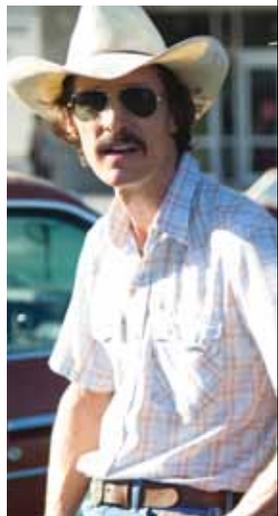




FILM DIRECTOR
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CRY'
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WCT'S WEDDING
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Marriage bill goes to Gov

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Loud cheers erupted through the state capitol Tuesday as the Illinois House voted 61-54 to enact the Religious Freedom and Marriage Equality Act, which could make Illinois the 15th state to get same-sex marriage equality.

Marriages can begin June 1, 2014.

State Rep. Greg Harris made good on a promise he made last spring, to return in a veto session and to call for a vote. Rumors spread throughout the Capitol that the vote might happen Tuesday afternoon—Harris had filed an amendment early in the day that would address timing complications about SB10's effective date, which to many signaled that he was ready.

Before the vote was called, Harris said that the political landscape had changed since the spring, given

the U.S. Supreme Court's decision striking many of the tenets of the Defense of Marriage Act.

Since the decision came down, Harris said, LGBT Illinoisans had moved "from a second class to a third class status," since marriage rights were now available in the eyes of the federal government. If couples get married out of the state "they lose rights when they return to Illinois," Harris said.

Turn to page 8



Above: Rep. Harris with Gov. Quinn in Quinn's office celebrating the House vote, with a Lincoln portrait behind. Photo by Tracy Baim. Below: The board showing the 61-54 vote.



Y-61 N-54 P-2 NV-1 4:02
RDG 3 PG 3
SENATE BILLS
SB 10 HARRIS, G-DUNKIN
JAKOBSSON-MITCHELL, C
CIVIL LAW-TECH

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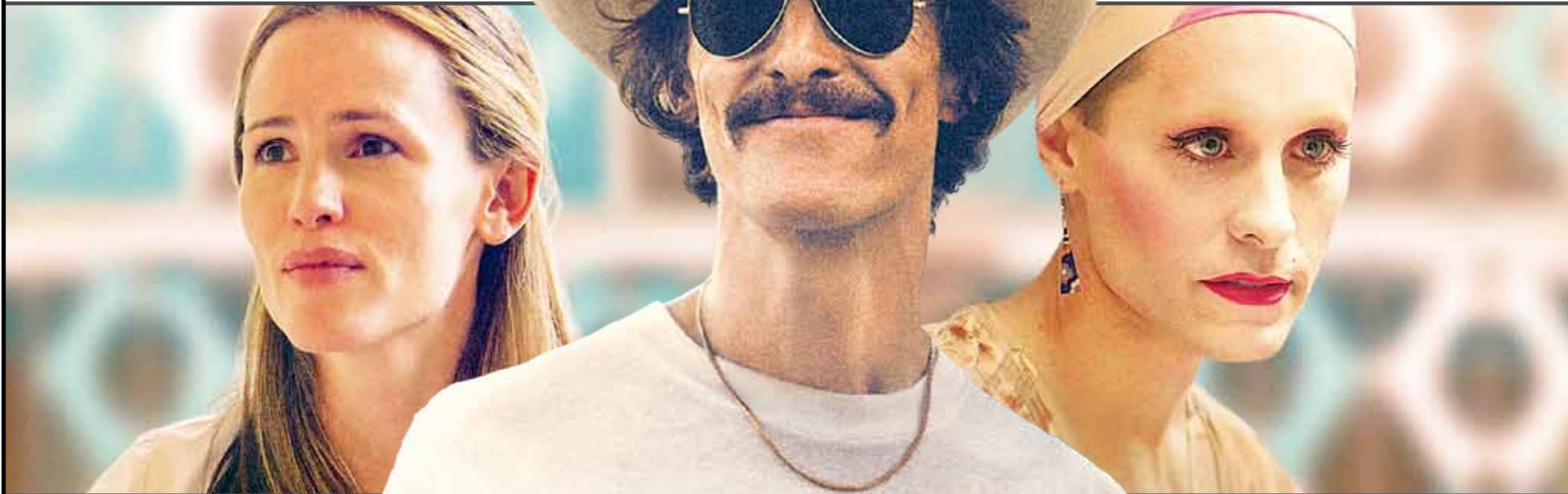
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Photos on cover (left, from top): Publicity photo of Kimberly Peirce by Jasmine McGlade; photo of Marcia Hill by Ross Forman; image of Matthew McConaughey in Dallas Buyers Club by Anne Marie Fox/Focus Features; Joel Derfner publicity photo

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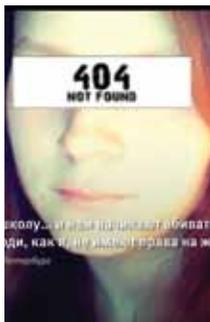
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POLITICAL PARTY
State Rep. Kelly Cassidy held an event that was part petition drive, part karaoke.
Photo by Vern Hester



Bent Nights went to Redmoon Theater's Boneshaker and remembers Lou Reed (above).
Photo by Vern Hester



WCT reports on a Russian film being made about LGBTQ youth.

DATE NIGHT
Robert Kingett discusses dating as a vision-impaired gay man.

GETTING PERSONAL
Pro-choice group Personal PAC held its annual luncheon—and this one featured Kirsten Gillibrand from New York.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT
Find out the latest about Kerry Washington, Madonna and Laverne Cox.

MONAE, MONAE



Pop Making Sense discusses Donna Summer and Janelle Monae (above), among others.

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NEXT LECTURE

SAT., DEC. 7, 2013, 11AM-1PM
OWEN DANIEL-McCARTER**Constitutional Law as it Applies to Transgender Prisoners**

Owen Daniel-McCarter is a transgender activist and attorney. He is co-founder and collective member of the Transformative Justice Law Project of Illinois which provides free, holistic, and gender-affirming legal advocacy to criminalized transgender and gender non-conforming people in Chicago and throughout Illinois prisons.

UPCOMING LECTURES

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

SAT., 5/3/14

Timothy Stewart-Winter
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Springfield for Windy
City Times
by Kate Sosin and
Matt Mills

Open To Thinking

BY NICK PATRICCA

Mary In Islam:
An Invitation to Dialogue

Mary, the mother of Jesus, enjoys a unique status in the Quran where she (as Maryam or Miriam in Arabic, Aramaic and Hebrew), the mother of Isa (Arabic for Jesus) is mentioned 34 times, more times than she is cited in the New Testament. Mary is the only woman to have a Surah (chapter) of the Quran named after her: Surah 19 'Maryam.' In all of the Quran, Mary is the only woman to be named by her personal name. All other women, no matter how important they may be, even the wives and daughters of Muhammad, are named by their social position in a male hierarchy, not by their proper name.

The Quran, which was written in the 7th century of our common era, proclaims that Mary was conceived without sin (the Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception), remained a virgin when she conceived Jesus through the intervention of God (the Catholic doctrines of Perpetual Virgin-

ets Aaron, Moses, and Miriam, as the suffering mother (Sufi tradition) or the suffering servant (Sunni tradition).

The prophetic mission of Mary in the Quran makes manifest the true meaning of jihad, of struggle, as a spiritual 'combat' with one's self, as essentially a spiritual process requiring compassionate action toward one's neighbors and one's self. The Quran's image of Mary taps the same sources of prophecy that create the image of Mary presented in the Magnificat of Christian Scriptures: they show us a non-violent spiritual struggle, one based in our common humanity as well as in our shared faith traditions.

The importance of Mary to Islam creates a possible common ground for establishing an ongoing Muslim/Catholic dialogue. Today, polarization and extremism seem to have triumphed in all spheres of our global civilization. In this fractured and hostile climate, it

would be good for us to remember what we share in common in our history and civilization and values. I am proposing that Mary, the mother of Jesus, can be a most fruitful starting point for Catholic/Muslim, then Christian/Muslim, then Jewish/Christian/Muslim dialogue creating a sacred triptych portrait of the Jewish Mary, the Christian Mary, the Islamic Mary as the revelation of a compassionate

"I am proposing that Mary, the mother of Jesus, can be a most fruitful starting point for Catholic/Muslim, then Christian/Muslim, then Jewish/Christian/Muslim dialogue"

ity of Mary and of the Virgin Birth of Jesus), and was assumed into heaven (the Catholic doctrine of the Assumption). The Immaculate Conception was not defined as a doctrine of the Catholic Church until 08 December 1854; the Assumption was not defined until 01 November 1950.

To my mind, the most important affirmation of Mary in the Quran is the proclamation of her office as prophet. The Quran affirms that by her perfect 'submission' to God Mary becomes for all peoples for all times the example of how to be the faithful servant.

Too often the Abrahamic tradition (shared by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam as the foundation of their monotheistic faith) promotes violent images of God, images that emphasize judgment, punishment, and irrational sacrifice, such as the archetypal image of Abraham sacrificing his son Isaac. In counter-balance to these violent masculine images, the Quran presents Mary, a direct descendant of the proph-

God rooted in the prophetic tradition of Miriam and other women of our common biblical sources.

Of course, this dialogue has already begun among the faithful, among those who follow their hearts and find common ground in their respect for Mary. In Turkey, there is a Catholic and Muslim shrine, a holy place of pilgrimage for both faith traditions: the House of the Virgin Mary (In Turkish: Meryem ana or Meryem Ana Evi, "Mother Mary's House"). It is located on Mt. Koresos, near the city of Ephesus.

And, in our own backyard, we have Mosque Maryam, a mosque of the Nation of Islam, located at 7351 South Stony Island Avenue.

Whether we are Christian or Muslim or Jew or agnostic does not matter. What matters is that we see in these powerful images of Mary paths to truth, reconciliation, and friendship.

Perhaps Mary, the mother of Jesus, can assist us on this path.

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

ENDA clears hurdle in U.S. Senate

BY LISA KEEN
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

The U.S. Senate invoked a motion for cloture Nov. 4, 61-30, just one vote more than the 60 it needed to force the chamber to take up debate and consideration of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA).

While it was not clear when the debate would begin, the bill's passage seems almost certain, given that the procedural vote drew at least eight Republicans to join Democrats and Independents to support its movement to the floor.

The bill seeks to prohibit negative employment actions against employees or applicants due to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. (To watch Senate action tonight, go to C-SPAN 2 or c-span.org.)

Even before the Senate convened, The Hill newspaper predicted ENDA would move to the floor thanks to an announcement Monday morning by Republican Senator Dean Heller of Nevada that he would support the measure.

But House Speaker John Boehner also made clear Nov. 4 that he had no intention of allowing ENDA to the House floor. Through a spokesman, he said ENDA would increase "frivolous litigation and cost American jobs." The comments were not a surprise; Boehner has said previously that "There are ample laws already in place" to deal with workplace discrimination.

President Obama's Organizing for America group says there are 29 states where there are no laws protecting employees from discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. They include Alaska, Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

In addition to his own essay in support of ENDA, published Nov. 3 at huffingtonpost.com, President Obama's organization sent out an e-mail to its supporters asking them to sign a petition for the measure.

Senate Majority Leader Reid said the existing "patchwork" of state laws prohibiting sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination is not good enough. He said House Speaker Boehner should take his cue from 56 percent of Republicans nationally who do support ENDA. And 81 percent of all Americans approve the measure.

Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) has championed the bill in his Senate Committee on Health, Educa-

tion, Labor & Pensions (HELP). Harkin said more than 56 percent of Americans live in states that give "no recourse under law" for discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Harkin credited Senate sponsor Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) and Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) for mustering the 60 votes the bill needs to pass the motion to put it on the floor and championing it. Harkin likened consideration of ENDA to that of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act.

"Here we are taking one more step to make the American family more inclusive," said an enthusiastic Harkin. "...This is an historic step for the United States Senate to do today."

Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.), the legislative body's only openly LGBT member, offered remarks before the cloture vote. She noted that Wisconsin, 20 states, and the District of Columbia have laws that prohibit discrimination against gays and lesbians but that "in over two dozen states it is legal to discriminate against LGBT employees."

"That is simply wrong," said Baldwin, "and this legislation seeks to right that wrong."

Before the Nov. 4 vote, the Senate mustered 60 votes for 71 percent of the cloture motions it has faced this year. It failed to pass two such motions (on judicial nominees) last week.

Twenty-five Republicans voted for a cloture motion that allowed the Senate to pass a continuing resolution to fund the government without defunding the Affordable Care Act.

ENDA got its first and only U.S. Senate vote in 1996, when it failed 49 to 50 (one senator had to be out of town on an emergency). The Republicans held a four-vote majority.

It has passed the House one time, in September 2007, on a vote of 235 to 184. Democrats had a 35-vote majority at the time.

The text of this year's bill is the same as it was in 2011, covering both sexual orientation and gender identity. The bill also makes clear that employers may require employees to adhere to "reasonable dress or grooming standards ... provided that the employer permits any employee who has undergone gender transition prior to the time of employment, and any employee who has notified the employer that the employee has undergone or is undergoing gender transition after the time of employment, to adhere to the same dress or grooming standards as apply for the gender to which the employee has transitioned or is transitioning."

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Pride House seeks partners for events at Winter Olympics

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Pride House International (PHI), on Oct. 29, launched its efforts to partner with national houses at the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games to create a network of venues "allowing for the promotion of the Olympic principle of sport for all," according to a statement. As such, PHI is calling on supporters to contact their National Olympic Committees asking them to host Pride House events.

Pride House founder Dean Nelson said, "We imagined a Pride House that would dare to make public the awareness of homophobia and transphobia in sport. It would be a safe venue for athletes, support staff and spectators to participate at the Olympics with authentic connections that celebrated our diversity through sports and friendships. ... After the success at the 2010 Winter Olympics, we saw Pride Houses activated at the UEFA Euro Football Championship and the London Olympics in 2012, and plans are underway for Pride Houses at the 2014 FIFA World Cup, the 2014 Commonwealth Games, the 2015 Pan Am Games, and the 2016 Summer Olympics."

Russian authorities have rejected attempts to create a Pride House at Sochi. Lou Englefield, PHI coordinator, added, "Various National Olympic Committees traditionally create a venue to promote their national teams and offer hospitality for officials, athletes, and fans. We are in discussions with a few such national houses for them to offer one or more days or evenings of programming in line with the tradition of past Pride Houses."

PHI is now seeking funding from corporate

and non-profit entities to allow the project to take place.

"We think the greatest impact for Pride House events in Sochi is ensured by multiplying a presence in national houses," Englefield said. "Our goal is for there to be a Pride House event somewhere in Sochi every day of the Games. There are significant logistics challenges, including shipment and transfer of materials, organizing panels and talks and film screenings, and so on."

For more information, visit www.pride-houseinternational.org.

World news

An Australian health organization is backing Intersex Awareness Day, according to Gay Star News. The National LGBTI Health Alliance—a coalition of organizations across Australia that work toward the improvement of health services for LGBTI people—has publicly shown support for the day, which sees intersex activists from across the world raise awareness of important issues that affect intersex people. Intersex Awareness Day (Oct. 26) started in 1996.

Soaring rent is forcing London's only lesbian bar, Candy Bar, to close its doors after nearly 20 years, according to SheWired.com. On Oct. 21, Candy Bar, London's only bar primarily catering to lesbians, announced it will shut down for good in January 2014. Since Kim Lucas opened the establishment in 1996, Candy Bar has gone through several owners, but remained the go-to place for lesbians in the Soho district of London to meet and hang out with other women.

Holocaust museum hosting forums on bias, hate speech

The Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center is hosting various events in December.

One is a Pfeffer Family Forum, "Anti-Semitism and Homophobia in Nazi Germany." It will take place Thursday, Dec. 5, 6-8 p.m., at the museum, located at 9603 Woods Dr., Skokie.

Another forum, "Do Words Kill? Hate Speech, Propaganda and Incitement to Genocide," will take place Thursday, Dec. 12, at 6:30 p.m.

Other events include screenings/discussions involving the films Mrs. Miniver (Dec. 8; 1-3:30 p.m.) and Skokie: Invaded, But Not Conquered (Dec. 15; 2-3:30 p.m.).

Visit www.ilholocaustmuseum.org/events.

National news

Mayoral contests in Seattle and Houston are being watched closely by LGBT advocates because the outcome Nov. 5 could be the election and re-election of openly gay mayors in two prominent U.S. cities. The Washington Blade reported. In Seattle, Washington State Sen. Ed Murray is in a strong position to unseat incumbent Mayor Mike McGinn to become that city's first openly gay mayor. In Houston, most consider incumbent Mayor Annise Parker, an out lesbian, as the frontrunner in a nine-candidate race.

More than two years after playing an influential role in the Obama administration's repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," former U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has been named president-elect of the Boy Scouts of America, according to The Huffington Post. The Boy Scouts voted in May to approve a resolution removing any ban on members based on sexual orientation alone, although gay Scout leaders are still prohibited.

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EQIL donating early to marriage backers in tough districts

BY KATE SOSIN

Ron Sandack, Jason Barickman, Mike Smiddy and Ken Dunkin. Those are the names of Illinois lawmakers whose support for same-sex marriage may have cost them politically. Those are also candidates accepting money from the Equality Illinois Political Action Committee (EQIL PAC) early.

For the first time in its history, the EQIL PAC has endorsed a handful of candidates early, an effort to support Republicans and other lawmakers whose support for equal marriage may have thrown an extra hurdle in their re-election bids next year.

Randy Hannig, policy director of Equality Illinois, said the PAC is backing a small number of candidates this fall in an effort to support the passage of equal marriage legislation.

The PAC typically shells out endorsements and cash in February, after filing deadlines, Hannig noted.

"We're just getting started in terms of our PAC fundraising," said Hannig.

But for Republicans reps like Ron Sandack and Ed Sullivan Jr., who have co-sponsored the same-sex marriage bill, the PAC is already cutting checks. Other sponsors like Toni Berrios (D-Chicago) and Cynthia Soto (D-Chicago) have also taken home early contributions.

"We really wanted to show those members that we have their backs," said Hannig.

Key supporters like Christian Mitchell and Ken Dunkin, chair of the House Black Caucus, also received early money.

Hannig said the rule this season is that sponsors or co-sponsors of the bill who said they needed support in their districts have been considered.

"If you haven't publicly declared your support for marriage equality by sponsoring or co-sponsoring the bill, the PAC board has decided not to consider giving you an early donation," Hannig said.

The exception has been Sen. Jason Barickman, whose vote for the bill, the only Republican yes



Randy Hannig of Equality Illinois. Photo by Kate Sosin

vote, shocked LGBT leaders. Hannig said Barickman put himself on-record, meriting a contribution. EQIL gave Barickman \$5,000.

The early contributions come after an ambitious fundraising commitment by Equality Illinois, which pledged to put \$500,000 toward the campaign to pass equal marriage legislation. Half of that money is expected to go to education and outreach for the organization, while the other half will be funneled through the PAC side.

A list 2013 of EQIL contributions according to the Illinois Board of Elections is as follows (with some candidates getting multiple donations):

Friends of Jason Barickman: \$5,000
 Citizens for Sullivan: \$5,250
 Mike Smiddy for State Representative: \$5,000
 Citizens to Elect Ron Sandack: \$5,750
 Friends of Ken Dunkin: \$5,000
 Friends of Christian Mitchell: \$5,000
 Citizens for Maria A. Berrios: \$5,000
 Citizens to Elect Ron Sandack: \$5,000
 Citizens for Sullivan: \$5,000
 Citizens for Cynthia Soto: \$5,000



Steven White and Matt McCrea. Photo courtesy of Lambda Legal

Lambda sues cab company over gay-kiss fiasco

BY KATE SOSIN

Lambda Legal has filed suit against a Chicago-based cab company after one of its drivers allegedly ejected a gay couple for kissing in May.

Sun Taxi and Associates has been hit with an Illinois Department of Human Rights complaint over the May 30 incident.

Steven White and Matt McCrea made headlines in June when they alleged that driver Jama Anshur ejected them from his cab late at night on a trip back from O'Hare Airport.

The couple previously told Windy City Times that after they exchanged a peck, Anshur pulled over on the side of the Kennedy Expressway and told them to get out in the rain.

"I was in shock, and I was like, 'We're not getting out here,'" McCrea said. "I was not going to get out on the expressway, and I made that explicit to him."

The complaint accuses Anshur of pulling back into the expressway and driving erratically before pulling off at the Cumberland exit in Park Ridge, where the couple called police and documented the incident.

The complaint alleges that Anshur violated the Illinois Human Rights Act, which guaran-

tees equal access to public accommodations regardless of sexual orientation. It seeks unspecified damages. It goes on to note that Anshur was fined \$1,540 for failing to show for a hearing before Chicago's Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection, following a complaint White and McCrea filed.

Christopher Clark, a Lambda Legal attorney representing the couple, said that since White and McCrea's story came to light, others have reported similar experiences in Chicago cabs. He hopes the case will send a message that discrimination against same-sex couples will not be tolerated in the state.

"They were put in a very scary and very dangerous situation because someone did not like that they kissed in a cab, and I will tell you this was a peck," said Clark.

Jong Lee, a manager at Sun Taxi, said he cannot comment on the case until he has had time to review the complaint. But he said that Sun terminated the driver's lease following the incident.

McCrea and White said the company never followed-up with them after the alleged incident or informed them that the driver had been released.

The two said they hope that others with similar experiences will come forward and also file complaints.

"I think we feel good to bring some attention to the issue," said White. "Because things like this are still going on, we think it's a story worth telling."



Left: Organizing for Action. Right: Lee Korty and Bert Morton, who have been together 31 years. Photos by Tracy Baim

OFA holds social security protest in Springfield

Organizing for Action-Springfield hosted a marriage equality event at the local Social Security office Nov. 4, in advance of a potential vote on Illinois marriage equality this week.

Speakers were Scott Cross of OFA; couple Buff Carmichael and Jerry Bowman, together 21 years; Lee Korty and Bert Morton, together 31 years; Linda Ryherd-Schroeder, a 10-year military veteran; Peggy Patty of the Abraham Lincoln Unitarian Universalist Congregation; and Ryan Croke, Gov. Pat Quinn's chief of staff.

See video of the event at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AmnHnJdiVms&feature=youtu.be>.

Velvet Rope owner charged in arson

Frank Elliot, 26, was arrested by Oak Park police Nov. 1 in connection with a fire that destroyed his gay bar Velvet Rope Ultra Lounge, 728 Lake St., on June 2, 2012. The fire was suspicious from the start, with Elliott alleging he was targeted in a hate crime, but other concerned it may have been motivated by an insurance claim.

Elliott was arrested at his new business, Bonsai Bar, 3503 N. Halsted in Chicago.

No one was hurt in the 2012 fire, which did damage to Velvet Lounge and neighboring businesses.

Oak Park Police Chief Rick Tanksley, in thanking local law enforcement and the state fire marshal, said: "This incident was a troubling one for our community, which prides itself on being open and welcoming to all. A hate crime just didn't make sense."

Elliott is awaiting a bond hearing. He could face up to seven years in prison for each of two counts of arson and 15 years for insurance fraud, in addition to fines of \$25,000 or more, according to Oak Park Police.

Temporary driver's license for the undocumented

Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White and state lawmakers recently announced the procedures for temporary visitor driver's licenses (TVDL) for undocumented (non-visa status) individuals.

Public Act 97-1157, which Gov. Quinn signed earlier this year, established a TVDL for undocumented individuals. The law authorized the secretary of state's office to administer the program and provided a minimum 10-month delayed effective date for implementation.

In December, non-visa status applicants will begin the process of obtaining TVDLs. Appointments are required; the secretary of state's office will begin accepting appointments Nov. 12.

For more information, visit <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/drivers/TVDL/home.html> or call 855-236-1155.

CHICAGO HUMANITIES FESTIVAL

Lesbian senator Tammy Baldwin talks historic win, Affordable Care Act

BY ROSS FORMAN

Sen. Tammy Baldwin, the first openly gay senator in U.S. history, will give an hour-long speech on Nov. 9, at the UIC Forum in Chicago (725 W. Roosevelt), reflecting on her first year in the U.S. Senate, her political career, and the state of women in government.

The Chicago Humanities Festival speech will honor the late Joanne H. Alter's pioneering work on behalf of women in social action and public service.

"I'm really, really excited," for this appearance, Baldwin said by phone in a wide-ranging, multi-subject interview in late October. "I looked at who has been involved in this lecture series in the past, including [Missouri Senator] Claire McCaskill last year; it's been an amazing lineup.

"Plus, I have a number of good friends who live and work in Chicago, including a number of Wisconsinites now in the Chicago area. It will be good to see some old friends and make some new ones while in Chicago.

"I am so thrilled, because of [Alter's] legacy, to be asked."

Hours before Baldwin talks, tennis great Martina Navratilova also will be speaking at the Chicago Humanities Festival. Baldwin tagged Navratilova as "a hero of mine."

Baldwin, 51, is the junior senator from Wisconsin, and previously served as the U.S. representative from the state's 2nd congressional district, along with three terms in the Wisconsin Assembly. She defeated former Wisconsin Gov. Tommy Thompson in the 2012 U.S. Senate election, becoming the first woman elected to represent Wisconsin in the Senate.

Being the first openly gay U.S. senator in history "means so much," she said, "I think about what it means to crash through glass ceilings.

"On the most frustrating days of work, when you feel like you're not able to push something forward or make progress, you understand that, nevertheless, you have the potential to be a role model, to be an influence on the lives of others—and that's an amazing feeling. I've always talked about my time in public service in terms of making substantive impact, and also a symbolic impact—and each has its value and importance."

—**Same-sex marriage in Illinois:** "I've been following it and I really have great hopes that [same-sex marriage] will pass in Illinois. I really



U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin.

want Wisconsin to be a marriage-equality state some day, but, in the meantime, the next best thing is to be surrounded by states that offer [same-sex marriage].

—**Government shutdown:** "It was very frustrating, enormously frustrating, and it caused real pain to people," she said. "One of the most basic things that we are elected to do is fund the government, keep it running [and] pay our bills. What we really want to be focused on in Congress and Senate is fighting for working people across this country, fighting to strengthen

the middle-class, fighting to get people back to work who have been displaced in the recession. That's what we want to spend our time on."

"I came here to do things, to fight for my constituents, fight for progress—and we were denied that opportunity during the shutdown."

—**ENDA, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act:** "By the time I get to Chicago, I hope that we will have some really encouraging news from the Senate. We are scheduled to begin our debate on ENDA on Monday, Nov. 4, [followed by] a series of votes, so yes, it's show time."

—**Affordable Care Act:** "I supported the Affordable Care Act when I was in the House, and sat on a committee that helped craft it, and it was something that I was very proud to do because, working for universal healthcare coverage has been one of my central missions as a person in public office. And I saw this as a big step forward in that direction. I am proud of a number of the things that are currently in effect, which have given new options for millions of Americans.

"I am so frustrated with the website and on-

line registration problems that they are having with healthcare.gov. I know the President is furious and that people are working around the clock to fix the problems. But those problems are not fixed yet, and the website is not yet performing at peak performance level."

Baldwin suggested other options, such as calling the 800 phone number. "We hope that people will not be deterred by the frustrating problems that they are having with the website," she said.

—**About Gay Games 9, to be held next August in Cleveland:** "I do not think that I will end up being an athlete in the Games in 2014," said Baldwin, a former Gay Games participant. "I have not played competitive volleyball since I was elected to the House of Representatives because of my travel [schedule], making it difficult for rigorous practice [schedules, attending] tournaments and weekly games. So, I think it's unlikely [that I will participate], but I will be cheering on the Wisconsin participants.

"I think the Gay Games is a wonderful sports festival."

'Retirement Post-DOMA' seminar Nov. 9

Della Monica & Associates and Ameriprise Financial are sponsoring a seminar entitled "Retirement Post-DOMA: What You Need to Know!" at The Little Goat Kitchen, 820 W. Randolph St., 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m., on Saturday, Nov. 9.

Among the issues that will be discussed are estate planning, new benefits for LGBT individuals and the identification of risks to people's financial futures.

Joseph Della Monica, Cheryl Nelson Boyd and Ray J. Koenig III are presenting the seminar.

Contact andrea.c.shay@ampf.com or call 773-880-5900 to RSVP.

Protest against anti-gay fundraiser Nov. 16

On Saturday, Nov. 16, 5:15-7 p.m., there will be a protest against a fundraiser banquet that the anti-gay organizations the Illinois Family Institute and Americans For Truth About Homosexuality are hosting.

The banquet will feature keynote speaker Sandy Rios.

The event will take place at 660 N. Ridge Ave. in Arlington Heights, Ill. Protesters will meet across the street at the Olympic Park Swim Center, 500 N. Dunton Ave. See "Protest against Anti-gay Fundraiser" on Facebook.

HRC Chicago gala Nov. 16 at Fairmont

The Chicago branch of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) will hold its annual gala Saturday, Nov. 16, at The Fairmont Hotel, 200 N. Columbus Dr.

Guests will kick off the evening with an optional VIP reception at 5 p.m., then a silent auction and general reception at 6 p.m. The dinner program will begin at 7 p.m., followed immediately by live entertainment.

HRC's 2013 Equality Award recipients will be honored. The Corporate Equality Award will be presented to Groupon. Linda Johnson Rice, Chairman of Johnson Publishing Co., will receive the Ally for Equality Award, and Rev. Dr. B. Herbert Martin, of the Progressive Community Center and The People's Church, will be honored with the Community Equality Award.

HRC President Chad Griffin will headline the dinner. Among those performing is singer Jess Godwin, an ally of the LGBT community.

Tickets are \$225-\$350; visit www.hrcchicago.org.



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BILL from cover

Many opponents of SB10 said it would result in religious organizations and institutions being forced to sanctify and affirm same-sex marriages. But Harris reminded the body that many religious institutions were eager to see marriage equality enacted.

"This legislation respects that point of view," Harris said.

"I am very happy and proud that this bill is up for a vote," said Rep. Ken Dunkin, who chairs the House Black Caucus. "I'm excited to see members take up this discussion for this bill... that would probably make us one of the most progressive states in this country."

"You know and I know that this is the right thing to do," Dunkin added.

Rep. Ann Williams said that she had been moved by multiple postcards she'd received from supporters that cited one word, "love," as the reason they supported gay marriage. "It's not often we get to discuss love on this floor," she added.

"I can't wait to push that green button," Williams said. "...I believe that this will be the most important vote that I take."

Out Rep. Sam Yingling called the issue a matter of "family values," reminding that religious institutions "have massive protections under this bill." He said nobody in the chamber could realistically fall back on religious liberties as a reason to reject SB10.

Yingling added that his constituents sent him to Springfield to represent both them and what is right for families across Illinois. "There are LGBT families in every county in this state."

Rep. Kelly Cassidy mentioned the personal stakes involved, adding that her sons have frequently faced obtrusive questions about their family, both on the playground and in the Capitol. Challenging her colleagues to pass the vote, she asked them to think of future generations.

"It is their opinion of your actions today that really matters ...You will never remember doing the right thing," Cassidy said.

Thanking Harris, Cassidy, Yingling and Ald. Deb Mell, Rep. Sara Feigenholtz said, "Equality is something we must stand up for...separate but equal is not equal. ...I know many great couples whose marriages have clearly outlasted mine."

Legislators opposed to the bill largely zeroed in the bill's address of religious freedoms, though Harris' amendment affirmed even further

that religious institutions and other organizations would not be required to any way affirm same-sex marriages.

Rep. Jeanne Ives called SB10 "the worst bill in the nation" in terms of protecting religious liberties. Additionally, she said SB10 would lead to explicit sex education in schools. Rep. Thomas Morrison said it would lead to a legitimization of polyamory.

Rep. Mary Flowers rejected the correlation between civil rights and LGBT rights many supporters drew. "This is not the issue I came down here to debate. ...This debate is a joke. What you want is for the federal government to give to you."

Many prominent supporters of marriage equality gathered for the vote. Mell and Illinois Comptroller Judy Baar Topinka were among prominent supporters who were sitting on the floor as the bill was debated. House Speaker Michael Madigan sat next to Mell for much of the session.

The Senate promptly passed the amended bill 32-21, and Gov. Quinn has said he would sign the legislation.

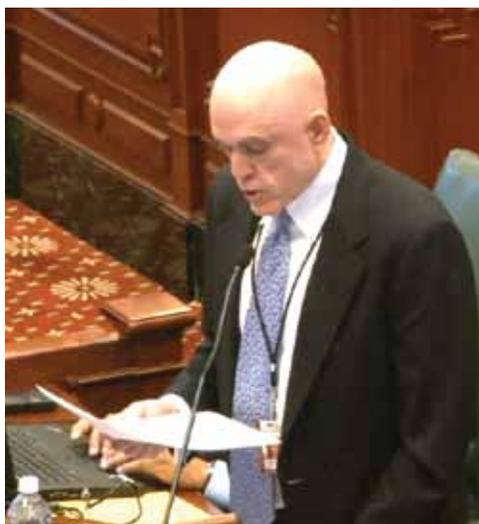
The governor was not expected to sign the bill immediately, and a special ceremony will likely be held, similar to when civil unions legislation was signed into law.

John Kohlhepp, campaign manager for Illinois Unites for Marriage, said, "Tonight, Illinois legislators made history. ...They can say for decades that they were part of history."

James Bennett of Lambda Legal said that the lawsuit his organization filed along with ACLU Illinois is now moot.

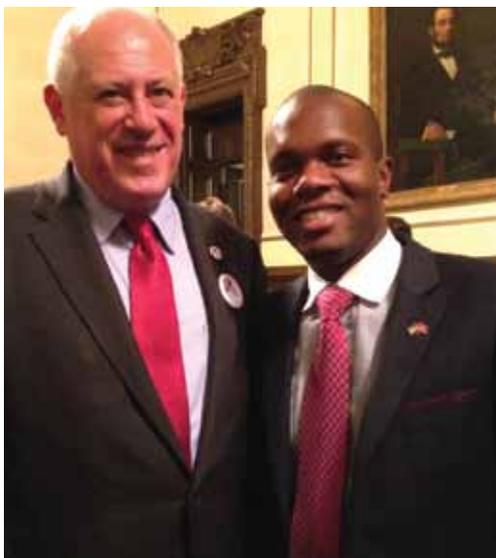
"Thousands of Illinoisans contacted their legislators about this bill," Bennett said. "I think it's great that they were able to share their stories this way, and that it led to this. I think we're a better state because of it."

"Many people worked long and hard to make marriage equality a reality for Illinois," said Kevin Boyer, one of the 13 co-chairs of the March on Springfield. "We're proud that the March helped provide months of needed energy and momentum going into the veto session. The March brought to Springfield an incredibly diverse statewide coalition of LGBT people, allies and organizations. The message of love, family, faith and equality was strong and life-affirming. We're told that our work made a difference and for that we thank not only our founder, (Windy City Times Publisher) Tracy Baim, but the thousands of Illinoisans who made it happen."



Reps speaking in favor of the bill included (clockwise from top left) Greg Harris, Kelly Cassidy, Sara Feigenholtz and Sam Yingling.

Those in opposition to the bill included (left to right) Reps. David Harris and Jeanne Ives.



Gov. Quinn poses with John Kohlhepp (left) and Marquell Smith before a portrait of Lincoln. Photos by Tracy Baim



Left: Bernard Cherkasov speaks with Rep. Kelly Cassidy.

Right: Rep Ken Dunkin (third from right) with friends celebrating marriage equality.

Photos by Tracy Baim





Diane Dodin at Prospect Animal Hospital. Photo by Sam Hamilton

Pets have long been Diane Dodin's passion

BY ROSS FORMAN

For Diane Dodin, her passion for pets dates back to her childhood, when the family pets ranged from cats and turtles to fish, gerbils and even a tarantula.

"Pets have touched me in such a way that I can't imagine doing anything else," but working with pets nowadays, Dodin said.

She grew up in north suburban Highland Park and said her dad, Jean, also was a big animal lover. "I got it from him," she said.

Dodin even took an animal-related anatomy class in high school, where they actually dissected a cat.

After graduating from Highland Park High School, Dodin earned an undergraduate degree from Delaware Valley College in Pennsylvania, earning a degree in small animal science. She then studied veterinarian medicine at Ross University in the Caribbean.

Her resume has, since 2003, labeled her as a vet—and as of Aug. 5, 2013, she became the owner of a suburban animal hospital. Dodin, who lives in Chicago's Austin neighborhood, now runs Prospect Animal Hospital in suburban Arlington Heights, a practice that has operated since 1955.

The business is a "dream come true," she said. Dodin said she considered similar business ventures in Chicago, but this was the best. She has been talking and negotiating for this business since early 2013. The purchase was completed Aug. 2.

"It's great, being able to make decisions that you want," Dodin said. "The clients here are wonderful, so supportive. They come in just to

say, 'Hi.' Everyone in the [strip] mall has been very, very supportive, too.

"The first time I walked in to look at the place, I just knew it was right."

Since purchasing, Dodin has been on a cleaning campaign. They also have added plants, new posters and more.

Prospect Animal Hospital has about 450 clients and has been in its current location for about 17 years, she said.

The 2,400-square-foot facility has two exam rooms and a procedure space plus areas for dental cleaning, surgery, x-rays, lab work and more.

"We've had some amazing stories, already," she said.

One involved a dog having routine blood work done that turned out to have some serious liver issues, which were treated. "The client was so grateful and the dog is doing well, wonderful," Dodin said.

"One of the biggest things I've noticed is these pets look great for their age. We had a 13-year-old German Shepard that looked like she was 4 years old. I couldn't believe it was 13.

"I've always wanted to do this, own a small practice. Get to know customers and their pets. Pets give so much to us, and they really don't ask for anything. Being able to help a pet when it's not able to tell you what's going on is the least we can do."

She added, "It's nice to wake up in the morning and look forward to coming to work. I'm very proud of what I'm doing."

See <http://www.prospectanimalhospital.com/> or call 847-253-8351. Also see <https://www.facebook.com/ProspectAnimalHospital>.

Kellogg business school to offer 'LGBT Preview Day'

Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management will offer an "LGBT Preview Day" Friday, Nov. 15.

The event aims to "help prospective full-time MBA students understand how Kellogg's

culture promotes diversity as a resource for effective teamwork, leadership and overall communication," according to a press release.

Attendees can, among other things, experience an MBA class and interact with members of the Gay and Lesbian Management Association.

For more info, email j-mulcahy@kellogg.northwestern.edu.

Chicago lesbian DREAM 30 detainee freed from custody

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

A rally took place to support the release of Chicago lesbian Marcela Espinoza and the other DREAM 30 detainees at Federal Plaza in Chicago Oct. 29.

Just hours after the rally, event organizer Yunuen Rodriguez said that she received a call from Espinoza who said that ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) would be releasing her and a few others; however, the rest are still in the detention center. Espinoza and five of the 10 women detainees had been on a hunger strike since Oct. 27.

Espinoza was among 30 undocumented immigrants ICE detained Sept. 30 in El Paso, Texas, as they attempted to return to their homes in the United States. Two weeks ago, the DREAM 30 were given permission to fight their cases in their home states; however, they weren't released. On Oct. 29, Rocio Hernandez Perez, one of the DREAM 30, was deported to Mexico.

"Detention centers have to go and today we are here to do a call to action to Sens. Richard Durbin and Mark Kirk to stop these deportations," said Rodriguez's friend, Jocelyn Munguia. Munguia called on rally attendees to contact Durbin's Chicago and Washington, D.C., offices. When they attempted to do so during the rally, they were immediately sent to voicemail.

"This really points to the intersection of the immigrant and LGBTQ struggle for equality and the ability to lead healthy lives wherever we think home is and not be institutionalized in detention centers," said Rodriguez. "Marcela was raised in Chicago and had to return



Jocelyn Munguia speaks at the rally. Photo by Carrie Maxwell

to Mexico to care for her grandmother and now she is asking to come back home. The life of this queer woman matters because she is queer and undocumented so she represents the oppression that these two groups face."

Espinoza's mom, Carmen Espinoza, and her cousin, Leticia Vargas, were also in attendance and they called on ICE to release Marcela.

Following the rally, Espinoza's family members and friends attempted to visit Durbin's office at Federal Plaza. They were denied entry.

See www.dreamactivist.org and www.facebook.com/NationalImmigrantYouthAlliance for more information.



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Dr. Phoenix Matthews: Helping to kick LGBTQ smoking in the butt

BY MELISSA WASSERMAN

There are the calming effect, the pleasurable feeling, the cool and rebellious look of it, the weight maintenance, and the addiction are some of the reasons given that make smoking a “bitch to quit.” While interacting with LGBTQ smokers in Howard Brown Health Center’s (HBHC) Bitch To Quit, the only LGBTQ smoking-cessation study in Chicago, Dr. Phoenix Matthews, Ph.D., hears every reason imaginable as to why participants smoke and have a difficult time quitting.

Matthews—along with Dr. Andrea King, Ph.D., from the University of Chicago—serves as the principal investigator of Bitch To Quit. A grant from the National Institute of Drug Abuse funds the study for a span of five years, allowing the group to investigate the effectiveness of smoking interventions for LGBTQ smokers. Currently in its third year, the study is an adaptation of the Respiratory Health Association’s Courage To Quit and is collaboration between University of Illinois Chicago (UIC), HBHC and University of Chicago.

“I feel really pleased we were able to bring so many stakeholders to the table to be able to offer what I believe is a really good treatment intervention for the community,” Matthews said. “I’m particularly pleased with the study because of the collaboration of LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ organizations that have helped to bring this together, but also we are moving beyond just describing a problem. We know that tobacco use is a problem among the LGBTQ communities and we’re moving in the right direction at trying to develop solutions for having people quit when they’re ready to quit.”

According to Matthews, there are very few studies in existence that include large numbers of LGBTQ smokers or that are specifically tailored to help LGBTQ smokers quit; as a result, little information is known about the smoking cessation needs of the community in terms of what strategies work best to assist community members in quitting. The mission behind the study is to be able to answer the question of what the quit rates are among LGBTQ smokers who participate in group-based and evidence-based treatments. The second question the study aims to answer which of two types of treatments are better for helping LGBTQ smokers quit.

The group-based treatment program operates within six weekly sessions where individuals participate with other LGBTQ smokers and a facilitator. In addition to the group sessions, participants receive four individualized telephone counseling sessions and access to free nicotine replacement patches. Matthews explains the pro-

gram is based on established methods for aiding smokers to quit including social support, goal setting, stress reduction, nicotine replacement, knowledge building, and strengthening motivation and belief in one’s ability to quit smoking.

As the program has the nature of a research project, a follow-up with group participants is conducted for 12 months after the completion of their group counseling sessions. Matthews said the ability to stay in touch with the participants for the entire following year is critical for understanding the long-term benefits of the treatment program. LGBTQ smokers over the age of 18 are potentially eligible for the study. Diversity within the study is desired, Matthews said, and hoping to reach a total of 400 participants in the study, recruitment is ongoing. With the same established, familiar name as HBHC’s 10-year-long clinical services program, the piece that sets this program apart is the heavy focus on research.

“At this point we’re running the intervention we developed and we won’t know until all the data is collected about the effectiveness,” said Matthews. “We are collecting data in the ways we anticipated and we’ll know at the end of the study what the findings are. We need to make sure the groups are run effectively, they’re culturally competent and we are doing everything we can to make this a good experience for the participants.”

Matthews is a licensed clinical psychologist and associate professor at UIC in the College of Nursing. Most recently, Matthews was appointed to sit on the Chicago LGBTQ Health Advisory Council. The focus of Matthews’ research is on the reduction of cancer disparities among underserved populations including racial/ethnic minorities and members of the LGBTQ communities. Examining the factors associated with physical and mental health disparities among members of marginalized social groups, Matthews has examined topics of cancer survivorship, cancer prevention, health care utilization, mental illness stigma and depression.

Hailing from a small town in Ohio, Matthews came to Chicago to complete training in psychology. In the health field since 1995, when Matthews received a Ph.D., Matthews said the thought of using psychological concepts to improve individuals’ health outcomes, whether it be working with individuals who are diagnosed with health issues such as cancer or helping individuals quit smoking, or changing other types of risk behaviors was intriguing.

“Some people want to be in the lab and I don’t want to be in the lab,” said Matthews. “I want to be in the community. I see the community as



Phoenix Matthews.

my lab. Understanding how to work in the community is the best means for doing the work that is important to me and hopefully important to the rest of the community as well.”

During graduate school—at the height of the AIDS epidemic—all work in the LGBTQ community at that time was focused on HIV and AIDS comprehension and risk reduction. As Matthews started off working in those areas, an interest in sexual minority women’s health, specifically in cancer prevention, cervical and breast cancer prevention, and cancer screening developed.

“They say all of research is ‘me’-search,” said Matthews of why this area of research was of interest. “It’s either directly in my life because it’s what I observed in my community, or in my family, or something I struggled with personally and I wanted to overcome. To do research you have to have something that instills passion. Thinking about the level of stigma and discrimination based on race and ethnicity, based on sexual orientation, based on gender presentation and try to be the person who provides the current generation and the next generation ways of getting out from under the burden of societal stigma is something that’s important to me.”

Matthews said typically people automatically think of HIV as the main and only concern in the LGBTQ community health landscape. However, smoking is a large health risk the public has not been aware of or attune to in that community. Matthews confirmed members of the LGBTQ community smoke at two to three times the rate of heterosexual individuals. The combination between HIV-positive people and smoking is also something people do not tend to know about either.

“That’s significant because it does interact with HIV in that HIV-positive individuals that also smoke have poor health outcomes directly associated with their HIV,” said Matthews. “It reduces the effectiveness of their anti-HIV medications, but it also puts them at risk for other non-HIV related illnesses such as cancer and respiratory illnesses.”

Many factors contribute to the higher rates of smoking within the LGBTQ community. One of the largest components in LGBTQ health risks, Matthews stated, is high rates of direct marketing targeting the LGBTQ community by the tobacco industry with smoking-related advertisements. According to Matthews, the tobacco industry spends millions of dollars each year to advertise in LGBTQ media and sponsors events such as pride festivals and LGBTQ organizations.

“When the tobacco industry is directly targeting and there’s this financial input into the community from the tobacco industry, it does a couple things,” said Matthews. “It reduces the likelihood that there are these anti-tobacco campaigns that are put in place. It also gives

the perception that the tobacco industry is our friend because they’re in some ways one of the few industries that’s actually willing to pay attention to us—they put people in ads, etc. It is a form of manipulation and direct targeting for those additional dollars and it’s been effective. We do see those high rates of smoking.”

Matthews noted another risk factor leading to smoking is higher rates of stress due to stigma and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. According to Matthews, stress is strongly associated with smoking and difficulty quitting.

Social settings, such as bars, also have an effect on smoking habits. Especially among younger participants in the study, it was voiced that smoking is a major way of making a social connection with peers in the LGBTQ community. Approaching someone with a cigarette creates a commonality and allows for a conversation to start more easily creating a less stressful situation.

“It starts for many people as stress reduction,” said Matthews. “Social smoking then becomes progressive to an addiction and then all the things that go along with trying to stop a substance that is both legal, that’s common in their environment, helps reduce boredom, stress, and enhances pleasure and is also addictive. That becomes a very difficult thing to do. Studies have shown that stopping smoking is as difficult if not more difficult than quitting heroin or cocaine due to the level of addictiveness, but there are other elements of it being legal, pervasive, and it doesn’t impair your ability to do your day-to-day activities.”

According to The National Network for LGBTQ Health Equity’s website, LGBTQ communities smoke at rates 40 percent to almost 200 percent higher than the general population. Matthews elaborates explaining that sexual-minority women smoke at higher rates than gay and bisexual men, while bisexual men smoke at about same rates as heterosexual men. Gay men smoke a little bit higher than heterosexual men, while some of the highest rates are among lesbian, bisexual women and transgender individuals.

Matthews expressed that although smoking-cessation treatments are helpful, public policy has had some of the strongest impacts on smoking behaviors, reducing the rates at which people smoke. One example of effective public policies Matthews lists is higher levels of taxation on cigarettes and tobacco products. Many people who are price point-sensitive—such as youth, lower income people and people who cannot afford the expense—are then no longer willing to pay.

Additionally, clean-air laws that restrict people from smoking in public places dramatically lower the smoking rate. Individuals who do not quit as a result of clean-air laws, Matthews said, end up smoking less than they had previously due to having to exit the building (and sometimes the property entirely) to be able to smoke.

Suggesting actions to be taken to make progress in the LGBTQ health field, Matthews said to use the creativity the community possesses to develop messages, develop public health campaigns specific to the LGBTQ community that would work to undo much of what has been done by the tobacco industry.

To help curb smoking, Matthews advised using helpful resources such as evidence-based treatments, which research has shown to be effective including methods such as counseling concentrating on skill building; using forms of stop smoking medications, obtaining social support for quitting; working on stress reduction; and persistence.

“I can’t say enough about persistence as key to becoming a non-smoker,” said Matthews. “It will take the majority of smokers several attempts before they are able to quit for good. The majority of the participants who come to our groups have tried to quit before. We believe that we can help provide the skills and support to help them quit for good or move one huge step closer to that eventual goal.”

To learn more about Bitch To Quit or to become a participant, visit www.bitchtoquit.org or call 773-388-8868.

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GAY *in the* **LIFE**
Aly Patsavas
 BY ROSS FORMAN, PHOTOS FROM PATSAVAS

Age
31

Neighborhood
West Town

Relationship status
Dating Katerina Kolárová for three and a half years

Education
Is a Ph.D. student in disability studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago and also is a teaching assistant at the University of Illinois at Chicago for the department of disability and human development

Hobbies
Painting, gardening and her two dogs: a chow-basenji mix named Scooby and a shepard-pit bull mix named Cyrano.

Favorite musician/group
Ani DiFranco, Tegan and Sara

Favorite TV shows
"Anything Joss Whedon has ever made."

Little-known fact
"I don't like white condiments: mayonnaise, sour cream, cream cheese, horseradish. And really any creamy white cheeses [too; that's] pretty much a no-go territory for me. Also, fruit in my pastries [is] absolute blasphemy in my book."



Aly Patsavas came into disability studies through personal experience with disability. She was in a car accident years ago and has had to deal chronic pain ever since.

"Learning to navigate a healthcare system, and society for that matter, that has very specific notions of what a body should be and do, what a disability is and should look like, and what pain is and should look like can be really devastating, especially before you connect with a community of people who can share their experiences with these things," she said. "I was desperate for a framework that helped me make sense of the struggle to get doctors to take my pain seriously, for a way to understand the guilt that I felt for not getting better after the accident and the host of other social, cultural and economic positions that you suddenly find yourself in when you have a disability.

"When I found disability studies, it was like somebody handed me a ticket to a show I didn't even know I was desperate to get into. The field of disability studies, born out of the disability rights movement and disabled people's activism, understands disability not as a bodily problem to be fixed, but as an experience/relationship between people with a variety of impairments and the environment.



Through disability studies, Patsavas said she has learned extensively about the history of ableism.

"Connecting my experience to a broader movement, getting a sense of the work that needs to be done to continue to challenge attitudinal, environmental and policy-based barriers that disabled people face gave me both the humility and the conviction needed to connect my passions to bigger, community struggles," she said.

Patsavas said she wants to pursue a long-term career teaching, ideally at the college level.

"I also want to explore the complex ways that people live with and through chronic pain," she said. "We have very fixed understandings of what pain is and how to deal with, accommodate and talk about it. We assume that pain is this experience that is so exceptional, so devastating—which it is and it can be—but yet by some accounts nearly 20 percent of Americans live with chronic pain. How can that many people experience pain, yet we have such few supports in place and we struggle so much to talk with each other about pain? I just hope that my through my scholarship and through teaching, I can contribute to the efforts of people committed to change some of that."

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**PRESIDENT
BARACK
OBAMA**

Congress needs to pass ENDA

Here in the United States, we're united by a fundamental principle: we're all created equal and every single American deserves to be treated equally in the eyes of the law. We believe that no matter who you are, if you work hard and play by the rules, you deserve the chance to follow your dreams and pursue your happiness. That's America's promise.

That's why, for instance, Americans can't be fired from their jobs just because of the color of their skin or for being Christian or Jewish or a woman or an individual with a disability. That kind of discrimination has no place in our nation. And yet, right now, in 2013, in many states a person can be fired simply for being lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

As a result, millions of LGBT Americans go to work every day fearing that, without any warning, they could lose their jobs—not because of anything they've done, but simply because of who they are.

It's offensive. It's wrong. And it needs to stop, because in the United States of America, who you are and who you love should never be a fireable offense.

That's why Congress needs to pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, also known as

ENDA, which would provide strong federal protections against discrimination, making it explicitly illegal to fire someone because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. This bill has strong bipartisan support and the support of a vast majority of Americans. It ought to be the law of the land.

Americans ought to be judged by one thing only in their workplaces: their ability to get their jobs done. Does it make a difference if the firefighter who rescues you is gay—or the accountant who does your taxes, or the mechanic who fixes your car? If someone works hard every day, does everything he or she is asked, is responsible and trustworthy and a good colleague, that's all that should matter.

Business agrees. The majority of Fortune 500 companies and small businesses already have nondiscrimination policies that protect LGBT employees. These companies know that it's both the right thing to do and makes good economic sense. They want to attract and retain the best workers, and discrimination makes it harder to do that.

So, too, with our nation. If we want to create more jobs and economic growth and keep our country competitive in the global economy, we need everyone working hard, contributing their ideas, and putting their abilities to use doing what they do best. We need to harness the creativity and talents of every American.

So I urge the Senate to vote yes on ENDA and the House of Representatives to do the same. Several Republican Senators have already voiced their support, as have a number of Republicans in the House. If more members of Congress step up, we can put an end to this form of discrimination once and for all.

Passing ENDA would build on the progress we've made in recent years. We stood up against hate crimes with the Matthew Shepard Act and

lifted the entry ban for travelers with HIV. We ended "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" so our brave servicemen and women can serve openly the country they love, no matter who they love. We prohibited discrimination in housing and hospitals that receive federal funding, and we passed the Violence Against Women Act, which includes protections for LGBT Americans.

My Administration had stopped defending the so-called Defense of Marriage Act, and earlier this year the U.S. Supreme Court struck down that discriminatory law. Now we're implementing that ruling, giving married couples access to the federal benefits they were long denied. And across the nation, as more and more states recognize marriage equality, we're seeing loving couples—some who have been together for decades—finally join their hands in marriage.

America is at a turning point. We're not only becoming more accepting and loving as a people, we're becoming more just as a nation. But we still have a way to go before our laws are equal to our Founding ideals. As I said in my second inaugural address, our nation's journey toward equality isn't complete until our gay brothers and sisters are treated like anyone else under the law, for if we are truly created equal, then surely the love we commit to one another must be equal as well.

In America, of all places, people should be judged on the merits: on the contributions they make in their workplaces and communities, and on what Martin Luther King Jr. called "the content of their character." That's what ENDA helps us do. When Congress passes it, I will sign it into law, and our nation will be fairer and stronger for generations to come.

This article originally appeared in The Huffington Post.



**PAUL
DOMBROWSKI**

A homosexual like you...

The bell had rung, it was the end of a very typical day at my northwest suburban Chicago school, my clothes and hands were stained with paint as I had just filtered through 125 students (first through sixth grades) through my art class. I left through the school office telling everyone I'd see them tomorrow.

My car was parked in the usual spot on the street directly in front of the school, no more than 25 yards from the front doors. I unlocked my car and slid into the driver's seat, put my seat belt on and key in the ignition. I looked up and spotted a fold up piece of salmon colored paper tucked under my windshield wiper. I grabbed the note, unfolded it and read it. This is what the note said;

"Homosexuals like you shouldn't be around children or adolescents. You should give up your post."

My mind raced, I reread the note, and I was rattled.

"Homosexuals like you shouldn't be around children or adolescents. You should give up your post."

My heart was racing, I took the note and went back into the school office. I showed the note to the school secretary, my principal, and a colleague who happened to be there. Their mouths fell open in surprise and disbelief. My principal advised me to call the police; unfortunately, I couldn't. I had kids waiting for me at the high

school where I teach direct their theater productions. I promised I would file a report after I was done at the high school.

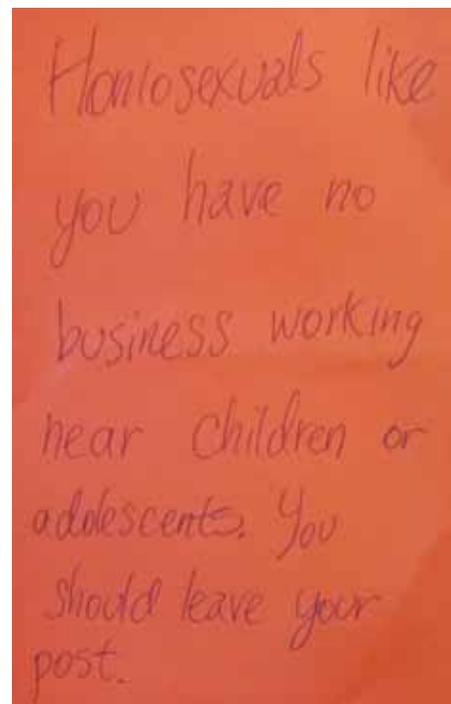
My mind raced. I couldn't stop thinking about the note. Who was the hateful author? Was it a parent of one of my students? Was it someone I worked with? Was it someone who noticed the small rainbow sticker I have on the bumper of my car? The message of the note wasn't terribly upsetting—being a gay man in my 50s, I've developed a pretty thick skin over the years. The fact that this was an act that was just meant to hurt someone, and it was delivered in the most cowardly way, was the thing that bothered me most. Have we just gone back in time to the 1970s, when Anita Bryant and her "Save Our Children" movement wanted all LGBT teachers to be hunted down, removed from the classroom and fired?

As I reread the bigoted, hateful note over again, one phrase raised questions in my mind: "Homosexuals like you." Homosexuals like me? Am I a specific kind of homosexual? Maybe there was a section in the frequently touted "gay agenda" that I missed that described the different kinds of homosexuals.

In fact, I always thought I was a damn good homosexual!

I am in a committed 16-year loving relationship with my civilly unionized husband. We were fortunate enough to be one of the first 30 couples in Illinois to be united in a civil union in Millennium Park two years ago. We are both advocates for marriage equality, we marched in Springfield and we continue to fight for the right to be married in our home state. We have been on panels and done presentations on safe schools, bullying and marriage equality. Both my husband and I have proudly lived our lives "out" in the open, with dignity and respect.

I have been a teacher for more than 25 years. I have always taught in diverse schools—there are 34 different languages spoken in the homes of my students. I am an advocate for all of my



Hate note Paul Dombrowski received. Image from Dombrowski

students. I teach them to respect everyone's ideas regardless if they are different than their own. I teach them to be respectful to other and earn respect for themselves. I encourage my students celebrate the differences of others and treat other fairly. I've been teaching long enough to see that the first second-graders I taught 25 years ago have grown into caring and compassionate adults. I've been fortunate enough to be able to receive the "gifts" from past students who remember the project we did,

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GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



Photo from Darren Stein

THE FRIEND ZONE

Teen queens fight over the new must-have accessory—a gay best friend—in the Reeling film *G.B.F.* Director Darren Stein talks on page 28.

DISH

On the Grid.
Page 30

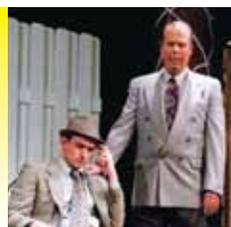
Photo of blue crab cracker
at The Grid by Andrew Davis



THEATER

'Son' shines.
Page 14

Photo from All My Sons
from Eclectic Full Contact Theatre



SPORTS

Queen of the Hill.
Page 26

Photo of the CMSA's Marcia Hill
by Ross Forman



SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Mourning and moving on with Ricky Ian Gordon

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Ricky Ian Gordon is a busy man. The New York-based 57-year-old out composer is finishing multiple opera commissions simultaneously for companies ranging from Houston Grand Opera to Opera Theatre of St. Louis.

Yet Gordon still made it a point to visit the Windy City during the weekend of Nov. 1 for the Chicago Opera Theater debut of his chamber opera *Orpheus and Euridice*. What makes Chicago Opera Theater's staging so unusual is that general director Andreas Mitisek (who originally staged and designed the work in 2008 for Long Beach Opera in California) presents it in a swimming pool.

Chicago Opera Theater was able to collaborate with the Chicago Park District to present Gordon's *Orpheus and Euridice* in the mid-century-modern Eckhart Park Pool. It fits with Mitisek's mission to stage opera in unconventional places, which is something he's done time and time again with Long Beach Opera, where he is also artistic and general director.

"Chicago is so lucky to have Andreas, because he's like a persistent ox," said Gordon, remembering the difficult logistics of rehearsing and staging the opera in a pool that was also open to the public. "He sees it in his head and he's going to go for it. And he knows full well that people are going to question him, and then it ends up being stunning."

Gordon was amazed at the elemental aspects of Mitisek's production, in which the water came to symbolize the mythological River Styx. Yet the small-scale nature of the work, which was originally written in as a project for clarinetist Todd Palmer and soprano Elizabeth Futral,



Ricky Ian Gordon.

has meant that *Orpheus and Euridice* can be staged most anywhere—from a Doug Varone-choreographed production at Lincoln Center in New York to Opera Theater of Pittsburgh's 2011

staging at Allegheny Cemetery in Lawrenceville, Pa.

Yet the emotional reasons why Gordon wrote *Orpheus and Euridice* had to do with his grief at slowly losing his longtime partner, Jeffrey Grossi, to HIV and AIDS in the late 1990s.

"It exploded out of me and that's the only way to explain it. My subconscious needed to work something out and that story came to me one night at 4 a.m.," said Gordon about the ancient Greek myth of a mourning musician who journeys to the underworld in an attempt to reclaim his deceased wife. "I needed to tell that story, and that myth at that moment was the only way to tell it."

Yet Gordon said many of his other works in the past 10 years have also been a way for him to work through his grief.

"When Jeffrey kept getting sicker and sicker and ultimately died, the feeling was that I couldn't protect him and it shattered me," said Gordon, who also mentioned that he experienced horrendous bullying and sexual abuse while growing up in Long Island. "I was destroyed and I had to put myself back together. And the way for me to put myself back together was by writing."

Gordon specifically cited his 2007 song-cycle *Green Sneakers* for Baritone, String Quartet, Empty Chair and Piano, which is specifically tied to memories of Grossi, to his grand opera adaptation of John Steinbeck's novel *The Grapes of Wrath*, which premiered at Minnesota Opera in 2007 and was staged locally earlier this year at Northwestern University.

"Believe it or not, *The Grapes of Wrath* was a really easy container for me at that time because the novel is riddled with grief," Gordon said. "It's just one loss after another."

Back in the 1990s, Gordon was initially seen as one of many potential successors to theater composer Stephen Sondheim. Several of Gordon's songs were featured on Audra McDonald's best-selling solo debut CD *Way Back to Paradise*, which also had recent or new material other theater composers like Jason Robert Brown (*Parade*, 13) and Michael John LaChiusa (*Marie Christine*,

The Wild Party).

Although Gordon did write two the off-Broadway musicals *Dream True: My Life with Vernon Dixon* (1999) and the Marcel Proust-inspired *My Life with Albertine* (2003), he's been finding more success with opera commissions both large and small.

Next year, Gordon and librettist Royce Vavrek are set to debut *Twenty-Seven*, a piece about the lives of lesbian poet Gertrude Stein and her partner, Alice B. Toklas (respectively starring mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe and soprano Elizabeth Futral) for Opera Theatre of St. Louis. There's also a gospel-hybrid collaboration with director/playwright Leonard Foglia next year called *A Coffin in Egypt* featuring mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade for Houston Grand Opera and Opera Philadelphia. And in the future, there's a potential Metropolitan Opera adaptation of Pulitzer Prize winner Lynn Nottage's 2004 drama *Intimate Apparel*.

"It's a good time. I feel like a lot of these projects are things I've generated or thought carefully about in terms of whether I could say something through them," Gordon said. "I get to work on a lot of things that I'm excited about with people who are fantastic."

And though Gordon is more than willing to revisit productions of his past works, he adds that it's time to move on from exclusively doing works inspired by his loss.

"Maybe it's metaphorical that here I am about to tell the story of Gertrude Stein, Meredith Bledsoe in *A Coffin in Egypt* and Esther in *Intimate Apparel*," said Gordon. "Having completely absorbed what happened to me, it's in the notes and everything I do, but it's for new stories now."

Ricky Ian Gordon's *Orpheus and Euridice* has two more performances at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Sunday, Nov. 8 and 11, at the Chicago Park District's Eckhart Park Pool, 1330 W. Chicago Ave. Tickets are free to the public, but very limited. Walk-up tickets are available at 6 p.m. prior to each performance on a first-come, first-serve basis. Visit www.chicagooperatheater.org for more information.



Patrick Andrews (left) and David Cromer in *The Normal Heart*. Photo by t. HARRISON HILLMAN

THEATER REVIEW

The Normal Heart

Playwright: Larry Kramer

At: Timeline Theatre at

Stage 773, 1225 N. Belmont Ave.

Tickets: 773-281-8463;

www.timelinetheatre.com; \$37-\$50

Runs through: Dec. 22

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

You know the play about the whistle-blower who discovers the source of a public health hazard, only to have his findings stifled by bureaucrats bent on protecting their own selfish interests? *Sure* you do—it's Henrik Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*, written in 1882, the prototype for countless populist-oriented social-problem docudramas all the way up to 1985, when Larry Kramer sounded the alarm on a mysterious disease that killed surely and horribly, but was protected by a code of silence—ironically, enforced by its very victims.

Stories premised on medical mysteries tend to wane in significance once a means to their containment, if not cure, becomes viable. With the immediate threat diminished, the furor engendered thereby (the centuries-old persecution of those afflicted with Hansen's Disease, for example) is often viewed as quaint and curious by generations removed from its context. The aforementioned social issues associated with an illness may still provide fodder for discussion, but these also are inclined to fade quickly from memory. Observes the ambulatory-impaired Dr. Brookner, who contracted polio only weeks before a vaccine was proclaimed, "Nobody gets polio nowadays."

The terrifying early days of the AIDS epidemic weren't so very long ago, however, and Timeline Theatre's specialty is making history come alive. Kramer's script may be steeped in righteous anger, its initial scenes saturated in factual exposition and its later ones, in fire-breathing oratory, but under Nick Bowling's direction, a cast of A-list actors reels off casualty lists as conversationally as baseball stats and swaps huge mouthfuls of propagandistic rhetoric with the precision of prophets in classical tragedy. ("If they'd let us get married to begin with, maybe none of this would have happened," a character remarks clairvoyantly.) As our bunkered-down comrades gradually succumb to the stress of their own helplessness in the face of nature turned hostile, the truth of Ibsen's conclusion

that "the strongest man is he who is most alone" becomes sadly apparent.

By the time a bereaved activist recounts how his husband's dying moments were spent surrounded by guards wearing hazmat suits, his lifeless body turned away by hospitals and refused burial, we are as outraged as our intrepid crusader (played by David Cromer with unswerving conviction and touching vulnerability), and when Mary Beth Fisher's even harder-boiled physician excoriates the government's medical board for their obstruction, the opening-night audience's spontaneous applause echoed the fury of her diatribe. What? Did you think that the war was over?

CRITICS' PICKS

Master Class, Theo Ubique at the No Exit Café, through Nov. 24. Maria Callas—the opera diva with a capital "D"—gets personal with us in Terrence McNally's showcase vehicle for a solo actress: in this case, multiple Jeff-winning Chicago favorite Kelli Harrington. MSB

The Rascals: Once Upon a Dream, Cadillac Palace Theatre, through Nov. 10. They were four undersized city boys, equipped with a church-sized Hammond organ, a few trap drums and one lone guitar, but the music of *The Rascals* is indelibly etched in the sound track for a history-making generation of Americans. MSB

The Sovereign Statement, Neo-Futurists, through Nov. 23. Laugh-out-loud funny audience interactive evening in which you help set up a new micro-nation. Don't like the bozos in DC? Try government yourself. Beneath the fun, some serious ideas about nationhood and nationality. JA

Wrecks, Profiles Theatre Alley Stage, through Nov. 17. John Judd gives an impassioned performance of a grieving widower unloading a hidden secret in this one-man show by Neil LaBute that mines classical theater for a "shocking" conclusion. SCM

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

THEATER REVIEW

All My Sons

Playwright: Arthur Miller

At: Eclectic Full Contact Theatre

at the Athenaeum, 2936 N. Southport Ave.

Tickets: 773-935-6860;

www.eclectic-theatre.com; \$25

Runs through: Nov. 17

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

In classical tragedy, the Gods determined the destiny of mortals. Amid the moral ambiguity engendered by two global wars in the first half of the 20th century, however, U.S. playwright Arthur Miller reinvented the traditional formula to create a hero whose suffering cannot be ascribed to divine intervention, but rather, from a misguided choice made long ago. The crime does not lie in the decision itself—anybody can make a mistake—but its perpetrator's refusal to acknowledge his error and make amends.

Our flawed human is Joe Keller, whose fortunes flourished during the recent war as his factories supplied military bases with machine parts. His older son has been missing these last three years, presumed dead by everyone but his mother, but Joe takes comfort in the knowledge that his remaining son will inherit the business he has built so diligently. On this fatal day, though, young Chris Keller will declare his intention of marrying his late brother's sweetheart, the daughter of Joe's former partner, himself cur-

rently serving a prison sentence for shipping defective engine cylinders leading to the death of 21 allied soldiers. Soon everything Joe has dedicated his life to upholding is shown to have sprung from corruption and deceit.

The downside of the "family values" that our society holds so dear is the ease with which that concept translates to fundamentally humane people providing for their own kin through the sacrifice of their fellow citizens. The moral implications inherent in this conflict is the focus of this Eclectic Theatre production, more so than Sophoclean analogs (e.g. a neighbor's hobby of reading horoscopes as the modern-day equivalent of oracles).

Tragedy still mandates, for its impact, a certain scope difficult to conjure on a small budget, in a spartan studio, with a predominantly young cast. Any initial college-classroom ambience evident under David Belew's direction quickly dissolves as his actors proceed to immerse themselves in their narrative with a disciplined intensity that escalates with every revelation propelling the fate of its protagonists to its inevitable conclusion. David Elliott lends to Joe's despair a dignity as poignant as it is obstinate, but it is Julie Partyka who contributes the evening's takeaway performance. Miller is well-known for reducing his female characters to weepy bystanders, but when the Keller matriarch cries out that "God does not let a son be killed by his father!", the frisson that rippled through the opening-night audience was as palpable as a literal bolt from the blue.

THEATER REVIEW

Good Thing

Playwright: Jessica Goldberg

At: Poor Theatre at Rivendell,

5779 N. Ridge Ave.

Tickets: www.thepoortheatre.org/

goodthing; \$15

Runs through: Nov. 16

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

John and Nancy are fortysomething school teachers in upstate New York, their 20-year marriage blighted by childlessness and John's drinking and one-time philandering. Dean and Mary are twentysomething. He's a blue collar guy who might have been more. She's near-term pregnant and a meth addict, as is Dean's kid brother Bobby, who lives with them. When Dean's former girlfriend, Liz, returns to pursue him, she adds fuel to an explosive situation.

It's difficult to fathom the good thing of the play's title in Jessica Goldberg's slice-of-life drama, or if it's meant to be ironic. Mary's pregnancy divides as much as it unites, a trap and yet possibly an opportunity. Liz and Bobby definitely are negative catalysts, while John and Nancy are a sad pair who function only as an extended plot device. The play centers on Dean, who has made easy but not affirmative life choices and has enabled the addition of his wife and brother. In a "lady-or-the-tiger" ending, Dean is forced to choose, at last, between opposing sides and life opportunities.

So there you have six characters with whom you may sympathize but whom you probably won't like very much, playing through a situational structure that's more than a little forced and improbable. But structure aside, Goldberg does what she does best (she's very much a hot shot playwright and— even more—TV writer), which is to deliver dialogue sounding like everyday speech but which is sharp, focused, forceful and telling.

In short, *Good Thing* can be a great vehicle for actors, and several members of this Poor Theatre production give rattling-good performances under director Will Crouse (Poor Theatre co-artistic director). Abbey Smith and Michael Medford are electrifying as addicts Mary (who's kept clean during her pregnancy) and Bobby. They live and breathe the be-



Good Thing. Photo by Justin Barbin Photography

fuddlement, desperation, volatility and drug fever of the hooked with commitment, focus and ferocious energy which are riveting and sometimes frightening. Medford, who is thin to begin with, is particularly convincing with darkened eyes and meth sores all over his face and arms.

Melanie Gollmann and Doug Scheutz have the opposite problem, and the fault is that of director Crouse. Given dreary characters to begin with, Crouse has directed them in dreary fashion. They move and talk slowly and barely speak above a whisper. Their scenes are so lacking in energy and pace they all but disappear.

Somewhere in between are Alex Fisher and Dillon Kelleher as Liz and Dean. Certainly attractive and more than adequate for their roles, they are affable and capable performers whose dynamics split the difference between the others.

Good Thing is imperfect as a play and production, but is a sufficiently strong calling card for the still-new Poor Theatre.



Wicked. Photo by Joan Marcus

THEATER REVIEW

Wicked

Music and Lyrics: Stephen Schwartz

Book: Winnie Holtzman

At: Oriental Theatre, 24 W. Randolph St.

Tickets: 773-975-8150

www.BroadwayinChicago.com; Start at \$40

Runs through: Dec. 21

BY STEVEN CHAITMAN

Has it really been 10 years already since Wicked arrived on Broadway? It's hard to imagine that a musical so contemporary in both music and stage spectacle has already aged a decade. Yet even in that short time, there's something ageless about the Stephen Schwartz musical, which might explain why in 10 years, this latest tour is the fourth iteration of the Best Musical winner in Chicago following the 2005 and 2010 tour stops and the three-and-a-half year sit-down production in between.

It would be hard to make a case against Wicked as the best musical of the 21st century thus far (hey, there have been a lot of great shows in the last 13 years) and this cast provides a reminder that the "untold story of the witches of Oz" is just as charming, fantastical and universally lovable as it was when Idina Menzel first sported the green body paint.

Alison Luff and Jenn Gambatese star as Elphaba and Galinda, better known as The Wicked Witch of the West and Glinda the Good Witch, in the story of how these seeming rivals were actually friends, and that everything you know from The Wizard of Oz isn't quite what it seems. If you've never seen Wicked, there's no reason to hold out any longer; it's in town through just before Christmas, and is a surer bet than most of the holiday shows it will compete with.

The astounding production value of Wicked hasn't changed in 10 years, naturally, nor has Schwartz's soaring, thematic score, so the spotlight shines brightest on new stars Luff and Gambatese—and what a pair they are.

Gambatese, whose Broadway credits include Jane in Tarzan and Natalie in All Shook Up, brings her own spunk and spirit to Glinda, adding substantial comic value to the already bubbly character. In terms of things in a musical that age well, humor isn't always one of them, yet Gambatese makes Glinda feel fresh, in a way that can only be described as channeling actress Kristen Wiig. Somehow she transforms the show's lightest number, "Popular," into a rousing anthem—and she delivers on the back end too, perfectly capturing Glinda's conflict of interest between rising fame in Oz and her relationship with "Elphie."

Luff makes it clear she's cut out for Elphaba the moment she opens her mouth for "The Wizard and I." She sings powerfully and with totally pristine sound throughout the show and does it with such apparent ease that when it comes time for her defining moment, the first-act climax "Defying Gravity," you're dying to know just what will happen when she lets it all loose. More impressively than all that, however, she puts as much passion into giving Elphaba a multidimensional personality and conveying the various emotions of her whirlwind transformation from quiet outcast to the defiant and determined Wicked Witch.

The supporting cast fills in nicely and the clever way Winnie Holtzman's book works in elements of The Wizard of Oz continues to add excitement to this show even on repeat viewings, but Luff and Gambatese are the reminder of why Wicked has become the international phenomenon it has. Glinda and Elphaba are powerful, complex and musically exhilarating roles for women, and they make the magic of Oz and Schwartz's music come alive.

SPOTLIGHT



Erasing the Distance, a nonprofit organization founded in 2005 to utilize theater to shine a light on mental-health issues, has teamed with students from The Chicago School of Professional Psychology to create **Veterans' Voices**. It's a new work that features five true stories performed as monologues to focus on the mental health issues facing servicemen and women, veterans and their family members, ranging from post-traumatic stress disorder to sexual abuse within the ranks. Veterans' Voices plays 7:30 p.m. Mondays through Wednesdays from Nov. 11-13 and 18-20. There is a special Veterans Day reception at 5 p.m. with the National Veterans Art Museum exhibit Esprit de Corps and a keynote address by Dr. Jack M. Bulmash of Hines VA Hospital. Performances are at Filament Theatre, 4041 N. Milwaukee Ave. Tickets are \$15-\$20. There are also 30 free tickets at each performance for veterans and active military (reservations must be made in advance). For more information, visit www.veteransvoices.brownpapertickets.com or www.erasingthedistance.org. Photo courtesy of Erasing the Distance

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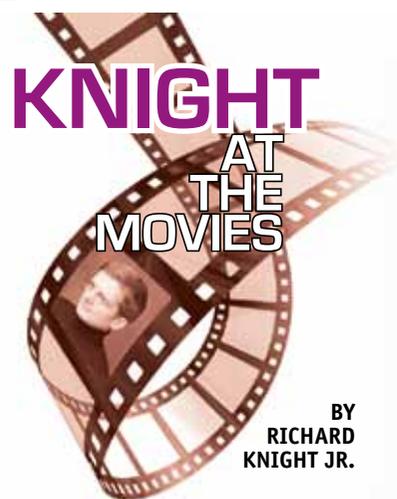
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BY
RICHARD
KNIGHT JR.

Dallas Buyers Club; notes

Movie audiences have always loved actors who give their all emotionally and physically. There's a certain lurid fascination in watching just how far into character a determined actor will go in his or her portrayal. Boris Karloff permanently damaged his back while filming *Frankenstein*, Charlize Theron got herself a big case of the uglies for *Monster* and ditto John Hurt in *The Elephant Man* and Eric Stoltz in *Mask*, while Eddie Murphy convincingly played an elderly white Jewish man in *Coming to America*.

Enduring hours in the makeup chair is certainly impressive, but there's nothing like a visible weight change to offer proof of an actor's dedication. Robert DeNiro packed on 80 pounds for *Raging Bull*, winning an Academy Award, while Christian Bale lost that much for the otherwise forgotten *The Machinist*. And Tom Hanks shed 25 pounds as he filmed 1993's *Philadelphia*, winning his first Oscar.

Dallas Buyers Club, based on a true story, ups the ante with two such feats—both Matthew McConaughey and Jared Leto lost more than 50 pounds each, giving the film instant buzz and positioning the duo as strong contenders as awards season approaches. Given the physical transformations of McConaughey and Leto, both renowned for their pretty-boy looks and normally muscular presences on screen, it would be easy to overlook the tremendous performances that both men give.

McConaughey plays Ron Woodroof, a Texas cowboy whose hard-partying lifestyle of womanizing, gambling, drugging and drinking abruptly comes to an end when he is diagnosed with AIDS and told he has 30 days to put his affairs in order. It's August 1985, when such a diagnosis was akin to a death sentence. But Ron, a homophobe who denies the truth, isn't about to go gently into that good night. For starters, he's



Matthew McConaughey in *Dallas Buyers Club*. Photo by Anne Marie Fox/Focus Features

heard about the brand-new drug AZT, which was just then going into the testing phase. Although he's not part of the initial trials, Ron comes up with a stash and begins to self-medicate.

The AZT nearly kills him but after slowly recovering, the skeletal Ron begins to hear about other drugs—available just across the border in Mexico but illegal in the United States. He travels there and regains his health and begins to follow up on other promising anti-viral drugs being developed around the globe. Other AIDS sufferers begin to implore him to bring back medications for them as well, one of the most persistent being a sweetly funny drag queen named Rayon (Leto) whose wealthy family has disowned him. In the midst of the terrible plague Ron sees an opportunity and he legally forms the first of several buyers clubs—selling memberships at high prices to a growing, desperate clientele and providing the drugs for free. Soon the lucrative clubs come to the attention of the FDA and the pharmaceutical companies; they go after Ron, determined to shut him down.

It's a long, tough road for Ron to go down before coming to terms with his intense homophobia and even longer for him to stop lining his pockets and looking out for himself in favor of the disenfranchised gay men he encounters. McConaughey seizes the opportunity to delve into this quasi-hero and he delivers a portrait that is ultimately moving without being sentimental. He is ably supported by Leto, who is convincing in a part that could easily have descended into pathos.

The script, by Craig Borten and Melisa Wallack (based on a 1992 magazine article), gifts the two actors with rich characters—although Jennifer Garner doesn't have their luck and is stuck

as a sympathetic physician and Denis O'Hare is once again cast in a nasty role as her boss. Director Jean-Marc Vallée (*The Young Victoria*) wisely keeps the camera on his two stars for the most part and, though the material is tough going (especially for gay audiences of a certain age), *Dallas Buyers Club* is both illuminating about a dreaded period in gay history and has those wonderful performances, to boot. This is a welcome addition to the queer movie canon.

Film notes:

The Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State St., has been presenting a retrospective of the French film director **Claire Denis**. Her 1999 adaptation of Herman Melville's *Billy Budd*, titled *Beau Travail*, is awash in male eroticism. The story is of a hunky, innocent soldier in the French Foreign Legion as viewed through the lens of his craggy, hard-bitten superior, who clearly has a major thing for him—and this forms the basis of Denis' steamy film. The movie plays Friday, Nov. 8, at 6 p.m. and on Sunday, Nov. 10 at 3 p.m. www.siskelfilmcenter.com

Ky Dickens—the Chicago-based filmmaker noted for her 2009 documentary *Fish out of Water*, which put the Bible's seven references to homosexuality under the microscope—returns with **Sole Survivor**, a thought-provoking documentary that is also playing at the Siskel, beginning a one-week run Friday, Nov. 8. Dickens' excellent film centers on four of the just 14 sole survivors of large-scale airplane disasters—whom she aptly describes as members of "the loneliest club on earth." With *Sole Survivor*, Dickens has made a compelling follow-up to *Fish out of Water* that is elevated by its sensitive approach to its potentially sensationalistic subject matter. www.solesurvivorfilm.com

The Polish films **Floating Skyscrapers** and **In the Name of...**—which both had their Chicago debuts during the recent Chicago International Film Festival as part of its queer film offerings—will play here again on Wed., Nov. 13, at Facets Cinematheque, 1517 W. Fullerton Ave., at 7 p.m. and 8:45 p.m., respectively. The first film focuses on a male swimmer whose fractured relationship with his girlfriend is further threatened when he becomes involved with a fellow male swimmer while the latter is the story of a conflicted, closeted gay priest who oversees a home for adolescent teenage boys. www.facets.org

Bruce Vilanch hosting Reeling sing-a-long Nov. 11

As part of the Reeling film festival's 31st edition, comic legend Bruce Vilanch will host a 31st-anniversary screening of the 1982 Julie Andrews film *Victor/Victoria*.

The event will take place Monday, Nov. 11, at 6 p.m. at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St.

See reelingfilmfestival.tix.com.

'Corpus Christi' doc to screen Nov. 10

The documentary *Corpus Christi: Playing with Redemption* will screen Sunday, Nov. 10, at 12 p.m. at the Logan Theatre, 2646 N. Milwaukee Ave., as part of the Reeling International LGBT Film Festival.

The film tells the stories of the touring company for 108 Productions' *Corpus Christi*, the controversial 1998 play by four-time Tony winner Terrence McNally, which imagines Jesus as a gay man living in modern-day Texas.

Michael Leppen is sponsoring the event.

Tickets are \$12; see www.ReelingFilmFestival.org.

Lakeside Pride holding equality concert Nov. 9

Rallying around the right to pursue same-sex marriage, the Lakeside Pride Symphonic Band will perform "Stand Up! A Musical Celebration of Equality" at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 9, at the Nettelhorst School Auditorium, 3252 N. Broadway.

This special performance—featuring the Chicago premiere of "Colors: A Celebration," by composer Tim Jansa—will present music that aims to champion equality. This evening will also include a musical tribute to civil-rights heroine Rosa Parks written by Chicago composer Mark Camphouse.

Tickets are \$20; see www.LakesidePride.org or buy at the school's auditorium the day of the concert.

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CHICAGO HUMANITIES FESTIVAL

Kimberly Peirce talks 'Boys Don't Cry,' 'Carrie,' bullying



BY JERRY NUNN

Kimberly Peirce directed and wrote her first film, *Boys Don't Cry*, to huge acclaim, earning Hilary Swank an Oscar for Best Actress and Chloe Sevigny a nomination for Best Supporting Actress. The story of transgender individual Brandon Teena being murdered in Nebraska touched many people, making the movie a huge success.

Peirce followed it with *Stop-Loss*, a portrait inspired by her brother about Iraq War veterans. Her *Carrie* remake, with Chloe Grace Moretz and Julianne Moore, had people talking and jumping out of their seats this past October.

As part of the Chicago Humanities Festival, Peirce, a University of Chicago alumna, will be joined in conversation with WBEZ's Alison Cuddy to discuss her career and female directors in the business as part of the annual Karla Scherer Endowed Lecture Series in partnership with Center on Halsted.

Windy City Times spoke with Peirce before her arrival about *Boys Don't Cry*, *Carrie* and cyborgs.

Windy City Times: Hi, Kim. You are now returning to Chicago after studying here years ago...

Kimberly Peirce: First of all, I love Chicago. I went to undergrad there at University of Chicago. There are a lot of great professors. I left for Japan then I came back and finished there. My fiance recently taught at Northwestern. It is a city that I absolutely love so I am thrilled to be coming back.

WCT: Did going to school here lead to a film career?

KP: I think it actually did. I studied photog-

raphy, history and literature. It did lead me to being a film director, so in many ways being in Chicago was great. Being there was really valuable. People have asked me that since University of Chicago is not a traditional art school did I learn anything about directing but the strong education I received is very vital to everything that I do. I think it is a great training ground.

WCT: Did you ever imagine *Boys Don't Cry* would be a huge film?

KP: No. I fell madly in love with the story of Brandon Teena when I was just a kid in grad school. I read the article in the middle of the night at my job. I loved the story and decided I had to make a film about it. I got to know a group of transsexuals called Transsexual Menace. They were traveling together to the murder town to go to the trial. I wanted to get to know them and hear their point of view. I filmed them for some time. I got their perspective and interviewed butch lesbians, the court reporter, and everybody there just to make a short film. As I was making it became very clear how it is such a great story to feature. I was beyond my means at that point because it was the first year at grad school. I just held onto that dream. I took it through Columbia University, then was invited to Sundance. I loved the story and never imagined that it would be as successful as it was.

WCT: Issues of transgender people must have evolved while you were working on the film.

KP: Absolutely. The film helped find a better way for the culture to talk about transsexuality. Part of the problem with *Boys Don't Cry* was people would say, "Brandon pretended to be a boy and she was raped and killed" so the way people told the story blamed Brandon, not that this was a person who was living as who they thought they were.

When I was at the Oscars I was being interviewed by Joan Rivers and she asked how I cast the movie. I explained how I found Hilary. She said, "Oh a woman who lived as a man." It was really great to be in that very public arena because we were creating the correct language for transgender people to be seen as who they are.

You might think it is just language and not that important but it is very important because

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Kimberly Peirce. Photo by Jasmine McGlade

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WINDY CITY
TIMES

Gay and Lesbian

Wedding Guide

'Happy, happy, gay, gay' website lets LGBTQs mark milestones

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL BLICKENSDEFER

When Springfield clears the way for same-sex marriage in Illinois, LGBTQ couples can collect their marriage licenses and plan the moment that they exchange vows and celebrate their love. Their friends and family members may want to buy a congratulatory card—but from where? That's the dilemma Emily Belden faced when her longtime friend, Lucas, married his partner 72 hours after the Supreme Court struck down the Defense of Marriage Act.

Although stores like Hallmark started to carry gay-themed cards in 2008, Belden found nothing suitable at her local outlets. She had known Lucas since she was 5. They played soccer and rode their bikes to school together. She watched him suffer through and eventually overcome the

torment of vicious bullying from his classmates. She was not going to celebrate his wedding without something to mark the occasion.

Instead, the 27-year-old Belden, who will be publishing a book this coming February, decided to put her creative abilities to the test and designed her own card. Her concepts led to the birth of a website specializing in same-sex sentiments for every occasion. "I had all these different ideas," Belden remembered. "I sat at the computer and one card turned into 10. Then 10 turned into e-commerce."

At happyhappygay.com, visitors can select from a variety of cards that do away with straightforward, poetic sentiment in favor of unconventional pearls of the fabulous ranging from recognition for someone who is coming 'out like a light bulb' to congratulations for a day that



Emily Belden of happyhappygay.com.
Photo by Gretchen Rachel Blickensdefer

began with love, then marriage, then 'a Donna Summer mega-mix at the reception.' People can send a gay best friend a thank you 'for being weird with me' or celebrate the idea that 'two parents who know how to decorate a nursery are better than one.'

The selected image is emailed over as a link either for the customer to print or to send as an e-card. Since Belden handles both the art direction and the writing of the cards, she has very little overhead beyond the maintenance of the website. She, therefore, decided that a portion of the five dollar cost for each card should go to charities like the Trevor Project, a national organization providing 24 hour crisis intervention and suicide prevention to LGBTQ youth.

Once again, Lucas served as Belden's inspiration. Looking back on their friendship, she realized that, for LGBT people, life is not always 'happyhappygay.' "When we were growing up, every 12 year old boy would say the nastiest things to him at school," Belden said. "It happened every day, and it got to the point that he was counting on it." Although noting with pride that, despite the obstacles he faced, Lucas

Turn to page 19

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A selection of cards available at www.happyhappygaygay.com.



WEBSITE from page 18

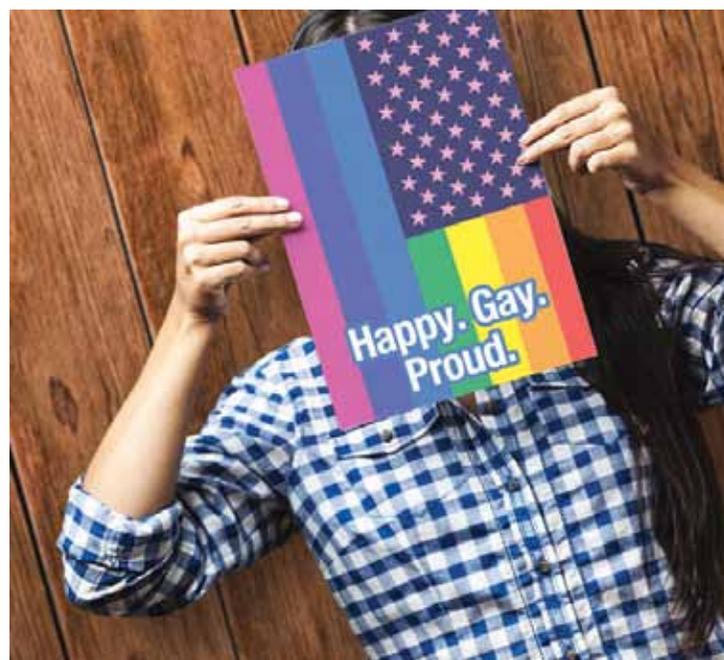
was able to make a success of his life, Belden is grateful that organizations like The Trevor Project exist today to help bullied kids. "It's not a way for anyone to have to grow up. Lucas could very easily have been Trevor," she said.

Despite having no advertising budget and relying solely upon social media and word of mouth, the response to happyhappygaygay.com surpassed Belden's wildest dreams. Within an hour of the site going live, her first customer was an order from Mexico. Belden sent the customer a thank-you email to which he replied, "I've been waiting my whole life for something like this."

Since then, Belden has heard from people all over the country and world. A boutique store in Minneapolis contacted her about carrying the cards. She has also received special requests for cards marking everything from adoptions to bar mitzvahs. Belden handles them on a one-on-one basis. "Now that I'm learning what the demand is, I'm amazed," She said. "It's more than just gay marriage, its milestones."

Still, Belden pointed out that there are a few people who hate what she is doing. The Jesuit college she attended omitted her from its alumni bulletins and, when her website was featured in Crain's Chicago Business, one commentator called it a "sick, sick concept." But the more overwhelming messages of support Belden received empowered her to take the idea as far as it can go. "I have no words for the anti-marriage people," She said. "They have a level of intolerance that I cannot grasp. Love should not be regulated."

As for Lucas, he will soon be standing as a Bridesman when Belden marries her fiancé and she said she could care less if people think it 'looks weird.' She believes it is just a matter of time before gay marriage becomes legal nationwide. Much like the success of [happyhappygaygay](http://happyhappygaygay.com) and the upbeat choices the site offers people celebrating the marriage of an LGBT couple, Belden would not have it any other way.





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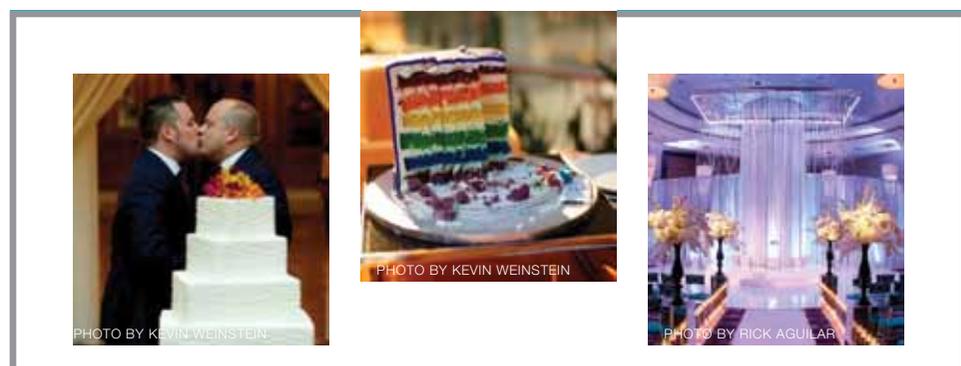
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'Lawfully Wedded Husband' traces couple's journey to the altar

BY CHARLSIE DEWEY

The gay-marriage landscape has changed drastically from when Joel Derfner first became engaged and began writing his newest book, *Lawfully Wedded Husband: How Gay Marriage Will Save the American Family*.

Still, he said, until all 50 states allow same-sex marriage, the book will find readers who can relate as well as many who can share in the stories he tells because they've had a similar experience getting to the altar.

In addition to tracing the changing political landscape around gay marriage the book also looks at the many other questions that Derfner contemplated along the journey.

"It's probably half-memoir and half, call it, exploration," he said. "Marriage is essentially the spine of the book, but there are a lot of things I talk about whose relationship to marriage isn't immediately clear. There is a chapter in which I spend a lot of time talking about racism in the gay community, which I think is a serious and incredibly disappointing problem."

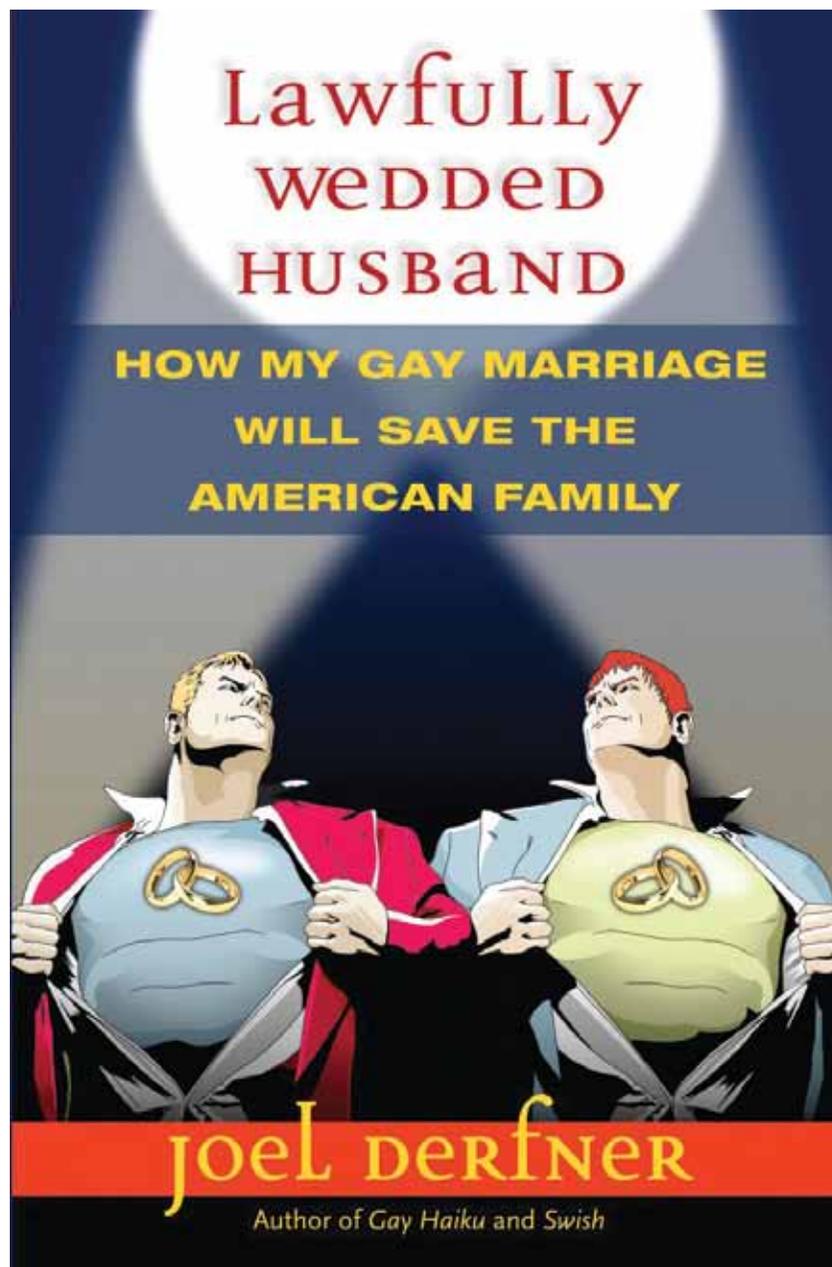
The book also includes an account of Derfner's experience of having his future in-laws move in so that his partner's father could die in their home as well as Derfner's experience on the reality show *Girls Who Like Boys Who Like Boys*.

"Basically, my boyfriend said, 'Hey could my parents move in so my dad can die in your office?' What, I'm going to say, no?" he said, pointing out that that is what marriage is about.

Derfner explores the difference of having to have, essentially, two weddings. The couple legally married in Iowa, but held their reception in New York.

"I really was very upset about the idea of these two weddings and what I came to was the realization that a wedding really is two things and for straight people those things can be combined into one," he said. "You have a ceremony, you get your friends together, you say your vows and then you sign a piece of paper."

"For us, because New York at the time didn't have marriage equality, those two things had to be separated. So I think one thing that is interesting in the book is people talking about how marriage is two different things, there is an emotional side to it and a legal side to it, and those have two sets of different ramifications."



Author Joel Derfner

The importance of being able to become a family is another topic Derfner broaches in the book.

"America in the 21st century, the only way to become a family is to marry, and by forbidding us to marry what they really want is to forbid us from forming families, and eventually the right to marry will force the country to admit that we can make families and that we are families," he said.

Derfner said that marriage hasn't changed the way he feels when he and his husband are at home, but when they are out in the world it does.

"I talk a little in the book about how what I came to was an understanding that marriage isn't about the relationship between two people; it's about the relationship between a couple and society," he said.

He noted that it was nice to be writing the book as more and more states were allowing marriage equality.

"I feel like once Massachusetts gained marriage equality in 2004 the battle was over," he said. "We'd won and it was just sort of a question of it playing itself out in all the states and in the government. We are going to have full marriage equality in this country in my lifetime. In an odd way it felt good to be writing a book about being on the winning side."

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Out jewelry designer at Nov. 8 launch

Openly gay jewelry designer Rony Tennenbaum has launched a line at Sparkles Fine Jewelry, 5405 N. Clark St.

Sparkles will host a chance to see Tennenbaum's jewelry collection Friday, Nov. 8, 6-8 p.m.

Tennenbaum, who has 25 years experience in jewelry manufacturing, launched his same-sex couples engagement, wedding and anniversary ring company in 2008 after recognizing the need for LGBT wedding jewelry that went beyond rainbows and triangles.

Tennenbaum also acts as consultant to both retailers and same sex-couple on what he calls "The New Etiquette of the Rainbow in LGBT Engagement and Marriage."

See www.RonyTennenbaum.com.



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Organizer pens book on lesbians and wedding planning

BY CHARLSIE DEWEY

With same-sex marriage on the fast track, wedding planner Bernadette Coveney Smith has put her many years of same-sex wedding planning experience into a useful guide for lesbian couples headed to the alter.

The Lesbian Couple's Guide to Wedding Planning is the first wedding-planning book to focus specifically on the needs of lesbian couples.

As Coveney Smith, who is a married lesbian herself, notes in the book's introduction, "Having worked with hundreds of lesbian couples, I've realized that we have our own needs, our own agendas, our own music—and our own wedding tastes and concepts."

Even with all the lesbian weddings that have taken place since 2004, when Massachusetts began allowing gay marriage, Coveney Smith points out that two of the most common questions she fields are: "What's normal?" and "What does a same-sex wedding look like?"

Her response? "Any wedding, gay or straight, should be about the personality and style of the couple. Don't let anyone tell you differently."

The book is designed to take the guesswork and stress out of wedding planning and help couples bring out their personality and style.

It is laid out in 15 chapters, with 12 of them serving as a planning guide that covers every step of the wedding planning process.

For example, "12 months out" includes subtopics on creating an organizing system, developing a budget, choosing the wedding party, and deciding whether or not to hire a wedding planner. "Nine months out" looks at setting up a wedding registry and booking a photographer. Lastly, "Three months out" includes purchasing rings, ways

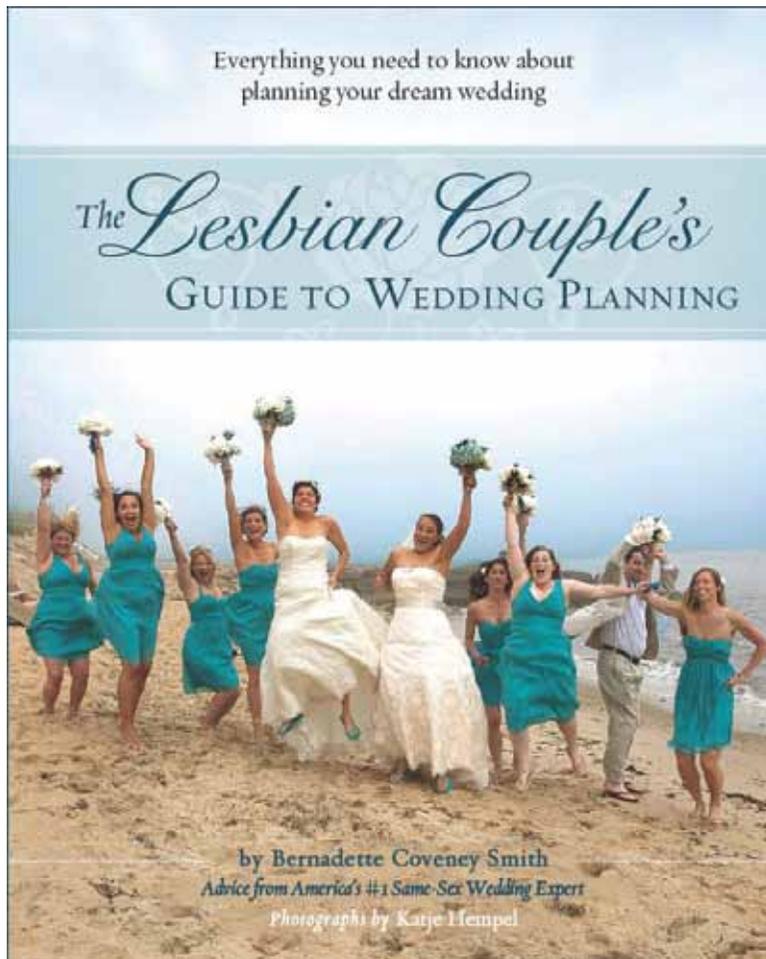
to personalize the wedding, finalizing the music and planning for transportation.

Coveney Smith also provides helpful tips specifically for transgender brides and grooms and acknowledges that despite using "lesbian," "brides," "LGBT" and "same-sex," she has tried to make the book inclusive.

A couple of the tips provided early on in the book specifically for transgender individuals include a note on which states have laws banning discrimination based on sexual orientation but that do not explicitly include gender identity, and a tip on coming out as transgender to vendors.

Coveney Smith does not sugarcoat the possibility of running into a homophobic vendor or someone who might actually mean well, but doesn't come across that way, and highlights some of the examples she's witnessed.

"I need to be honest and let you know that there's a



Author
Bernadette
Coveney Smith

good chance you're going to encounter some heterosexism and possibly homophobia, even if you're marrying in a state where same-sex marriage is legal," she writes. "I want to tell you this because, even as a planner, I've seen some ugly things, even with vendors I have prescreened."

She suggests lesbian couples come out to potential vendors right away, and reminds that in many states its legal for a vendor to say no to working with same-sex couples.

That honesty, combined with the book's thoughtfulness and expertise, make it a great resource.

In addition, it includes numerous photos of lesbian couples enjoying their wedding day, a great inspiration for the couple just setting off on their journey to the aisle.

Coveney Smith is the founder and president of 14 Stories, the first company in the United States specializing in planning legal same-sex weddings. Her company has produced hundreds of gay and lesbian weddings.

The book, which was published in September of this year, is available in bookstores nationwide.



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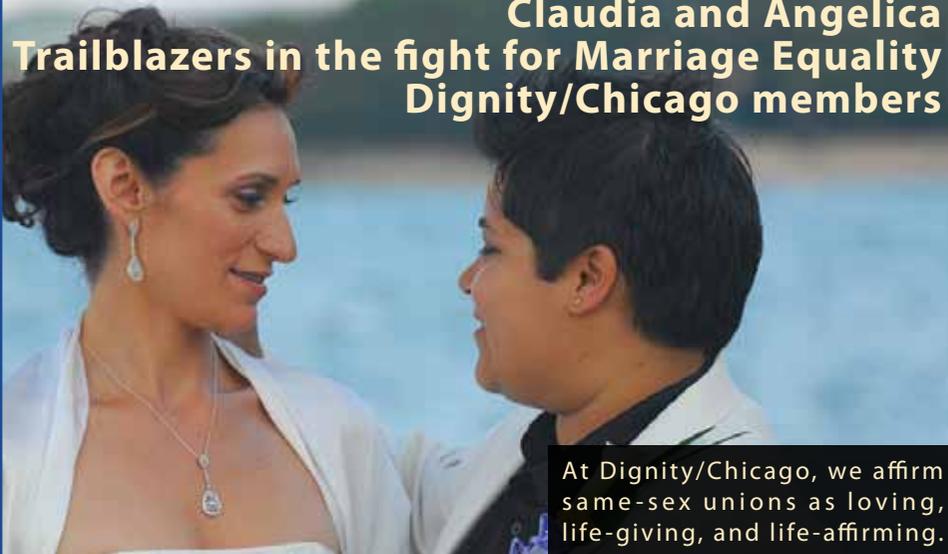
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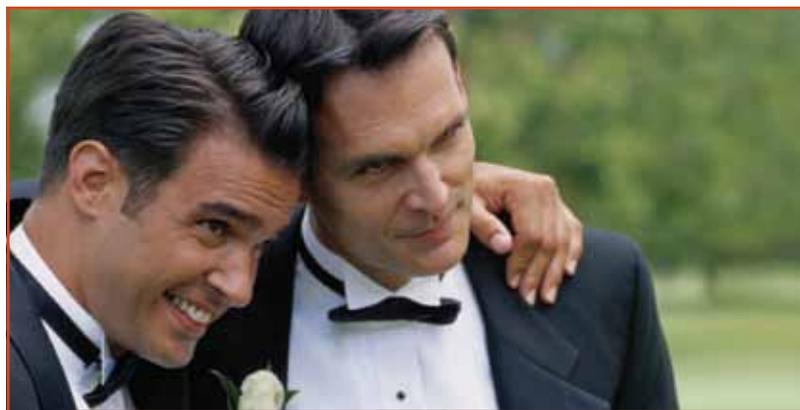
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Left: Roscoe's Crew at a CMSA volleyball season-ending awards party at Sluggers bar, originally printed in the April 21, 1993, issue of Nightlines magazine. Photo by Tracy Baim.



Right: From the 2013 CMSA Hall of Fame induction ceremony at Mary's Attic, March, 2013, featuring current and past inductees. Photo by Mel Ferrand

Chicago sports league CMSA marks 35 years

BY ROSS FORMAN

Gary Vien was given an off-white jacket, with red lettering, back in the mid-1980s after an all-star softball game of local gay players. He got it from Sam Molinaro who, in 1979, was named the first president when the Gay Athletic Association (GAA) was incorporated.

Vien, now 62, still has the jacket and countless memories from games decades ago—and he wears the jacket annually in the spring on opening day of the Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA) open division softball season, or if he attends the annual Gay Softball World Series.

The jacket is a link to history, connecting generations of Chicago's LGBT community through sports.

GAA started in 1978 with a 16-inch softball league, and was re-named the Metropolitan Sports Association (MSA) in 1985. In the late 1990s, MSA became the Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA), and even was the first organization inducted into the City of Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame (in 1992).

CMSA formally celebrates its 35th anniversary Nov. 9, with a three-hour party, dubbed, Come Out and Play, at The Sports Corner Bar & Grille in Wrigleyville (956 W. Addison), starting at 7 p.m.

"The thing with CMSA is, it's like a family, and I think almost anyone [in the association] would say that. If you ask any player now, on any team, in any sport, 'Name your 10 best friends and how you met them?' They'd probably say, through CMSA," said David Bartnick, 59 who lives in Lakeview, is a senior vice-president at Zurich, and met his partner, Jack Hazard, through CMSA—which Bartnick boasts as is his favorite memory of 34 years in CMSA sports, including his participation in softball, bowling, volleyball and tennis.

Bartnick played in the 2013 softball season. Bartnick and Hazard also sponsored a separate team in the CMSA open division softball league, filled mostly with first-year players.

Vien pitched this past season, and plans to return to the CMSA softball fields—at Clarendon and Margate parks on the city's north side—in 2014. And his all-star jacket from the 1980s will be back, again, without question, he said.

Bobby Nicholson, 64, lives in Lakeview, is retired, and has a partner, David Liechty. Nicholson also is a 34-year member of CMSA, who has participated in softball, bowling, basketball, flag football and kickball. He is one of the co-founders of the annual Senior Cup softball tournament, launched in 2000, and boasts a unique trifecta on his gay sports resume: he won a Gay Softball World Series title, umpired the Gay Softball World Series, and then returned to play, and win, the Master's Division at the Gay Softball World Series in 2011.

"So many laughs, so many good times, so many good friends ... that's how I think of CMSA," Nicholson said. "What I take away most from CMSA is: having fun, meeting people, seeing the country, doing what you love, and all of the laughs and good times."

Marcia Hill, 55, who lives in Albany Park and

works as an account manager, has spent more years in CMSA than any other woman. She's been a player, official, board member and league commissioner—and for multiple sports in each realm.

No one may know more about CMSA than Hill, a walking encyclopedia of Chicago's gay sports scene.

Hill was inducted into the City of Chicago Gay & Lesbian Hall of Fame in 2011, based on her CMSA involvement—and that's her prized CMSA memory.

"The last 10 years have flown by," said Hill, who couldn't meet to be interviewed for this story until, naturally, after a full day of CMSA sports.

"For the first 20 years, it basically was a four-sport organization, plus Proud To Run," which was founded and hosted by the GAA in 1982. The annual Proud To Run, held in late June, became

nowadays, Bartnick said.

In 1981, GAA added men's volleyball to the league's roster of sports, and the association's membership passed 440.

Women's volleyball was added in 1982. Tennis and basketball leagues formed shortly thereafter.

When MSA celebrated its 10th anniversary in 1988, the membership was about 1,200.

"I remember 1988 ... we had scorekeepers, standings, league batting champs [for softball] and more. We even had sit-down banquets; we would all get dolled up to go to the banquets," Hill said. "Remember, this was [an era] before cell phones, before FAX machines, before social media. Heck, we'd have to call the [gay] newspapers every Sunday by 6 p.m., leaving standing on the [phone] message, so they would get in the newspaper that upcoming week.

"Also back then, there was a league rule that

Sosa does not know anyone personally who has died from HIV/AIDS. Nicholson, meanwhile, said, "I don't think there was one team in any [CMSA] sport that did not lose someone [from HIV/AIDS]."

All five were teary-eyed reflecting on the HIV/AIDS era of the 1980s.

In 1987, MSA established Athletes Against AIDS (AAA) fund to pay all fees for bowlers impacted by HIV/AIDS. Supporting the fight against AIDS became a regular activity/event, especially among bowlers.

By 1992, more than \$30,000 had been raised to help local AIDS-related agencies through bowling.

"There was so much horror in the mid-1980s, and [AIDS-related] funerals continued well into the 1990s," Bartnick said.

Hill in 1988 played on a men's softball team. Today, she's the only one still living from that team.

Despite the heartache of the HIV/AIDS era, the Chicago gay sports scene picked up steam on the national front. In 1987, for instance, MSA joined the North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance (NAGAAA), a non-profit, international association of gay and lesbian softball leagues.

MSA also was prominent in the late 1980s and early 1990s on the national gay volleyball scene.

"There was steady growth for a while, but the biggest growth [period] was in 2005-2007, around the time of the Gay Games, which were held in Chicago in 2006," Hill said.

CMSA saw its membership total increase by about 900 participants, the biggest jump ever, after the 2006 Games.

Molinaro and Art Johnston, the co-owner of Sidetrack in Lakeview, were named as the two most influential Chicagoans in building GAA-MSA-CMSA in the early years.

Molinaro retired as president after 13 years in 1991.

Johnston attended the 2011 Gay Softball World Series, held in the Chicago area, and certainly leaves his lasting footprint on the sports scene with Sidetrack sponsoring teams in every sport.

"I think it's great that younger people are still coming into CMSA," Bartnick said.

One example is Sosa, the youngest player on his flag-football team. He formally met Hill, for instance, for the first time when they got together for the interview for this story.

Hill, coincidentally, had officiated Sosa's football game 24 hours earlier.

Sosa had no clue on the field that Hill, in her black and white referee jersey, was so prominent in CMSA history.

"Just hearing their stories, listening to what they've gone through, what CMSA has gone through, is an experience unto itself," Sosa said.

All four CMSA veterans each expressed gratitude to Sosa for talking about CMSA and carrying on its rich history. Each encouraged Sosa to play softball in the spring, regardless of his skill level—just as they do to/for all in the gay community.

"Life is short. Have fun," Vien said.



Sidetrack's Division I team from the August 18, 1993, issue of Nightlines magazine. Photo by Tracy Baim.

MORE PHOTOS AND CMSA/GAA HISTORY ON PAGE 27

an event run by the Frontrunners & Frontwalkers Chicago in 1992.

GAA started with about 30 people playing softball, and a Tuesday afternoon bowling league was added next, in 1979. GAA added the Tuesday afternoon league so bar owners and employees could bowl, and then go to their jobs that night, Hill said.

There were four softball teams in 1979, and Nicholson still remembers the player who, in one of the association's first few years, showed up wearing women's evening gloves on his arms, "because they told him to bring gloves," he said, laughing.

Bartnick was asked to join the league by a bartender and admitted, "I had no idea what gay softball was going to be like."

As the softball league grew, expanded and improved, Nicholson said, "There were some of the best players I ever played with and against; it was very competitive."

Many teams in the 1980s had large rosters, perhaps 17 or 18 players, which is not common

you could not video tape a game. And many team photos weren't full team photos, or a player would be facing away from the camera," so as to not be outed in the photo.

CMSA also battled the HIV/AIDS onslaught in the 1980s and 1990s, which Bartnick tagged as "horrible."

"It was really tough to be the pallbearer for your old drinking buddy," Bartnick said.

"It's still so tough to talk about that [HIV/AIDS era]. I had so many friends pass away," Vien said.

Nicholson said he still remembers going to three or four funerals, or memorial services, in a week. And there were many weeks like that.

David Sosa, 23, who lives in Wicker Park, played his first CMSA sport (flag football) this fall. He said simply hearing their tales of the HIV/AIDS era is "devastating."

"It's even hard to just sit and listen to their stories," said Sosa, who joined Bartnick, Hill, Vien and Nicholson for a late October roundtable discussion on CMSA 35-year history.



This recent multi-media installation at Berlin shows the bar's commitment to art. Photo by Kirk Williamson

Now serving a 30-year mix of memories at Berlin

BY ROSS FORMAN

Tim Sullivan and Shirley Mooney, a gay man and a straight woman, opened the Berlin Nightclub along West Belmont Avenue in Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood in 1983. "They wanted Berlin as an alternative to having to hang at the only options out there at the time: either leather bars or what Shirley would call sweater bars," said current Berlin co-owner Jim Schuman.

"There wasn't anywhere [then] truly mixed where they could both socialize and not feel out of place," said Jo Webster. "That was what Berlin was created for: a place to escape those mutually-exclusive worlds into an inclusive one, which embraced everyone."

Berlin is still that, 30 years later—and Schuman and Webster are still front and center.

The two are real-life partners as well as business partners. They carry the "owner" title for Berlin, but say they "prefer to think of ourselves as its custodians," Webster said. In some sense, they said, they are the historic explorers of Berlin.

"It's amazing to reflect on just how many people have come to think of Berlin as family over the years," Webster said. "We've been lucky enough to make friends with so many folks of every kind, from all over the world. Many of them hadn't been able to be open about who they were in their regular lives, or be comfortable with being 'different' in one way or another. But, they'd come to Berlin and found a place where they could be accepted and make lasting friendships. Berlin became a home away from home for them, in fact, for all of us."

"It is so fantastic that, after 30 years, it's still a place which brings joy and happiness to such a rich variety of humanity."

Berlin has not changed much over the past 30 years, which is something the couple take great pride in. "It's still very mixed, and we still love to be original and quirky—we celebrate with art installations regularly, give a place for some very original talent to be showcased, use original videography and ahead-of-the-curve music to watch and dance to," said Webster. "We were very careful to be true to the original vision of Berlin when we took over from Shirley after Tim died. We even swore to Shirley that we wouldn't hang ferns in the windows. Why she thought that was a risk, we still don't know."

Schuman said he and Webster are each "over 21 and legally able to party," which they still enjoy. They have owned Berlin for nearly 20 years, though both tended bar as far back as 1984 and Webster was even a bar-back at the club.

"Our very first anniversary at Berlin, Shirley shackled a bowling ball-sized glitter ball to each of our wrists with handcuffs and told us to get on with it. It's quite a ride, and we've learned never to judge a book by its cover [because] under that wig may be your bank manager, and that cute guy over there may have been born a girl," Webster said. "The most unassuming people may turn out to be super talented; you might find the guy or girl next to you is working on some amazing invention for the government, or is a cartoon artist for a major comic book. We've watched two Berliners perform 'Carmina Burana' as Siamese twin piglets, hosted the Del Rubio Triplets in their golden years, complete with go-go boots and cowboy hats, danced with Lady Miss Kier and partied with The Scissor Sisters."

Celebrating 30 years is a week-long event, which kicks off in early November, culminating with the 30th Anniversary Party, dubbed, An All-Out Family Affair, on Sunday, Nov. 10, with doors opening to the public at 11 p.m.

The anniversary week is all about the art of celebration, Schuman said. "We've been leading up to it all summer really, with our Pride [Parade] Float and club installation as an ode to Keith Haring," he said. "The next install was a pop art mash-up of Gainsborough vs. Lichtenstein," Webster continued, "and right now we're celebrating Warhol in an installation of art he might have created if he was still around. So, against this backdrop, we're revisiting some of our favorites—from Ralphi Rosario spinning Testosterone Tuesday, complete with go-go boys, to Glam-Cam Friday, where we'll set up our photography studio tent and bring out the crazy props; this time it's taxidermy and found objects from nature. Wednesday, we'll bring back 'Women Obsession,' our girl-for-girl party, and on Thursday, Heather Doble and Zebo will spin us back to 'Thrive.' Of course after Saturday's Drag Matinee and Twisted Dance Party, Sunday's the big bang, so we're really looking forward to that. It's going to be an amazing week."

Webster said Berlin, circa 2013, remains "a neighborhood dance bar of the future," as it was called originally. This year, Berlin has added "Art Bar" to its moniker.

One of the club's biggest nights ever was its House of Harlot show. "One of our best friends from London is kinky clothing designer Robin Archer, who's designed fantastical outfits in colored and printed latex for movies like Tim Burton's 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' and the upcoming Wachowski siblings' 'Jupiter Rising,'" Webster said. "He's clothed every music star from Tina Turner to Lady Gaga, from Marilyn Manson to Beyonce."



Cazwell (from top down), God-Des and She, SSION, Mykki Blanco, Jackie Beat, and BAATHAUS (formerly DAAN) are just a few of the counterculture superstars who have performed at Berlin in the past few years. Photos by Kirk Williamson and DJ Greg Haus for Nightspots



"It was a huge undertaking. We put up a runway, built a big steel cage, flew Robin, his clothes, and his fabulous wife Michelle in from London and had a fashion performance like no other. We didn't have to twist too many arms to get around 20 of the most eager models you can imagine. Think 'Fifth Element' meets Russ Meyer and Jean Genet, quite the combination."

And what about Madonna-Rama?

"She's absolutely a star like no other—her influence is huge, as are the influences upon her," Webster said. "She's almost a collector of talent, and those collaborations have yielded some of the finest artistic expressions of our time. It's funny, I remember sitting in the car with Tim Sullivan back in the 1980s, listening to one of her albums, and Tim turned to me and told me how amazing he thought she was—the hard work, the message, the musical ear, the 'It Factor,' and that she deserved every bit of the success she'd had."

"Tim would have been so proud to know that Berlin has become the Chicago nucleus of appreciation for her talents."

In the early years, Berlin was half the size it is today and the DJ booth was a little cubicle somewhere above the women's bathroom. The long bar was pretty much the footprint it is now. The plumbing was terrible and, as a bar-back, Webster said he had the "gruesome task" of trying to free some of the worst obstructions possible—"It used to be toilet paper; now it's cell phones."

"As with any business, Berlin has had its good, and also its not-so-good, years," Schuman said. "There were maybe some early [years] when we put trust where we should not have. But you live and learn."

So what do the next 30 years hold for Berlin?

"More, more, more," Webster said. "We're really dedicated now to getting back to our roots in art. Art really can bring peace, love and understanding, especially in a world where different cultures are coming so close to each other, that they often seem set to collide. We've got some great ideas in production."

They were nonstop when asked about some personal memories of the past 30 years, including the time they both modeled in the first "Men in Skirts" fashion show. They also noted such memorable Berlin experiences as the Sunday afternoon petting zoo, Wig Night, Valentine's Day Mascara, Totally Enormously Extinct Dinosaurs, the House of Games mechanical decor, feathers, glitter, and more.

Schuman added: "We take the business side of things very seriously, as any business has to, but for us it's not so much about which drink is more popular than another or what each square-foot can generate in revenue. If we did, we might as well open a supermarket. [Instead], for us it's about putting on the best party we can and making people feel welcome."

Perhaps that's why both say Berlin does not have a demographics of patrons, and that's just how they want it.

"Many of our employees have been with us more than 10 years. Some of them have been with us as long as we've been around," Schuman said. "We think there must be a group portrait in an attic somewhere. But we also have plenty of family members who've only been with us for a short while. Either way, loyalty is a two-way street here—we're very lucky to have found the crew we have. Or maybe they found us, and will continue to do just that."

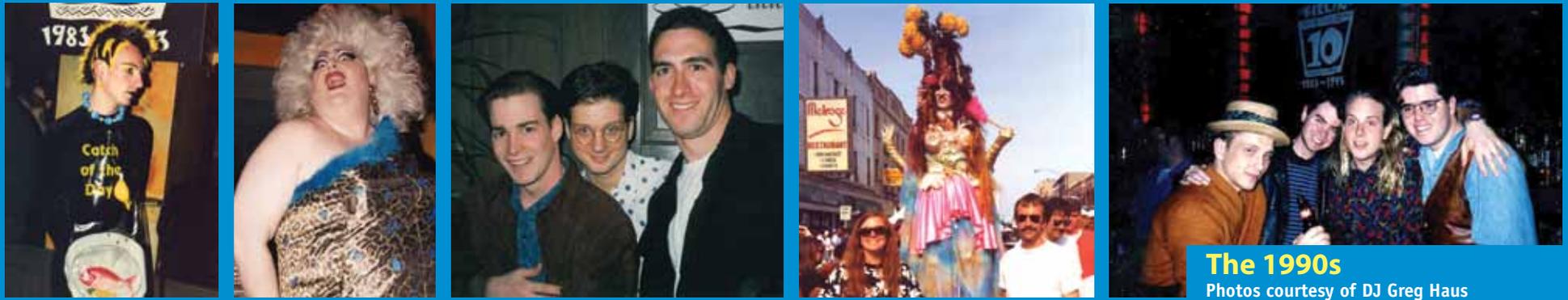
Schuman said they are regularly recognized worldwide, even at other clubs, when people ask them, "Hey, do you remember me from Berlin?"

"It never ceases to amaze us how small the world can be, from Barcelona to Buenos Aires, there are people who treasure Berlin and the memories they have of it," Webster said. "The most amazing awards Berlin has won over the years have been out of the blue, like Best Dance Bar from Rolling Stone, or Best Dance Bar from the U.K. Time Out Travel Guide. It's really great to have everyone's hard work appreciated in the media, but ultimately it's our patrons who give us the best accolades."

Berlin: Down the decades from page 26



The 1980s
Photos courtesy of DJ Greg Haus



The 1990s
Photos courtesy of DJ Greg Haus



The 2000s
Photos by DJ Greg Haus and Kirk Williamson

More CMSA history ... from page 25

GAY ATHLETIC ASSN.

The Piggens/Backstreet team—Phil, Mikey, Richard, R.J., and Linda—play in the GAA Wednesday night bowling league at Marigold Arcade.

From the Dec. 15, 1983, issue of Gay Life.

MSA ... Simply the Best!

Please come and join your friends at the **Metropolitan Sports Association Holiday Party**

To Celebrate Our 16th Year of Athletic Activities

Sunday, December 4th
5 pm to 9 pm
at **The Stadium Club**
at **Wrigley Field**

The Stadium Club entrance is located on the south side of Wrigley Field on Addison. Parking is available in the Red lot on Clark Street.

- ◆ Your picture with Santa
- ◆ in a souvenir key chain
- ◆ Hors d'oeuvres Dancing
- ◆ Open Bar 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

(Well, Wine, Domestic Beer, Soda & Juices)

In keeping with the Holiday Spirit, this party will benefit the Lakeside Partry which distributes emergency food supplies to those in need. Please bring a contribution of non-perishable food, peanut butter, cans of tuna or meat, soap and tissues are especially welcome.

Come to the party! See your friends! Have fun!

Sportball ◆ Bowling ◆ Volleyball
Tennis ◆ Flag Football ◆ Basketball
Fall Classic Invitational Volleyball Tournament
MSA/NAGAAA Softball World Series Qualifier
ChicagoLand Roll-off ◆ Snoball Softball Tournament
Chicago International Indoor Tennis Classic
Chicago Pride Invitational Bowling Tournament

Thanks to our sponsors, teams and the many volunteers that have supported MSA!

3-D Am Sather's Restaurant Aquatic Design Fashions Beatrix Big Chick Boyer's Cowbears Buda Buddy Casper/Pro Resume Service of Peasants Cher's Crispale & Her Courts Cruz Rhodes Dandy's Danka Deli M Productions Dust'r Dudes Elat Deuce Estate Club of Chicago Gaby's Gardner & Associates Gay Chicago Magazine Genesee Depot	Gayety Shoe Frame Beauties Girls with Spikes Harlow Street Folkers Infelixy Irk Em Lip Ironville Jeffrey Stephens Know No Limits Legends N.H. Minds Lost & Found Margaret Bowl Arcade Mike's Broachery Cafe Murray & York Nighttime Weekly North End Off The Line Outline Newspaper Our Spoken Bikes 'n' Stuff Party Animals Paul Saters Hair Design Peeps Like Us Books	R.J.'s Videos Rococo's Shirts Illustrated Sidetrack Sisters of Mercy So Chic Sole & Braette Spire Parts Success Bank Sue Sweetarts The Other Side The Closet The Alpha/Lambda Triple Inn Vertes We're Everywhere Windy City Fruit & Nut Women & Children First Zauu Coffee Shop Zurek & Co.
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Play Hard ◆ Play Fair ◆ Play Safe
Happy Holidays to Everyone!

CMSA's holiday party ad from the Nov. 16, 1994, issue of Nightlines.

Gay Pride Race - Biggest Ever!

The 6th Annual MSA Proud-To-Run races boasted a field of more than 150 runners. Although most of the entrants were from Chicago and its metropolitan area, our race also attracted runners from Wisconsin, Iowa, Ohio, Pennsylvania and even the Virgin Islands.

107 runners competed in the 6.2 mile (10K) course, while 23 ran the 1 mile Fun Run. And more than 40 MSA volunteers kept time, recorded results, manned water stations and served as marshals.

Peggy Baker, the gay & lesbian issues coordinator for the City of Chicago presented awards to the race winners.

Steve S. (36:48) and C.M. Schmidt (46:42) of Racine, Wisconsin won top honors in the men's and women's divisions of the 10K. Felix C. (6:28) and Peg Grey (6:59) captured first place in their respective divisions of the 1-mile race.

In the gay corporate competition, Sidetrack (56:31) topped Roscoe's (84:08) and RJ's (88:55).

The Proud-To-Run, again designated a "Race Against AIDS", was sponsored, in part, by Lite Beer from Miller. Our thanks to Ms. Angela Lemke, Special Events Director for Chicago Beverage Systems, for all her support.

Nearly one-third of the runners chose to collect pledges for their running. As of race day more than \$7,000 was pledged to the runners with all collected donations to be divided between Howard Brown Memorial Clinic and Chicago House.

Peg Grey, Proud-To-Run race director, had only praise for the workers and supervisors of the Chicago Park District and Chicago Police Department who went out of their way to accommodate the runners participating in the gay pride run.

SS ★ PP ★ OO ★ RR ★ TT ★ SS

MSA playoffs begin--Sidetrack men, Synergy women win

Sidetrack's MSA Men's 12" first baseman grabs the throw for an out vs. Windy City/Diamonds. Photos: Tracy Balm

Big Reds' third baseman puts in a line drive in his team's first game vs. Harrods.

Right: From the Aug. 13, 1987, issue of Outlines. Left: From CMSA's Aug. 1987 newsletter.



REELING LGBT FILM FESTIVAL

A closer look at week one's films

BY STEVE WARREN

Here are reviews of some of the movies that will be shown at Reeling: The Chicago LGBT International Film Festival Nov. 7-12. (Next week's issue will feature films that will be shown Nov. 13-14.)

G.B.F. (Nov. 7): Director Darren Stein returns to the "campy John Hughes" territory of his 1998 breakthrough, *Jawbreaker*, with another socially conscious high school comedy that's sometimes silly, sometimes hilarious. North Gateway High has a Gay-Straight Alliance but no out gays. You'd think everyone would know about Brent (Paul Iacono), "the queeny one," if not his BFF Tanner (Michael J. Willett), but if they do they respect the boys' right to come out when they're ready. Tanner is accidentally outed, but because we're trendy he finds three girls fighting to get him for their Gay Best Friend (see title). Talented, "sassy Black" Caprice, religious (Mormon) 'Shley and bitchy (but secretly brainy) Fawcett lead the school's largest cliques and are competing to be prom queen. They see Tanner as a desirable accessory. Megan Mullally plays Brent's mother, who can't wait for him to come out so she can be accepting.

Who's Afraid of Vagina Wolf? (Nov. 8): I fell in love with Guinevere Turner in 1994 when I saw "Go Fish," an amateurish but endearing indie film about a group of lesbians. Most of the cast quickly abandoned acting careers but almost 20 years later Turner's back in another amateurish indie film about a group of lesbians. Having continued to develop as an actor, she stands out like a healthy thumb among the cast, even veteran Carrie Preston. This is a vanity project for producer-director-star Anna Margarita Albelo, who also conceived the semi-autobiographical story about an indie filmmaker turning 40 and trying to reach her annual goals of making a film, losing 20 pounds and getting a girlfriend. Incredibly, none of the women are attached, leaving open all kinds of romantic possibilities; but the focus is on Anna (Albelo), whose self-pitying, self-destructive behavior (including chain smoking) wins her no sympathy here.

Truth (Nov. 8): Truth features more telegraphing than Western Union in its heyday. The first few seconds, with a closeup of crazed eyes and a hand grabbing a large knife, could come from another Psycho remake. There's a lot of flashing back and forth but once we settle into a story we have a long wait for those eyes and that knife to get down to business. A psychiatrist (Blanche Baker) is interviewing Caleb (Sean Paul Lockhart) in prison. Caleb claims he doesn't know why he's there, but agrees to tell his story "from the beginning." Although we go further back to explore his abandonment issues, life basically began for Caleb when he met and fell in love with Jeremy (writer-director Rob Moretti). The men lie around naked a lot discussing their miserable childhoods (but in eight months Caleb never wonders where Jeremy lives) before Truth becomes a somewhat more effective horror film than it was a romance.

Southern Baptist Sissies (Nov. 9): Fans of *Sordid Lives* have doubtless bought their tickets to Del Shores' latest, which should ensure a sellout. Being a film of a Los Angeles stage production has its disadvantages but gives you closeups of actors crying real tears that the theater audience may have missed. It's about four boys growing up gay in a Baptist church in Dallas, and you know what that means. Mark (Emerson Collins) questions everything he hears in church. Benny (William Belli) floats above it all on a pair of high heels. Andrew (Matthew Scott Montgomery) believes it all and hates himself. TJ (Luke Stratte-McClure) believes it and fights temptation the "ex-gay" way. There are enough of Shores' fabulous one-liners to make you think

you're watching a comedy, but there's a lot of seriousness too, especially toward the end. When things get too heavy Shores cuts to Leslie Jordan and Dale Dickey as a couple of barflies, but even they have serious moments. There's still potential for an actual film adaptation, but it's better to see "SBS" this way than not at all.

The Battle of AmfAR (Nov. 9): I guess the headline should be that Elizabeth Taylor has a new movie! We don't need another AIDS documentary now, but this brief (40 minutes) one by Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman is classy and star-studded. Liz, Rock Hudson, Sharon Stone, Woody Allen – but the real star is Dr. Mathilde Krim, who used her husband's showbiz connections to jumpstart the American Foundation for AIDS Research (AmfAR) and begin searching for a cure and vaccine before Ronald Reagan made his one public utterance of the word "AIDS" (at an AmfAR benefit); and before Congress, lobbied by Ms. Taylor, passed the Ryan White Care Act to provide federal funds for HIV treatment and care. Epstein and Friedman find some new faces and angles to what's become an old story.

Geography Club (Nov. 10): Another 21st-century version of a John Hughes movie, or maybe a very special episode of "Glee," "Geography Club" convincingly shows the pressures high school students are under: peer and parental, academic



Interior. Leather Bar.

and athletic. Of course, lesbian and gay teens have it worst of all, especially at Goodkind High, where their miniscule support group (including Alex Newell, Glee's Unique, and Nikki Blonsky, Hairspray's Tracy) masquerades as the Geography Club to avoid discovery. Russell (Cameron Deane Stewart) isn't ready to come out until he's kissed by football star Kevin (Justin Deeley, the current guardian angel on "Drop Dead Diva"); then Russell's ready but Kevin isn't. Some contemporary kids won't believe school was ever like this, while others will be empowered to make sure it never is again.

I Am Divine (Nov. 10): LGBT history is about more than struggle and disease. It's also a world of entertainment, including the most outrageous. Jeffrey Schwarz's documentary is nostalgia for the Stonewall Generation, bringing back memories of midnight movies that shocked us back when people could still be shocked. John Waters was "The Sultan of Sleaze." His muse and biggest star was his Baltimore neighbor, known to his family and friends as Harris Glenn Milstead but known to the world as Divine. This entertaining film tracks Glenn's story from a chubby, bullied kid to an international cult figure who had brought cross-dressing into the mainstream before dying too soon at 42. What's most heartening is how many goals he was able to achieve in his short life, including hit records, off-Broadway shows and being accepted as a character actor who could play male roles as well as female.

Hot Guys with Guns (Nov. 11): Like a Scary Movie, *Hot Guys with Guns* takes a scattershot approach to spoofing various genres, starting pretty well with some film noir-style narration and a 007-inspired credit sequence; but what follows is neither noir nor Bond. It's about two amateur detectives, with a little help from a professional, investigating a series of crimes against L.A.'s gay community. Someone is robbing a series of circuit orgies in the private homes of Hollywood hotshots too famous and closeted to report the thefts. Danny (Marc Anthony Samuel) is an actor studying detective work for a role. He isn't over his ex, Pip (Brian McArdle), who assists him in his sleuthing. Pip still lives at home with his mother, although she and the miscast McArdle look about the same age. Samuel is the better actor, though a little low on personality. The hot guys are the extras in the orgy scenes but they get very little camera time. Despite better production values than many gay indies, Doug Spearman's direction fails in some key scenes and the plot would work better in a one-hour TV episode than a movie almost twice that length.

Interior. Leather Bar. (Nov. 12): The mystery of James Franco deepens as the straight actor-filmmaker immerses himself in the gay scene once again. We'd all like to be the "right boy" we hope he just hasn't met yet. "Interior. Leather Bar." is a movie about the making of a movie about the making of a movie, William Friedkin's controversial *Cruising*. Now it gets complicated. The central figure is a straight actor, Val Lauren, who's conflicted about playing straight actor Al Pacino playing a straight detective who's conflicted about going undercover in the gay leather community. Franco and his out gay co-director Travis Mathews are ostensibly recreating 40 never-seen minutes of footage Friedkin was forced to cut to get an R rating, but about 50 minutes of this hourlong film takes place before or behind the scenes, as straight actors, including Franco, discuss boundary issues. A gay couple shows they have no boundaries in one of the few scenes from the actual shoot. Franco offers a few clues to his own motivation. Love it or hate it, you've never seen anything like this.

Reeling 31 to take place Nov. 7-14

BY RICHARD KNIGHT JR.

After going on hiatus last year, Reeling: The Chicago LGBT International Film Festival is back, "recharged and ready"—poised to bring yet another slate of winning queer themed movies to the city. The second-oldest LGBT film festival in the world and a beloved Chicago cultural institution will screen more than 50 separate screening events during its eight days, which will take place Nov. 7-14.

The 31st edition of Reeling once again kicks off with a splashy, red carpet screening event at the Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport Ave. G.B.F., this year's opening night selection, is director Darren Stein's (*Jawbreaker*) latest teen comedy. Clueless and *Mean Girls* mix it up with elements of *Camp* and *Glee* when the most popular girls in high school duke it out to acquire fashion's newest Must Have accessory: a gay best friend. Michael J. Willett, Paul Iacono and Sasha Pieterse star.

G.B.F. features memorable performances by Megan Mullally, SNL's Horatio Sanz, Jonathan Silverman, Rebecca Gayheart, and Natasha Lyonne. The 7:30 p.m. screening of this delightful comedy will be preceded by a red carpet event that will feature several of the film's young stars—Paul Iacono (*The Hard Times of RJ Berger*), Molly Tarlov (*Awkward*), and "Desperate Housewives" Andrea Bowen as well as a bevy of stars from other Reeling movies. The lineup includes Trent Ford (*The Vampire Diaries*) and Rob Mayes (*The Client List*) from *Burning Blue*, porn star turned actor Sean Paul Lockhart and Rob Moretti from the gay crime thriller *Truth*, and LeRoy McClain (star of *The Happy Sad*).

The screening will be followed by a reception at the nearby Laugh Factory, 3175 N. Broadway. There, the fun continues with a hilarious selection of specially chosen comedy shorts and a performance by stand up local LGBT stand-up comics.

The festival then moves to its primary location, the historic Logan Theatre, 408 N. Kedzie Ave., in Logan Square. (Satellite screenings will also take place at various venues around the city.) Brenda Webb, founder

and executive director of Reeling, had this to say about the new location: "We have felt a very warm welcome from the Logan Square community and this year's festival will be more festive than ever. In addition to our terrific lineup, we have lots of after parties at Logan establishments."

The theater location also offers patrons easy access to parking and public transportation (both are less than a block away) while the recently restored venue itself has a lounge and a bar. A closing-night reception will be held at the Stan Mansion, 2408 N. Kedzie Ave. The movies being shown Nov. 14 are *Ludwig II*, *Reaching for the Moon* and *Ian Harvie Superhero* starring Ian Harvie, the world's first FTM transgender standup comic (who will attend the screening).

Other highlights include *Black Box*, writer-director Stephen Cone's follow-up to *The Wise Kids*; Cory Krueckeberg's *Getting Go: The Go Doc Project* (the fest's spotlight screening with stars and filmmakers in attendance), *Interior.L Leather.Bar*, a collaboration between James Franco and Travis Mathews that ruminates on the missing footage from director William Friedkin's *Cruising*; *An Abominable Crime*, which looks at the violence that gays and lesbians experience in Jamaica, Two: *The Story of Roman & Nyro*, a documentary portrait of hit songwriter Desmond Child, his film producing partner Curtis Shaw and their twin sons (all who will be attending Reeling), *Del Shores' Southern Baptist Sissies* (*Shores*, the film's star Emerson Collins and Levi Kreis, who performs the end credit song, will also be attending), and *Sing-a-Long Victor/Victoria* with live commentary by gay icon Bruce Vilanch in celebration of the 31st edition of the movie, the festival, and *Sidetrack*, where the screening is taking place.

"We're very happy to have so many filmmakers and actors in attendance this year," Webb said. "Their presence always helps make Reeling that much more exciting for the audiences—and for us!"

The complete festival lineup, advance tickets and updates are at www.reelingfilmfestival.org.



Darren Stein on the set with G.B.F. co-stars Xosha Roquemore (center) and Sasha Pieterse. Photo courtesy of Stein

REELING LGBT FILM FESTIVAL

Director Darren Stein of 'Jawbreaker' chats about his new film, 'G.B.F.'

BY ANDREW DAVIS

In 1999, gay director Darren Stein won over viewers (including many members of the LGBT community) with his cult classic *Jawbreaker*, which starred Rose McGowan, Rebecca Gayheart and Julie Benz as three of the most popular girls at a high school who accidentally kill their prom-queen friend with the title object when a kidnapping goes horribly wrong.

Now, Stein is back with another high-school film that's just as fun: *G.B.F.* In this film, three clique queens who rule the school compete for this year's must-have accessory: the G.B.F. (gay best friend). He talked about the film's cast (which includes everyone from Gayheart to Megan Mullally to *Pretty Little Liars'* Sasha Pieterse to gay actor Paul Iacono) and a musical based on *Jawbreaker*.

Windy City Times: When I first saw the title, I thought, "How nice—a movie about gay Black friends."

Darren Stein: [Laughs] That's funny.

WCT: This movie is pretty fun. What did you think when you first saw the script?

DS: I just thought it was so smart and timely, and it read to me like a potential classic about something important. And it had this character for a lead that I really hadn't seen before.

WCT: And can we talk about this cast? I kept going, "I know who that person is: That's Rebecca Gayheart, and that's Jonathan Silverman, and that's the girl from *Pretty Little Liars*." How did you [assemble] this cast?

DS: With Rebecca, I thought it'd be fun to use one of the actresses from *Jawbreaker* in an adult role in this movie. And we wanted to use a lot of relevant actors from pop culture: Sasha or Evanna Lynch—who's from the *Harry Potter* movies. We wanted to create a world of actors known from other worlds, but in the context of a new movie.

WCT: Megan Mullally is the mother who knows all about her gay son, and that queer movie night scene...

DS: Yeah, it's such a fun scene. It's fun to see her play mother to a future Jack [from TV's *Will & Grace*].

WCT: Yeah, times have changed a little since I was in high school. [Stein laughs.] Did you know someone like the main character when you were in school—or were you a G.B.F. of some sort?

DS: I was not; I went to an all-boys school. I didn't have a bad high-school experience but, sometimes, for gay guys to feel empowered it takes friendships with girls to give them that validation. But I certainly had it in spades in college, at NYU. [Laughs]

WCT: So what was that like?

DS: Oh, I was like a kid in a candy shop. There was dating for the first time and falling in love for the first time and having close female relationships. I was a late bloomer: I didn't get drunk for the very first time until college.

WCT: This might sound weird, but I wish there was a "Topher" [a gay Mormon character who pretends to be straight] in my high school...

DS: I know, right?

WCT: And then for the two gay students to have a straight male student in their clique is unusual. It really is a new day.

DS: Right. Well, it's a fun selection and a new line-up. I think it's a fantasy for [some] gay guys being the mean girls or being the diva or being very popular. We sort of put female power on a pedestal. It's fun seeing the gay kid in the lineup with the hot girls in the teen comedy. It's something you haven't seen before, and it's fun and fresh.

WCT: The movie stops short of being a bullying-type movie because it's comedic.

DS: Yeah, it's not that movie. It's a comedy, so you want to laugh. It has very emotional undertones, and there's the relationship between the two boys. Also, Tanner finds a depth in [head diva] Fawcett that he didn't expect to see. Ultimately, it's about how everyone is an outsider in his or her own way. The writer and I wanted this film to be an experience that could be shared by a mainstream audience, not just a gay one.

WCT: Where are you with *Jawbreaker* the Musical?

DS: We just had a reading in New York, with financiers, producers and others. It looks like we're going to be doing the first production in Seattle, probably around next summer. Hopefully, from there it'll go to New York or the U.K.

WCT: Or Chicago, which has quite the theater scene. When people say that the movie *Jawbreaker* is a cult classic, how do you feel about that?

DS: Great, because some of my favorite movies are cult classics—movies that are subversive, that push the envelope and are not meant for

mass audiences. I feel very good to have my movie considered that. Some things about the movie may make people feel uneasy, but it's a comedy.

WCT: Do you see yourself directing movies such as edgy dramas?

DS: I do, even though I'll be known for two teen comedies. I have Chloe Sevigny attached to a project that's a lot darker—it's a Hollywood gothic piece about a mother and her transsexual son. I definitely want to explore things that are bleaker. I definitely don't feel limited to just one genre.

WCT: G.B.F. will be the opening-night selection at Reeling. That's pretty exciting.

DS: I know! I'm hoping to come to Chicago. I've been traveling so much: San Francisco, Seattle, Ohio... There's a chance I can come, but I'm supposed to fly to Brazil for another film festival. If I can't make it, actors from the film will definitely be there.

G.B.F. will be the opening-night movie at the Reeling LGBT International Film Festival at the Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport Ave., on Thursday, Nov. 7, at 7:30 p.m.

REELING LGBT FILM FESTIVAL

Doug Spearman brings 'Hot Guys' to festival

BY TERRI-LYNNE WALDRON

Doug Spearman is known for being in front of the camera as a cast member of the 2005 LOGO TV series *Noah's Arc*, but it is his work behind the scenes as a writer and director that is taking him to new places.

Spearman is bringing his directorial debut film (he has been a commercial director for 22 years)—*Hot Guys with Guns* (HGWG), what has been called the first gay action movie—to Chicago's Reeling International LGBT Film Festival Nov. 11. Spearman is not going to be idle anytime soon. He is about to embark on another theatrical journey with the upcoming movie *Welcome, Sinners*, a romantic film about two men from different worlds who are drawn to each other.

Windy City Times: What has been the reaction to *Hot Guys with Guns* from the audience at film festivals?

Doug Spearman: I am extremely happy with the way the film is being received and I can always tell when the audience is in. There's a joke that happens two and a half minutes into the movie. If they get the joke then I know they're going to go along for the ride.

WCT: On your Twitter profile you refer to yourself as an "all-around hard-ass."

DS: I like to get shit done. So help or get out of my way. I'm at a certain age where there is way more sand on the bottom of the hourglass than there is on the top. I like a neat house and I like things to move and in order. I tend to say what's on my mind a lot and I am very distinct and clear about what I want, what I mean and what I say. That can be challenging for people.

WCT: You work with your friends in your films, like Darryl Stephens in HGWG and the upcoming *Welcome, Sinners*. Are you harder on actors who are your friends?

DS: Yes. I really believe in them and I get to see things in them, like any director. I take them aside and I say, "Here's what I see and here's where you're not doing the work so here's what you need to do, so let's get on it."

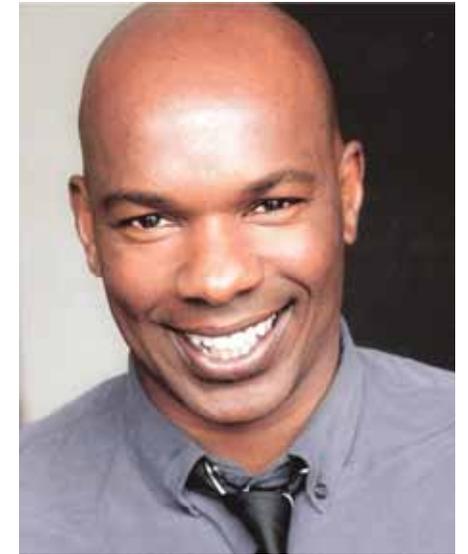
WCT: *Welcome, Sinners* is an updated version of a lot of romantic films such as *Making Love*, the 1982 movie about a married man who confronts his long-repressed attraction to other men.

DS: When I saw it I was in college and it's the only time I've ever put on dark glasses and snuck into a movie theater—I went to college in a very small town in Indiana. I thought the movie was amazing and great and I was kind of breathless.

WCT: Tell me about the Indiegogo campaign for *Welcome, Sinners*, a film that you wrote, will direct and executive produce.

DS: For the Indiegogo photo shoot, I wanted cast portraits, like unified advertising, and I'm going to put out a coffee table book of those portraits. That's part of the Indiegogo perks.

WCT: The theatrical release of *Hot Guys with Guns* is set for 2014 and it will be on



Doug Spearman.

Netflix sometime after that. It will be distributed by Wolfe Releasing?

DS: It's a real honor because Wolfe is a fantastic company and Barbara and Kathy Wolfe—who run the company—and Maria Lynn, who is the president, have such great ethics. They are really out there for the filmmaker and for the audience. They were with us from the very beginning and they believed in me.

WCT: How far along are you with the sequel to *Hot Guys with Guns*?

DS: It's completely outlined but I won't start writing it until next summer because I need a break.

WCT: You will be at the Reeling International Film Festival in Chicago Nov. 11. Why is *Hot Guys with Guns* an important film for the LGBT community?

DS: Independent film is important to support. If you want to see people and scripts and dialogue, it's going to be in a smaller film. We're the ones who are going to be replacing all those other people in Hollywood that are no longer going to be making movies. Hollywood can't afford to support itself—an old economic model. The LGBT community needs to apologize to LGBT audiences because I think that for a long time we made movies that did not live up to their hopes and dreams in terms of style, acting and production value.

What me and my partners and producers are trying to do is raise that bar. If LGBT audiences don't support their own films, then no one's going to make our movies. If we don't make our movies then we don't get our stories told. And if we don't get our stories told then we are not part of the cultural tapestry in the country of the world that we live in.

Hot Guys with Guns will be screened at the Reeling International LGBT Film Festival Nov. 11. For more info, visit www.reelingfilmfestival.org. More about *Hot Guys with Guns* is at www.hotguyswithguns.com.



WEEKLY DINING GUIDE IN WINDY CITY TIMES



The Grid

BY ANDREW DAVIS

The Grid (351 W. Hubbard St.; <http://TheGrid-Chicago.com>) is among the new crop of River North restaurants (Municipal, Blackfinn Ameri-pub) to incorporate a Chicago theme.

As one might guess, this eatery is modeled on the city's grid system, as evidenced by a decor that shows what appears to be screens throughout the restaurant. Yes, it's a gimmick—but it works.

Thankfully, the contemporary American cuisine also works well, overall. The cocktails are named after areas of Chicago, and the drink I had (the Hubbard Street) was one of the best I've had in recent memory. (Unfortunately, as of last week, it was not listed on an online menu that includes items such as the Little Village, The Gold Coast and Argyle Street.)

Assistant general manager Noah recommended several dishes, so my guest and I decided to try the blue crab cracker and the smoking steak tartare. While the former dish did not work too well for me (the chili aioli seemed to overwhelm the crab), the tartare definitely worked for me as a visual and gustatory delight.

That continued with my sandwich: the "Explorateur," a combination of Angus beef, cheese, maple pork belly and lettuce. I was a little concerned about one meat's flavor being lost in the other, but that was certainly not the case as

they complemented each other perfectly. My guest had the fried chicken-and-oyster sandwich (with sweet chili, bok choy and peanuts), which he also seemed to enjoy. By the way, The Grid has a pretty impressive list of entrees, ranging from braised butternut squash to salmon to pork steak.

There are also desserts (again, not listed online). Items include donuts (and it's the sauces that make that dessert) as well as a tasty coconut cream pie, among others.

Unfortunately, the wood-fired oven was not ready so we could not sample the pizzas. However, the combinations look quite tempting, such as one with smoked chicken, fig and blue cheese.

When asked if the location is problematic (considering it's a bit far from tourist-saturated Michigan Avenue), Borden replied that The Grid is located very close to well-known spots such as Merchandise Mart and the tony gym the East Bank Club.

I'm not sure if people will want to indulge in pizza and beer right after working out, but The Grid definitely deserves a shot. (Also, be sure to say hello to server Natalie, a friendly blonde who is simultaneously efficient and accommodating.)

—**Jellyfish**, take two: Windy City Times recently reviewed the trendy pan-Asian eatery Jellyfish (1009 N. Rush St.; <http://www.jellyfishchicago.com>), but a subsequent visit warrants deeming this eatery a "must-visit." When my guest (who had just come from Japan) had no complaints, that should recommend it right there.

From the edamame to the spicy crab minitacos to the signature rolls (the Fire & Snow is especially delightful) to the taro funnel cakes, Jellyfish has it down pat. Also, the Sizzling Stone (where patrons cook wagyu tableside) is something that should be tried.



The Explorateur (left) and the donut tower at The Grid. Photos by Andrew Davis



Chef Jason Im (left) and dessert at Jellyfish. Photos by Jerry Nunn

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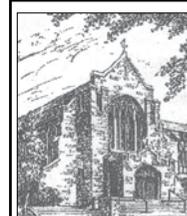


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MOVIES

A conversation about 'Blue Is the Warmest Color'

BY RICHARD KNIGHT JR.

Almost from the moment that director Abdellatif Kechiche's *Blue Is the Warmest Color* won the coveted Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival earlier this year, the lesbian-themed movie has been the subject of intense debate.

From its graphic, lengthy sex scenes to its three-hour running time, Kechiche's French movie has been the talk of the indie film world. Actress Adele Exarchopoulos plays the 17-year-old Adele, a junior in high school of uncommon beauty who dreams of becoming a grade-school teacher. One day on a crowded avenue Adele passes by a young woman with streaks of blue in her hair; that evening Adele fantasizes making love with the object of her desire.

Richard Knight Jr.: Not only did this film win the Palme d'Or but both actresses won special acting prizes at the Cannes Film Festival. So, there was all this initial acclaim and then almost immediately, there was push back about the extent and length of the sex scenes.

Tracy Baim: It's not that the sex was unreal; it's just that it was more like pornography. It didn't feel like the amount of it was germane to a story. It was gratuitous and pornographic. It's not that it was unreal. People have sex in all different ways. That's not really what my objection is. I hated the movie. "Hate" may be a really strong word but I wouldn't recommend it to anybody for a variety of reasons.

RKJ: I liked very much at the beginning of the film as it went through the stages that a queer person would go through at that age when you're 17 and just coming to realize your same-sex desire and to act on it. I liked how the film tracked that. Visually, I loved that first moment when Emma, with her blue hair, walked by Adele on a crowded street and their eyes briefly met. And later, when she pleased herself and visualized it—that was really great. I also really liked the first time in the lesbian bar, the first conversation, the kiss—all that discovery—I loved all that.

TB: I liked that, too. He [the director] just ruined the movie. He made a movie that was twice as long as it needed to be, gratuitous sex

for whose purpose I don't even know and his close-ups were *Les Miserables*-close—gross and irrelevant to the plot. He was so self-indulgent with the length of the movie. Everything in the movie was twice as long as it needed to be, which ruined it.

There was wonderful stuff in it. The kids were fantastic (these are later in the film when Adele becomes a grade school teacher) but there were twice as many as they needed. The whole drama of the break-up and wanting to get back together felt twice as long as was necessary. So I felt like he ruined a perfectly good movie. When he was close-up on faces and then he would pull back—it was beautiful. But there was just too much preciousness with the close-ups, too much of "I am making a movie." But even though I think he ruined it I did like a lot of it.

RKJ: [Laughs] Those damn close-ups! Her hair became a major part of Adele's character—it was always in her mouth, in her face, strands in her eyes.

TB: And she couldn't find a Kleenex for the life of her. [Adele cries pretty much through the last half of the movie.] Again, there were some beautiful moments and I like the acting and the actors. I just felt they were used in a way that made the movie ridiculously long.

RKJ: Well, we did see some walk-outs. But again, I liked the build up and I was okay with the close-ups—I liked that you were forced to be in her space so when she finally got together with Emma the camera moved back to encompass the two of them. I also liked when Emma did the sketch of Adele on the park bench and says the sketch needs work—that's the filmmaker giving us the definition of the character. I like when the theme is stated metaphorically like that.

I also like that the movie then jumped over certain sections—we don't see Adele's parents coming to terms with her being a lesbian. We just jump to a year later and the two living together and obviously that wall has come down. I liked that.

TB: I liked that, too, but they didn't age her well. I couldn't quite tell if she was just playing house or if she really was a year older.



Blue Is the Warmest Color. Photo courtesy of Sundance Selects

RKJ: I think that was a problem as the years advanced—they didn't really age Adele much. I didn't mind the sex scenes.

TB: I didn't mind them; they just felt ridiculously long.

RKJ: I also didn't find them very sensual. A film critic—who I can't recall—has observed that any time you see people making love on the screen the audience is excluded by the very act and you are thrown out of the movie. I think in some ways that is true—and unless it's done "artfully," which it wasn't here, you're really aware that you are sitting there waiting and waiting for the movie to invite

you back in.

The scenes were shot like porn but they didn't seem designed to turn you on. I was more turned on by all the stuff leading up to their first sex scene—their first encounter in the lesbian bar was incredibly hot.

TB: Right! That was so much sexier.

RKJ: Oh my God—it was palpable, the desire, the connection between the two. When Emma's friends barge in you want to kill them—you really get into Adele's head at that moment.

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PEIRCE from page 17

when you don't identify someone in the terms they want to be identified in then you are robbing them of the ability to be acknowledged accurately. Simply by listening to people and learning how they want to be identified gives them a level of authenticity and space to be who they are. I was able to reflect Brandon accurately by listening to other people.

WCT: I just saw Carrie last weekend.

KP: Oh, good!

WCT: What made you want to update the past film?

KP: They came to me and I had the same question that everybody has: "Should I revisit this novel?" I spoke to [original director Brian] DePalma and he gave me his blessing. We are friends so he was open to it. I looked deeply at the novel and I was really transfixed with what a fantastic character Carrie White is, the misfit who wants love and acceptance at school. She has a horrible time getting it at school and at home. Her mother absolutely loves her but because she is terrified of life and sexuality her mother has created her own religion. She beats herself and her daughter. She is mentally ill and a conflicted woman. It was revelatory to me that Carrie discovered these superpowers.

WCT: Carrie always has that look—like she just might make it.

KP: Those powers she has almost give her a second chance about being okay in the world. It's almost like a person understanding, "Oh, I am queer" or "Oh I have this talent and I'm a musician." You go from being unaccepted and unacceptable to find a possibility in life. For some time in the movie she is okay. The complication is the possibility of love and acceptance by the boy. She buys into what we all buy into

to try it again and maybe it will work. She wants that Cinderella moment like we all do. We go to the prom and celebrate with her. I just love that it all explodes! To me that meant a boiling cauldron of drama.

When I read the novel again it was undeniable that this was a story I wanted to tell. It had been told before and maybe that is a reason not to tell it but for me it was he did it 40 years ago and did a great job but I loved the story and I want to tell it again.

WCT: Talk a bit about the modernization of the remake.

KP: We love a revenge story. We love right and wrong and justice. I thought that was something I could really turn up the heat on but I could modernize it. I put in cell phones where kids use to film themselves, and we all do, upload then download it. For better or worse everything is more amplified when you share something with millions of people.

WCT: There is such a different perspective on bullying now.

KP: They is. Bullying is in the news every week. There is always another case of bullying. We are just now seeing the tragic effects on the kids that are now going through it. There has always been a lot of bullying going on in our culture at the corporate level but this is a moment where we are seeing it at this age group a lot and it is having devastating effects. This was undeniable to me. This story is more relevant now than even when he wrote it. It was like he was seeing into the future.

Don't miss Peirce's appearance on Saturday, Nov. 9, at 5 p.m. at 2233 N. Clark St. in the Diane and David B. Heller Auditorium. Visit chicagohumanities.org.

Visit www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com to read the entire interview.

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560 W Diversey Ave, 6:30pm-11:30pm,
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The Kindness of Strangers Forty storytellers in a three-week festival featuring first-time and experienced tellers nightly. Kim Morris, Eric Warner, and Amy Sumpter will each headline a different week of the festival. The Side Project Theatre, 1439 W. Jarvis Ave.; 7:30pm-9:30pm, 773-340-0140, <http://www.thesideproject.net>

Sinead O'Connor American Kindness Tour. City Winery Chicago, 1200 W. Randolph St., www.citywinery.com; 312-733-9463

Equality Illinois Holiday Season Wine Tasting. Enjoy a variety of more than 99 different wines from around the world as well as light hors d'oeuvres. Bottles and cases of wine will be available for purchase. Your contribution will go toward the Equality Illinois PAC. 6:30pm-9pm, Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St., www.equalityillinois.org. Tickets: www.eqil.org/events.html

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., www.gayliberation.net

Arabian Nights The Theatre School at DePaul University Presents: 7:30pm-10pm, 312-922-1999, Healy Theatre, Fullerton and Racine in DePaul's Lincoln Park Campus., theatre.depaul.edu

Mary-Oke If you hear the siren and choose to sing a song picked by the KJ you get a free shot Sing your heart out, boys and girls They've got more songs than you can shake a high heel at, and they're always adding more. Check out the song selection online at www.KaraokeSongBook.net 9:30pm, Mary's Attic, 5400 N Clark St.

Thursday, Nov. 7

The Vaudevillains Get your tickets for the Off-Broadway sensation, starring Jinx Monsoon! 9pm-11:30pm, Roscoe's Tavern, 3356 N Halsted St., www.roscoes.com

Queer Contra Dance Chicago monthly dance. Contra dance is a form of folk dance, similar to square dancing, but with lines. 6:30-9:30pm. Community hall at St. Luke's Lutheran Church of Logan Square, 2649 N. Francisco Ave.

Julia Serano, author of Whipping Girl, reads from her new book, Excluded: Mak-

ing Feminist and Queer Movements More Inclusive. Women & Children First, 5233 N. Clark St.

Reeling Opening Night Film G.B.F. When the adorable Tanner (Michael J. Willett, United States of Tara) unexpectedly becomes the school's first openly gay student, nothing will stop the three "it girls" from making him their new bestie. The movie, which Darren Stein directed, features memorable performances by Sasha Pieterse, Megan Mullally, Jonathan Silverman, Rebecca Gayheart and Natasha Lyonne, among others. 7:30pm-10pm, Music Box Theatre, 3733 N Southport Ave., www.reelingfilmfestival.org. (Reeling runs through Nov. 14.)

Master Class Terrence McNally's stage biography of legendary opera diva Maria Callas. Inspired by a series of master classes conducted by Callas at the Julliard School, this sparkling, rich play with incidental music by Verdi, Puccini and Bellini puts the diva back onstage as she coaxes and inspires her "victims" while she rivetingly regales us with secrets professional and personal of her own. 7:30pm-9:30pm, 800-595-4849, No Exit Cafe, 6970 N. Glenwood Ave., www.theo-u.org.

Friday, Nov. 8

DIFFA/Chicago Presents Beauty and the Feast, Dining by Design. Eye Candy, Public viewing. 10 a.m. - 2 pm. \$10 donation at the door. Merchandise Mart, 8th Floor. kimberly@jochicago.com

Oak Park Area Gay and Lesbian Association (OPALA) Potluck, private home. info@opalga.org

Reeling: Truth screening Suspenseful, psychological thriller, exposing the hidden demons buried deep inside each and every one of us. Actor and producer Sean Paul Lockhart will attend. 9:15pm-11pm, The Logan Theatre 2646 N. Milwaukee Ave., reelingfilmfestival.org/; Tickets: <http://reelingfilmfestival.tix.com/event.asp?event=607714>

Wicked, one of the longest-running shows in Broadway history. Oriental Theatre, 24 W. Randolph St.—runs through Dec. 21. Visit www.broadwayinchicago.com.

Who's Afraid of Vagina Wolf? Life is not going well for 40 year-old filmmaker Anna whose birthday finds her once again repeating her usual list of resolutions: to lose 20 pounds, get a girlfriend and direct a movie. 7pm-9pm, Logan Theatre, www.reelingfilmfestival.org. Tickets: http://reelingfilmfestival.org/?page_id=1141

Orpheus & Euridice by Ricky Ian Gordon. 7:30pm, 312-704-8414, Eckhart Park Pool, Ida Crown Natatorium, 1330 W. Chicago Ave., www.chicagooperatheater.org/orpheusandeuridice/

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. Through Nov. 17. 8pm, TimeLine Theatre, 615 W. Wellington Ave.; timelinetheatre.com.

Note Naked Hair & Fashion Show with America's Got Talent's Branden James The Menz Room Salon and Equality Illinois present a charity Hair & Fashion Show. Latest hair styles for men this fall. Models in next to nothing underwear and accessories by Cram Fashions. 8pm-11:30pm, Hydrate Nightclub, 3458 N. Halsted St., www.eqil.org.

Saturday, Nov. 9

Kimberly Peirce: From Boys Don't Cry to Carrie Feature film director of 1999 feature film, Boys Don't Cry, a fact-based drama about the life and tragic death of Brandon Teena, a Nebraska transgender who was brutally raped and murdered after his double life was exposed. 5 pm-6 pm. Francis W. Parker School, Diane and David B Heller Auditorium, 2233 N. Clark St.

DIFFA/Chicago presents Beauty and the Feast, POP UP, Table Hop and Taste, Dining by Design. 11 a.m. - 3 pm. \$40 pre-purchase. \$50 Admission at the Door. Merchandise Mart, 8th Floor. kimberly@jochicago.com

Post-DOMA financial, legal, estate planning seminar. Retirement and Estate Planning seminar, sponsored by Della Monica & Associates with Ameriprise Financial, will help identify what couples need to know regarding taxation, marriage, retirement plans, government benefits, insurance coverage as well as the estate planning essentials. 9am - 12:30 pm The Little Goat Kitchen, 820 W. Randolph Street, Chicago. RSVP: contact.andrea.c.shay@ampf.com or call 773-880-5900 to RSVP.

Kimberly Peirce: From Boys Don't Cry to Carrie. Feature film director of 1999 feature film, Boys Don't Cry, a fact-based drama about the life and tragic death of Brandon Teena, a Nebraska transgender who was brutally raped and murdered after his double life was exposed. 5 pm-6 pm. Francis W. Parker School, Diane and David B Heller Auditorium, 2233 N. Clark St. chicagohumanities.org/events/2013/animal/kimberly-peirce-from-boys-dont-cry-to-carrie#.Um_xtrJLYg

Reeling: Southern Baptist Sissies Del Shores (Sordid Lives) returns to the screen with an adaptation of his award-winning 2000 play. Shores' long running hit—filmed before a live audience—is the alternately hilarious and heartbreaking story of four Texas gay boys who grew up

as born again Christians. 12pm-2pm, Logan Theatre, www.reelingfilmfestival.org. Tickets: reelingfilmfestival.org/?page_id=1141

Stand Up: A Musical Celebration of Equality This Lakeside Pride Symphonic Band program highlights music that reflects the struggle for equality around the world. Chicago premiere of Colors: A Celebration, a special 2013 commission by the Atlanta Freedom Bands for the 2013 Lesbian and Gay Band Association Annual Conference. 7pm-9pm, Nettelhorst School Auditorium, 3252 N. Broadway, www.lakesidepride.org.

Reeling: The Most Fun I've Ever Had with My Pants On. Childhood girlfriends Andy, a lesbian, and Liv, who is straight, reunite to scatter Andy's father's ashes from LA to Austin where Liv will audition for the role of a vixen spy in a noir film. 7pm-9pm, Logan Theatre, www.reelingfilmfestival.org. Tickets: reelingfilmfestival.org/?page_id=1141

Reeling: Two: The Story of Roman & Nyro Combining over twelve years of home movies and narrated by their nine year-old twin sons, film follows iconic songwriter Desmond Child (Livin' La Vida Loca, I Love Rock-n-Roll) and his partner's loving journey as they create their new family. 3pm-5pm, Logan Theatre, www.reelingfilmfestival.org. Tickets: reelingfilmfestival.org/?page_id=1141

Sunday, Nov. 10

Reeling: Official Premiere of Corpus Christi: Playing with Redemption at Reeling LGBT Int'l Film Festival, Sponsored by Michael Leppen. \$12. 12 pm. The Logan Theatre, 2646 N. Milwaukee Ave., reelingfilmfestival.org

Divalicious Brunch Kit Kat Lounge and Supper Club presents the one and only Madam X. Enjoy tasty tini's, delicious eats and the talents of the iconic. 11am-4pm, Kit Kat Lounge & Supper Club, 3700 N. Halsted St., www.kitkatchicago.com

Monday, Nov. 11

American Veterans for Equal Rights (gay veterans) Annual Veterans Day Dinner. \$35. includes 6:30 open bar, 7:15 buffet dinner; 8:15 program with keynote speakers; Lorry Luscri and Mandi Evanson from Jesse Brown Veterans Administration Medical Center, the force behind the "Operation Do Ask, Do Tell #2" this past September, 8:45 silent auction and fellowship. Reserve by calling Jim Darby, 773-752-0058. Ann Sather Restaurant, 909 W. Belmont Ave.

Reeling: Hot Guys with Guns Imagine Lethal Weapon's Mel Gibson and Danny Glover as younger and hotter ex-boyfriends forced to work together on a criminal investigation — and you have the basis for the aptly titled Hot Guys With Guns. 9:15pm-11:15pm, Logan Theatre, www.reelingfilmfestival.org. Tickets: reelingfilmfestival.org/?page_id=1141



NOTHING COMPARES

Wed., Nov. 6

Singer Sinead O'Connor concludes her stand at City Winery, 1200 W. Randolph St.

Photo by Barry Carroll

Tuesday, Nov. 12

Reeling: Interior. Leather Bar. Director William Friedkin's 1980 film Cruising (starring Al Pacino as an undercover cop investigating a serial killer in the NYC gay leather bar scene) was plagued with controversy and Friedkin was forced to cut 40 minutes of sexually explicit material. Those 40 minutes have never seen the light of day. 7pm-9pm, Logan Theatre, www.reelingfilmfestival.org. Tickets: reelingfilmfestival.org/?page_id=1141

Reeling: Matt Alber with Strings Attached This screening of music-themed films will be followed by a live performance by Grammy award-winning singer/songwriter Matt Alber. 7:15pm-9:15pm, Logan Theatre, www.reelingfilmfestival.org. Tickets: reelingfilmfestival.org/?page_id=1141

Reeling: Valencia A national community of queer filmmakers, writers, drag queens, performance artists, stylists, musicians and visual artists all gathered to create a film adaptation of the underground classic memoir Valencia. 9pm-11pm, Logan Theatre, www.reelingfilmfestival.org. Tickets: reelingfilmfestival.org/?page_id=1141

Wed., Nov. 13

The 3rd Annual Over the Rainbow, a benefit to raise money and awareness for those who struggle with cancer within the LGBT community. Performers include Matt Alber, Molly Callinan, Cyon Flare, Sami Grisafe, Tajma Hall, Sharriese Hamilton, Stephen Leonard, Circuit Mom and Chadwick Stadt. Silent auction. Proceeds benefit Gilda's Club Chicago. Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted, 7-10 p.m. www.sidetrackchicago.com.

BLUE from page 31

TB: Right, right.

RKJ: So, the earlier sections of the film had some wonderful moments. But the minute Adele went out in that too long scene in the bar and danced with the male co-worker and eventually kissed him—I thought, "Oh, Christ, its Personal Best again—30 years later!" Or it's The Kids Are All Right all over again. Here we go. If she was that fragile and insecure, why couldn't she have an affair with a woman?

TB: Exactly, exactly. And at the end, of course, we're meant to think that the guy she sees at the art gallery is going to track her down and that's who she's going to be with.

RKJ: The movie lost me at that point. That just seems like such a straight male conceit. Here we go again with Sandy Dennis in The Fox in 1967 being told by Keir Dullea she needs sex with a man to "cure her affliction of lesbianism." [Laughs] "If only you'd sleep with a guy it would cure you of this weird disease you have of wanting only to sleep with women."

TB: Or more relevant to this movie is that she

doesn't need a cure; it's that the woman was the aberration. It's a little bit further than The Fox but not much. [Laughs]

RKJ: And that's 45 years ago!

TB: There were so many things to *not* like that even though there were things I did like I couldn't recommend it to people. Maybe wait until it's available on TV so you can take a pause and come back to it the next day. It really felt like, "I'm a French moviemaker and I'm going to make you sit here for three hours." I understand movies that do that and I have enjoyed three-hour movies many times. This was not a story that was worthy of three hours. If he had cut it in half, I think it would have worked. Ironically, I would have liked more of the family because that was unresolved. She never went back to her family after the breakup or to her high school gay friend. Once we lost that connection to her as a person I didn't care about her anymore. I liked her through her family and through her gay high school friend. But I never liked her again after those characters disappeared from the movie. I realized that I didn't like her for the last half of the movie and you can't not like the central character. So I feel like he ruined his own movie.

RKJ: Well, I think you can not like a central character—it's harder to do.

TB: Yes, it's harder to do.

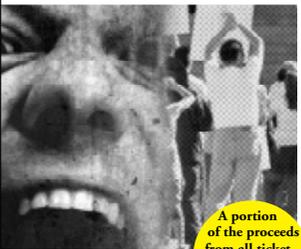
RKJ: It's not that I didn't like her—I just didn't feel a whole lot for her. I, too, wanted to see what had happened with the people around her who cared about her. It was very hard for me to believe that Adele and Emma didn't have some kind of reconciliation earlier than three years later. And I know I was supposed to feel great empathy in that scene in the restaurant where Adele sobbed and sobbed. But I just saw Acting, Acting, ACTING at that point.

TB: I just thought Kleenex, Kleenex, KLEENEX! [Laughs] I have to say, I really wanted to like it. For me, it's like The Kids Are All Right where I want to like these lesbian movies; I want more lesbian movies to be made but who is getting funded to make these lesbian movies is going to be able to decide what lesbians are. [Laughs] And that sucks. If a lesbian had made that movie it probably would never have gotten seen; it probably wouldn't have gotten to Cannes.

Read the entire conversation at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Is-Blue-Really-the-Warmest-Color/45006.html>.

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"I was so young. It made me go back in the closet because I was so overwhelmed at 26 or 27. I didn't want the responsibility, I didn't know how to handle the responsibility of speaking for the gay community. I always felt like I owed them a huge apology for coming out too late."—Sean Hayes discusses how the success of Will & Grace made him more private about his personal life. I can't speak for the entire gay community, but giving Linda Lavin more to do in Sean Saves The World will make us forgive almost anything.

I recently read an article with a provocative headline: "Does It Matter That Ronan Farrow Is Gay?" I guess it would matter if you were sleeping with him. And I suppose it might matter to Frank Sinatra if he were alive. But does it matter to anyone else? I posed the question to a number of people, who overwhelmingly responded, "Who is Ronan Farrow?" Well, he is newsworthy since he'll soon be hosting a show on MSNBC (which I am sure begs the question, "What is MSNBC?").

After the recent Vanity Fair feature on his look-alike mom, Mia Farrow, a bit of public attention was expected. In a New York Times profile, his personal life was dispatched with a cryptic statement that Ronan makes the rounds socially, "often appearing at political fetes with Jon Lovett, a former Obama speechwriter." Next thing you know, he'll be referred to as a confirmed bachelor, and Lovett his longtime companion. What is unclear is if this shroud of secrecy was an edict from Ronan's camp. Frankly, I don't care if he's gay or if he comes out. But I must remember, if

one cared. Even the revelation that he's dating an underling half his age generated little interest. Then Michelangelo Signorile wrote an article for the Huffington Post called "Why It's Wrong to Say It's Wrong to Say Shepard Smith Is Gay." I love Mikey and I get what he's saying—that when the press omits saying someone is gay, they're perpetuating the belief that being gay is something to hide. And I think that's a valid point in a story about someone's sex life. But tossed into a report about a waitress in a bar does seem slightly gratuitous and rather suspect. I hasten to add that I'd say the same thing if this were a story about a heterosexual man. If someone wrote that a straight male comedian was acting like a dick to his waitress while drinking with a gal who charges by the hour, I'd cry foul. Being out with a hooker has nothing to do with the story. Plus, who am I to disparage dating hookers? So, while I won't name Shep's alleged beau, I'll share photos of him on BillyMasters.com.

More than Shepard Smith, more than Satchel Ronan Farrow O'Sullivan Allen Previn Sinatra, my favorite story of the week was that attendees of the G20 Summit received bugged gift bags. Who knew they gave out gift bags at a summit? The bags included flash drives and cell phone chargers that would allegedly transmit data to a third party. What is the world coming to? At this rate, when I get a gift bag at the People's Choice Awards, I'm now gonna worry that my phone calls are being listened to by Kaley Cuoco.

Our "Ask Billy" question comes from Nathan in Florida who writes: "What can you tell me about Blake McIvar Ewing from The Little Rascals movie and the last season of Full House? I heard he's gorgeous and gay."

The precocious child actor (who has dropped Ewing from his professional name) is now a very handsome 28-year-old man who is indeed gay—something I suspected after he turned up on the first season of The Nanny tap-dancing while singing "Put On A Happy Face." In fact, Blake started out as a singer and got his big break on Star Search, where he won the junior singer category. Since his time as a child star, he's been rather successful as a voiceover actor for various animated projects. He recently turned up on Bravo's short-lived The People's Couch alongside his pals Emerson Collins and Scott Nevins. But my readers will likely be interested in his other career—as a go-go dancer! When asked about this new venture, he said, "I had so much shame about my body. This was a way to express myself that was safe, sensual, and fun. I'm not hiding who I am anymore—not pretending to be something I'm not." He's also barely hiding his candy, as you'll see in the mega-hot photos on BillyMasters.com.

Since I didn't exactly give you any full-frontal nudity, I'll make up for it with a brief response to a reader who is a fan of YouTube sensation Davey Wavey. I've met Mr. Wavey and can attest that he's as charming and charismatic in person as he is on screen. But my fan was curious about Davey's derriere and dick. Although he shows lots of skin in his videos (and on DaveyWavey.tv), I was fairly confident that Wavey has never shown all. How wrong I was. In fact, I came across a fistful of photos showing every inch of him. Of his ass, I expected something to behold. But upon seeing the rest of him, I'd rather behold his penis. Check him out on BillyMasters.com.

When Blake can still get us to put on a happy face, it's definitely time to end yet another column. Because of our last item, we ran long (in more ways than one). So let me wrap up by reminding you to check out www.BillyMasters.com, the site that never scrimps on size. If you've got a question for me, do send it along to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before Shepard Smith hooks up with Ronan Farrow! Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.



Davey Wavey (above) is very proud of his body, Billy says. Photo by Rick Day

ever I do meet him, not to call him Satchel.

At roughly the same time, a number of stories on Gawker targeted Fox News anchor Shepard Smith. First was an account about his boorish behavior to a bar waitress seven months earlier; he allegedly screamed, "Get my fucking drink" and jostled her elbow. Buried in that story was the waitress' casual mention that Smith was with a muscular 6-foot-2, thirtysomething white male who several bar employees identified as his boyfriend. (The pair had reportedly been seen holding hands under the table.) Days later, Gawker got more specific—about a year ago, Smith began dating a 26-year-old male production assistant from Fox News, who is now an associate producer at Fox Business Network—a move said to have been facilitated by Smith to avoid the appearance of impropriety. The aforementioned waitress and other co-workers confirmed this by saying, "Yes, that's Shepard's boyfriend."

This led to a New York Times article called "Gawker Kicks Open the Closet, but Its Disclosure Barely Reverberates." The gist was that while Gawker may have hoped that a Fox News anchor being gay would cause some hubbub, no

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President Obama honors the Chicago Blackhawks. Photo by Patsy Lynch

Obama honors Blackhawks

The final piece of the Chicago Blackhawks' celebration of their 2013 Stanley Cup championship occurred when President Barack Obama honored the team at the White House.

For many team members, it was their second time meeting the president, as they did it in 2011 to celebrate the Hawks' 2010 Stanley Cup. "Since I took office we've hosted a lot of championship teams, from Boston, New York, Pittsburgh and Miami, but since I've been president only one team has brought a world championship to my hometown of Chicago and now the Blackhawks have done it twice," Obama said, according to the Chicago Tribune.

Photo by Patsy Lynch

She Writes to present Chicago women authors

My Three Sisters Publishing presents She Writes Chicago Thursday, Nov. 14, 7-9 p.m., at American Junkie, 15 W. Illinois St. It's an event featuring Chicago women writers.

Hosted by author Jillian Conley, WCIU's Aly Bockler, B-96 radio personality Showbiz Shelly and 103.5 KISS FM radio personality Jordan, the event aims to bring Chicago women writers together in recognition and in celebration of their work.

The night includes a red carpet, hosted cocktails and filming for a documentary. All proceeds will benefit My Three Sisters Literacy initiative, which brings books to underfunded classrooms and Charity 4 Life, which assists street kids in Third World countries.

Tickets are \$10-\$20; visit <http://www.fan-fueled.com/Event/Details/6321-she-writes>. For more info, email jillianconley@yahoo.com.

Mr. Internat'l Rubber announces judges

Mr. International Rubber (MIR) has announced the judges for MIR 17, to be held Nov. 8-10 at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St.

The judges are Daddy Tom, member of Centaurs MC and Mama's Family; Dean Ogren, American Brotherhood Weekend producer and American Leatherman 2000; Master Dexter, International LeatherSIR 2005; Philip Hitchcock, Ph.D., Gallery owner and Mr. Midwest Leather 2010; Rubi-nuki, Mr Rubber UK 2012 and first runner-up for

MIR 16; Sir Dart, kink presenter and host of the Dart's Domain podcast; Stephen Perry, husband of MIR16 Jason Lynch and member of the New England Rubber Men.

Carlos "Wolfy" Diaz, Mr. Ybor City Eagle 2010; and Ryan Weidner, Mr. Iowa Leather 2010, will be tally masters.

The MIR Kink Market & Social, located in The Billie Jean King Recreation Center at the Center, will be open Nov. 8-10. (Patrons must be 18.) Admission is \$5 per day or \$10 for all three days.

See www.mirubber.com.

YOU from page 12

or the lesson they learned, of the difference I made in their lives.

For the past 10 years, I've spent every Thursday night volunteering for Links-Pride Youth. Pride Youth is a youth group for high school LGBTQ teens and their friends. Some of our youth have no place to turn or have no one to talk to. We listen, we educate and we encourage our youth group members to make educated healthy choices in their lives. I once received a phone call from a panicked youth who had just got a call from a friend who was trying to end his life by taking pills and needed the reassurance that he did the right thing to save his friends life. I have watched our youth graduate from high school and college, and get their first jobs. Pride Youth has received letters from parents thanking us for giving their children a safe place to be themselves. One of our youth just announced his engagement and another has been hired to teach junior high. I am so proud.

The writer of the hate note intended the note to hurt me, to take away my power, my self-esteem—but it did just the opposite. It empowered me to continue to fight against the bigotry and hatred LGBTQ people experi-

ence every day. The impact of this hate note has been felt by many: the teachers I teach with, the administration of my district, the police department, and my friends and family.

The outpouring of love and support was incredible. All of these people impacted were disgusted by the cowardice of the author. I can guarantee the next time they hear an anti-gay remark or gay slur, or see someone's civil rights being denied, they will speak out and they will take action. The note will affect more students than the author ever imagined, affect them in a positive way, in an accepting way, in a gentle way ... in a loving way.

There are millions of "homosexuals like me" who fight for LGBTQ rights every day. Who fight for the rights of the youth in hopes that this kind of hatred and bigotry will end. Who fight for the rights of those who can't fight out of fear of violence. Who fight for the rights of everyone.

I vow to make this single note, scribbled on a piece of salmon-colored paper, impact as many people as it can. It will make a difference, because we are damn good homosexuals!

The note is still under investigation by the police department, and is being investigated as a felony hate crime.

Ray J. Koenig III and Clark Hill PLC



Ray is a legal authority on all of his practice areas, which include probate, trusts, guardianship, estate planning, and elder law, including the litigation of those areas. He is a longtime advocate for and member of the LGBT community, and is involved in several charitable groups, community associations, and professional organizations.

Ray is a member of Clark Hill PLC, a full-service law firm consisting of a diverse team of attorneys and professionals committed to our clients and our communities.

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