



**BIG FREEDIA BOUNCES TO THE BIG TIME**

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**TRANSITIONING ARIANA DAHMS IS 'HAPPY WITH MY LIFE'**

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**TRANS TRIATHLETE CHRIS MOSIER MAKES STRIDES**

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**CLEVELAND SHOWS OFFERINGS AS IT PREPARES FOR GAY GAMES 9**

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# Youth-rights advocate reflects on decade's work

BY MATTHEW C. CLARK

Illinois Safe Schools Alliance (ISSA) Executive Director Shannon Sullivan will be leaving the non-profit advocacy group at the end of the month. The alliance was established in 2007 with the same mission it has today—"to promote safety, support and healthy development for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth, in Illinois schools and communities, through advocacy, education, youth organizing and research," according to its website

A reception was held Nov. 17 honoring Sullivan's career with the alliance, and announcing the Shannon Sullivan GSA Scholarship Fund in honor of her vision, commitment and leadership.

Sullivan began her career 10 years ago with The Coalition for Education on Sexual Orientation (CESO), and the Chicago chapter of the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN), before the two organizations came together to form the Alliance.

In 2007, Sullivan estimated that there were about 80 gay-straight alliances (GSAs) in Illinois schools. She said today there are 163.

Sullivan spoke with Windy City Times about her career in safety and education for LGBTQ young people, and her work with ISSA.



Shannon Sullivan. Photo from Illinois Safe Schools Alliance

**Windy City Times: What has been the impact the GSA network doubling in Illinois?**

Shannon Sullivan: GSAs are basically the indicator of how safe LGBTQ and allied youth feel or don't feel in schools—that, and being able to identify a supportive adult. So we know the power of GSAs in schools. Even if you'd never attend a meeting, just knowing that resource is there shifts the way young people perceive their school environment. Thinking about the doubling of the GSA network between 2007 and today makes me feel like there's a lot more promise for young people entering school and their perceptions of how safe or respected they may or may not be. One of the huge impacts that the Alliance has had is expanding that GSA network outside of the Chicago area.

We started intentionally working in Peoria in 2006-2007. There was not a single gay-straight alliance in or around Peoria at that time. There are eight now. I think that's the power of the work right there.

**WCT: At a glance, the Alliance is so involved. You have Night of Noise, legal aid and youth leadership summits. You work with the Legacy Project, About Face Youth Theater and the list goes on. Are there any standouts for you?**

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## AFFAIRS TO REMEMBER



page 6

Photo by Hal Baim



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Photo by Kat Fitzgerald (www.MysticImagesPhotography.com)

The recent passage of the marriage-equality bill in the state's General Assembly gave two big annual events—the Hall of Fame reception and the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Chicago's gala—even more meaning than usual this year. See photos from the Hall of Fame event on page 6, and images from the HRC gala on page 23.

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# this week in WINDY CITY TIMES

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Photos on cover (left, from top): Photo of Big Freedia by Kareem Black; photo of Ariana Dahms by Ross Forman; photo of Chris Mosier from Mosier; photo of Cleveland's Marriott Renaissance Hotel (site of Gay Games 9 registration) by Andrew Davis



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### CAPITAL IDEA

The group Capital Cities (left) talked with WCT about the song "Farrah Fawcett Hair" and covering Madonna's "Holiday."

Photo by Jerry Nunn



Tony Velez and Frank Ochoa run the local Puerto Rican gay bar E.M. Lounge.

Photo from Robert Castillo



John Legend and Tamar Braxton brought their show to the Chicago Theatre.

Photo by Jerry Nunn

### REEL LOVE

Reeling: The LGBT International Film Festival held closing ceremonies last week.

### LEGAL EAGLES

This month's "Ask Lambda Legal" is about asylum and sexual orientation.

### THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

Find out the latest about Hugh Jackman, Andy Cohen and Jillian Michaels.

### SCHOOL DAZE



Christine Irvine (left in the above photo) has launched a Change.org petition asking Loyola University to stop its ban regarding same-sex ceremonies on campus.

Photo from Irvine

plus DAILY BREAKING NEWS

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**Jim Bennett of Lambda Legal and the Illinois House Passing SB10**

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Art "Chat Daddy" Sims surrounded by supporters at the fundraiser. Photo by Hal Baim

## 'Chat Daddy' holds medical fundraiser

Art "Chat Daddy" Sims—host of The Real Deal Experience with Chat Daddy & Mark Lewis as well as a contributor on the TV show You & Me This Morning—recently held a benefit to help offset medical expenses.

In 2010, Sims was diagnosed with chronic myelogenous leukemia. He is currently in remission but it requires extensive medical treatment and ongoing cancer drug prescriptions. People can visit [www.gofundme.com/teamchat](http://www.gofundme.com/teamchat) to donate or learn more.

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### NEXT LECTURE

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**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.

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**  
From Civil Rights to Gay Rights in Chicago

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# A Queer Agenda

BY ANDRÉ PÉREZ



## Thanking and Giving

With the holidays approaching, it's time to be thankful for what we have and giving with our plenty.

If you're anything like me, you lay awake at night agonizing about gift giving—How do I show that I care? Is it better to be practical or whimsical? What's the right emotional note to strike? End-of-year giving isn't just for friends and family. It's a time many choose to say thanks through charitable giving.

Money speaks. It's up to you to decide what your money will say. Which causes matter to you? Which organizations do you want to support? What do you hope to accomplish by giving? Giving money is a small but crucial step in creating new possibilities in the world. As public funding for non-profits has taken a nose-dive, the decisions we make are critical. Clarify for yourself what your values around giving money are.

You might be thinking: What's so complicated? You could pick a cause, type it into Google, and donate to the first organization you see. Unfortunately,

I always prefer to donate to member-driven organizations or groups that do grassroots fundraising because an influx of capital can make or break a project. Even relatively small amounts of money can help an organization take their programming or services to a totally new level. If you want your dollars to really count, then give them to someone who is doing a lot with a little.

Being the first can be scary but powerful. Emerging organizations struggle to find their first funders because no one wants to take a risk. However, risk is necessary for innovation in all fields. By donating to an emerging organization, your dollar is worth more than its face value. It's a vote on the success of their ideas and leadership. If you are truly inspired by a fledgling group and feel like they have an idea that can work, then put your money where your mouth is.

Every person needs to answer these questions for themselves. In going through the above process, I recognized that I cared about supporting youth, housing, LGBTQ issues, and fighting

racism. Within those causes, I placed a lot of value in how the work was done, not just on the results. I wanted to promote intergenerational community building in LGBTQ communities, to help create housing opportunities that help prepare people to live independently, to help trans people have more of a voice in issues that impact the community, to support

"However, risk is necessary for innovation in all fields. By donating to an emerging organization, your dollar is worth more than its face value."

there is no guarantee that popular organizations will share your values or spend your money well. If you scratch the surface a little more, you'll find smaller organizations that don't have the funds to spend on marketing and promotion. Nonetheless, they may walk the walk more than their flashy counterparts. There is no better way to know about an organization's work than to see it in person. The second best thing is to talk with people who are directly impacted by your cause. The third best thing is to talk with friends or family who work in non-profits. They aren't the ones who would benefit from your donation, so they are less biased than you might assume. They will probably enjoy talking your ear off about who is doing work that they respect, admire, and trust.

Next, ask yourself—Where will my donation have the most impact? The smaller an organization's overall budget, the more valuable your donation is because it increases their capacity to act. Also, consider where the organization gets the majority of its funding from. If you donate to a well-funded group, your hundred bucks is a drop in the ocean.

leadership development in communities of color, and to support organizations developing unconventional models.

After discussing with friends and family, I decided to give money to Project Fierce Chicago, Trans Oral History Project, Orgullo en Accion, FreeGeek Chicago, Young Women's Empowerment Project, Freedom Lifted, and a few personal campaigns for transgender community members. The first three are groups that I organize with on a regular basis, and I see financial contributions as a natural extension of my volunteering. I chose others because they do work that is too unpopular to be funded through grant money, because I trusted people working on the projects, and because they work from an intersectional analysis. I donated to personal campaigns for transgender leaders to get surgery or get trained because I am inspired by how many trans people are giving their time and energy generously despite being under incredible pressure. I want to reward that spirit, and do whatever I can to make those contributions more effective.

May we all be lucky enough to experience generosity as givers and receivers.

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

# Hawaii 15th state with marriage equality

BY LISA KEEN  
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

The debate went on much longer than expected but the Hawaii Senate voted Nov. 12 to give final legislative approval to a bill allowing same-sex couples to obtain marriage licenses. The bill then went to Democratic Gov. Neil Abercrombie, who signed it Nov. 13. It will take effect Dec. 2, making Hawaii the 15th state plus the District of Columbia to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples. The vote was 19-4, with two legislators excused.

The Illinois legislature passed its marriage-equality bill before Hawaii, but its Democratic governor, Pat Quinn, will not sign the bill until Nov. 20 and the law does not go into effect until June 1, 2014. That will make Illinois the 16th state to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

On the floor of the Hawaii Senate, Sen. Clayton Hee—chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee and a champion of the legislation—answered critics who said the marriage equality bill had been rushed through the legislature without giving the public ample time to express its views.

"The discussion of same-sex marriage really began in 1993 with the decision by the [state] Supreme Court in a case brought by a same-sex couple denied a marriage license," said Hee. "To say this legislation has been rushed is simply untrue."

Hee's Senate Judiciary Committee entertained public testimony from more than 1,000 people and the House panel listened to more than 5,100 citizens who wanted to weigh in on the bill. Each legislator also received thousands of emails, phone calls and other communications to express their views.

Hee shared two communications he received. One was from a straight Republican woman; the other was from Edie Windsor, the plaintiff in last June's historic U.S. Supreme Court ruling striking the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). Both urged support for the marriage-equality bill.

"Some have said this is the wrong time to bring this thing up," said Hee.

"Martin Luther King Jr. said 'There is no wrong time to seek justice.'"

Sen. Mike Gabbard, a Democrat, noted that 60 percent of those who testified at the public hearings were opposed to "this incredibly divisive bill." The voters of Hawaii did vote on the issue in 1998, ratifying a legislature-approved constitutional amendment to limit marriage to male-female couples.

Sen. Russell Ruderman said that, while most of the testimony at the public hearing was opposed to the bill, most of the correspondence received by his office was in support, suggesting the opposition was due mostly to an orchestrated campaign.

Sen. Jill Tokuda noted that, throughout history, judges and lawmakers "are asked to exhibit great courage on behalf of the disenfranchised and minority voices," in regards to such issues as segregation, internment, and interracial marriage.

Although the Senate proceedings were not competing with chants of outside protesters that day, the debate was not always respectful. One senator, referred to the "LGBTXYZ community." Another said an opponent told him that Typhoon Haiyan, which wreaked devastation



Hawaii state Sen. Jill Tokuda was in favor of the marriage bill.

on the Phillipines Nov. 8, was caused by Hawaii's passage of the marriage-equality bill. And Sam Slom, the Republican leader in the Senate, could barely contain his disdain for the measure and the Democratic Party. He said the day was historic because the date can be written as "11-12-13 and that will never happen again." He mocked the references of marriage-equality supporters to King's "the arc of the moral universe is long but it bends toward justice" quote. Slom said it was being bent by man, not God, and noting that King never supported same-sex marriage.

"We have never had an outpouring like this," said Slom. "I don't know if more hours or more study will change anything, but [the bill] will have lasting and serious consequences."

The struggle for marriage equality in Hawaii has held a special place in the history of the LGBT-rights movement. In 1990, three same-sex couples filed a lawsuit in state court in Honolulu, a trial judge concluded the denial of marriage licenses violated the state constitution, and the Hawaii Supreme Court, in 1993, ruled that the state needed

to demonstrate it had reason to deny the marriage licenses. After the trial judge determined that the state had failed to do so, the legislature amended the state constitution to limit marriage to male-female couples and the voters ratified that amendment in 1998. In the midst of this, Congress passed the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in anticipation that the marriage-equality movement was emerging and conservative political activists orchestrated ballot measures around the country to ban same-sex marriage in other states.

That tide of opposition to allowing same-sex couples to marry began to turn in earnest in November 2003, which the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court issued the first state high court ruling that a state constitution guaranteed same-sex couples the same rights to marriage licenses as male-female couples. Hawaii now joins 15 other states and the District of Columbia that have ended their bans on allowing same-sex couples to marry. The U.S. Supreme Court in June struck down the key provision of DOMA, which denied federal benefits to same-sex couples with valid marriage licenses.

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See  
[windycitymediagroup.com](http://windycitymediagroup.com)  
for Nov. 20  
coverage of Gov. Quinn  
signing the Illinois  
marriage bill.

## Biden to swear in Brewster as ambassador

BY MATT SIMONETTE

After a long confirmation process, Chicagoan James "Wally" Brewster, an openly gay businessman and fundraiser for President Obama, was confirmed Nov. 14 as ambassador to the Dominican Republic. Vice President Joseph Biden will swear in Brewster in Washington, D.C., Nov. 22.

Brewster was nominated for the position in June. He had been working as Managing Partner for SB&K Global, a strategic consulting firm. From 2010-2012, he was a co-chair for President Obama's re-election campaign and a member of the campaign's "Leadership Circle." He also served as a co-chair of LGBT issues for the Democratic National Committee and is on the Board of Human Rights Campaign. He and his partner, Bob Satawake, a managing partner at Jameson Sotheby's International Real Estate, together bundled more than \$500,000 for Obama in the last presidential election.

In a Nov. 15 email, Satawake said he and Brewster would be married shortly after the swearing-in ceremony.

"We still can't believe all this has finally happened, as many of you know [thanks to FBI interviews] this process all started back in March," said Satawake. "Thank you so much for your kind words."

In a statement released after the confirmation, which appeared in Chicago Sun-Times, Sen. Dick Durbin congratulated Brewster.

"In a meeting in my office after his nomination, Wally reminded me that he has been visiting the Dominican Republic for many years, often spending extended periods of time there," said Durbin. "His understanding



James "Wally" Brewster from HRC's 2012 gala. Photo by Kat Fitzgerald

of and appreciation for the country and its people were evident. I know that his unique understanding of the Dominican Republic, of our shared interests, and of our future as partners in trade and in security will help to strengthen the ties of our two nations."

Brewster's nomination drew the ire of anti-gay religious groups in the Dominican Republic. Speaking to television reporters, Cardinal Nicolas de Jesus Lopez, president of the Conference of the Dominican Episcopate, used the word "maricones"—"faggots"—to describe Brewster. There are no laws against homosexuality in the Dominican Republic, but members of the LGBT community have been subject to harassment, and the nation's constitution bans same-sex marriage.

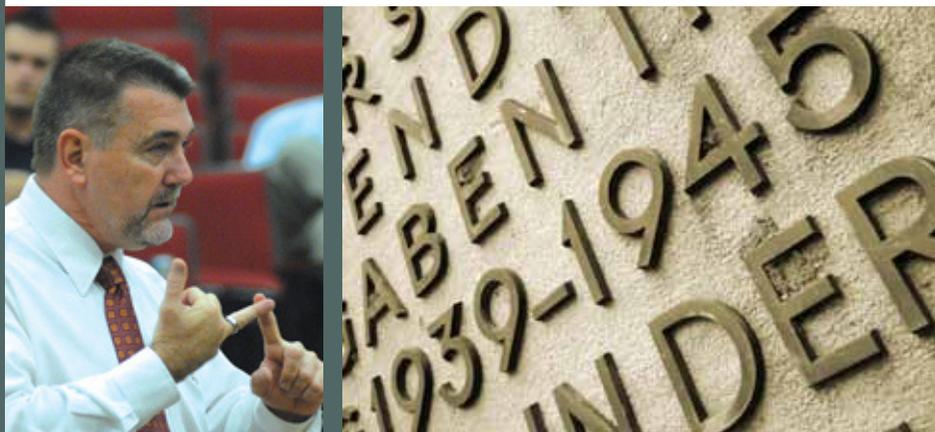
The administration of President Danilo Medina was initially silent on the matter. But officials in the Dominican Republic's U.S. embassy told the publication Foreign Policy that Brewster's nomination would not have been announced had the government not accepted the nomination.

Brewster is the fifth openly LGBT ambassador confirmed this year, after Daniel Baer (Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe), John Berry (Australia), James Costos (Spain) and Rufus Gifford (Denmark).

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# Hall of Fame honors LGBT trailblazers

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL BLICKENSDEFER

The 23rd annual Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame welcomed 16 new inductees Nov. 12 at the Chicago History Museum. Mayor Rahm Emanuel did not make the annual event, which has usually featured the mayor giving out the awards.

According to the Friends of the Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame planning committee co-chair Gary G. Chichester, Chicago is unique in that it is the only municipality to honor its LGBT communities and the contributions its citizens make to the city as a whole. Fellow co-chair, Mary F. Morten added that Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame inductees are people and organizations who have been trailblazers, longtime supporters and activists on behalf of the LGBT Community.

In her opening remarks, Chicago's head of the Commission on Human Relations Mona Noriega noted that 22 years ago, a gay and lesbian hall of fame was a revolutionary idea, and now that marriage equality has passed in Illinois. Noriega said that this year's inductees "represent what is good about our community. Each has reached beyond their own comfort zone to help achieve something that serves a larger purpose." When Noriega announced that the mayor would not be there, there were a few hisses from the crowd.

Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle agreed with the statement about the inductees, saying, "We, as a state, have made a step forward in creating equality for all our citizens, but the fight is far from over. We must all continue to fight for equal rights for all our citizens."

Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Public Health Dr. Bechara Couchair added that the evening's honorees were a great example of how diligence and innovation can lead to change. "This is why we have improved the quality of life for, not only the LGBT residents in our city but for residents citywide," he said.

Two Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame alums—activist/writer Sanford Gaylord (inducted 2012) and writer, director and producer Megan Carney (2005)—introduced this year's inductees. The honorees included Gaylon Alcaraz for her work for reproductive rights, health and justice; and philanthropist/attorney James L. Alexander for his impact on LGBT rights and welfare over three decades.

Illinois Unites for Marriage Chair James L. Bennett was honored for his leadership and tireless energy and Jorge Cestou, for his 20-year advocacy for the interests of LGBT Latinos including immigrants and those living from HIV.

Rocco J. Claps, the first openly gay Illinois cabinet member for then-Gov. Rod Blagojevich, was recognized for his continuing public service and Lakeview business leader Rudolph Johnson Jr. (of the North End bar) was inducted for his history of community building. His partner, Mike Wasilewski, accepted the award in his honor.

Photodocumentarian Lee A. Newell II joined the 2013 inductees for the critical role he played in maintaining Chicago's LGBT social service infrastructure in the 1970s and '80s, for Gay Horizons. Longtime bartender and devoted animal rescue and LGBT volunteer Paté was honored for her history of helping both humans and pets.

Social and cultural critic Andrew Patner joined the Hall of Fame this year for his distinguished career writing about the arts, while Laura Ricketts, the first openly gay woman to own a Major League Baseball franchise, was recognized for her philanthropy and both her non-profit and business leadership.

Puppeteer Burr Tillstrom created the puppet characters of Kukla, and he became an influence for Jim Henson, among others. His career garnered him five Emmys and a Peabody. Tillstrom was posthumously inducted into the Hall of Fame and his award was accepted by Chicago History Museum President Gary T. Johnson. Bailiwick Repertory Theatre Artistic Director David Zak was honored for more than three decades spent developing LGBT theater.

The two organizational inductees were the Midwest Regional Office of Lambda Legal for its participation in the national organization's most important LGBT cases as well as the legal advice they have provided for thousands of people. Performers or Writers for Women on Women's Issues (POW-WOW) was celebrated for its decade-long work to create opportunities for marginalized and displaced women.

Also, two Friends of the Community were honored: Chicago Sun-Times columnist and author Neil Steinberg, for his history of supporting the core principals of LGBT equality; and Chicago Filmmakers Executive Director Brenda Webb, who was recognized for her three-plus decades of work, dedication and perseverance in the creation and presentation of the Reeling Chicago LGBT International Film Festival.

Off stage, Ricketts said she was humbled. "I love this city and I love this community," she said. "To be recognized for what I've done is an incredible honor."

Bennett said that the induction was his first-ever award. "I'm very uncoordinated," he said with a laugh. "So I was never going to get a prize or a trophy for any kind of sports feat!" He added that he was very excited to be among people he looks up to as role models.

For Lambda Legal Midwest Regional Office Senior Staff Attorney Christopher Clark, the induction was the climax of a very exciting week for his organization. "We are thrilled," he said. Meanwhile, Newell is continuing his work in the small eastern Florida community where he now lives. "We have started a gay-pride event there," he noted, "and it's been very well received."

Lisa Henson, daughter of Jim Henson and CEO of the Henson Company, issued a statement in celebration of Tillstrom's induction. In it, she recalled how Tillstrom became a mentor to her father, both personally and professionally. "They became fast friends," she said. "Sharing a mischievous sense of humor and mutually respecting each other's talents and contributions to puppetry."

For more information about this year's inductees, visit [www.glhalloffame.org](http://www.glhalloffame.org).



Members of POW WOW receive their award. All photos by Hal Baim



Gary Chichester and Mary Morten.



Left: James Alexander receives his award. From left: Gary Chichester, Toni Preckwinkle, Alexander, Dr. Bechara Couchair, Mona Noriega and Mary Morten. Right: Gaylon Alcaraz receives her honor.



Left: Lambda Legal is honored. Right: Toni Preckwinkle with Laura Ricketts.



Jorge Cestou (left) and Pate receive their awards.



Left: Rocco Claps with his award. Right: Sanford Gaylord.





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# Latino/a community celebrates marriage equality with reception

BY MATTHEW C. CLARK

"It wasn't easy, it wasn't easy for me," said Illinois state Rep. Luis Arroyo to the crowd gathered on the second floor of the Puerto Rican Arts Alliance (PRAA) Nov. 13. "But you guys made me believe that the right thing to do was vote for marriage equality."

Earlier this year, Arroyo had the choice in the Illinois General Assembly Executive Committee of sending SB10, the Illinois Religious Freedom Protection and Marriage Fairness Act, to the floor of the General Assembly for a vote—or killing it then and there.

"I don't want to be the one to not give you guys the opportunity to discuss this bill on the floor," he said before the committee in February. "But I will tell you, I don't think I can vote for this bill in the floor of the house because of my religious beliefs, and because of the churches in my district that I represent."

Nine months later, Arroyo voted in favor of SB10.

"I went back on my word, and I voted for marriage equality the other day, so I don't have to discriminate," he said to the crowd.

Arroyo was not alone. Every member of the Democratic Latino caucus voted in favor of the bill and, on Nov. 13, Latina/o community members and activists came together to celebrate the passage of SB10, and honor their representatives at the Marriage Equality Victory Latino Reception.

"The fact they were able to move them from passive support to active support, to me, demonstrates a coming together of minds between the gay community and the Latino leaders," Association of Latino Men for Action (ALMA) President Julio Rodriguez told Windy City Times.

While celebratory, Rodriguez also acknowledged the work and coalition building that still needs to be done.

"For binational couples, the fact that they can get married now in Illinois takes away one burden, but it doesn't take all their burden," he said. "To really get the LGBT community at-large to see that the immigration issue is an issue that they should care about—because it affects families, because it affects couples, because it affects children—is the other goal of this event."

Rodriguez also said the night's event served to honor others in the community, leaders who have done this work but don't get recognized by



Julio Rodriguez at the reception. Photo by Matthew C. Clark

the press, and to dispel the myth that the Latino community doesn't support gay rights.

Rodriguez cited a recent Equality Illinois study that showed more than 60 percent of Latinos polled support same-sex marriage.

"It really is about telling our story, in terms of our place in the movement in Illinois," he said.

Also present at the event were Illinois State Representative Maria Antonia "Toni" Berrios, Cook County Circuit Judge Jesse G. Reyes, Director of the Office of New Americans for the State of Illinois Teresa Reyes and Lambda Legal's Luis Roman.

"All of you did your part. You all worked and talked to the legislature and shared your stories. That's what made a difference," Berrios told the crowd during her own speech.

Jessica Carillo of United Latina/o Pride spoke

about what marriage would mean for her and her partner Rocio Guerrero.

"We don't need the justification from government to say that we want to be together, and that we want to have a family," Carillo said. "But it means so much to be able to go up to my mother and say, 'yeah, I can get married.'"

In a quiet gesture, halfway through her speech the two began to hold hands behind the podium.

"At the end of the day, I'm an old-fashioned Mexican wife. That's what I want to be, that's what I was raised to be," she said. "Last Tuesday, you made that a real reality."

## Bishop to offer prayers, exorcism on signing date

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Bishop Thomas Paprocki announced Nov. 14 that he will offer "prayers of supplication and exorcism" in Springfield at approximately the same time Gov. Pat Quinn will sign marriage equality into law next week.

The ceremony will be held at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Springfield on the afternoon of Nov. 20, while Quinn signs SB10 at the UIC Forum in Chicago.

In a statement, Paprocki said, "since same-sex marriage is contrary to the plan of God...those who contract civil same-sex marriage are culpable of serious sin." The prayers for "Supplication and Exorcism Which May Be Used in Particular Circumstances of the Church" are drawn from the Appendices to the 2004 Latin edition of the Rite of Exorcism.

Paprocki also said Illinois lawmakers who supported gay marriage were "morally complicit as co-operators in facilitating this grave sin." He was especially harsh in denouncing Catholic politicians such as House Speaker Michael Madigan and Quinn.

"It is scandalous that so many Catholic politicians are responsible for enabling the passage of this legislation and even twisting the words of the pope to rationalize their actions despite the clear teaching of the church," he said. "All politicians now have the moral obligation to work for the repeal of this sinful and objectionable legislation. We must pray for deliverance from this evil which has penetrated our state and our church."

Joe Murray of Rainbow Sash Movement called Paprocki a "hysterical and fearful man."

"The bishops across the country are getting their butts kicked over the gay marriage issue," said Murray. "So you'll see more stunts like this, and it's going to make the church into a laughingstock. We're not back in the Middle Ages. Exorcism is a sacred rite. It should not be used for a political end."

"As a Roman Catholic who takes communion, I am completely embarrassed," added Rick Garcia of The Civil Rights Agenda.

"There are people who may support this, but they're not mainstream," he added. "When you look at the polling, both locally and nationally, Roman Catholics largely support matters of equality for the LGBT community. ...What he is doing is not going to curry favor with the decision makers in Rome."

Dignity/Chicago, an advocacy organization for LGBT Catholics, said in a statement Nov. 18 saying it was "perplexed and disappointed" by Paprocki's announcement.

"We are concerned about the real harm this latest action is causing for LGBT Catholics and our families. Young children are now hearing that their parents and families are evil and require an official act of a senior church leader to drive out that evil," says Chris Pett, past Dignity/Chicago president and spokesperson. "Paprocki's actions also negate and disrespect the voices of many thousands of Catholics across the state which have been raised in support of marriage equality and the families of LGBT people."

"So thank you on behalf of us and our family."

Community organizations ALMA, United Latina/o Pride, Lambda Legal, Affinity Community Services, Amigas Latinas, the LGBT Immigrant Rights Coalition and Illinois Unites for Marriage were responsible for holding the reception, with the space provided by the PRAA.

The reception was held in connection with a screening of *Free to Love (Libres para amar)*, a documentary by Jorge Oliver about the 2008 grassroots initiative against a constitutional marriage amendment in Puerto Rico. The screening was part of Reeling: The Chicago LGBT International Film Festival.

Meanwhile, also at 3:30 p.m. on Nov. 20 in Springfield, the Rev. Martin Woulfe of Abraham Lincoln Unitarian Universalist Congregation will be offering a public prayer of thanksgiving on behalf of lesbian and gay couples that will soon be able to marry.

Woulfe said that before the prayers, the church will hold a screening of the signing ceremony, which is being streamed live. The event is intended as thanks to the activists and legislators who made the successful SB10 vote possible.

The remarks from Paprocki have been consistent with the bishop's theology in recent years, Woulfe added. So he takes consolation in his own church having an opportunity to show a commitment to fairness and social justice.

"No one church has a monopoly on truth, nor a monopoly on ethics or morals," Woulfe said.

## George denounces same-sex marriage in letter

BY MATT SIMONETTE

In a letter that he asked to be included in all church bulletins throughout the Chicago Archdiocese, Cardinal Francis George predicted dire consequences as a result of same-sex marriage coming to Illinois.

According to NBC5, George said that "there will be consequences for the Church and society that will become clearer as the law is used to sue for discrimination."

He added that the new law is "bad law because it will contribute over the long run to the further dissolution of marriage and family life, which are the bedrock of any society."

George also wrote House Speaker Michael Madigan misused a quote from Pope Francis when speaking in support of the marriage-equality legislation: "The Pope was not speaking about approving gay marriage. To use his words against his teaching, as they were used on the floor of the State House of Representatives on November 5, is less than intellectually honest."

Gov. Quinn will sign the legislation Nov. 20 at the UIC Forum.

George has been a staunch opponent of same-sex marriage, and publicly spoke out against SB10. He turned in a perfunctory letter of resignation—required of all cardinals when they reach age 75—to Pope Benedict in early 2012. Popes may choose to ignore a resignation, and Benedict never appointed a replacement, nor has Pope Francis.

George said after writing the letter that he anticipated being on the job another two or three years, but "the Cardinal has no plans to retire soon," his spokesperson, Colleen Dolan, told Chicago Sun-Times in October.

A dinner will be given in honor of George at the Drake Hotel Dec. 18. Members of Gay Liberation Network are planning to protest.



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# Transitioning Ariana Dahms is 'happy with my life'

Ariana Dahms was profiled in the *Windy City Times'* continuing *Gay in the Life* series in June 2011. Dahms remains a clinical massage therapist in Chicago, but has begun transitioning into a woman. Dahms agreed to share her story, once again, with WCT writer Ross Forman.

BY ROSS FORMAN

Ariana Dahms was near the intersection of Belmont and Racine in Lakeview one day this past March when his world came crumbling down, figuratively. He broke down and started crying.

"It just hit me that I was, and am, a transgender female," Dahms said.

Dahms, for about two years now, has been questioning her identity, her sexual orientation. Admittedly, Dahms was envious of women she saw and attracted to straight men.

"I was not living a lie; I knew something was wrong," said Dahms, who, for the past few years, has battled depression over her sexual orientation and gender identity. "I long had very limited knowledge of the transgender community, other than what he saw on *The Jerry Springer Show* or those [transgender] who I saw walking around in Lakeview."

Dahms dressed in girl's clothes as a youngster and, in recent years, sported women's attire while at home. As a youngster, Dahms often had to be told, by his family, to act like a boy and do things that boys do—not like a girl, or with girls' toys. In fact, he had a doll that was eventually taken away and given to the next door neighbor—because Dahms played with it too much.

"From the day you are born, you start figuring out your identity. I just didn't have the words or the knowledge of what [I] was, what I was feeling, what was going on," Dahms said.

Dahms came out as a gay man, "mostly because that was the closest I could come to the fact that I like men."

Dahms endured gender dysphoria.

"I never totally felt like I was a man, so that's why I acted hyper masculine often, and why I worked out [at the gym] a lot," Dahms said. "Everyone seemed to know Ryan, the straighter,



Ariana Dahms. Photo by Ross Forman

less-feminine male. But deep down I knew it was not me; that was totally not me."

Coming from a military family, Dahms spent time in eight different schools. He attended Tingley Park High School for two years in the Chicago suburbs before transferring to Hanover-Horton High School in Michigan, where he graduated in 2001.

Dahms moved back to Chicago in 2006.

She has researched the transgender world for years and admitted, "That started hitting close to home."

A gender therapist confirmed Dahms' thoughts. "The more and more that I talked to [the therapist], the more and more I figured out who I was," Dahms said.

She truly found herself that March day on the streets of Lakeview.

And on July 5, Dahms started hormone treatments.

She now enjoys "a real sense of empowerment, confidence, and well-being," she said.

Dahms came out as transgender to her mom and then close friends, and was insistent on doing so before her hormone treatment started.

Dahms has received full support, "though a lot

of my family is keeping its distance, but it's not negative; I just don't think they know how to handle it. I think they're kind of nervous to see me transition."

Dahms, 31, who lives in Norwood Park, said his mom, younger brother and younger sister, all of whom live in Chicago, have been accepting and supporting.

"I'm happy with my life, very, very happy. There's no second-guessing or questioning anymore," said Dahms, who is considering a career change, though not sure into what field. Dahms also is planning for breast implants and considering gender-reassignment surgery over the next couple years.

Dahms acknowledged that she has been sexually harassed since transitioning and even followed in cars. Still, "this is the best time of my life, definitely," she said.

Dahms has a brand new wardrobe and admitted she loves shopping for women's clothing, "because there are so many more options."

"I'm grateful that I was a gay man first, mainly because it's ... kind of been a stepping stone, a good safety net," Dahms said. "I now am always a lot more aware of my surroundings. When you step out the front door, you don't really know what could happen, who's around, who's looking, what the reaction will be.

"Consequently, as soon as I step out the door, I have total confidence, because there is no

other way. There is no choice."

Dahms said others who are questioning their identity or sexual orientation should see a gender therapist, "and always trust your gut, your inner guidance ... and don't second-guess yourself."

## Transgender Day of Remembrance event Nov. 20

The national Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) is Wed., Nov. 20.

In Chicago, one event will be held at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., 6:30-8 p.m.

There will be a reception and welcome address with light food and refreshments, a reading of names, videos and performances by several prominent members of the trans community. This free event is open to the public.

A week before the event, Center on Halsted will tie purple ribbons in the trees outside its building to commemorate the lives of trans\* community members who have lost their lives as a result of anti-transgender hatred or prejudice.

Howard Brown Health Center, Broadway Youth Center, Chicago Women's AIDS Project, Chicago House Trans Life Center and Center on Halsted are jointly hosting the event.

## Cappleman, Thale tie the knot in Washington state

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Ald. James Cappleman has wed his long-time partner Richard Thale in Washington state.

Cappleman announced that the marriage had taken place on his Facebook page Nov. 17.

"After 22 years, at last we're married surrounded by family and friends," wrote Cappleman. "Can't wait to celebrate the day that's coming soon when other same-sex couples can get married in Illinois."

The openly gay alderman told *Windy City Times* in October that he and Thale, a community activist, could no longer wait for the protections that marriage provides and would be married in Seattle by Cappleman's brother. The couple has been together for over two decades.

"Symbolically, we were married 22 years ago," Cappleman said. "Without the protections that marriage provides, it's almost like driving a car without insurance."



Ald. James Cappleman (left) and Richard Thale. Photo from Facebook

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Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup>  
5:00–7:00 p.m.

**Learning to Use Twitter | \$15**

Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup>  
4:00–6:00 p.m.

**GIMP: The Free Alternative to Photoshop | \$15**

Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup>  
5:00–7:00 p.m.

**Windows Movie Maker | \$15**

Friday, December 20<sup>th</sup>  
4:00–6:00 p.m.

To register or for more information, please contact 773.661.0730 or [cybercenter@centeronhalsted.org](mailto:cybercenter@centeronhalsted.org).

To learn more about this and other events visit [centeronhalsted.org](http://centeronhalsted.org)

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## ADVOCATE from cover

SS: Thank you for recognizing that. Working in partnership and coalition is a value for us. It's the lynchpin of everything that we have been able to do.

There's one that's not as obvious for people—because it's sort of internal—but we have had a research practice partnership and collaborative with UIC's [the University of Illinois at Chicago's] department of education psychology for the whole 10 years that I've been doing this work, both of CESO and then at the Alliance, where we have had access to PhDs led by Dr. Stacey Horn, so that if we want to be able to figure out how do we evaluate our professional development, we've had access to people with that expertise who will sit down together and figure it out.

I think that research partnership has probably been one of the hugest drivers of the quality of our work, and also our depth of understanding of what we need to do and where to go.

**WCT: Have you ever had to make any tough choices that put a community's needs ahead of what were maybe institutional goals for the Alliance?**

SS: Yes, and we should. We do tough work, and it's personally and professionally hard. But it is in service of the people for whom it is much harder. It can be adults in communities too, but particularly young people who could be put at risk if there were media attention or some kind of other attention, they have a family acceptance that could be put at risk if we don't do the right thing in the right way.

And that trumps everything, all the time. There have been times where yes, it would have served the purpose of the Alliance to have a media story about something or to advance a policy change and have young people speaking out about that in a certain community.

But if a young person or a family or a community or school is put in any kind of risk in order for us to advance our work, in terms of awareness or funding or our own annual objective goals, then the choice is very clear, and always has been for us.

**WCT: In a recent Huffington Post article you talked about the assumption by policy makers and school leaders that LGBT-issues are often controversial, so they often don't act on them. Why do you think that is?**

SS: We use a phrase around here called the vocal minority. What we mean by that is—and this has been born out over the course of my entire career—there are always three parents who call a school. It's always three. There could be a school of 3,000 students, there will be three parents who call a school when they hear about a GSA, or somebody took a same-sex date to prom, or they want to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the protected categories in anti-bullying policy.

These three parents are usually very well resourced, very well connected and people that the school has heard from. It is very easy for policy makers, school leaders, to say it's just going to be easier to be quieter on this than to



Shannon Sullivan (center) at the Alliance Brunch last month. Photo by Melissa Wasserman

figure out a way to address that vocal minority and still move this community forward.

**WCT: Has the academic environment changed at all?**

SS: Absolutely. In many ways. The doubling of the gay-straight alliance alone, I think is such a signal for the type of change that's occurring. Young people are empowered to be active on this, to be leaders of this, to challenge adults. That is tremendously powerful. More and more often we're seeing people coming from supportive families, so their parents are active and engaged as leaders, or their friend's parents. I just think that this sort of societal shift that we've been seeing in terms of acceptance has definitely impacted the amount of support, safety, security, etc. that young people are perceiving, even if it's not directly from their own family or maybe from their school.

We also have the three first gay-straight alliances in middle schools now in the state of Illinois. To have any at all is a huge shift in the movement itself. This is going to grow. The coming out age has dropped younger and younger. So having these supports in place at younger ages is critical in keeping young people engaged and successful in school.

We also have teachers who are now coming out of teacher preparation programs where these issues were included in their coursework. As we get a workforce that's much more prepared and has a much higher level of analysis around addressing these issues in relation to other stuff, that's shifting our school climates as well.

Of course, that has all given way, unfortu-

nately; now we work on the wholesale exclusion of transgender and gender non-conforming students from our education system, because there's no acceptance and no support and no policies and procedures in place to support young people who are working their way through this stuff. School discipline is pushing them out of schools, school administrators are pushing them out of school, because they can't go to the locker room, or use the bathroom, or dress the way they need to dress or use the pronoun that they need to use. There's plenty of work to be done.

**WCT: Recently, bullying in schools became a very mainstream topic that was talked about a lot in the media. How do you feel about the way that the conversation played out and the kind of impact it had?**

SS: Like everything, there are great things and not-so-great things about it. It gave greater attention to the issue and increased people's awareness, particularly about the pervasiveness about anti-gay bullying and that it impacts straight kids. That to me was very positive. I have often joked over my career that I identify as a lesbian and I'm out there talking about sexual orientation and gender identity and most of my work is serving to impact the lives of straight kids.

But I think promoting that type of awareness and the pervasiveness of bullying, that it is anti-gay in nature—even if it's not expressly about someone's sexual orientation—is positive and has helped us in our work.

And then of course there's also the sensationalism and some of the really tragic suicides that got really played up. I just can't imagine as a family member for those people what that must have been like and is like still. Some of that gives us pause. Of course we want to be in service of a movement, but never at the cost of a life. For myself, there are times where we all just need to let [grieving families] do what they need to do. This is a tragedy and needs to be regarded as such.

And alongside that, this sort of notion of 'We're going to throw all these kids who are bullying into jail! Get them out of the schools!' There's a hyper-knee-jerk reaction that tends to happen when there's a lot of media attention and some sensationalizing of issues. The reality is that the kids who are perpetrating bullying behaviors are in just as much trouble as those young people that have been targeted by them. A response should be to help them understand the consequences and damaging things about their behavior and to do better and do differently and give them the opportunity to practice

and build those skills so that everybody can be included in a respectful school environment.

**WCT: Do you consider that to be a restorative-justice model?**

SS: We call it restorative discipline here, because the phrase restorative justice means so many things to so many different people. We want to be really strategic about it. And it is one of the things that we advocate when we work with schools to transform their school environment. Detentions, suspensions and expulsions are totally ineffective. The only thing that is actually proven about suspensions and expulsions is that they can possibly increase anti-social behavior between and among young people.

I taught myself, and I did those things myself. And I wonder why wasn't I better prepared in my schooling to realize that these are ineffective and to not utilize them. So knowing that they're ineffective, and understanding that they could possibly only serve to make things worse, we work from the restorative discipline or a restorative practices framework, which means that, yes, in any given instance where harm has occurred in any type of way, be it bullying behavior or physical aggression, what's incumbent upon that community is figuring out how to heal from that harm for everybody.

**WCT: In your time working with young people, have you been able to form any lasting bonds as individuals have grown into young adulthood?**

SS: Oh there are so many. I have such a privilege. We've had young people come back in as interns, as staff.

So many people come to mind, but there's a young person who went on to graduate from school in three years and has started her own non-profit. She's a refugee young person herself to this country, working with refugee youth. That is such an example, yeah it's not in the LG-BTQ safe-schools movement, but here are young people on the forefront of social justice issues moving forward, utilizing some of the skills and knowledge and development that they did here with us. And that's amazing.

**WCT: What's next for you now?**

SS: I'm actually... [Laughs] It's so hard to think about what's next. I still have one more week to get through. There's so much to do!

I hope, of course, to still be doing social justice, anti-oppression work. That's obviously my passion, and certainly, hopefully working somehow alongside young people, whatever that might look like. That has been really important to me throughout my career. Using my own adult privilege strategically, how best to work that. I can't say, specifically; I hope to be more engaged with the work, maybe more broadly. Always including LGBTQ rights and issues, but potentially in a different area, but still involved in really pursuing the guarantee that we all have of equal and equitable treatment in the U.S. Constitution.

## 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](http://www.ilholocaustmuseum.org/events).

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**TRANS** *in the* **LIFE**  
**Keir McCoy**  
 BY ROSS FORMAN, PHOTOS FROM MCCOY

**Age**  
33

**Neighborhood**  
Edgewater

**Relationship status**  
Girlfriend, Jess; they have been together for about three years

**Orientation**  
Queer

**Preferred pronoun**  
He/him

**Dream vacation destination**  
The Scottish Highlands

**Hobbies**  
Traveling, exploring urban areas, and photography.

**Favorite pizza toppings**  
Olives and mushrooms, "but you can never go wrong with multiple kinds of cheese, and you can never put too much garlic on pizza."

**Favorite movie**  
2001: A Space Odyssey

**Favorite TV shows**  
The X-Files or Mystery Science Theater 3000

**Little-known fact**  
"Everyone is shocked to learn that I hate fruit."



Keir McCoy admitted that, as a child, he didn't feel a connection with his body as female.

"Over time, and especially during puberty, I knew that others perceived me as female, but I never felt the same way," McCoy said. "I knew nothing about transgender people and literally had no language to describe how I felt. Over the years I made quite an effort to accept my body and accept being perceived as female, but it never, ever felt right."

In his late 20s, McCoy was attending school in Hawaii, and met his first openly transgender man—and heard his story.

"It was like I was listening to someone tell me my own story," said McCoy, who then started reading all he could about transitioning, "and suddenly I found words and concepts that described what I had been feeling all these years."

"It was not an easy journey by any means, but I don't regret a minute of it."

McCoy's transition has already spanned several years, and the process isn't over yet. He is now raising funds for top surgery and plans to have a hysterectomy in the future.

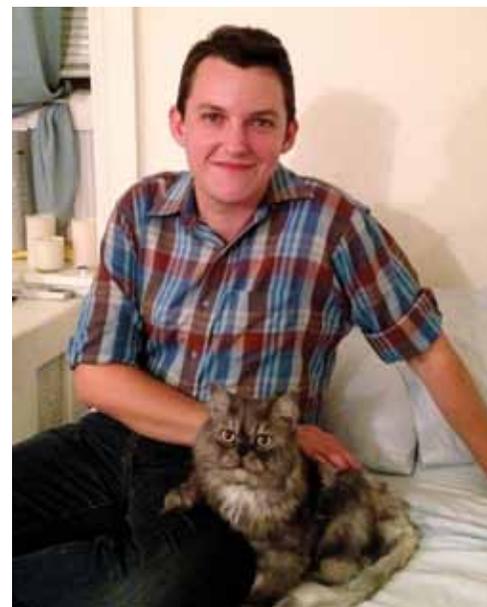
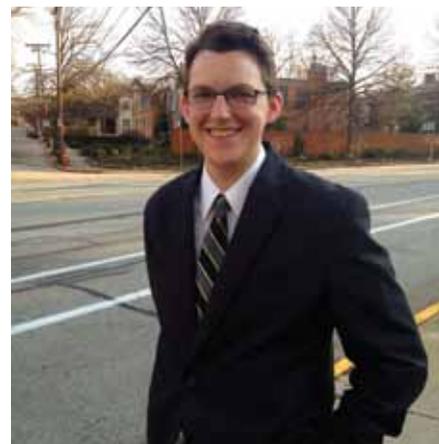
"I gave myself plenty of time to consider whether [transitioning] was right for me and eventually I got to a place where I knew I couldn't live another day without it. I could not imagine growing older as anything but a man, so I knew it was time for me to start," the process, he said. "I am incredibly fortunate to have an insurance company that recently added gender confirmation surgery to [its] list of covered procedures."

However, McCoy has struggled finding work, despite a Master's degree in Library and Information Science. He is now working in a food service position, "and being under-employed means I cannot afford the thousands [of dollars] in fees associated with surgery, even with an insurance plan that covers the procedure."

To help raise funds to pay for the surgical fees, McCoy started an Etsy shop with his girlfriend, selling original prints, photographs, and crafts. In October, he launched an Indiegogo campaign with many perks.

"Gender confirmation surgery means different things to different people, but for me, top surgery would allow me to feel at home in my own body," he said. "Binding my chest daily is physically painful and takes a toll on my mental and emotional well-being. There are days when I dread having to bind, but mentally I know I wouldn't be able to leave the house without doing it. Having to balance your physical comfort with your emotional and mental well-being is a terrible and frustrating thing to always have to worry about. Finally being free of that battle would mean so much for me."

To support McCoy, visit [igg.me/at/keir](http://igg.me/at/keir).



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## VIEWPOINT

WINDY CITY  
TIMES

VOL. 29, No. 8, Nov. 20, 2013

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founded May 1987.PUBLISHER & EXECUTIVE EDITOR  
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REV.  
IRENE  
MONROE

## UMC is still wrong-headed on gay marriage

In 2013, the reality that Rev. Frank Schaefer, pastor at Zion United Methodist Church (UMC) of Iona in Pennsylvania, was forced to stand trial Nov. 18 for officiating his son's 2007 same-sex nuptials is not only wrong-headed—it is also wrong-hearted.

"I love him so much and didn't want to deny him that joy. I had to follow my heart," Schaefer told the *New York Daily News*.

The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the Methodist Church, however, wants to drill home to Schaefer and his allies that he—irrespective of familial love or Christian belief—blatantly and willfully violated the church's law book, the Book of Discipline, prohibiting same-sex marriages.

Sadly, little has changed in the UMC on this issue since the well-publicized trial of Rev. Jimmy Creech in Nebraska. In 1998 the Judicial Council of the United Methodist Church ruled that Creech, a heterosexual ally, violated church law by blessing the union of two lesbians. Following the Judicial Council's ruling, Creech's contract as pastor of the First United Methodist Church in Omaha was terminated. The following year, Creech was in the hot seat again for blessing the Holy Union of two gay men.

For this act of ecclesiastical disobedience, that the jury felt was of biblical proportions, Creech was defrocked and lost his ministerial credentials. However many conservative United Methodist clerics felt Creech got off easy and believed that a harsher decision, banishment from the church, should have been rendered.

When asked by *The Advocate* that year why

he continued to marry same-sex couples while knowing the church's position, Creech rightly stated the following: "A cultural prejudice... has been institutionalized in the church. The position of the church is wrong, it's unjust. It's discriminatory. It isolates a part of our population, part of the brothers and sisters of the human family. It denies their humanity, considers their own humanity to be somewhat unnatural or immoral or sinful."

The UMC is contradictory in its policies concerning LGBTQ worshippers. While it states that we have and are of the same sacred worth as heterosexuals, and that it is committed to the ministry of all people regardless of gender identity and sexual orientation, the church also views queer sexualities as sinful. The Book of Discipline states that sexuality is "God's good gift to all persons" and that people are "fully human only when their sexuality is acknowledged and affirmed by themselves, the church and society."

However, this rule is not applicable to LGBTQs. Since the church's conservative and liberal wings merged in 1968 to become the UMC, it has implemented stricter positions against us. In 1972, for example, UMC delegates inserted in The Book of Discipline that as a church body, "We do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching."

In 1984, the delegates barred from its general conference clerics who were "self-avowed practicing homosexuals." And in 1996, the UMC gave the ecclesiastical order that prohibited "ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions," which was affirmed by the Methodists' high court in 1998. The church also maintains its policy requiring heterosexual clerics to remain faithful in their marriages, and for both unmarried heterosexual and homosexual clerics to be celibate.

However, the UMC's exclusionary language and practices toward LGBTQ people will not stop those of us who feel called to ministry. If anything, it confirms our calling that much more. And not all churches allow homophobic churchgoers or ecclesial powers to stand in the way.

While it is clear that the UMC is not in lockstep with the changing societal tide toward LGBTQ acceptance, it is also not in lockstep with its

own more progressive arm of "reconciling and inclusive" congregations. Union United Methodist Church (UUMC), a predominately African-American congregation located in Boston's South End—the epicenter of the city's LGBTQ community—is one of them. And it is the one institution least expected to be lauded among LGBTQ people of African descent because of the Black Church's notorious history of homophobia. But UUMC is a movement, and it's an example not just regional to black churches in Boston.

Since June 2011 more than 100 Methodist ministers in New England have pledged to marry gay couples in defiance of the denomination's ban on same-sex unions. Approximately one out of nine Methodist clerics signed a statement pledging to open their churches to LGBTQ couples that stated, "We repent that it has taken us so long to act... We realize that our church's discriminatory policies tarnish the witness of the church to the world, and we are [complicit]."

Knowing where Methodist clerics in New England stand on same-sex marriages, Schaefer officiated his son's nuptials here in Massachusetts.

The public trials of Creech and soon Schaefer are disciplinary means of control to evoke fear among our allies and us. While UMC's ultimate objective is to reinforce ecclesiastical heterosexism, it also keeps the church itself trapped in its sins of both homophobia and inhospitality. This recent public act of religious intolerance by the church not only feeds into the existing climate of queer-bashing in this society, but it also has LGBTQs constantly questioning their self-worth and relationship with the church and with God.

"We just love him so much it was an honor to be asked. Had I said no to him, it would have negated all the affirmations we gave him for all those yea r... that we believe you are just as worthy and precious in God's sight as anybody else," Schaefer told the *Patriot-News* of central Pennsylvania.

As LGBTQ people we must know that this religious intolerance and spiritual abuse are antithetical to the social gospel of Jesus Christ: that all people under God have the same sacred worth—even if the United Methodist Church doesn't religiously practice it.

## LETTERS

## Claus and effect

To the editor:

"Yes, Harry, There is a Santa Claus"  
 (An Open Letter to Ald.  
 Osterman in Chicago)

Dear Ald. Osterman:

Your constituents in the 48th Ward of Chicago encourage you to accept in December the petition for a promenade and bike path along the lakefront in Edgewater. A street and online petition have been circulating in our North Side neighborhood since May.

Edgewater is a progressive community with a history of supporting cultural diversity and various civil-rights movements. Newly arrived immigrants were welcomed into the community during the 19th century. The women's civil rights movement sprouted here during the early 20th century.

Affordable housing for returning veterans was supported here after the cessation of World War II. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was invited to speak here in the 1960s. Hollywood Beach, Chicago's traditionally gay beach, is located in our neighborhood. Many progressive-minded public leaders have been born in Edgewater, including

Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton, your mother and yourself.

Alderman, you are doing a magnificent job. Our streets are well-maintained and lit. Our crime rate is one of the lowest in the city. Our local high school was recently selected as one of the best schools in Chicago. Our main thoroughfares are booming with new businesses. You are greatly admired, beloved and respected as an alderman, and the voters here will see to it that you are re-elected handily in 2014.

No one supports you more than the chair and members of the Edgewater Beachwalk Proposal Committee.

Last September, during a meeting in your office with our committee, you agreed to accept our petition in December. One of your esteemable qualities is your commitment to honoring your agreements. Your steadfast commitment to upholding an open and unobstructed democratic process commands respect. Your support in Edgewater is strong, Harry, and voters will elect an alderman in 2014 who also honors and upholds our progressive roots and who is not afraid of supporting bold moves that will make history. Avoid temptations to cave to scaremongering tactics of nattering nabobs of negativity.

The proposed Edgewater Beachwalk promenade and bike path will create lots of good paying construction jobs for years, draw more customers to our local businesses and enhance the

enjoyment of Lake Michigan. Just read our letter to Senator Dick Durbin and Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky on our website, and you'll see. This proposed lakefront civic project will symbolize the progressive spirit of Edgewater and represent hope for the future and change for the better.

Yes, Harry, there is a Santa Claus, because people during the 2013 holiday season still want to believe in something that is good, right and inspirational that will bring joy and harmony to the community. Edgewater believes in this project, alderman, and so should you.

Respectfully yours,  
 Morry Matson, chair of the Edgewater  
 Beachwalk proposal committee

P.S.—This is a partial list of people to whom a copy of this letter shall be sent.

President Barack Obama, First Lady Michelle Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, President Jimmy Carter, Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton, Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL), Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), Sen. Harry Reid (D-NV), Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), Gov. Pat Quinn (D-IL), Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Ald. Patrick O'Connor, David Axelrod, Chris Matthews, Rachel Maddow, Lawrence O'Donnell (MSNBC) and Rev. Al Sharpton (MSNBC)

## GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



PR photo courtesy of Daniel Sobrino

## TIE ONE ON

Openly gay singer Daniel Sobrino is one of the artists profiled in this week's Pop Making Sense. Read page 17.

## DISH

That's LYFE.  
Page 22

Photo of LYFE Kitchen  
by Andrew Davis



## THEATER

A 'Great' deal.  
Page 14

Photo from Great Expectations  
by Chris Ocken



## TRAVEL

Cleveland rocks.  
Page 20

Photo by Andrew Davis



## SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

## A New York slant on 'La Traviata'

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Anyone who pays attention to the hip theater and dance scene in Brooklyn and Manhattan will notice that the young creative staff for the Lyric Opera of Chicago's new production of *La Traviata* is filled with up-and-coming New York notables.

Director Arin Arbus, named in 2009 by Charles Isherwood of *The New York Times* as "the most gifted new director to emerge this year," makes her Lyric debut directing Giuseppe Verdi's 1853 romantic tragedy. Also making their Lyric debuts on the production are costume designer Cait O'Connor, lighting designer Marcus Doshi and acclaimed out choreographer Austin McCormick, the founder and driving force of the acclaimed New York dance troupe Company XIV.

"This is my first project on this scale," said McCormick, who previously collaborated with Arbus for a production of *Much Ado About Nothing* for the New York company Theatre for a New Audience, where she is associate artistic director. (The company also recently made news for opening its first permanent theater space in Brooklyn with director Julie Taymor's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.)

Arbus specifically sought McCormick to choreograph *La Traviata*, and he's hoping to possibly ruffle a few feathers by presenting some very earthy dances in Flora's Spanish-themed Act III party scene.

"The idea behind is that this troupe just shows up at this party and that they're rough street performers, so they really bring a different kind of sensuality to the proceedings," said McCormick, adding that a touch of gender-bending and the use of elaborate puppetry all come into

play as well. Even though the party is full of courtesans (high-priced prostitutes) and their customers, McCormick said even they will express some shock at the earthiness of the visiting troupe.

In terms of sensuality, that's a big part of what McCormick is known for in creating works for Company XIV. For instance, his acclaimed take on *The Nutcracker* called *Nutcracker Rouge* is a bawdy burlesque spin on the classic holiday ballet filled with powdered wigs, corsets and go-go boys. Audiences under the age of 18 are not admitted to many of McCormick's dance pieces.

Another of McCormick's specialties, his love and emphasis on baroque ballet choreography and costuming, also gets a bit of an outing in the Lyric's new *La Traviata*. McCormick said that Arbus' approach to the Act I party scene is that of an 18th-century-themed dessert costume party complete with powdered wigs.

"Cait is designing the costumes to be 1860s-specific, but with a sort of baroque costume on top of it," McCormick said. "Both parties in the opera are contextualized to be theme parties. There's a lot of room for beautiful costumes, for sure."

The Lyric's new *La Traviata* replaces out director Frank Galati's two-decade-old production, and it's a co-production with Houston Grand Opera and Canadian Opera Company in Toronto. McCormick is excited that he'll be able to share his work on *La Traviata* with in major cities and to rework his choreography on a different company of dancers.

One issue McCormick is still dealing with is the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, which caused extensive flooding damage to the Brooklyn rehearsal and performance spaces for Company



Austin McCormick. Photo by Tony Gale

XIV. While the space is being repaired, Company XIV has been moving its performances to other theaters around town.

In the future McCormick would love to work again with director Arbus, and even tackle directing a full-length opera himself—particularly baroque works.

"Baroque opera is sort of where my heart is right now," McCormick said. "Any opportunity to work on baroque material is a dream of mine."

The Lyric Opera of Chicago's new production of Giuseppe Verdi's *La Traviata* plays 10 performances at the Civic Opera House, 20 N. Wacker Dr. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 20, 23, 30, Dec. 3, 9 and 20 with 2 p.m. matinees Nov. 27, Dec. 6, 12 and 15. Performances are sung in Italian with projected English

translations. Tickets are \$54-\$284. For more information, call (312) 332-2244, ext. 5600, or visit [www.lyricopera.org](http://www.lyricopera.org). For more information on Austin McCormick and Company XIV, visit [www.companyxiv.com](http://www.companyxiv.com).

### Crossing the footlights (or tasteless self-promotion)

When I worked as an arts writer and second-string theater critic for the Salt Lake Tribune from 1999-2002, one of my most interesting stories came about from appearing in a community theater production of *42nd Street* in 2000.

The story was originally supposed to be about what it's like to go through the audition process, but the theater asked if I could be in the production since they really needed men. To avoid conflict-of-interest accusations, the feature about my experiences on the other side of the footlights ran after the show closed.

But one of the complaints I got from actors who missed *42nd Street* was that they didn't get a chance to see how I measured up as a performer—especially since I got to pass judgment as a critic on their performances.

So in that light of a critic being critiqued, let mention that I'm appearing as Pirelli in the musical *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* at Oakton Community College in Des Plaines through Sunday, Nov. 24. The 1979 Stephen Sondheim and Hugh Wheeler musical has always been one of my top favorites, so I took a chance on auditioning once I got permission from my employers.

I'd forgotten how exhausting and time-consuming doing theater on top of a full-time job can be, and how there are so many chances for things to go wrong. So hopefully this foray on the stage will give me more empathy for those I'll be critiquing in the future.

**Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street** continues through Sunday, Nov. 24, at Oakton Community College, 1600 E. Golf Road, Des Plaines. Performances are at 8 p.m. Thursday through Saturday and at 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$10; call 847-635-1900 or visit [www.oakton.edu](http://www.oakton.edu).



Appropriate. Photo by Michael Courier

## THEATER REVIEW

### Appropriate

Playwright: Will Kern

Playwright: Branden Jacobs-Jenkins

At: Victory Gardens Theater at the Biograph, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.

Tickets: 773-871-3000;

www.victorygardens.org; \$20-\$50

Runs through: Dec. 8

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The sins of the father, runs the quote, are visited upon their children. Long the basis for classical tragedy, this theme likewise permeates Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' multi-generational tale of ancestral legacies. The siblings who converge on the antebellum mansion constituting the seat of the venerable Lafayette clan following the death of its patriarch make passing reference to "evil" polluting their tribal bloodline. The household cemetery adjoining the former plantation's swampy Arkansas site also hints at past secrets long buried, and later, scenic designer Yu Shibigaki provides a stunt-effect drawn straight from Edgar Allan Poe's House of Usher.

This is the play that its author may have meant to write, but only a few vestiges of it remain on the Victory Gardens stage. Whether as a result of advice by workshop mentors, literary associates, BFFs or combinations thereof, what could have been gripping family drama in the style of Eugene O'Neill or Arthur Miller has been transformed into another August: Osage County knock-off, replete with raised-voice bickering 15 minutes into the first act and undiluted vitriol spewed forth with the stridency of dueling steamrollers at the 30-minute mark, all heartily enjoyed by theatergoers well-versed in post-Norman Lear comedy, who chortle at every "zinger" launched in the crossfire. You'd think that the discovery of a folio containing photographs of uncertain vintage, depicting atrocities of a distinctly Southern character, would impose a more somber tone on the proceedings—but it doesn't.

Can there be greater irony than actors doing their job so well that they totally subvert their play's intent? Miracle-man director Gary Griffin has assembled an ensemble of muscular troupers—including, among others, Kirsten Fitzgerald, Keith Kupferer, Stef Tovar and Cheryl Graeff—all doing what Chicago audiences have come to expect from their favorites. Vivid characterizations and agile timing conspire with a

varied stage picture boasting a diversity of visual and vocal presences, to conceal the formulaic structure of a text incorporating a veritable catalogue of current playwrighting fashions. (Did I mention the hitherto non-physically aggressive kinfolk erupting into a breezily inconsequential brawl in the latter part of the second act?)

This in no way diminishes the entertainment value of sneering at Dixieland culture and still participating in solemn post-show discussions on racism in this country. The dynamics connecting the Lafayettes to the Atruseses and Cadmuses—and, ultimately, to us—will have to wait for analytic dissection (from a safe chronological distance, preferably).

## CRITICS' PICKS

**The Killer Angels**, Lifeline Theatre, through Nov. 24. Gettysburg, 1863: three days of slaughter that turned the tide of the Civil War. This skillful adaptation of Michael Shaara's novel, with period songs, brings heart and soul to officers and enlisted men alike in a beautiful ensemble production. JA

**Late Nite Catechism**, Royal George Theatre, open run. "John Paul II grew up with the polka, but Pope Francis danced the tango, and that's very different kind of dance," says Sister in this quirky performance verité show, now celebrating the 20th year of its continuous run. MSB

**Miss Saigon**, Paramount Theatre, Aurora, through Nov. 24. I may have issues about the work itself, but director Jim Corti's production of this 1989 updating of Puccini's Madama Butterfly to the Vietnam War era is unquestionably a strong and dramatic one. SCM

**The Peacock**, Jackalope Theatre at Edgewater Presbyterian Church, through Dec. 8. "You can't always get it all in one read," says one of Calamity West's frustrated would-be authors—and a single viewing of this literary gender-wars thriller only begins to pique our curiosity. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

## THEATER REVIEW

### Great Expectations

Playwright: adapted by Gale Childs

Daly from the novel by Charles Dickens

At: Strawdog Theatre, 3829 N. Broadway

Tickets: 773-528-9696;

www.strawdog.org; \$28

Runs through: Dec. 14

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

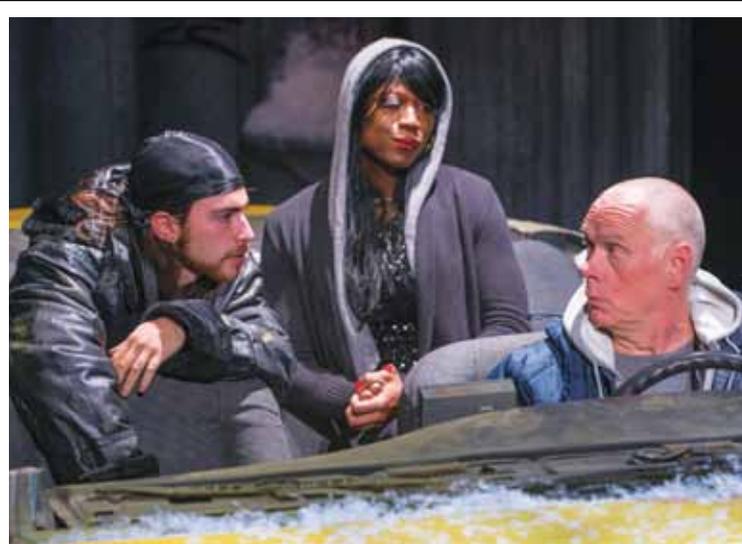
Victorian novels were written for leisurely consumption—serialized, perhaps, one chapter at a time, in a weekly or monthly publication—and only later collected into a single volume. The abbreviated study practices encountered in modern classrooms where Charles Dickens is taught often mandates considerable editing of source material, while reconfigurations for the stage may consist of excerpted portions (as in the high school textbooks), or may pack entire stories into double-feature marathons like the Royal Shakespeare Company's legendary nine-hour Nicholas Nickleby in 1980.

Gale Childs Daly's adaptation takes neither of these paths, but instead employs a narrative technique akin to Paul Sills' Story Theater, featuring a six-member cast and a protean setting composed of a table, four chairs and a number of tall bookcases whose contents become, as needed, a lump of bread dough, a blacksmith's tools, a burning house or the banks of the Thames, besides providing a screen behind which actors change clothes and personae. The players

begin by reading from individual copies of the novel, returning to this motif in the course of the performance, not because they are in need of prompting, but to indicate that what we hear at that moment is quoted verbatim from Dickens' text. The efficiency engendered thusly permits inclusion of such oft-ignored episodes as an amateur performance of Hamlet and a likewise rough-and-ready Christmas Panto.

This brand of literary legerdemain relies for its implementation firstly, on swift and precise timing, lest we lose our focus on the recitative thread, and secondly, on clear differentiation of our author's vividly-drawn characters: the sinister Abel Magwitch, the hearty Joe Gargary, the severe Mr. Jaggers, the fussy Mr. Wemmick, the eerie Mrs. Havisham (whose ravaged face remains concealed behind her ancient wedding veil), the haughty Estella and wholesome Biddy, and a host of facilitative, obstructive and expository personnel.

Under Jason Gerace's direction, the physically and verbally agile ensemble, led by Mike Tepeli as the orphaned protagonist, shifts between personalities with the swap of an apron or the donning of a pince-nez, keeping Dickens' coming-of-age fable proceeding smoothly and seamlessly for the smidgen over two hours necessary to bring the intricate plot to a satisfying resolution. "Take nothing on its looks," advises Jaggers, "but on the evidence." All evidence points to this being an unrivaled success for Strawdog Theatre Company.



Hellcab. Photo by Michael Brosilow

## THEATER REVIEW

### Hellcab

Playwright: Will Kern

At: Profiles Theatre Main

Stage, 4139 N. Broadway

Tickets: 773-549-1815;

www.profiles theatre.org; \$35-\$40

Runs through: Jan. 12

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

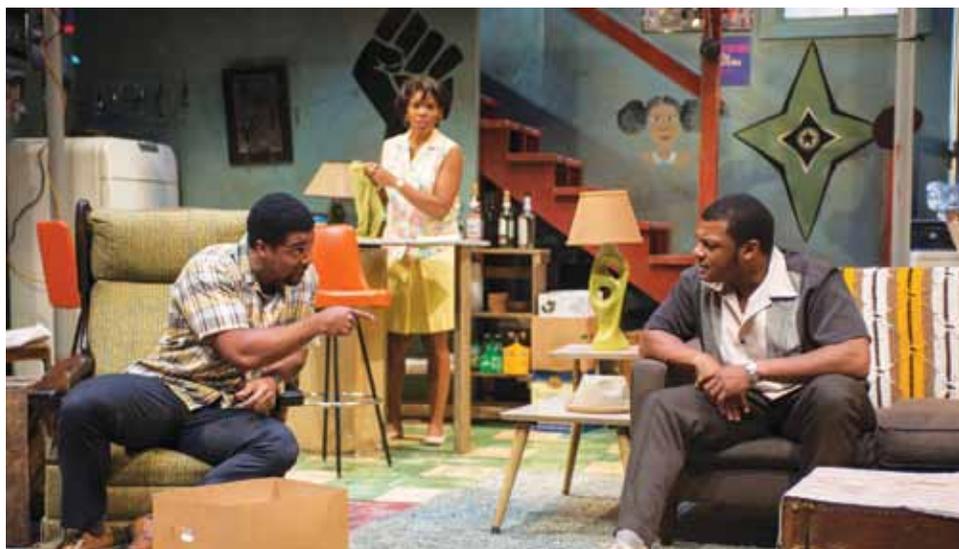
Hellcab, garaged since finishing its nine-year run in 2002 for the now-disbanded Famous Door company, resumed cruising the streets in 2012 at Profiles Theatre, where it now returns for another holiday season. You don't hear audiences vocalize in recognition of geography referenced in the script any more—not even the Wooden Nickel tavern on Wilson Avenue—but as if to prove that the city landscape doesn't change, Paul Dillon, the actor who first played the lonely young refugee from Rockford eking out an income as an automotive hack returns to his place at the wheel—somewhat weathered, like his decrepit vehicle, by odysseys we can only imagine.

A taxicab, you see, is not like a bus, which follows a fixed route, or a limo, shuttling between predetermined locations. The driver of a taxicab is an itinerant contractor, serving a dizzying panorama of humanity. He (or nowadays, she) may be called upon to perform the duties of a counselor, a bodyguard, a paramedic, a midwife, a confessor, a surrogate uncle, an old flame or a gallant suitor. His

privacy may be interrupted at any moment by anybody with a few dollars to swap for temporary sanctuary from the stygian gloom lurking beneath the desperate cheeriness of a bitterly cold Christmas Eve in Chicago.

Our pilgrim's day starts with a pair of pious parents, quickly succeeded by an array of ethnic minorities demonstrating that bigotry transcends social, filial and occupational boundaries. By nightfall, he will witness the full spectrum of human appetites—trusting lovers who can't wait for a motel room, squabbling lovers who disrespect one another, and a cross-dresser who works up the nerve to dismiss her abusive consort. He will rush a pregnant woman to the hospital, attempt to rescue an innocent from the attentions of a cad, and deliver a rape victim safely to her door. He will be the target of strangers seductive, selfish, and scary before encountering a Samaritan to heal his scarred and wounded soul.

Director Darrell W. Cox imposes narrative coherence on a potentially scattershot script by tracking the supernatural elements associated with spiritual journeys on this traditionally magical night, while last year's outsized 303 taxi has been replaced by a compact Yellow model allowing us a clearer view of its 32 (by my count) passengers, as well as our guide's weary—but surprisingly mobile—countenance. Although it clocks in at a mere 80 minutes, Hellcab furnishes its riders with all the adventure and mystery of far more exotic excursions.



Detroit '67. Photo by Michael Brosilow

## THEATER REVIEW

### Detroit '67

Playwright: Dominique Morisseau

At: Northlight Theatre,  
9501 Skokie Blvd., Skokie

Tickets: 847-673-6300;

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

Runs through: Dec. 15

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Skilled veteran director Ron OJ Parson has assembled five personable, vigorous actors who charm the audience in this African-American dramedy, centered on sister and brother Chelle (Tyla Abercrombie) and Lank Pointdexter (Kamal Angelo Bolden), and framed by the Detroit 12th Street Riot of 1967. Guided by Parson, they create appealing and sympathetic characters as still-young adults (although no longer kids) with wit, hopes and energy.

The play itself is not as good as the performers. It's serviceable enough to create a slice-of-life at a specific point in time, and to provide several good comedy moments, but the characters are too familiar and the story is too predictable, even without reading the program notes (and absolutely so if you do). Detroit '67 seems too much like a variation on *A Raisin in the Sun*. In that groundbreaking 1959 play (a fine production is playing at TimeLine Theatre), a mother and son split on how to spend \$10,000 in life insurance left by their deceased husband/father. In Detroit '67, a brother and sister split over spending their late parents' \$15,000 life savings. In both cases, the young men want to invest on short notice in high-risk liquor-related enterprises. Why not make it a dry-cleaning business in Detroit '67 and avoid comparisons?

Comparison aside, author Dominique Morisseau serves up facile surface charm (yes, it's pleasing to watch and hear) without really digging deep into her characters. Conservative sister Chelle wants to preserve the family home for Lank, herself and her college-age son. Brother Lank and his buddy/co-investor Sly (Kelvin Roston, Jr.) want an independent business so they needn't spend 40 years working in Detroit auto plants. Chelle's gal pal Bunny (Coco Elysses) is salt-of-the-earth funny but has no influence on the outcome of the story. Into this mix Morisseau shoehorns Caroline (Cassandra Bissell), a young white woman whose sole purpose is to ignite socio-political statements by others in opposition to the spark between Caroline and Lank. Like Bunny, Caroline has no influence on the play's outcome as the exploding street riot shakes the secure Pointdexter household (seen through Jack Magaw's thoroughly believable, comfy basement rec room set). So Lank has a dream but not a plan, and Chelle has a plan but not a dream, and we've seen these characters many times before. Morisseau concludes Detroit '67 with a rueful feel-good ending between brother and sister that feels pasted on.

Morisseau is too young to have known the 1960's first-hand, resulting in minor oddities. For instance, Lank is surprised that Caroline is

familiar with Motown music—the Temptations, Marvin Gaye, the Supremes, Gladys Knight—when every Top 40 radio station played them. Sharply played Detroit '67 has personality, certainly, but not sufficient depth.

## SPOTLIGHT



Chicago's deadliest fire was the Iroquois Theatre fire of 1903, in which 600 people perished during a performance of the holiday pantomime *Mr. Bluebeard*. To commemorate the 110th anniversary of the tragedy, The Ruffians are reviving Jay Torrence's critically acclaimed show **Burning Bluebeard**, which originally bowed at the Neo-Futurists in 2011. The original cast is back to portray a troupe of singed performers reflecting on that terrible day. *Burning Bluebeard* previews from Thursday, Nov. 21, through Saturday, Nov. 23, with an official press opening at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 24. Regular performances run through Sunday, Jan. 5, and are at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays, 3 and 7:30 p.m. Saturdays and 3 p.m. Sundays (no show Nov. 28). Added shows are 7:30 p.m. Dec. 15, 22 and 29, with Iroquois Fire 110th Anniversary performances on Dec. 30 at 7:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. (the time of the actual fire). Performances are at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave. Tickets are \$25 with the possibility of student rush tickets (depending upon availability) For more information, call 773-975-8150 or visit theaterwit.org. Photo by Evan Hanover

## CHICAGO GAY MEN'S CHORUS

# MAKING SPIRITS BRIGHT



**Friday, Dec. 6 | 8pm**  
Harris Theater for Music and Dance

**Saturday, Dec. 7 | 8pm**  
North Shore Center for the Performing Arts in Skokie

**Saturday, Dec. 14 | 8pm**  
Rockefeller Chapel at University of Chicago

**Sunday, Dec. 15 | 3 & 7:30pm**  
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# KNIGHT AT THE MOVIES

BY  
RICHARD  
KNIGHT JR.

## Animals; LGBT festival films on DVD; notes

**Animals**, the debut feature from Spanish director Marcal Flores, is easily one of the oddest coming-out stories audiences are likely to encounter—and, after years of these movies, that's a compliment.

An LGBT-festival favorite (which included *Reeling*, which I programmed), *Animals* walks the same weird little path that *Donnie Darko*, *American Beauty*, *Elephant* and *Kaboom* trod. It's a haunted, unconventional coming-of-age tale that is often bizarre and tragically intense (in the way that many of these movies focusing on the primal teenage years are). It's also, at times, surprisingly funny—albeit in a dark, twisted way. The film is out on DVD and available on iTunes.

Talk about teenage angst! The brooding Pol (played by Oriol Pla), who loves to play punk

music on his guitar in his bedroom and wander the woods near his home, is one of his high school's biggest misfits. It doesn't help that his best friend is a walking, talking stuffed bear named Deerhoof who speaks in a clipped British accent (and, no, this bear is in no way related to Seth MacFarlane's Ted). Pol's older brother wants nothing more than for Pol to get rid of the stuffed furball but Pol isn't ready to let go of his four-legged blankie.

Considering the strange goings-on at Pol's school—the disappearance of a local girl who turns up dead; a host of odd occurrences involving his gay best friend David (Dimitri Leonidis); his unresolved, same-sex attraction to Ikari (Augustus Prew), a hunky new transfer student; and the suspicions of his English teacher (The Hobbit's Martin Freeman)—it's not surprising that Pol needs Deerhoof as a confidant. After an awkward attempt to get physical with his female gal pal Laia (Rosier Tapas), Pol faces his desire for Ikari. This aligns with his decision to “put away childish things” and grow up. But Pol soon learns that leaving Deerhoof behind isn't going to be as easy as he thinks—or, perhaps, wants.

The movie's eerily beautiful cinematography by Edward Grau (not surprising, considering Grau also shot the sumptuous *A Single Man* and claustrophobic *Buried*) help Flores' script (which Flores co-wrote with Enric Pardo and Aintza Serra) and purposely surreal tone. The forest through which Pol and Deerhoof roam is magically beautiful and slightly ominous—something the nearby lake (which plays a large part in the plot) underlines. Admittedly not for all audiences, *Animals* is nevertheless one of the most startling debut features of 2013 and I await Flores' follow-up—hoping that it will again contain strong LGBT themes and characters.

A raft of other queer-themed movies, of varying quality, that have played the LGBT film festival circuit over the last year are either now available for home viewing (via DVD or VOD) or will



**Animals.**

be by the beginning of the month (many from Breaking Glass Pictures).

**Longing Nights** follows four young, mostly gay hardcore nightlife denizens trolling the drug-fueled club world of Spain for yet another anonymous sexual encounter. As the film goes on and the partners and drug intake increase, the nightlife carousel spins faster and faster. The four principals seem to be riddled with self-loathing or have major cases of boredom—yet, they never seem to take a break from their illicit pursuits long enough to face the music. It's not my cup of tea but the copious amounts of male nudity will be enough for some.

Gay-porn star/distributor Michael Lucas is determined to find the sexy side of the Holy Land in *Undressing Israel: Gay Men in the Promised Land*, a short that has been expanded to 45 minutes for its DVD release. Those expecting one of Lucas' over-the-top porn epics will be unhappy to discover that this is merely a travelogue (and a rather rote one at that) that examines Israel's gay culture (the existence of which seems to be news to Lucas).

**Peyote** is a slow but ultimately rewarding story of a shy Mexican teenager who travels to a small town in the bowels of Mexico with his best friend, upon whom he has a huge crush. This small road film, nuanced and featuring strong performances from its two leading actors, is a charming winner.

**C.O.G.** (which I reviewed in my Sept. 18 column) is based on an autobiographical story by gay writer David Sedaris and stars Jonathan Groff as an intellectual snob fresh out of college who opts for a job picking apples in the American Northwest in order to get a taste of “real life” but, naturally, gets taken down a peg or two instead. The performances of Groff, Denis O'Hare and other fine supporting actors are the best reason to see this eccentric piece that worked better in print.

**Bridegroom** is the heartbreaking documentary portrait of a young gay couple whose promising future was cut short when one was killed in a freak accident. The events that occurred when Tom Bridegroom's conservative family stepped in after his death can be guessed at from the first moments of Linda Bloodworth-Thomason's film, which a YouTube video from the surviving partner, Shane Bitney Crone, inspired. For some, that familiarity will breed contempt and there

is, indeed, an underlying mawkish quality to this story but for others—and I include myself in this category—the powerful emotions and frustration on display in the film sweep those hesitations aside. Get out your Kleenex.

### Film notes:

—Whoopi Goldberg's warm directorial debut, **I Got Somethin' to Tell You**, a documentary portrait of Moms Mabley, the African-American stand-up comic who broke the mold for women of color, is playing all this month on HBO.

Goldberg's film includes vintage footage of Mabley in performance on television variety programs like *The Ed Sullivan Show* along with the expected interviews with comedians like Eddie Murphy, Arsenio Hall, Kathy Griffin, and others (including Whoopi herself) who weigh in on the importance of Mabley. The film also includes a rare peek into Mabley's lesbian offstage life. <http://www.hbo.com/#/documentaries/whoopi-goldberg-presents-moms-mabley>

—Happy Anniversary! The historic **Music Box Theatre**, 3733 N. Southport Ave., is celebrating its 30th anniversary Nov. 22—Dec. 5 with a raft of special screenings that harken back to its old format in which the venue daily booked two classic films back to back. The movies run the gamut from the Harold Lloyd silent *The Freshman* (which will include live organ accompaniment and a post-screening reception on Nov. 23) to Monty Python and the *Holy Grail*. Other highlights include *Citizen Kane*, *His Girl Friday*, *North By Northwest*, *Singin' in the Rain*, *A Clockwork Orange*, and *Bonnie & Clyde*. The celebration concludes Dec. 5 with the Chicago premiere of *Medora*, a documentary that focuses on the financial struggles of a small town and the basketball team that might help change their fortunes. [www.musicboxtheatre.com](http://www.musicboxtheatre.com)

—Save the dates: The Music Box Theatre is also celebrating Thanksgiving with its annual **Sing-a-Long Sound of Music** screening events (Nov. 29-Dec. 1 at various times) and kicking off a host of festive holiday movies with a Sunday, Dec. 8, matinee of the gay-themed **Scrooge & Marley** (which I co-wrote and directed and which was Executive Produced by Windy City Times publisher Tracy Baim). The 2:30 p.m. screening will include a festive carol sing-a-long and prize giveaways. [www.scroogeandmarley-movie.com](http://www.scroogeandmarley-movie.com)

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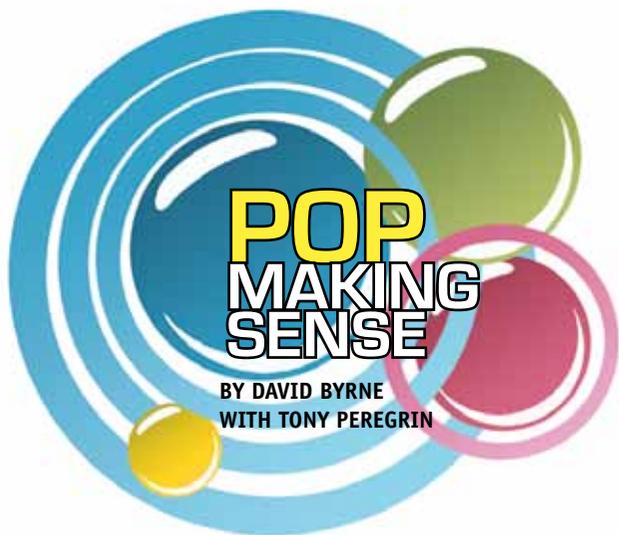
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As if it needs to be announced again, **Lady Gaga** just released her latest, ARTPOP. It would not be Gaga without moments that demand a double take. These include a surprisingly decent duet with R. Kelly on "Do What U Want" and "Jewels N' Drugs" featuring T.I., Too \$hort and Twista. The energetic "Gypsy" and the ballad "Dope" are destined to become fan favorites. But there is filler like "Manicure" and "Swine" plus eye-rolling references to drugs and hyper-sexualization to skip over throughout ARTPOP.

Certain over-the-top tracks like "G.U.Y." (girl under you) and "Mary Jane Holland" give me flashbacks to the '90s Swedish camp dance outfit Army of Lovers. A sizeable chunk of these tunes could have been recorded by any pop star, such as Miley Cyrus or Katy Perry. Luckily, Gaga's quirky personality is present on the title track and "Applause." Just like her bodysuit with a platform dubbed as Volantis, the first flying dress, ARTPOP does not quite go into orbit, despite the hype.

It is worth the wait; **Sky Ferreira's** full-length debut—Night Time, My Time—is finally out now via Capitol Records. "Heavy Metal Heart" and "24 Hours" are fun electro-pop rock ditties, while "Love in Stereo" is overly cool and emotionless. In the video for "You're Not the One," the blonde sports a denim jacket with a black sheer top and shades, ultimately serving up my FDA daily requirement of Desperately Seeking Susan realness. The references to the '80s do not stop there; "Boys" brings Transvision Vamp to the 21st century and "Nobody Asked Me (If I Was Okay)" summons the spirit of The Flirts. Ferreira will be at The Vic Theatre, 3145 N. Sheffield Ave., on Saturday, Nov. 23, with Smith Western.

On *Innocents*, **Moby** favors a more tranquil, soothing approach. Damien Jurado's vocals on "Almost Home" are heaven-sent, as if a traveler nudges his companion and whispers, "wake up,

wake up, wake up, we're almost home." Cold Specks, the guest on "A Case for Shame" and "Tell Me," has a gorgeous voice that is older than its years with its bluesy, folksy styling. On "The Perfect Life," The Flaming Lips' Wayne Coyne is paired with a choir, which can be described as divine intervention. A limited edition of *Innocents* is also available with angelic bonus tracks.

**Sir Elton John** has been garnering many praises for his album *The Diving Board*. Here, the out icon tells stories on piano-driven material, which he penned with his loyal lyricist **Bernie Taupin**. The timeless collection gels nicely with his '70s classics. A choir superbly provides back up on the highlight "Take This Dirty Water." The fun "Mexican Vacation (Kids in the Candlelight)" shows off his skills on the keys. The music industry veteran brings his tour to All-State Arena, 6920 N Mannheim Rd., Rosemont, on Saturday, Nov. 30.

Folk legend **Patty Larkin** returns with the new album *Still Green*. The set opens with the simply beautiful "Best of Intentions," which is followed by the slightly moody "Down through the Woods." "My Baby" and "Nothing Else Matters" shine brightly with backing from the band.

Larkin previously released the collection 25, where she revisits her catalog as duets with folk-music greats like Shawn Colvin, Suzanne Vega and Dar Williams. In 2005, Larkin produced the compilation *La Guitara: Gender Bending Strings*, which showcases different talented female guitarists. On Sunday, Nov. 24, Larkin takes to the stage at Old Town School of Folk Music, 4544 N. Lincoln Ave.

On his new single "Box," openly gay singer **Daniel Sobrino** offers hope for others to never give up. Also he uses the parallel of "living in a box" to being closeted and not being oneself. In a video of the recording sessions of "Box," the young crooner opens up about a personal experience when he was taunted by a classmate for taking gymnastics as a kid. His previous single, "Power of Us," is equally inspiring. Sobrino's EP, *Born Again*, is on the horizon.

Having coached many singers and conducted performances, it is hard to believe that *Love Is Born at Christmas* is **David Edelfelt's** debut album. This collection has Edelfelt's rich, expressive vocals on holiday evergreens like "Mary, Did You Know?," "Go Tell It on the Mountain" and "O Holy Night." "God Bless My Family" features beloved Windy City cabaret and stage performers

Tom Michael and Amy Methany. Get a jump start on the season, as Edelfelt will be accompanied by Beckie Menzie for *It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year* at Davenport's, 1383 N. Milwaukee Ave., on Friday, Nov. 29, through Sunday, Dec. 1. Reservations are suggested.

About two years ago, Chicago siren **Meghan Murphy** and I were judges together for *Windy City Gay Idol*. She wowed the crowd with her hilarious song "Yo Titties Look Funny in That Dress." Here, she displayed everything the hope-

fuls should strive for with her stage presence, jaw-dropping chops and, most importantly, the right material to emphasize her talents. Lovingly nicknamed "Big Red," Murphy joined songwriter and pianist John Fournier to form the band *Everybody Says Yes*. Fournier's lyrics perfectly suit Murphy's passionate, soulful delivery. The duo filled out and now operates as a seven-piece band. Expect *EverybodySaysYes.com* to launch soon to complement the group's official fan page on Facebook with news and concert schedules.

## Windy City Performing Arts has Dec. 7 concerts

"Don We Now..."—Windy City Performing Arts' annual holiday concert featuring the voices of Windy City Gay Chorus and Aria, under the direction of Artistic Director Paul Caldwell—will take place Saturday, Dec. 7, at 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. at Ebenezer Lutheran Church, 1650 W. Foster Ave.

The shows, which will feature a mix of familiar and unique musical selections, will benefit HIV/AIDS agency Vital Bridges.

General admission tickets are \$20 and can be purchased online at [windycitysings.org](http://windycitysings.org). Discounted tickets for seniors (\$15) or students and children (\$10) are available only at the box office.

## Chicago Gay Men's Chorus shows Dec. 6-7, 14-15

The Chicago Gay Men's Chorus will close its 30th-anniversary season by holding its annual holiday show (entitled "Making Spirits Bright") on various dates throughout December.

The performances will take place Friday,

Dec. 6, at 8 p.m. at the Harris Theater, 205 E. Randolph St.; Saturday, Dec. 7, at 8 p.m. at the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts, 9501 Skokie Blvd., Skokie; Saturday, Dec. 14 at 8 p.m. at the University of Chicago's Rockefeller Memorial Chapel, 5850 S. Woodlawn Ave.; and Sunday, Dec. 15, at 7:30 p.m. at Mayslake Peabody Estate, 1717 W. 31st St., Oak Brook.

Tickets are sold out for the 3 p.m. show at Mayslake on Dec. 15.

See [www.cgmc.org](http://www.cgmc.org).

## 'Sing-A-Long Sound of Music' Nov. 29-Dec. 1

"Sing-A-Long Sound of Music"—the audience-participation event includes a presentation of the 1962 Rodgers & Hammerstein movie musical *The Sound of Music*—will take place Nov. 29-Dec. 1 at Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport Ave.

Ticketholders to "Sing-A-Long Sound of Music" receive a free goody bag with special props for the "magic moments" that make the evening go with a "bang."

Passes are \$8-\$12.50; visit [www.musicbox-theatre.com/events/sound-of-music-sing-a-long-2013-nov-29-fri-0400pm](http://www.musicbox-theatre.com/events/sound-of-music-sing-a-long-2013-nov-29-fri-0400pm).



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Big Freedia. Photo by Jeremy Simmons

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## Big Freedia bounces to the big time



BY JERRY NUNN

Gay New Orleans rapper Big Freedia was twerking while Miley Cyrus was still in diapers—only it was called “bounce.” This movement was underground, but thanks to artists like Freedia it became big following his lively concerts and several albums.

He was nominated for a GLAAD Media Award, featured on many television shows and then shook all the way to South by Southwest.

His new reality show on Fuse is set to bring him into the spotlight in a personal and professional way. Windy City Times talked with him before the big debut of the series.

**Windy City Times:** Hi, Freedia. I saw you perform in concert at the Empty Bottle a while ago.

Big Freedia: Oh yeah. I love the Empty Bottle.

**WCT:** That was a blast!

BF: It was.

**WCT:** I think people need to see you perform live to get the full effect.

BF: Definitely.

**WCT:** What made you decide to make a reality show?

BF: My manager, Melvin Foley, decided my life was a story and he wanted the world to see my life about the whole bounce movement phenomenon. He started to shop around to different places, him and my other manager, Renee Moncado. The production company that decided to pick it up was World of Wonder. Fuse was the network that is running it. That is how the creation of it came about.

**WCT:** How was it working with Randy Barbato and Fenton Bailey, who created Worlds of Wonder?

BF: It was amazing. The executive producer and I got along really well. We connected on many different levels to make things happen. The whole staff was amazing to work with.

It was not easy to allow cameras to enter into your life all the time but when get used to each other we forgot the cameras were even there.

**WCT:** The show deals with you being more mainstream. Was that a goal of yours?

BF: Oh, yes, most definitely—to keep on getting more mainstream and working so hard. It makes things easier with the clearance of the music and all of that. I have been working super-hard because there are so many opportunities within mainstream music world that will keep me working.

**WCT:** The show depicts your childhood. Can you talk a bit about that?

BF: Yes, growing up in New Orleans was a bit of a challenge, especially being Black, gay and young. Things were tough for me. I learned a lot in growing up here. It made me a strong individual. I learned what I believe in. It created who I am today.

**WCT:** Are you having a big party to celebrate the show?

BF: We are having a party in New York where we will get over 200 people to twerk in the Times Square. That will be exciting.

In New Orleans we will have a party where people get to walk the red carpet and take some pictures with me. So [there will be] two big parties in New York and New Orleans.

**WCT:** You have a new album called Queen of Bounce. Can you explain the difference between twerk and bounce?

BF: “Bounce” is the overall vocabulary word and “twerking” is just one of the words in the vocabulary. A lot of people use twerk but we shake here in New Orleans. We have been shaking. There are so many words that we use. We pounce, we wobble, we wiggle, we bend over, we bust open! That being said, “twerk” is just one of the words in our vocabulary.

**WCT:** I watched your “Duffy” video. It was wild.

BF: Thank you.

**WCT:** Have you ever been hurt twerking it? You bring many people up onstage, so any accidents?

BF: I have never hurt myself onstage. I maybe have pulled a muscle but that still didn’t stop the show.

**WCT:** You toured with the band Postal Service?

BF: It was very interesting the whole tour long!

**WCT:** How was making the song “Peanut Butter” with RuPaul?

BF: That was amazing. Just getting a phone

call from RuPaul to say he wanted to work with me and he liked my music was just enough right there but to actually meet him in person and do the video was a great experience.

**WCT:** So you have more music coming out?

BF: Yes; a new EP and a new album will be coming out right behind. This is all to promote while the show is going on. My fall tour is going to happen so we have a lot going on.

**WCT:** Are you coming to Chicago soon?

BF: Hopefully on this tour; I want it to be on the list.

**WCT:** I would be in front row but I might get

knocked down.

BF: You just have to stand your ground.

**WCT:** Well, you stand your ground, too, and don’t change for anyone. You have a story that is important for people to see.

BF: Oh, I won’t change. I love what I do. I am a humble spirit. God has definitely blessed me in so many different ways. I work very hard to stay who I am and strong on what I believe in. I will stand firm.

For more on Big Freedia, visit [www.bigfreedia.com](http://www.bigfreedia.com) and follow him on [www.fuse.tv](http://www.fuse.tv).

NUNN ON ONE: TV

## Sunrise, ‘Sunset’: Talking with Reza Farahan

BY JERRY NUNN

Reza Farahan is starring in the third season of his Bravo hit reality series *Shahs of Sunset*. Cameras chronicle the antics of Farahan and friends living in Beverly Hills as Iranian Americans.

He is not only a real-estate mogul; he cements the whole group together, and is openly gay. Windy City Times rang the stalion with a ‘stache before the debut of the current season.

**Windy City Times:** Hi, Reza. I haven’t talked to you since the first season of *Shahs*.

Reza Farahan: I know. Why didn’t you call me last year?

**WCT:** Why didn’t you come visit me in Chicago?

RF: [Laughs] I totally will. I promise...

**WCT:** I am going to have to pay now to book you here. I saw you have a booking fee!

RF: There you go.

**WCT:** So how has life been now that you are a Bravo celebrity?

RF: That’s a weird concept because I live in L.A. and I’m a real-estate agent, and I am on television. I don’t walk around acting like a celebrity. I am blessed that I have access to a lot more people. Other than having a lot more followers on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram my life isn’t really that much different.

**WCT:** You are very lovable on the show.

RF: Thank you.

**WCT:** What can you tell readers about this new season?

RF: “Season” always sounds so weird because it is my life. This summer was really amazing. I turned 40. I am still seeing Adam. I feel like I ended my thirties with a bang and started my forties in a rock solid place, with my family, with Adam and my friends. It might sound weird to say but I am proud of myself and where I am at in my life in this stage.

**WCT:** I think things get better after 40. I am 43 years old myself.

RF: Heyyy.

**WCT:** On this season it looks like there is a trip to Turkey.

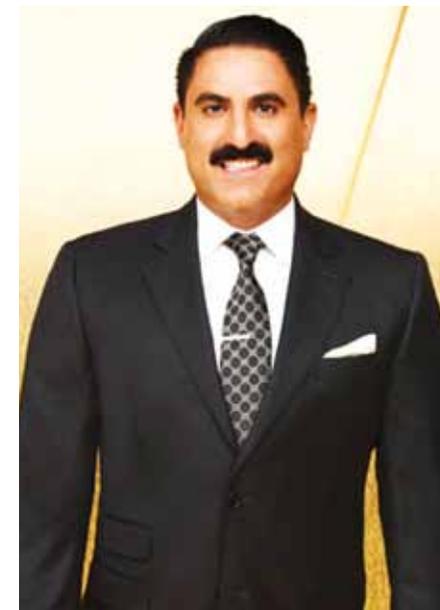
RF: There is a trip to Turkey. For most people it would seem like just a trip there but going to a place like Turkey is odd and strange. When you are walking around people look more like me than they do back home. Where I stand, whether I am called exotic, or Middle Eastern here, over there everyone looks like my ugly cousin! It’s weird.

**WCT:** There is also a moment on the preview where you go back to Iran—or attempt to.

RF: We didn’t actually go back to Iran but we made a pilgrimage of our own.

**WCT:** It looked really emotional.

RF: It really was. There were a lot of emotions that I had held onto all of these years.



Reza Farahan. Photo courtesy of Bravo

It really all came out when we were there.

**WCT:** Looks like more gay issues are coming up.

RF: [Laughs] Definitely some gay issues come up this season. I was shocked when this gay issue came out of left field. I have never been confronted by it before. I had to deal with something in a very real and raw way. The audience is going to hate me for it in the beginning but then hopefully understand and be a little sympathetic in the end.

**WCT:** I noticed you did some GLAAD work recently to fight bullying.

RF: Yes, I like to support anything being gay and lesbian especially when it comes to bullying. I grew up with it. Nowadays it is so much more intense than in my time. Back then you would get bullied while in school or on the telephone but now it is constant 24 hours seven days a week. It never stops. I can’t imagine what it would be like to be Reza of eight or nine years old with all of the technology that exists today.

If I have a chance to support any causes with GLAAD or about bullying I am all for it.

**WCT:** Was it your idea to make this “Like a Persian” music video on the Bravo website?

RF: Absolutely not. I wanted to do a song that was a little more current than that song. There were people working on the video that weren’t hip to the “Like a Virgin” version of the song, which really freaked me out. It made me very aware of the fact that I am 40.

**WCT:** Do the *Shahs* go on tour now?

RF: They don’t, but I do. I have done my fair share of comedy shows. I went to Portland and Seattle. I would love to do more of it if my real-estate schedule permitted. I love doing stand-up comedy!

Read the entire interview online at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

BOOKS

# Chicago native travels through 'Body Geographic'

BY ROSS FORMAN

Barrie Jean Borich has two truly telling tattoos. On her back, she has art of two cities, which she writes about in the opening of her 2013 book, *Body Geographic*. On her right arm, she has the tattoo of work from artist Ariel Cafarelli in Minneapolis translating one of the maps from the book into body art.

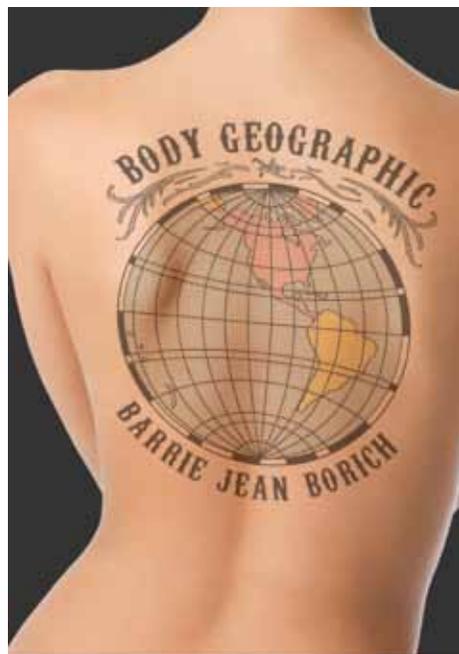
The map is called Meandering Mississippi and is from an Army Corp of Engineers chart of the changing paths of the Mississippi River. A portion of this map is included in the book, in a chapter about New Orleans, and the Mississippi is the major waterfront of Minneapolis, "so [it] has a special significance for me, both in terms of geography and in regards to the way the image conveys the experience of living through change," she said.

Borich, 54, lives in Chicago, and is, she said, "unlegally married" to Linnea Stenson, 53, the dean of a community college in Minneapolis who is moving to Chicago in December. Borich also is a professor at DePaul University.

*Body Geographic*, released this past March, is a 272-page journey, divided into 14 chapters plus narrative notes. The chapters—some of them called Maps, some called Triptiks, some "Unmapped" passages of transition and remaking—come together to evoke the experience of reading an atlas that has been immersed in personal experience and memory, she said.

"I'm interested in the way our lives are part of the history of places and the ways places hold the stories of migrations and longings of people, so the book is a kind of personal atlas about the idea of locating the self and making sense of a life as seen through a geographical lens," Borich said. "Some theorists describe the sort of thing I'm up to in this book as a 'deep map,' meaning, a description of place that includes history, memory, testimony, observation, politics, poetics and anything else one might say about the definition of a place."

For Borich, her places are Midwestern cities, and her relationship to these cities is part-iden-



AMERICAN LIVES SERIES | TOBIAS WOLFF, EDITOR

tity and part-migration stories. "I tried, in writing this book, to explore the echoes between my grandparents' and great grandparents' emigration from Croatia, Bohemia and Poland to the steel mill regions of Chicago and my own queer migration from Chicago to Minneapolis," she said. "I'm interested in the ways queer bodies are themselves a kind of map of desire, longing and reinvention, making us, in some ways, the most American of Americans."

Borich said one of her personal favorite parts of the book is the chapter called "Cities of Possibility" about walking Minneapolis at night years ago and her friendship with a young gay man named Scott. "Although it's one of the more difficult parts of the story I had to tell, I am partial to the chapter called 'City in the Middle,' about the year my spouse and I were faced with issues of mortality, events that significantly remapped us both."

Borich started writing and researching *Body Geographic* about 12 years ago. The book was in production at University of Nebraska for about 18 months. And so far many of the book's reviews have been positive.

"I received an email to my website this past summer from a distant cousin, the son of my father's uncle, who is now a fine arts painter in Cincinnati and I had never met him," Borich said. "He wrote me to share his attentive and artful responses to the book, not only the themes and stories but also, as he put it, that 'some of your relatives are my relatives.'"

"I love the way publishing books has helped me make these surprising connections with parts of my family, and thus my family history, I would have otherwise never known existed."

Borich teaches undergraduate- and graduate-level creative writing and in the new MA in Writing and Publishing Program. "I've only been at DePaul for a year, so I'll probably have much more to say about the culture a bit down the road, but so far I've found the institution supportive, welcoming, and queer-friendly," she said. "I'm currently working on developing a course on literary journals, have just been named the faculty advisor for the student literary magazine, and am working on starting up a new national literary journal with an urban environmental focus."

Borich's work nowadays on Chicago's North Side is a contrast with her South Side upbringing. She was raised in Riverdale and attended high school in South Holland. "This was [during] the 1960s and '70s, when the steel mills were still open, so most of the people I grew up with came from families with some connections to the mills," she said. "My parents were public school teachers in the near South suburbs, but my grandmother didn't move out of her apartment in South Deering until close to the end of her life, and our cousins lived in Beverly, so we traveled frequently back and forth across the South Side city line. We were smart-mouthed, hard-partying, cynical kids, accustomed to gritty industrial landscapes. Where I live now, at the edge of Boystown near the lake, was unknown to me until I was in college and started looking for queer culture in the city."

*Body Geographic* is, without question, a queer book, she said. "It's a queerly structured [book that] makes queer associations and embraces queerness as a 'normal' American identity," Borich said. "The book is not a coming-out story, but also does not assume that heterosexuals own American culture. When I sold the book to the University of Nebraska American Lives series—which features all manner of American memoirs, many of them place-based—I argued that the queer story is as American as any other

American story, perhaps even more so because of all the ways the very American concept of reinvention is the special province of American queers. It's a book that rises out of a life lived in the LGBT world, from a quarter century lived in a self-defined lesbian marriage, but which also examines the ways historical, geographical, and corporeal intersections are the stuff of all our American stories."

**More from Barrie Jean Borich:**

—About her book *My Lesbian Husband*: "I wrote *My Lesbian Husband* in a time very different than the one we live in now, before most of us imagined same-sex marriage would ever be legalized in our lifetime." The book was first published in 1999, but was just re-released by Graywolf Press as an e-book, with a new preface, updating the marriage debates.

"*My Lesbian Husband* is not so much an argument for what we call today 'marriage equality,' but rather, a book-length essay/memoir exploring, from a lesbian point of view, whether the concept of marriage is one my beloved and I want to apply to our long love affair. At the same time, the book's subtitle is 'Landscapes of a Marriage' and the project also explores the relationship of home to the ways our relationship has been seen and understood by family and community during the course of our lives together. So much has changed since I wrote that book, but it's still the only lesbian memoir I know of that interrogates the concept of marriage from a feminist perspective, looking at the question personally, both pro and con, and all the way through asking the question 'Are we married?'"

—One of her favorite and least favorite destinations: "I love and believe in cities. All cities fascinate and enthrall me, though I'm particularly interested in cities that have embraced bicycle transit and green city planning. I love ocean fronts, but otherwise I'm a city girl and prefer built landscapes to open spaces, unless the natural landscape is dramatic and difficult, such as the High Sierras or the Mediterranean Coast."

—About her relationship: "Linnea and I most frequently refer to each other as 'spouse.' I don't mind 'wife' for myself, but it doesn't work for her; she's far too butch. We had a wedding in Las Vegas 15 years ago, before it was legal anywhere in the states, but haven't decided yet, [even] after 26 years together if we will take advantage of the new marriage laws, or if we will keep our status old-school." **For more about Borich and *Body Geographic*, and to see her Meandering Mississippi tattoo in progress, go to [www.barriejeanborich.com](http://www.barriejeanborich.com).**

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## TRAVEL

# Cleveland does, indeed, rock, as Gay Games heads its way

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Cleveland and Akron, Ohio, will be ready for Gay Games 9 next August.

That was the message delivered during a recent media trip to Cleveland that highlighted spots where Gay Games activities will take place—and that featured venues that show the cultural aspects of the city.

## Seeing the sites

One of Cleveland's cultural highlights is **PlayhouseSquare** (1501 Euclid Ave.; [www.playhousesquare.org](http://www.playhousesquare.org)). Annually, more than 1 million guests visit the opulent theaters at PlayhouseSquare for more than 1,000 annual events including Broadway's best shows, international and national performing acts and musicians.

The eight theaters—five of which have been beautifully restored to their splendor of the 1920s—make PlayhouseSquare the largest performing arts center in the nation outside of New York City.

Next, the writers had lunch at **The Greenhouse Tavern** (2038 E. Fourth St.; [www.thegreenhouse-tavern.com](http://www.thegreenhouse-tavern.com)). Chef Jonathon Sawyer, a Cleveland native, evokes the farm-to-plate movement in the eatery's extensive menu. (By the way, as the first LEED-certified restaurant in Ohio, nearly everything inside is made of recycled or repurposed materials.) The decor is captivating in a quirky kind of way—with bicycles adorning the venue, and with a bookcase with, yes, VHS tapes. As for the food, I'm still dreaming about the corn and creste pasta dish.

We then toured downtown Cleveland to get a sense of the venues that will host various Gay Games activities. Among those are the **Cleveland Convention Center** (300 Lakeside Ave.; <http://clevcc.com>), which includes the **Global Center for Health Innovation**. The global center—which features an 11,000-square-foot, column-free junior ballroom—is the only facility in the world that displays the future of health and healthcare presented on four themed floors. It

will be the site of several Gay Games competitions, including volleyball.

**The Marriott Renaissance Hotel** (24 Public Square; <http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/clebr-renaissance-cleveland-hotel/>) is the 2014 Gay Games host hotel. As such, it will welcome participants at the beginning of the event through the opening accreditation activities as well as other events throughout the week, including darts and dancesport. One impressive factor is that the hotel has almost three dozen meeting rooms that total 64,734 square feet of total space.

Another Gay Games site is **Cleveland State University** ([www.csuohio.edu](http://www.csuohio.edu)). The institution will host several competitions, including swimming (in its Robert E. Busbey Natatorium) and tennis. By the way, I'm sure the writers thank the swimmers for allowing photography.

Then, it was on to the cultural venue known as **Severance Hall** (1101 Euclid Ave.; <http://www.clevelandorchestra.com/about/about-severance-hall.aspx>), a concert hall that opened in 1931 as the home of The Cleveland Orchestra. The building is named for John L. Severance and his wife, Elisabeth, who initially pledged \$1 million for its construction of the hall, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. (In addition, the hall can be rented for various events.)

The writers' host hotel was the **InterContinental Cleveland** (9801 Carnegie Ave.; [www.ihotelsgroup.com/intercontinental/en/gb/locations/cleveland](http://www.ihotelsgroup.com/intercontinental/en/gb/locations/cleveland)). Among the perks the hotel offers are 299 elegantly appointed non-smoking guest rooms, including 23 suites and two lounges. There's also 24-hour in-room dining, a 24-hour fitness center and meeting facilities.

**Table 45** ([www.tbl45.com](http://www.tbl45.com)), located in the InterContinental, is a sophisticated restaurant that offers, among other things, curry mussels, Asian duck, seared salmon and ginger spice cake. Each of the restaurant's five zones is designed for different moods, from quiet and intimate to casual and high energy.



Workers at the lesbian-owned The Pork Chop Shop, one of many businesses in Cleveland's West Side Market. Photo by Andrew Davis

After having drinks there, it was on to **Spice Kitchen + Bar** (5800 Detroit Ave.; [www.spicekitchenandbar.com](http://www.spicekitchenandbar.com)), a sustainable restaurant that's minimalist in decor but has dishes with big taste. The options look and taste delectable—and I learned that pawpaw is apparently a staple in Ohio, as I encountered it on a trip to the state earlier this year.

We wound up the first night at the gay night-spot **Twist** (11633 Clifton Blvd.; <http://clevelandgaycities.com/bars/845-twist>). If there's one thing I learned at this dance spot, it's that the residents of Cleveland can be very friendly—but don't read too much into that.

## Seeing the sites: Day two

The second day started with a trip to **West Side Market** (1979 W. 25th St.), which is like farmers' market on steroids. Located in the area of town known as Ohio City, West Side is open Monday through Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. Among the many businesses there is the lesbian-owned Pork Chop Shop—but there are so many items there, ranging from apple fritters to Mexican cuisine to, yes, Chicago hot dogs.

**Bon Bon Pastry and Cafe** (2549 Lorain Ave.; [www.bonboncleveland.com](http://www.bonboncleveland.com)) is literally a hop, skip and a jump away from the market—and, judging from the lines, is very much in demand as a breakfast/brunch spot. (FYI: The dishes are massive.) Lesbian owner Michelle Tomallo informed the writers about how she is involved with an initiative with local LGBT businesses to let them know they can be certified as such.

After getting fueled, we went on a tour of University Circle ([www.universitycircle.org](http://www.universitycircle.org)), home to more than 20 artistic and cultural venues such as the Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland Botanical Garden, Cleveland Institute of Art, Cleveland Institute of Music and the aforementioned Severance Hall.

**The Museum of Contemporary Art** (11400 Euclid Ave.; [www.mocacleveland.org](http://www.mocacleveland.org)) opened in late 2012, and is the first piece of architecture designed by London-based Farshid Moussavi in the United States. The building itself is quite a work of art, and Director of Communications Tom Poole emphasized that the museum revolves around three concepts: transparency, sustainability and flexibility. Stopping by the gift store is a must, by the way.

Art aficionados should also check out the **Cleveland Museum of Art** (11150 East Blvd.; [www.ClevelandArt.org](http://www.ClevelandArt.org)). The only major museum in the country to still offer free admission to its permanent collections, among its current spe-

cial exhibitions is the intriguing "Sicily: Art and Invention Between Greece and Rome." Also, be sure to stop by the museum's restaurant **Provenance** ([www.clevelandart.org/visit/plan-your-visit/provenance](http://www.clevelandart.org/visit/plan-your-visit/provenance)), as Chef Doug Katz offers light and hearty fare. Desiring the former, I opted for the mesclun greens salad (with strawberries and cucumbers with mint-champagne vinaigrette)—and it was absolutely delightful. However, other dishes include trout Meuniere and Moroccan chicken. (Also, the host and hostess were ridiculously good-looking, which never hurts.)

One of my favorite stops was the **Cleveland Botanical Garden** (1030 East Blvd.; [www.cb-garden.org](http://www.cb-garden.org)), a combination of indoor exhibits housed in a glasshouse and 10 acres of diverse outdoor gardens. (I got an idea of the fun to expect outside of the venue, where a few of us encountered a praying mantis.) I could've stayed in those outdoor gardens forever.

After some down time, it was time for **Market Garden Brewery** (1947 W. 25th St.; [www.marketgardenbrewery.com](http://www.marketgardenbrewery.com)). The brewery features 11 unique beers created by native Northeast Ohio brewmaster Andy Tveekrem. Two things I'll remember from this place are the beer flights and (again!) the very good-looking staff—and I'm talking men as well as women.

Dinner was at **Parallax** (2179 W. 11 St.; [www.parallaxtremont.com](http://www.parallaxtremont.com)). Parallax is located in the Tremont area, an artsy neighborhood located just south of downtown Cleveland. The pan-Asian menu includes sushi; seared salmon with curried quinoa, roasted cauliflower and mushroom dashi; and tempura lobster tail and vegetables with ponzu sauce and spicy mayo.

Lastly, the writers sampled Cleveland's nightlife again—this time, by going to the city largest LGBT bar, **Bounce/Union Station Video Cafe** (2814 Detroit Ave.; [www.columbusnightlife.com/clevelandcocktails/default.htm](http://www.columbusnightlife.com/clevelandcocktails/default.htm)), a restaurant up front with a dance club in the back. The venue is no longer for those between 18 and 21, but that doesn't mean the energy has been diluted. In fact, the night we went RuPaul's Drag Race alumna Carmen Carrera performed—and either transfixed clubgoers or gave them body issues.

Of course, this wrap-up only is the tip of the iceberg of the myriad offerings Cleveland has—from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum to restaurants from celebrity chefs such as Michael Symon (currently on ABC's daytime show *The Chew*).

Many thanks go to Positively Cleveland and Gay Games 9 for sponsoring the excursion and providing information.



A sarcophagus (at the Cleveland Museum of Art) and RuPaul's Drag Race alumna Carmen Carrera (at the club Bounce) were two of the sights on a recent excursion to Cleveland. Photo by Andrew Davis

# Chicago native Mosier transitions into triathlon star

BY ROSS FORMAN

Chris Mosier ran around as a youngster, even until age 14 while living in northwest suburban Lake Zurich, but admittedly never was a runner. Mosier opted for team sports instead, especially after a failed stint in cross-country while in junior high. "I wasn't very good," Mosier said.

Mosier played volleyball, basketball and softball, and then intramural sports while at Northern Michigan University.

"I ran for fitness, but never really enjoyed it," Mosier said. "It wasn't until after college that I started to run a little more seriously."

Serious enough to run the 2008 Chicago Marathon, Mosier's first time tackling a 26.2-mile race.

"After that, I looked for a new challenge," said Mosier, who signed on as a volunteer for the Nautica New York City Triathlon, which meant Mosier got an entry into the following year's event.

"Since I was signed up, I had to learn how to swim and get a bike, and see if I like triathlons," Mosier said, laughing.

Mosier completed that 2009 tri.

"Back in high school, I never imagined I'd be doing triathlons. I never was a swimmer or serious cyclist. Plus, the sport is really body-conscious; you're wearing spandex and swim gear. I was too uncomfortable to even consider," based on the clothing needed, Mosier said.

Though Mosier's sporting life was taking off, it was his personal life that was an issue.

"I had been thinking about transition for two or three years, but was hesitating because I had a lot of fear about how people around me would react. What would happen at work? What would happen with my family? What would happen as an athlete, especially since at that time, I was having pretty good success in my races?" Mosier said. "As a competitive person, I thought ... if I stayed in the female [division], I may have the opportunity to move up to elite status, perhaps to win races, but was kind of worried that transitioning would set me back in terms of my performance and my [ability] to compete against men."

Mosier debated until 2010, but ultimately started taking testosterone in June of that year.

Mosier had, though, been asking family and friends to use male pronouns as of September 2009.

"I did not know any transgender people when I was growing up. In fact, [trans] wasn't even in my vocabulary; it wasn't part of my understanding of gender, probably not until after college. I was kind of late to the game in transition, so there was a lot of self-discovery after college leading up to my transition.

"My biggest fear was, how others would perceive me. I always knew it was the right thing for me to do. I just had a fear of how others would react. Once I got over that fear, it really freed me to be myself, to be authentic in my own identity."

The questions were endless in Mosier's mind: "Am I going to be able to compete on a team and [have teammates] accept me? Am I going to be safe in my workplace and have people respect my identity? Are my friends and family going to be understanding with this process with me?"

Mosier's fears never materialized.

Mosier, 32, now lives in New York City, and has for the past eight years. He works in higher education at the college level and is happily married to his wife of 11 years, Zhen Heinemann, also a Chicago native who he met after college.

Mosier is now recovering from a fractured clavicle, suffered in a cycling accident this past May,

which wiped out his 2013 race season. He was planning to do a full triathlon over the summer, and pushing for elite status in the Nautica New York City Triathlon.

Instead, it's regular physical therapy and watching the calendar until his next race—in January in Florida.

Mosier also is a tri coach for the Empire Tri Club in New York City, encouraging beginners to try tri, and more

Mosier's time away from the sport over the past few months has been, admittedly, "frustrating, but also a blessing of sorts," he said. "Often, as a serious athlete, I don't give enough time to recovery, but this has been a real good opportunity for me to really sync up with my body and take the time it really needs to recover.

"Last year, I probably would have been wildly



Chris Mosier at the Compete Sports Diversity Awards, held Nov. 12. Photo courtesy of Mosier

depressed about [the injury and its recovery], but now, for whatever reason, I'm just in a better place. Plus, the support of my teammates has helped me mentally stay focused on recovery."

Mosier's teammates have always been by his side.

"As an athlete, your teammates are your family. I know my teammates have my back, and while triathlon is a pretty individual sport, having the team to train with their support means the world to me. I really enjoy the camaraderie that comes with having teammates," he said.

### No issues since transitioning

Mosier said he had issues before transitioning, mostly because "I was an androgynous person, or a masculine-looking female at the start line with these women because the sport is sort of separated at the start line for many races," he said. "So, I'd go there with my age-group of women, and people would be looking at me and be like, what are you doing here? I felt I would have the same backlash if I was with the men at that point.

"So, a lot of issues I had were that I didn't feel like I was fitting in to my specific start

Turn to page 24

*\* A sweet and distinctive spin on a holiday standard.\**  
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# the DISH

WEEKLY DINING GUIDE IN WINDY CITY TIMES

## Kanela (Old Town); Rockit's brunch; LYFE Kitchen

BY ANDREW DAVIS

The Old Town branch of **Kanela** (1552 N. Wells St.; [www.kanelacafe.com](http://www.kanelacafe.com)), thankfully, continues the tradition of the older Lakeview venue with delectable items and friendly service.



The French toast flight at Kanela. Photos by Andrew Davis

Poring over the extensive menu might be a bit time-consuming, and could lead the most single-minded person to be a tad indecisive when it comes to selecting what to eat. However, regarding the starters, one could never go wrong with the monkey bread or the Kanela roll (cinnamon roll with cream cheese). In addition, the heady list of juices (including one consisting of banana, strawberry, orange and honey) is intact. Our server, Rob (a perfect combination of

friendly and deadpan), brought out a flight of French toasts—orange, red velvet, banana walnut and poppyseed—that would bring a smile to any diner's face.

Also, like the Lakeview branch, menu items are divided into "Sweet," "Savory," "Soups," "Salads" and "Sandwiches." Two of my favorite savory items are the duck confit hash and Lorraine scramble (peppered bacon, gruyere cheese and caramelized onions).

Just keep in mind that Kanela is only open 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday through Sunday, so there's a somewhat limited window to enjoy the food—and Rob.

How do you maintain a crowd when the Cubs aren't playing? Well, Wrigleyville's **Rockit Burger Bar** (3700 N. Clark St.; [www.rockitburgerbar.com](http://www.rockitburgerbar.com)) may have just the ticket with a weekend brunch that can satisfy practically anyone's appetite. (Note: Dieters should enter at their own risk.)



Rockit's brunch menu.



Ribbon cutting at the opening of LYFE Kitchen.

There are certainly traditional items such as eggs Benedict, customizable omelets and waffles. (Our waffles were decorated with apples, pretzels, walnuts and raisins, and drizzled with caramel sauce—too little, unfortunately.) However, everything else hits the mark, including a sumptuous breakfast burrito stuffed with eggs, chorizo, avocado, cheddar jack, diced tomatoes and chipotle mayo. (This says a lot for me, as I'm not a fan of avocado.)

There are also items such as Rockit's well-known burgers, including The Motherclucker and the Truffle Mushroom Burger. Be sure to top things off with drinks ranging from mimosas to Oreo milkshakes.

Nov. 15 marked the grand opening of **LYFE Kitchen** (413 N. Clark St.; <http://lyfekitchen.com>), a fast casual restaurant with a sustainable approach.

LYFE stands for "Love Your Food Everyday,"

and this eatery definitely employs a healthful approach, as chefs Art Smith and Tal Ronnen have created items that do not exceed 600 calories. Items range from breakfast items such as Art's Start (steel-cut oatmeal with dried cranberries, almond granola, Greek yogurt and pure maple syrup) and quinoa buttermilk pancakes to dinner offerings such as grilled barramundi and Tal's Grain Bowl. (Reinforcing the health-oriented approach, there are also a herb garden for viewing as well as specialized menus that stress vegan and gluten-free options. In addition, there was a "sprout-cutting" in place of the traditional ribbon-cutting.)

Smith told Dish he put his name and reputation behind LYFE because "it was the first restaurant that was driven by the intention and purpose that it be healthful, delicious, comforting, and safe for the people as well as for the environment." Smith added that the menu will change by season.

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# HRC gala draws record crowd

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Human Rights Campaign (HRC) set an attendance record Nov. 16 for its 2013 Chicago gala. About 900 people gathered for the reception, dinner and silent auction at the Fairmont Chicago Millennium Park.

Among those in attendance were Gov. Pat Quinn, Lt. Gov. Sheila Simon, State Comptroller Judy Baar Topinka, Attorney General Lisa Madigan and U.S. Rep. Robin Kelly. State representatives and senators were also in attendance, including lead marriage bill sponsors Rep. Greg Harris and Sen. Heather Steans, and lead co-sponsor in the House, Rep. Ken Dunkin.

Much of the evening's programming revolved around the Illinois legislature's passage of same-sex marriage, and guests heard from politicians and activists, among others, who worked to make marriage equality a reality for many people in the United States.

Californians Kris Perry and Sandy Stier, who, in 2009, who were part of a lawsuit challenging Proposition 8—a suit ultimately leading to the U.S. Supreme Court, which sent it back to the pro-marriage equality decision in a lower court—spoke of how integral marriage equality was for same-sex couples with children and how much Illinoisans had to look forward to when marriage equality finally arrives in the Land of Lincoln.

"The power of choice is life-changing," said Perry. "The power of choice is undeniable. Living in a state that supports equality enhances everyone's lives—and Illinois, you are on the cusp of equality after a long, hard battle."

Craig Stowell, a Marine veteran who spearheaded an online marriage equality initiative in New Hampshire, largely on behalf of his brother, Calvin, who is gay, said, "Before this started, I had never even written so much as a letter to the editor. For me getting involved was a no brainer."

"I am also a Republican," he added. "That means I believe government should not be taking rights away from our friends, families and coworkers."

Gov. Quinn was later awarded HRC's Leadership for Equality Award.

"There were setbacks along the way, but we never quit," Quinn said in his acceptance speech, adding that when communities band together for common causes, "there's no more powerful force on this earth."

He looked ahead to Nov. 20, the day he will sign legislation legalizing same-sex marriage, and noted that that day came just a day after the 150th anniversary of the Gettysburg Address. He relished the fact that Illinois would be the 16th state to sign marriage into law

so close to a day associated with the 16th president, Abraham Lincoln.

Linda Johnson Rice, chairman of Johnson Publishing Co., received the Ally for Equality Award (presented by Desiree Rogers) and Rev. Dr. B. Herbert Martin, of the Progressive Community Center and The People's Church, received the Community Equality Award (presented by HRC's MacArthur Flournoy). Rep. Harris presented the Corporate Equality Award to Groupon, who was represented by Brian Schipper, senior vice president, human resources.

HRC supporters and officials gave a broad overview of the organization's plans in upcoming years. Gala Co-Chair Sam Abeysekera said LGBT rights could essentially be springboards to achieving equality for other communities that are still struggling.

"The LGBT movement crosses every echelon of society," Abeysekera said. "Through the LGBT movement, we can realize that equality for one is equality for all." Her cochair was Marisa McCabe.

Marty Rouse, HRC's national field director, said during his remarks that the organization hopes to help bring about marriage equality in all 50 states within the next 5 years. Following the presentation, he explained that that goal would hopefully come about through a combination of popular and judicial strategies. Rouse spoke in place of HRC's leader Chad Griffin, who was unable to attend.

"We're working on winning equality in as many states as we can," Rouse said. "Right now we're working in New Mexico, hoping to win in the courts (there). We're also working on marriage in Nevada and perhaps Arizona, Ohio, Michigan and Colorado for 2016. ... Then, at that point, a court case will probably be ready at a federal level."

Politicians attending the event had no regrets over their support of marriage equality. Republican state Rep. Tom Cross, who was a surprise "yes" vote on SB10, said, "Like any vote, some people were happy with it, and some people were not. I'm very comfortable that I made the right decision."

Harris said he's been enjoying the excitement that's come in the wake of the SB10 passage.

"We're hearing the stories of families from all over the state who are so thrilled," he said. "I've heard from grandmas and grandpas who are thrilled for their grandsons and granddaughters. John and Char Cepek of Northern Illinois PFLAG drove all the way to Chicago just to give me a tin of home-baked cookies. It's been so wonderful. People are so happy, and I think across the state there's nothing but joy."



State Rep. Greg Harris, Sen. Heather Steans and Gov. Pat Quinn. Photos by Kat Fitzgerald (www.MysicImagesPhotography.com) and Hal Baim.



John Barry with Gov. Quinn.



Calvin Stowell.



Rev. B. Herbert Martin (left) was honored by HRC, but left before the presentation, so Patricia Jacobs (center) accepted from HRC's MacArthur Flournoy.



Singer Jess Godwin.



Prop 8 plaintiffs Sandy Stier (left) and Kris Perry.



Gala Co-Chairs Marisa McCabe and Sam Abeysekera.

# CALENDAR

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## Wed., Nov. 20

**Gov. Pat Quinn to sign marriage bill.** SB 10 (The Religious Freedom & Marriage Fairness Act) signing ceremony. The event will be live streamed. 3:30pm University of Illinois at Chicago Forum, 725 W Roosevelt Rd., <http://quality.Illinois.gov>

**Wedding Cake & Champagne Celebration of the Bill-Signing** In honor of Governor Quinn signing the Religious Freedom and Marriage Equality Bill at the UIC Forum, Sidetrack is happy to host a celebration with wedding cake, champagne and hugs. No cover. 5:00pm - 7:00pm Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St.; <http://www.sidetrackchicago.com>

**National Transgender Day of Remembrance** Reception and welcome address with light food and refreshments, a reading of names, videos and performances by several prominent members of the trans community. This free event is open to the public. Howard Brown Health Center, Broadway Youth Center, Chicago Women's AIDS Project, Chicago House Trans Life Center and Center on Halsted host jointly. 6:00pm - 8:00pm Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St.; <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

**Holiday Stocking Drive for The Night Ministry** Organized Chaos helps Chicagoland's homeless with soap, shampoo, socks, gloves, toothpaste, tooth brushes, note pads, Chapstick, deodorant, dental floss, etc. Drop off items, or stick around and help with the stockings. Or support with a donation to Organized Chaos Chicago. 6:00pm - 8:30pm Hamburger Mary's 5400 N Clark <http://www.hamburgermaryschicago.com>

**Gender Diversity Therapy Group** For those who are transgender (MTF and FTM), crossdressers, drag queens or kings, or anywhere on the spectrum of gender identity or sexual orientation. This group will cover healthy steps of transitioning. \$20. Pre-register by phone or email [spectrumrockford@u0040yahoo.com](mailto:spectrumrockford@u0040yahoo.com) 7:30pm - 9:30pm Spectrum of Rockford, 6625 N. 2nd St., Loves Park, 815-639-0300 <http://www.spectrumrockford.com>

## Thursday, Nov. 21

**The American Friends of the Tel Aviv Museum of Art 2nd Annual Fall Gala (AFTAM)** Chicago Chapter honoring Scott Hodes as the 2013 "Patron of the Arts". Proceeds will benefit the Tel Aviv Museum of Art (TAMA), Israel's leading museum of modern art, and home to the largest col-

lection of Israeli art in the world. \$500. 7:00pm Trump International Tower, 401 N. Wabash Ave., 212-319-0555 <http://www.americanfriendstelavivmuseum.org>.

**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 la 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 No Exit Cafe 6970 N Glenwood Ave 800-595-4849 <http://www.theo-u.org/>

## Friday, Nov. 22

**Set Up** Romantic comedy for grown ups and winner of the 2013 Neil Simon Festival New Play Contest, is about two people with personal baggage who pull themselves together just long enough to go on a blind date. 7:30pm - 9:00pm Studio Be 3110 N. Sheffield Ave., 773-465-8668 <http://www.setupchicago.com>

**It's A Wonderful Life: Live in Chicago!** Pink Previews, where tickets sales benefit the Lynn Sage Foundation for breast cancer research, are Friday, Nov. 22 and Saturday, Nov. 23 at 7:30 pm. \$19-\$49. Through Dec. 29. 7:30pm Greenhouse Theater Center 2257 N. Lincoln Ave., 773-404-7336; <http://americanbluestheater.com>

**Loose Chicks** Roberta Miles and Jillian Erickson starring in and presenting an hour long performance based on their experiences through life. 8:00pm Emerald City Coffee and Cafe, 3938 N. Sheridan Ave., <http://www.theloosechicks.com>

**Music Box Theatre Day and Mistaken Identities Double Feature** Reception beginning at 6 and a 7pm/9:45pm double feature of North By Northwest and The Big Lebowski 9:00pm Music Box Theatre 3733 N Southport Ave., <https://mistakenidentities.eventbrite.com>

## Saturday, Nov. 23

**Minibar Slammed** World class DJs spin a variety of party jams and club hits from across the decades. 9:00pm Minibar 3341 N Halsted St., <http://www.minibar-chicago.com/#/events/c9qb>

**Taverna 750** Five-Dollar Late Night Saturday Taverna 750's popular Saturday \$5 late night menu features the perfect treat to end or prolong your evening. 11:00pm-1:30am 11:00pm Taverna 750 750 West

Cornelia Ave <http://www.Taverna750.com>  
**Boobs of the Dead: A Walking Dead Burlesque** Parody of the popular Walking Dead television series. 11:45pm Gorilla Tango Theatre 1919 N Milwaukee Ave., 773-598-4549 <http://www.gorillatango.com/zombies>

## Sunday, Nov. 24

**"Dine to Donate"** Fifty percent of food sales will be donated to relief efforts for those affected by Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. Make a reservation at 630-516-0180 or online. 10:00am - 2:00pm, <http://www.DevonSeafood.com>

**Taverna 750's Weekend Brunch** Sunday-Funday begins with Taverna 750's weekend Brunch. Enjoy delicious cocktails, tasty treats, and festive fellowship at Boystown's popular Taverna. 11:00am - 3:00pm Taverna 750 750 West Cornelia Ave <http://www.taverna750.com>

**Scarlet's Liquid Brunch** Liquid Brunch, Chicago's post brunch party, hosted by Scarlet. Featuring \$12 bottles of champagne, complimentary cereal, cartoons on the screens, and DJ DOLO on the decks. 1:00pm - 5:00pm Scarlet Bar 3320 N Halsted St., <http://www.scarletbarchicago.com>

## Monday, Nov. 25

**HambINGO** Join Mary's for "HambINGO Mary's" every Monday night at 8pm downstairs in the dining room, with your host, Velocity Metropolis calling the balls. You know this ain't your church bingo! 8:00pm Hamburger Mary's 5400 N Clark <http://www.hamburgermaryschicago.com>

**Dollar Drink Night with DJ Laura B!** Due to popular demand, \$1.00 drinks have made a return to Monday's at Hydrate. Featuring DJ Laura B spinning your favorite drinking tunes till 4am! All house level cocktails are just a dollar and \$4.00 4 Rebel Bomb Shots. Get there early to catch the hilarious Ruff N Stuff show starting at midnight! 9:00pm Hydrate Nightclub 3458 N Halsted <http://www.hydratechicago.com>

**Dragzilla Party with RuPaul's Drag Race** Season 4 Fan Fave DIDA RITZ as she hosts Spin's Dragzilla Amateur Drag Contest every Monday! First place is \$100! Sign up by 10:30pm. The show starts at 11pm! Enjoy \$5 Absolut Cocktails and \$4 Miller Lite & Coors Lights. No Cover! 11:00pm Spin Nightclub 800 W Belmont Ave., <http://www.spin-nightclub.com>

## Tuesday, Nov. 26

**Cameron Esposito Queer Comedy.** Cameron Esposito made her late night debut on Late Night with Craig Ferguson. After touring with Anthony Jeselnik and multiple panel appearances on Chelsea Lately, she is returning home to Chicago to headline Queer Comedy at Zanies. \$15 + 2 item food/bev. minimum. 8:30pm Zanies Comedy Club 1548 N Wells St., <http://www.zanies.com>

Chicago.zanies.com

**Drag Race with Frida Lay** Chicago's only amateur drag contest, hosted by Frida Lay! A hit at Roscoe's since its premier in 2000. \$300 in cash prizes! 10:00pm Roscoe's Tavern 3356 N Halsted St., <http://www.roscoes.com>

## Wed., Nov. 27

**The Return of the Hit Holiday Musical WE THREE LIZAS** - Preview Performance Fresh from a concert at Joe's Pub in New York City with a revamped book and expanded score, last year's sparkly, queer holiday hit is back... and better than ever! Box maker Conrad Ticklebottom's life has hit a block. Once, Conrad and his purple box ignited an entire movement in art and design, but now he finds himself alone, forgotten and teetering on ruin. The holidays bring three magical figures to his door—a trio of Liza Minnelli to escort him on a fabulous journey through what-was, what-could-be and what-the-f\*?!?, redeeming his lost promise and re-inventing a brand-new Conrad Ticklebottom. 7:30pm Stage 773 1225 W Belmont Ave., 773-327-5252 <http://www.aboutface theatre.com/2013/10/we-three-lizas-tickets-are-on-sale/> Tickets: <https://www.vendini.com/ticket-soft-ware.html?t=tix&e=71ec28fcc60d265777717703b8a8b9>

## Saturday, Nov. 30

**Elton John** - Allstate Arena - "all The Hits" Elton John and his band will play at the Allstate Arena in Rosemont, IL on Saturday, November 30. The 13-city tour will feature iconic hits and classic album tracks from throughout his incredible five-decade career, as well as a selection of new songs from his highly-anticipated album, The Diving Board, which will be released by Capitol Records on September 24. 8:00pm Allstate Arena 6920 N Mannheim Rd Rosemont, Ill., 60018 800-745-3000 <http://eltonjohn.com> Tickets: <http://Ticketmaster.com>

## Sunday, Dec. 1

**13th Annual Dance-along Nutcracker** Join the Lakeside Pride Symphonic Band as Sugar-plum fairies and toy soldiers of all ages return once again for the 13th Dance-Along Nutcracker, an interactive holiday event presented by the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events. Audience members, young and old, are encouraged to dress in their finest tutus and hit the dance floor alongside professional dancers. The San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band, the world's first openly gay musical organization, originally created Dance-Along Nutcracker in 1985. FREE 12:00pm - 3:00pm Chicago Cultural Center 78 E. Washington St. (773) 381-6693 <http://www.lakesidepride.org>

**TransActions Legends Lunch All Star Awards** TransActions presents the Legends



## FACE TIME

### Starting Nov. 27

About Face Theatre's  
**We Three Lizas** is at  
Stage 773, 1225 W.  
Belmont Ave.

Photo by Michael Brosilow

Lunch All Star Awards, a World AIDS Day Ceremony in association with the Chicago Department of Public Health. Joy Morris [mzjoy773@yahoo.com](mailto:mzjoy773@yahoo.com) . 1:00pm - 6:00pm Mayne Stage 1328 W Morse Ave 312-513-3878

## Monday, Dec. 2

**The Sing Along Messiah** Dr. Kim Diehnelt will conduct a mass choir, accompanied by professional soloists, the Chicago Chamber Orchestra and Michael Shawgo, organist. Bring scores, or scores will be available for purchase. An offering will benefit the work of the Greater Chicago Food Depository. 3:30pm Second Presbyterian Church, 1936 S. Michigan Ave., 312-225-4951, <http://www.2ndpresbyterian.org>

**Asian Pacific Islander Coming Out Group** Open to LGBTQ APIs. Adoptees, hapas and multiracial folks welcome. Free. Light snacks. [chicago2i@yahoo.com](mailto:chicago2i@yahoo.com). 6:00pm - 7:30pm Asian Human Services 4753 N. Broadway, 7th Floor

## Friday, Dec. 6

**12th Annual World of Chocolate** Chocolate lovers are invited to satisfy their sweet tooth and commemorate the upcoming December 1st, World AIDS Day at World of Chocolate, AIDS Foundation of Chicago's 12th annual winter soiree. 6:00pm - 11:00pm, Union Station, <http://afc.aidschicago.org>

## MOSIER from page 21

[group]. Even race officials would question me." Since transitioning, "I have not had a problem."

And everyone on Mosier's tri team "has been totally cool."

Mosier's tri team was one of the first places where he started to socially transition, and one of the places where he was most afraid.

"In team sports, even in LGBT leagues, I've had issues [in the past, mostly with] problematic language, such as people saying 'tranny,' or saying comments about my testosterone levels, or the way I play," he said. "But it's been a tremendously positive experience with my tri team."

Mosier has done exceptionally well in triathlons before and after transitioning which, he admitted, was not completely expected.

"I used to place in the top 10 of races, and since transitioning over the past two years, I've won my age-group a number of times; I've come in third in a race. I'm placing in the top three pretty consistently, which is an amazing feeling to me to know that I can still be competitive and that my hard work as an athlete is paying off," said Mosier, who competes in the extremely

competitive 30-34 men's age group.

"I am now being as successful as I was before transition. I'm extremely proud of how I'm competing now because I didn't think it would be possible. I have exceeded my expectations as an athlete. One thing that hasn't changed is my drive and my desire to be the best I can be. In some ways I feel more motivated by the fact I have transitioned.

"No one had expectations that I'd do well, but I worked my ass off and dedicated myself completely to my training, to see what I'm really capable of. And I've been very pleased with my results."

Mosier is truly an award-winning triathlete.

He was named one of three finalists for the Compete Magazine's Athlete of the Year award in 2011, and was given an honorable mention by USA Triathlon for the 2011 USAT Spirit of Multi-sport Awards.

Mosier was named the 2013 Athlete of the Year for Compete Magazine, it was announced in mid-November.

"A big part of the reason I won [the USAT honor] was [because] I am a trans athlete and I really focus on bringing a voice for trans and queer into triathlon, and I don't really think there was a voice," Mosier said. "In the sport as

a whole, sexuality is not really an issue, or it's not really talked about, and gender is not really an issue either. That's been kind of interesting for me. There are very few sports where the top female competitors are so close to the top male competitors. In Ironman races, there's not that large of a gap, and it's really awesome to see that women are sort of respected in the same way that men are respected in the sport.

"For me as a trans athlete, I've found that I've had very few issues in the sport, which has been really incredible because that hasn't been the case for me in team sports.

"I received the award, based on work done in the LGBT community, for the inclusion of trans athletes, and for policies and procedures that will help queer athletes participate."

Truly, the role-model label fits solidly on Mosier's shoulders—and he's proud to carry that title.

"I love the idea of being a role-model for young athletes," he said. "I knew no trans athletes before coming out, and that was part of the reason I delayed my transition.

"The idea of using my voice now to reach young athletes to let them know that, yes, you can play [sports] and still maintain your identity as an athlete and also still be true to yourself,

and do whatever that means to you, [be it] identify as queer, or trans ... it's really important for me to do that.

"I feel I can use my voice to help influence folks, to allow trans-participation, including adequate preparations for coaches and administrators to support trans athletes, and to let trans athletes know that they can participate and they can play."

To that, Mosier is launching a website: [www.transathlete.com](http://www.transathlete.com), a resource for students, coaches and administrators to find information about trans-inclusion in athletics at various levels of play.

"It will serve as a resource for everything trans and sports," Mosier said. "My goal is to compile all of the resources for players, coaches, teammates and allies, so everything is easily accessible and hopefully help continue the conversation on trans inclusion in sports because it really has become a topic in education.

"I think there really is a need for this resource."

Chicago trans sportswriter Christina Kahrl said Mosier is "the kind of role model our community deserves."

Turn to page 26

# BILLY MASTERS

"She is very, VERY old, so the crowd is going to be old. I've seen Cher perform and she is amazing. Hmm, the theatre itself is formal when you come in. It's not like you can rouse the crowd with 'Do You Believe In Life After Love'; it's all gentle claps and hums. You really have to understand that it brings that mood."—Celine Dion explains why her concerts have more energy than Cher's. And, Dion should know about old people—her husband has been collecting social security since their honeymoon!

I was lying on a gurney when I heard someone behind me ask, "Where do I drop off my urine sample for Dr. Wacker?" That took my mind off of the impending surgery, which I clearly survived. As I was being wheeled into pre-op (ironically BY a pre-op), I heard music playing in the distance. It was faint, but it was unmistakably "Silver Bells." And for that brief moment, I stopped worrying about my mortality long enough to be pissed off that they were playing Christmas songs two weeks before Thanksgiving ... and in a somewhat Hebraic hospital.

Not only am I thankful to have survived my procedure, I'm thankful to not be Alec Baldwin—because, yet again, Baldwin finds himself embroiled in a scandal. Last week, he was filmed calling a photographer a "cocksucking fag" (although Baldwin claims that what he actually called the guy was a "cocksucking fathead"). As typically follows a Baldwin outburst, he issued an apology: "I did not intend to hurt or offend anyone with my choice of words, but clearly I have—and for that I am deeply sorry." I once made an apology like that. I said to a dear friend, "I didn't do anything wrong, but obviously it hurt your feelings, so I'm sorry for that." It's a way of apologizing without taking any responsibility—you're actually telling the offended person to just get over it.

In short order, MSNBC pulled Baldwin's Up Late chat show from the schedule for two weeks. Around the same time, someone from GLAAD pointed out that the term "cocksucker" is an anti-gay slur (which I'm sure is news to Chloe Sevigny). And, because he hates to be left out, Anderson Cooper weighed in via Twitter: "Wow, Alec Baldwin shows his true colors yet again. How is he going to lie and excuse his anti-gay slurs this time? Just read Alec Baldwin's latest excuses. They are actually so ridiculous they are funny."

But Alec had a trump card up his sleeve. The next day, he arranged a photo-op in front of the salon of his openly gay hairdresser, presumably to prove that he has gay friends (who, one assumes, are cocksuckers). Nick Berrios told TMZ, "I don't think he's homophobic. I don't at all. Whenever he is in here, we are always talking and cutting hair. He booked an appointment for today, he always does and he is a good tipper. He has a very big gay following. We love him more now. We always love a drama-filled story." To say nothing of a good tipper.

As luck would have it, actor Maulik Pancholy just came out. You may not know him by his real name, but Maulik played Jonathan, Alec's assistant, on 30 Rock for every year except for 2012—the year he left to join the cast of Whitney. Although his character started out engaged to a girl, later in the season he realized he was gay and was soon written off the show. Happily, he returned to the welcoming arms of Alec Baldwin's Jack Donaghy. In real life, Maulik just celebrated his ninth anniversary with his partner. Congrats.

Portia de Rossi realized she was a lesbian as a child, but fought it every step of the way. Throughout her teen years, she harbored many unrequited crushes. "It took me until I was about 18 when I realized I had to date other lesbians if I was ever going to fulfill that fantasy," she said. The problem was, she didn't know any lesbians—at least not that she knew of. "I'd never met one for a start, and I just thought they were strange and that they hated men and

they were very serious," she added. Obviously, that changed when she met that laugh riot Ellen DeGeneres. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Chely Wright appeared quite regularly at the Grand Ole Opry. However, she hasn't been back ever since she came out in 2010, and her fans are hoping to change that. They've started an online petition: "In the past three years, [Chely Wright] has had a new album, a book and a film that was part of the Nashville Film Festival. Yet she still has not been asked to sing at the Opry. We fans have started a petition asking The Grand Ole Opry to invite her back." Thus far the petition has been signed by over 50 thousand supporters. You can find it at Change.org.

This week our "Ask Billy" question comes in the form of a "Could it be" item from a longtime reader. Karl in Maine writes: "Could it be that the subject of your most notorious blind items revealed himself on a sitcom this week? It sure looked like him—and for a guy of a certain age, his body definition shows he's still trimming the fat."

You've certainly said a mouthful, Karl. While I was surprised to see him in this role, I believe the art was imitating life when the script



Portia de Rossi has opened up about her life, according to Billy. Photo by Rex Wockner

says he seems to want us to watch. And since a picture is worth a thousand words, we'll deliver a couple grand to you courtesy of BillyMasters.com.

When I've survived a question, a blind item and a surgery, it's definitely time to end yet another column. Even slightly compromised and surviving the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, one thing is clear—it takes a helluva lot more than a urine specimen and a pre-op nurse to slow me down. While I'm enjoying the buzz provided by my narcotics, the best medicine is always to check out [www.BillyMasters.com](http://www.BillyMasters.com), the site that will never put you out. Even heavily medicated, I'm always here for your queries. So send them along to [Billy@BillyMasters.com](mailto:Billy@BillyMasters.com) and I promise to get back to you before Alec Baldwin shows us what's in his wallet. Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

## BOOK REVIEW

## I Have a Secret

by Justin B Terry-Smith  
\$12.30; Creative House  
International Press

BY ROBERT KINGETT

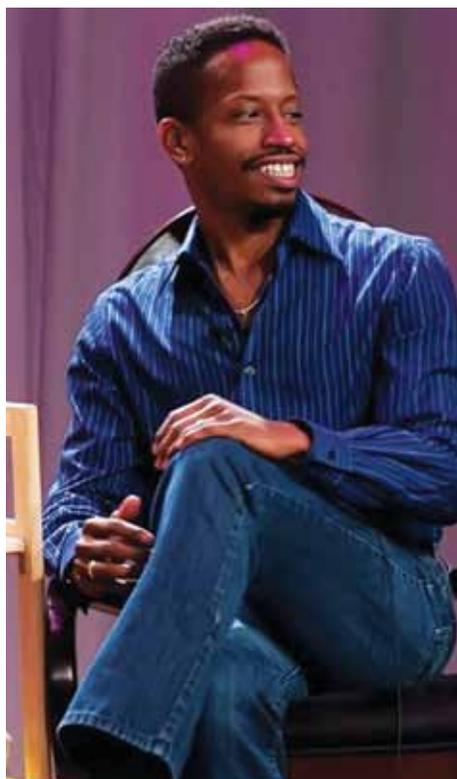
A small voice of awareness can open up a world of acceptance. In the case of *I Have a Secret*, it does more than aware kids about the importance of HIV acceptance. It brings the life of someone with HIV into an open medium that anyone, in any grade, can enjoy.

The story follows a sixth-grader named Jay who's just starting school. For protection from discrimination, his father has insisted that Jay keep his HIV a secret to everyone, even his friends. When Jay's medication falls out of his bag one day, his friendship is put to the test; then, he must either tell his secret or keep it and risk the consequences. Realizing that he must be a voice of awareness he plans a presentation to the entire school about HIV and his life.

This children's book does a wonderful job of weaving adult conflicts and scenarios into a vastly accessible and fun binding. Smith has a knack for allowing people into a different life and this prose details the journey in a gripping style that will soon have readers flipping pages. Readers of all ages won't forget Jay's journey of discovery and acceptance.

Told in a freshly chic style the elegantly woven messages will have readers' quickly understanding Jay and his mission. The story unfolds in a nice even pace that grips your attention long after the last page is closed.

With a clean writing style Justin brings a children's book that tells a story that everyone can pick up and learn from. The book does an excellent job of blending education and entertainment that will ring with resonance. The simply powerful prose is the foundation of a valuable educational tool that's enhanced by likable characters and a deeply relatable storyline. I



Justin B. Terry-Smith. Facebook photo

have a secret said that it's okay to keep secrets but huge rewards will blossom and bloom with awareness. Packed with rich meaning this accessible children's book is the perfect advocacy tool to spread the importance and acceptance of differences everywhere. This is an epically sound journey that you won't want to miss.

## Lillstreet hosting holiday events

Lillstreet Art Center will host a series of holiday happenings at 4401 N. Ravenswood Ave. Nov. 22-Dec. 31.

The center launches its 38th annual holiday season with the "Let There Be Light" curated ceramics exhibition and holiday party Friday, Nov. 22. In addition, there will be one-day gift-making workshops all season; a jewelry trunk-show series Nov. 29-Dec. 22; and a winter open house/family holiday party Dec. 14.

Visit <http://lillstreetgallery.com/holiday2013>.

## Artemis Singers winter solstice concert Dec. 6-7

Artemis Singers, Chicago's lesbian feminist chorus, will present its winter solstice concert,

"A Midwinter Night's Journey," at 8 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 6, and at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 7, at the Ethical Humanist Society, 7574 N. Lincoln Ave., Skokie.

The chorus will perform "A Midwinter Night's Journey" on two nights because the group's Jan. 19, 2013, concert at this venue sold out.

Founded in 1980, the 35-member Artemis Singers specializes in music written or arranged by women.

Tickets for "A Midwinter Night's Journey" are a suggested donation of \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door for adults. Tickets for seniors age 65 and older and for children age 12 and younger are a suggested donation of \$10. Visit <http://artemisidwinter.brownpapertickets.com>.

## MOSIER from page 24

"He's an active athlete who has made no bones of the fact of who he was or who he is, and by being open, he's also showing the wider world how his fellow athletes feel about competing with and against trans athletes," Kahrl said. "The fact that he has received such tremendous support speaks to the very essence of sports: It's a vehicle of acceptance for athletes of every stripe, and because Chris has been accepted by so many others, that's an object lesson to everyone else."

The lesson, of course, is taught by Mosier the educator, who admittedly approaches things as an athlete and as an educator.

"My work in higher education has prepared me to help influence young people," Mosier said. "My hope is that young people can see me being successful, placing well in my competition and know that they too can, potentially, do it."

"When we're looking at eliminating homophobia and transphobia in sports, we're somewhat missing those transgender voices. We're getting more and more gay and les-

bian athletes coming out, and then getting very good reception. But we're still missing that transgender voice. So, my hope is, by continuing to be competitive, speak to my competitors and my teammates, and be that voice."

## Away from sports

Mosier said his wife has been "absolutely incredible, so supportive of my transition, knowing that this was the right thing for me to do."

Both now identify as queer, though they are now perceived as a straight couple, "which has sort of taken a little bit to get used to," Mosier said.

"She's fantastic and her family is amazing." The two live with their three rabbits and plan to move back to Chicago, probably within the next five years or so.

"I am perceived as a straight white man now, and that took a lot of getting used to, going from an androgynous/queer female who was trying to be invisible because I was afraid of how people would treat me, to now," Mosier said.

But it's been a smooth transition.

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**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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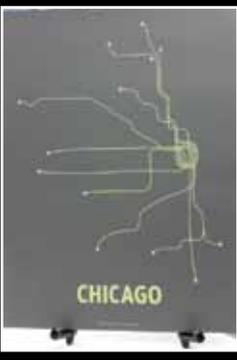


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