., Oct. 2

**Gay Liberation Network meeting** Chicago's multi-issue, LGBT direct action group calling attention to equality and liberation for LGBTs, against America's wars, supporting labor and immigrant rights, and more. 7pm-9pm, 312-543-7552, Berger Park Cultural Center, 6205 N. Sheridan Rd., Chicago, <http://www.gayliberation.net>

**Signs of Life** Signs of Life, a new drama with music based on the true story of the Czech ghetto Theresienstadt, tells one of the most fascinating and least known stories of the Holocaust. 8pm-10pm, 773.871.3000, Victory Gardens Theater, 2433 N Lincoln Ave., <http://www.signsoflifethemusical.com>

**Anne Alt of Women Bike Chicago, Commuting and Bikes on Transit.** Learn how to commute on your bike: We'll show you what to wear, how to carry things, and what to do about the weather. We'll even go over getting your bike on a bus or train to shorten the ride. Women Bike Chicago is a grass-roots organization founded in 2012 made up of women who love to bicycle and to encourage other women to bicycle. Refreshments will be served. 7:30 pm Women and Children First Books, 5233 N Clark St.; 773-769-9299

## Thursday, Oct. 3

**15,000 Reasons to Celebrate The Human Rights Campaign (HRC)** recognizes Little City as the first and only foster care and adoption agency in Illinois to obtain cultural competence in serving the LGBT community. 5:30pm-9pm, 1-855-WeFoster, NBC5 Chicago, 454 N Columbus Dr., <http://www.littlecity.org/celebratefoster>

**Free BYOB Comedy: Congrats on Your Success** Entertainment from diverse, literate performers in a free, BYOB comedy show at Uncharted Books in Logan Square every 1st Thursday of the month. 7pm-9pm, 312-508-8006, Uncharted Book, 2630 N. Milwaukee Ave., <https://www.facebook.com/events/242309519242879/>

**Lauren Grodstein , author The Explanation for Everything.** A student at Exton Reed College in New Jersey asks biologist Andy Waite to direct her independent study in intelligent design. This project is the catalyst for Andy's life's collapse, as he gradually loses sight of his personal and professional boundaries, as well as his moral grounding. With the possibility of faith comes responsibility and guilt—the very things that Andy has sidestepped for years. 7:30 pm Women and Children First

Books, 5233 N Clark St., 773-769-9299

**Local Artist Series** featuring the work of Valerie Booth. 6-8 pm. Bridgeview Bank, Andersonville, 5117 N. Clark St..

## Friday, Oct. 4

**Hofbräuhaus Chicago**, the first and only German micro-brewery, beer hall and restaurant in the Chicago area, will celebrate its first annual Oktoberfest through Oct. 31. 11am-11pm, MB Financial Park, 5500 Park Place Rosemont, <http://www.hofbrauhauschicago.com>

**Raisin in the Sun** by Lorraine Hansberry An array of acclaimed artists from Chicago and beyond tell the powerful story of an African-American family living in a crowded apartment on Chicago's South Side during the 1950s. Previews Aug. 20-25. Through November 17. 8pm, TimeLine Theatre, 615 W. Wellington Ave., <http://timelinetheatre.com>

**The Mystery of Irma Vep** Combines high camp with Gothic horror making this complex melodrama a satirical and vampirical delight. Two men, ten characters, and over forty costume changes in one of queer theatre's most beloved productions. 8pm-10pm, 847-424-0089, Piccolo Theatre, <http://www.piccolotheatre.com>

**Sweet & Sour Richfield starring Miss Richfield 1981** She's at it again! Miss Richfield 1981 stars in Sweet & Sour Richfield for two nights only October 4-5 at Hydrate Nightclub; 8pm-11pm, Hydrate Nightclub, 3458 N. Halsted St., <http://www.hydratechicago.com>; Tickets: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/466482>

**Don't Blink: A Doctor Who Burlesque** Travel through time and space with The Doctor and his companion, Cort, in their silliest, sexiest and most "lady-like" adventure yet. \$28-35. 9pm-10pm, 773-598-4549, Gorilla Tango Burlesque, 1919 N. Milwaukee Ave., <http://www.gorillatango.com/who>

## Saturday, Oct. 5

**Campus Pride LGBT-Friendly College Fair** Campus Pride and Roosevelt University invite you to attend the Midwest LGBT-Friendly College Fair on October 5 at Roosevelt's downtown Chicago Campus. LGBT and ally prospective students can now ask their LGBT questions and get answers while searching for their best college choice. 11:30am-2pm, Roosevelt University 430 S. Michigan Ave., <http://gopride.com/z90p>

**#GodHatesHashtags** GayCo Productions

presents the brand new sketch comedy show: a searingly silly look at the evolving gay community, exploring the burning questions; is Stockholm syndrome necessarily a BAD thing; is there more to the twerkers of Halsted than meets the eye; and with all the recent advancements in gay rights, how will we handle our happily ever after? 7:30pm-8:30pm, Donny's Skybox at the Second City, <http://gayco.com/godhateshashtags>

**CAKE Chicago-7 Yr. Anniversary Queer Arts Showcase** LGBTQ Arts Showcase featuring, Tamale Sepp, Eli & The No Good, and Rm:509; 9pm, 773-274-5463, Red Line Tap, 7006 N Glenwood Ave., <http://www.facebook.com/cakechicago>

**Raise Your Glass Cabaret Show** A Song & Dance Cabaret Benefit Performance to raise money for arts education in the Chicago area through ArtReach Educational Theatre. 11pm, 773-604-1892, Maneuvers Bar, 118 E. Jefferson St., Joliet, <http://www.artreachspotlite.com>

**Boobs of the Dea:** A burlesque parody of the popular Walking Dead television series. 11:45pm, 773-598-4549, Gorilla Tango Theatre Bucktown 1919 N Milwaukee Ave., <http://www.gorillatango.com/zombies>

## Sunday, Oct. 6

**Beers, Boys, Burgers, and Beats** Who Needs A's When You Can Get B's! Beers, Boys, Burgers, and Beats at Roscoe's. 11am-11:45pm, Roscoe's Tavern, 3356 N Halsted St., <http://www.roscoes.com>

**Northalsted Sunday Funday!** North Halsted comes alive with Sunday-Funday festivities and activity. See what all of Chicago Land is enjoying. Come straight to Halsted! 11am-11pm, Halsted/Belmont to Halsted/Waveland, <http://www.northalsted.com>

**Angelina Ristorante "Gay Church" Brunch** Known in Boystown as "Gay Church" this Sunday tradition brings cute people & tasty food together! Join Zany Philip, Straight Graham, Cute Bryan, Misbehaving Mikey, Bottle-Popping Justin, Pretty Teresa, Charming Daniel, Super Model Jayson, and Benny the Harry Potter look-a-like for this loud and delicious celebration. CASH ONLY; 11am-2:30pm, Angelina Ristorante, 3561 N Broadway, <http://www.angelinaristorante.com/>

**Illinois Safe Schools Alliance Brunch 2013: On the Road** Allies and supporters celebrate the ongoing expansion of the Alliance's work, honoring those who've been instrumental in promoting safety, support and healthy development for LGBTQ youth. Sidney R. Yates Gallery. 11:30am-3pm, Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E Washington St., <http://illinoisafeschools.org>

**Scarlet's Liquid Brunch** Liquid Brunch, Chicago's post brunch party, hosted by Scarlet. Featuring \$12 bottles of champagne, complimentary cereal, cartoons on the

screens, and DJ D0LO on the decks. 1pm-5pm, Scarlet Bar, 3320 N Halsted, Chicago, <http://www.scarletbarchicago.com>

**Jazz service with Lucy Smith Quartet** Every Sunday jazz service with communion. Pre-service music begins at 3:50 pm. Validated parking, \$8, available at 900 N Michigan lot. Entrance on Walton or Rush streets. 4pm-5pm, 312.787.4570, Fourth Presbyterian Church, Michigan & Delaware, <http://www.fourthchurch.org/jazz/index.html>

## Monday, Oct. 7

**Adler LGBT immigrant forum.** The U.S. Supreme Court and DOMA's Section 3: Impact on the LGBTQ Immigrant Community/The Role of the mental health professional in the LGBTQ Immigration Process. Panel will discuss challenges and opportunities this Supreme Court ruling creates for the LGBTQ immigrant community, bi-national same-sex couples, and the increasing role of social workers and mental health professionals in assessing extreme hardship, violence against immigrants, U-Visas, etc. RSVP to [erinn.intern@affinity95.org](mailto:erinn.intern@affinity95.org). 8:30-10:30 am. Adler School's Community Hall, 17 N. Dearborn St.

**Mattilda Sycamore, author, The End of San Francisco.** Reveals the passions and perils of a life that refuses to conform to the gay/straight binary. Here is the tender, provocative, and exuberant story of the formation of one of the contemporary queer movement's most savvy and outrageous writers and spokespersons. Part memoir, part social history, and part elegy. 7:30 pm Women and Children First Books, 5233 N Clark St., 773-769-9299

**Fireside Chat with Marge Summit.** Marge Summit of His n Hers bar on the history of leather. A formal interview and question-and-answer session will be held. The event takes place from 7:30 pm to 10 pm. Hoover-Leppen Theater at Center on Halsted, located at 3656 N. Halsted St. A \$5 donation is suggested. [www.centeronhalsted.com](http://www.centeronhalsted.com)

## Tuesday, Oct. 8

**Drag Race with Frida Lay** Chicago's only amateur drag contest, hosted by Frida Lay! A hit at Roscoe's since its premier in 2000. \$300 in cash prizes! 10pm, Roscoe's Tavern, 3356 N Halsted St, <http://www.roscoes.com>

## Wed., Oct. 9

**Dolores DeLuce Booksigning** Dolores DeLuce will be appearing at Women & Children First to promote her new book; 7:30pm-9pm, 773.769.9299, Women & Children First 5233 N. Clark St., <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com/>

**Q&A Trivia w/ Kwizmaster Kirk Williamson** Join Nightspots' own Kirk Williamson as he challenges the audience with a variety of questions while bartender Jeff serves up \$5 Rokk cocktails. Get your team



## SCHOOL IS IN

### Sunday, Oct. 6

**The Illinois Safe Schools Alliance brunch will take place at the Chicago Cultural Center.**

Photo from 2012

by Melissa Wasserman

together, because the first place team receives a \$25 @mosphere certificate. Drink prizes for second and third place teams as well. 8pm-10:30pm, Atmosphere Bar, 5355 N. Clark St., <http://www.facebook.com/qatrvia>

## Thursday, Oct. 10

**Leader Luncheon 2013** The YWCA Leader Luncheon honors individuals for outstanding achievement in their chosen career fields and one leader for a commitment to racial justice. Since 1972, honoring women for their career achievements. 12pm-1:30pm, 312-762-2743, 200 North Columbus Dr., <http://gopride.com/z8yd>

**49th Chicago International Film Festival** The 49th Chicago International Film Festival will take place through Oct. 24, 2013. The oldest competitive film festival in North America, more than 150 films including short films, documentaries, feature films will be presented. 12pm, 312-683-0121, AMC River East 21, 322 E Illinois St., <http://www.chicagofilmfestival.com>

**Dining Out for Equality** Celebrate National Coming Out Day and the important and urgent work we are doing on LGBT equality by joining us at one of the participating restaurants in our 5th Annual Dining Out for Equality. Each restaurant will be donating a portion of the sales from that evening to benefit the efforts of Equality Illinois. 5pm, 773-477-7173, Participating Restaurants, <http://www.eqil.org>

**National Coming Out Day Community Worship Service.** Unity Lutheran Church of Berwyn, 6720 31st St., Berwyn. 7:30 pm. Info from [pastorboleyn@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pastorboleyn@sbcglobal.net) or [www.unityberwyn.org](http://www.unityberwyn.org)

# Celebrations

## MARRIAGE:

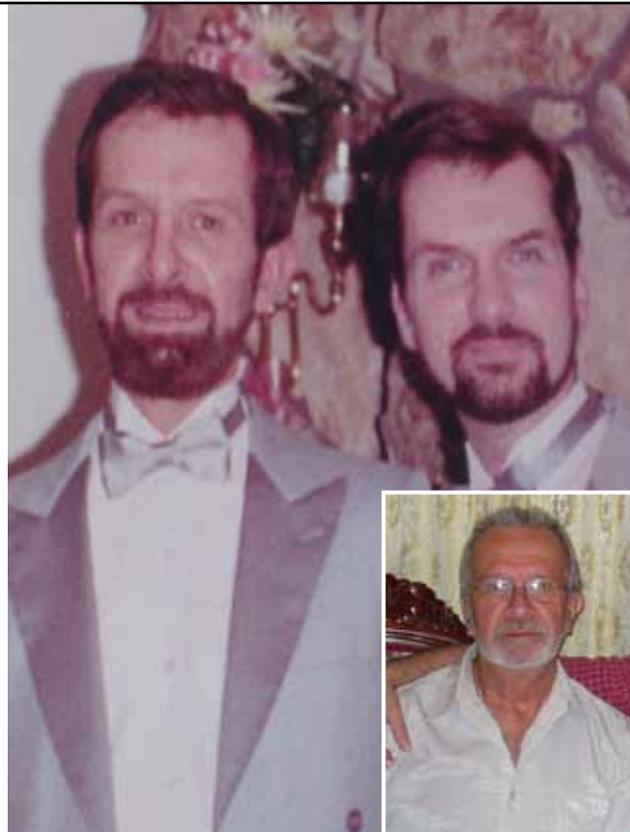
### Burick/Young

Eli Burick, a former office manager for Windy City Times, wed his longtime partner Rodney Young in a ceremony in Iowa, Sept. 13.

The couple met Dec. 7, 1985. "Later Eli would say he loved me from the moment he saw me," Young said. "I, on the other hand, was a little more difficult. We began dating one another exclusively and he eventually won my heart, but I never dreamed this was the first phase of what would become a lifelong committed relationship, a lifelong love story.

"On Nov. 29, 1986 we entered into a Sacramental Marriage in the Episcopal Church. We had a fairly small ceremony consisting of the actual marriage ceremony and the Communion service. There were better than 100 guests and we had a dinner reception, lots of hugs and good wishes. But the marriage was not 'legal.' Thus we began the second phase of our lifelong love story.

"Time moved so quickly and all of those years our one wish was for recognition of our Sacramental Marriage, primarily by the federal government of our country. That became possible after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned [a section] of DOMA and the IRS and Dept of Treasury recognized same-sex marriage no matter where the couple lived, the only requirement is that it is a legal marriage. We have been talking for months about having a civil wedding ceremony. So, we did it yesterday. We are now entitled to all the same benefits and obligations as heterosexual married couples. And we have now begun the third phase of our lifelong love story as two legally married men. We have no idea where phase three will take us, but we know we are making the journey together and if this part of the journey is as wonderful as the first 28 years (and we know it will be), then it's going to be a hell of a wonderful ride!"



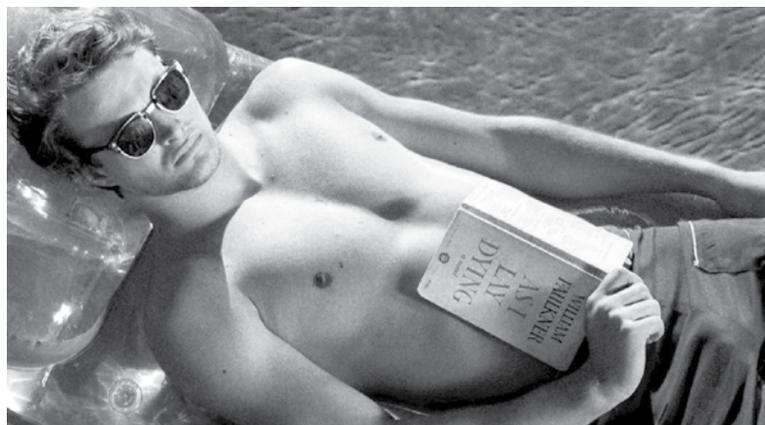
Rodney Young (left) and Eli Burick.



# BILLY MASTERS

"I know tons of celebrities that are in the closet right now. But it's up to them to decide if they want to come out, and I will support whatever decision they make."—Lance Bass answers Bethenny Frankel's question if he would lie for a celebrity who was gay and in the closet. Let the guessing begin.

What would you do if you met your celebrity crush? Probably something embarrassing or inappropriate. That's what I was thinking when I read about a soccer fan in Miami who ran onto the field to hug the very sexy Cristiano Ronaldo. Clearly he was an overexcited fan ... wearing a Ronaldo shirt. Still, we cannot have just anyone hopping fences and tackling hot men. That would lead to anarchy, although it does give one pause. What I didn't know was that the rabid fan was a young Albanian attending Palm Beach State Community College. (We Albanians don't shoot too high.) After being escorted out of the game, he was arrested and charged with trespassing and disorderly conduct. This could lead to the 19-year-old losing his student visa and being deported. Once Cristiano heard this,



James Preston has caused a stir portraying the title icon in *Joshua Tree, 1951: A Portrait of James Dean*.

of a fan to take photos during a play, they're probably getting Twitter alerts on their phone. Alas, those hopes were thwarted when the snaps continued in the third act. By then, Manganiello had enough. He stopped in mid-sentence and said, "Can you stop with the camera? You have no idea how distracting it is!" The question remains—where are those photos? Until they surface, we'll post the mega-hot official shots on our website.

Matt Bomer has had quite a ride since coming out. From *White Collar* to *Magic Mike* to *The Normal Heart* (where he plays Felix), he's been busy, busy, busy. Some people are annoyed that he wasn't cast in the film adaptation of *50 Shades of Grey*. However, I suspect the phrase "he dodged a bullet" will turn out to be more than just a little apt. Plus, it frees him to tackle a far more challenging and appropriate project. Bomer has been cast as the lead in a biopic about screen legend Montgomery Clift. *Monty Clift* focuses specifically on the actor's relationship with Elizabeth Taylor from when they were both cast in *A Place in the Sun* until his death in

he wrote a letter to the Miami-Dade state's attorney's office asking it to drop the charges: "I understand your position and the importance of enforcing rules and law. However, I respectfully request that you and your office reconsider this decision and dismiss the two criminal charges this young man faces."

In between playing soccer and helping Albanians, Cristiano Ronaldo only wants to make his fans happy. What better way than to start an underwear line ... and to be his own model. We just got our hands on some advance marketing photos and let's just say that they may inspire many more of you to risk deportation and tackle him. The risqué and impressive shots can be found on [BillyMasters.com](http://BillyMasters.com).

Far more fascinating to me is the story about Alabama federal circuit judge Bill Pryor. If rumors are to be believed (and who am I to doubt the veracity of a rumor), the judge posed nude and aroused while he was a student at Northeast Louisiana University. And what makes the story even better is that he is a very conservative right-wing judge. While His Honor has denied the photos are of him, one Republican colleague was shown the explicit pics and was quoted as saying, "Holy cow, that's Bill Pryor!" You can judge for yourself on [BillyMasters.com](http://BillyMasters.com).

As I always tell you, photos can get people in trouble. This next story is about someone who was actually taking photos ... during a performance of *A Streetcar Named Desire* at Yale University. Normally, a college run of a Tennessee Williams play wouldn't attract any attention, but normally they aren't starring Joe Manganiello. During the opening week of the Yale Rep production, snaps were being taken during the first two acts, prompting the *True Blood* hunk to post the following on Twitter: "Dear person taking pictures during our show tonight... The ushers are going to be looking for you and you will be thrown out ... you are insanely distracting to all of the actors onstage and incredibly rude. If you read this, please leave and don't come back." The hope was if someone was enough

1966. Production is scheduled to begin in early 2014.

Our "Ask Billy" question is about someone else who was close to Elizabeth Taylor. Darren in Chicago asks, "What can you tell me about this new DVD about James Dean? I'm told it really focuses on his gay life. True?"

Did you know that James Dean was quite in awe of Clift? Reportedly, Jimmy would call Monty late at night just to hear his voice. And yet when I do that, people call me a stalker. But, I digress. I'm assuming you're referring to *Joshua Tree, 1951: A Portrait of James Dean*. Certainly this newly released DVD (the film did well on the festival circuit) does not shy away from the alleged gay aspects of his life. At one point Jimmy is fucked by a sailor on a staircase—it's hard to go wrong with material like that.

The performance by James Preston (known primarily as a model for Bruce Weber and Abercrombie) as Dean is spot-on—although not enough to erase the memory of either James Franco or Casper Van Dien. The film is really a series of vignettes—episodic in nature, but beautifully shot by writer-director Matthew Mishory. It also features some very good acting from my pals Robert Gant and David Pevsner, along with a surprise appearance by a former paramour, Edward Singletary. You can see some of the more explicit scenes on [BillyMasters.com](http://BillyMasters.com).

When I'm sharing lovers with James Dean, it's definitely time to end yet another column. And it's a perfect place to stop since I'm not sure I could top myself—although I wouldn't be the first one to try! In the meantime, you can try checking out [www.BillyMasters.com](http://www.BillyMasters.com)—the site that's always focused on bringing you as much pleasure as possible. If you've got something you want me to look into, send a note to [Billy@BillyMasters.com](mailto:Billy@BillyMasters.com) and I promise to get back to you before someone tries peddling nude photos of Ruth Bader Ginsburg (admittedly, a limited market). Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

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## 'Nine for IX DVD Gift Set' out Oct. 15

ESPN Home Entertainment, in conjunction with Team Marketing, announced they will release the Nine for IX DVD Gift Set Oct. 15 for \$29.95.

Inspired by the 40th anniversary of Title IX—the law which banned sex discrimination in college athletics and created opportunities for countless female athletes—the Nine for IX series consists of nine feature documentaries highlighting athletes and moments that have impacted the culture of female sports in the last 40 years.

Films in the collection include Venus Vs. (about tennis player Venus Williams), Pat XO (about former coach Pat Summit), The Diplomat (figure skater Katarina Witt), Runner (Mary Decker), No Limits (free diver Audrey Mestre), Branded (tennis player Anna Kournikova), Let Them Wear Towels (female sports reporters), Swoopes (Sheryl Swoopes), The '99ers (the '99

U.S. women's soccer team), Coach (C. Vivian Stringer) and Abby Head On (soccer player Abby Wambach).

## Proud to Run seeks 2014 beneficiaries

Proud To Run, which comprises Chicago's Pride Weekend 5 and 10K runs, is accepting applications from organizations wishing to be considered as beneficiaries for next year.

Proud To Run's board of directors will consider applications from organizations that serve the Chicago-area LGBT community; clearly define the need or have a project with a specific timeline and budget; are community-based and -driven; and are grassroots in nature or do not receive a large part of their budget from state or federal grants.

Guidelines and application documents are available at [www.proudtorun.org](http://www.proudtorun.org) or by emailing [info@proudtorun.org](mailto:info@proudtorun.org). The deadline to submit an application is Nov. 30.

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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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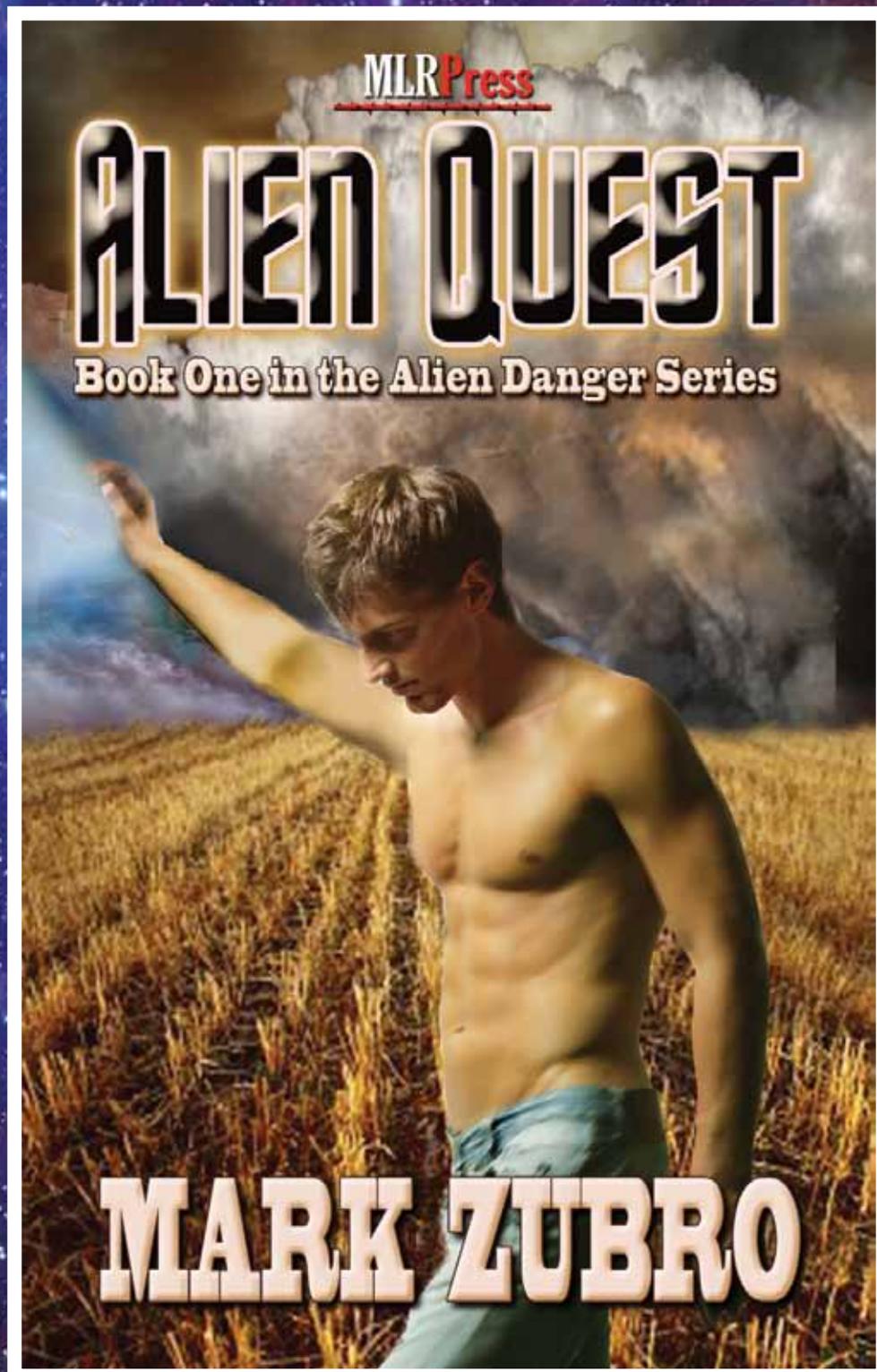
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