

TALKING
WITH MARY
WILSON

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WINDY CITY TIMES

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For the love of Sally Interview with Tam O'Shaughnessy, partner of astronaut Sally Ride



MAIN: Sally Ride and Tam O'Shaughnessy giving the keynote speech at American Library Association in 2009 Anaheim Convention Center, about how they write together, their new books on earth and its changing climate, and Sally Ride Science. Photos from O'Shaughnessy INSET: Sally Ride at work as an astronaut. NASA photo



BY SARAH TOCE

Sally Ride was the first female U.S. astronaut in space, and her world was an open book—to an extent.

The California native traveled the world talking about her adventures in the atmosphere, but no one really knew of her personal stories on the ground and in her own home. That key was kept within the heart of one Tam O'Shaughnessy—her companion of more than 27 years.

"Sally was an interesting blend of a person who wanted to do big things and, in a way, wanted to be famous, but only because that meant she did big, important things," O'Shaughnessy said.

And that she did.

One week before the death of her best friend and mate, O'Shaughnessy asked Ride what she should tell the media when they asked about their life together — about Ride's personal life in general. Ride left that decision up to O'Shaughnessy and vowed that she would be comfortable with whatever her partner ultimately decided. Ride died from pancreatic cancer. She was 61. In her obituary on July 23, 2012, it was written: "Dr. Ride is survived by her partner of 27 years, Tam O'Shaughnessy; her mother, Joyce; and her sister, Ms. Scott, who is known as Bear."

What follows is an interview with O'Shaughnessy conducted via phone with Windy City Times.

Windy City Times: Can you tell us about your relationship with Sally Ride?

Tam O'Shaughnessy: Sally and I had a lot of fun doing the things we did over our 27 years together

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Judge: Couples with serious medical conditions can get married early

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A federal judge signed an order Dec. 16 that stated same-sex couples wherein a partner faces a serious medical complication can marry ahead of the scheduled June 1, 2014, start date when marriage equality takes effect in Illinois.

Couples seeking an early marriage for medical reasons will be able to access a form from their county clerk's office; a physician will need to certify the form.

The ruling applies to Cook County only, so residents of other counties would have to obtain their licenses and marry there.

Forms were expected to be available from the Cook

County Clerk's Office by the afternoon of Dec. 16.

Judge Sharon Coleman from the U.S. District Court of the Northern District of Illinois issued the ruling. The case is being argued by lawyers from Lambda Legal and ACLU Illinois, as well as the law firms of Kirkland & Ellis and Miller Shakman & Beem.

Two couples have already wed because of Coleman's determination, which was delivered orally on Dec. 9. Elvie Jordan and Challis Gibbs were wed in their North Side home Dec. 12, while Ronald Dorfman and Ken Ilio were married Dec. 13.

The first state-recognized same-sex wedding performed in Illinois took place Nov. 27 when activist and former Cook County State's Attorney Victims Advocate

Vernita Gray, who is terminally ill, and her partner, Pat Ewert, were wed at their home.

Two other couples—Brenda Lee and Lee Edwards, and Patricia Tucker and Ingrid Swenson—are named in the Dec. 6 petition but were not addressed in the response since they do not have immediate health concerns. Litigators will file a petition laying out arguments on their behalf in early January.

Following the Dec. 16 hearing, John Knight of ACLU Illinois said, "Today we're happy that the judge has agreed to protect other people who have serious illnesses, and we have an agreement from the State's

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Photos on cover (left, from top): Photo of Mary Wilson; photo of protester in India by Kabi; photo of Andrea L. Zopp by Victor Powell; still from Chicago Gay Hockey Association's holiday video by Glam Tie Media

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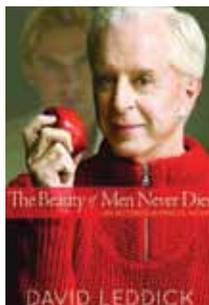
THE 'JINGLE' LIFE

Enrique Iglesias (left), Robin Thicke, Fifth Harmony and Flo Rida were part of 103.5 KISS-FM's "Jingle Ball."

Photo by Jerry Nunn



In Ask Lambda Legal, Paul Castillo discusses military spousal benefits.
Photo from Lambda Legal



WCT reviews David Leddick's book The Beauty of Men Never Dies.
PR photo

CAKE WALK

Complete with a cake, Auditorium Theatre at Roosevelt University recently marked what will be 125 years of performances in 2014.

LAST MINUTE

WCT's latest edition of Five Worth Finding has suggestions for last-minute gifts.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

Find out the latest about Jane Fonda, Sir Ian McKellen and Portia de Rossi.

plus
DAILY BREAKING NEWS

'SLO' GOING



Artists such as LGBT performers J.C. Brooks and KOKUMO (above) were part of the fundraiser "The Slo-Mo Spectacular."
Photo of KOKUMO by Vern Hester

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In India, protesters took to the street. Photo by Kabi

Gay-sex ban reinstated in India

India's supreme court has upheld a law that criminalizes gay sex in a ruling gay-rights activists have criticized, the BBC reported.

The decision—in which the court said it's up to parliament to legislate on the issue—reverses a landmark 2009 Delhi High Court order that had decriminalized same-sex acts.

According to Section 377, a 153-year-old colonial law, a same-sex relationship is an "unnatural offense" that is punishable by a 10-year jail term.

India Law Minister Kapil Sibal told reporters the government would respect the ruling; however, he did not say if there were plans to amend the law.

"Such a decision was totally unexpected from the top court. It is a black day," Arvind Narain, a lawyer for the Alternative Law Forum gay-rights group, told reporters.

In response to the development, LGBT-rights activists staged a "Global Day of Rage" Dec. 15. On Facebook, activists urged people to send words, images and videos. Events were planned in Indian cities such as Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai and Pune as well as other global sites ranging from Ann Arbor, Mich., to Sydney, Australia.

Mandela laid to rest

Former South African President Nelson Mandela was laid to rest in Qunu, South Africa, Dec. 14.

CNN reported that a military escort accompanied Mandela's coffin to the burial site and took off the national flag that draped his casket. The funeral and burial were the culmination of 10 days of national mourning for him.

Mandela's widow, Graca Machel; his ex-wife, Winnie Mandela; and luminaries such as Oprah Winfrey, Prince Charles and mogul Richard Branson attended the event.

Mandela died Dec. 5 after a period of declining health.

Late SF mayor's son marries partner

Jonathan Moscone—the son of the late San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and the artistic director of Cal Shakes—recently married his partner, attorney Darryl Carbonaro, at City Hall, according to SFGate.com.

Carbonaro and Moscone walked in together to Jane Birkin's instrumental "She Left Home." Friends read poems by e.e. cummings and Seiviyorum Seni before the couple's self-written vows.

Former City Supervisor Dan White shot and killed the elder Moscone and Harvey Milk—the first openly gay official elected to public office in California—Nov. 27, 1978.

U.S. Ed. Dept. to recognize same-sex marriages for aid

As part of the U.S. Department of Education's ongoing efforts to implement inclusive policies that reflect the diversity of country's families, and consistent with the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling on Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in *United States v. Windsor*, the department announced new guidance on the use of "marriage" and "spouse" in the federal student aid programs, including on the completion of the FAFSA, the federal student aid form.

Before the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Windsor*, the department had interpreted all provisions of Title IV of the Higher Education Act—which authorizes the federal student aid programs—consistent with Section 3 of DOMA, which prohibited all federal agencies from recognizing same-sex marriages.

More information can be found at studentaid.ed.gov.

A Queer Agenda

BY ANDRÉ PÉREZ



A Year for the History Books

History isn't just about the big events. It's about the story that emerges when you string together the big and small plot twists of our day. 2013 has been a historic year, with LGBTQs breaking barriers and one of the most powerful governments in the world screeching to a halt. How will we remember this year five years from now or even 50?

The LGBTQ community has been making headlines all year long. In July, Laverne Cox became the first trans woman of color to have a leading role on a mainstream television show. Jennifer Pritzker became the first openly transgender billionaire when she came out in September. After being proposed almost every legislative session since 1994, the federal Employment Nondiscrimination Act (ENDA) finally it made it out of committee. This November, while all eyes were on the culminating passage of Illinois equal marriage, the U.S. Senate quietly passed ENDA. The gradual integration of LGBTQ people into the social and cultural fabric of our country is inspiring, and I am proud to be a part of it. However, I think future generations will come to see this millennium as defined by privatization,

Illinois correctional facilities. Two of those prisons were juvenile detention centers and one was a prison where prisoners endured solitary confinement 24 hours per day. The reality is that it's expensive to be the nation leading in number of people incarcerated. Warehousing people is socially unredeeming and expensive. Quinn's decision would have been impossible to imagine in the hard-on-crime climate of the '80s and '90s. Luckily, a growing amount of research indicates that community-based alternatives can strengthen community while supporting individuals in rebuilding healthier lives. Our government's actions set the tone for the economy, not only because of the scale of its spending but also because it circumscribes what is possible.

Non-profit agencies (LGBTQ-focused or not) have always had to navigate the tensions between private and public interests because they receive grant money from private foundations and also from the state. With a sharp decline in state funding, non-profits are being forced to align themselves with corporations and business interests. After moving to Chicago, I was surprised to learn that the Center on Halsted had contracted its waiting area to Whole Foods and that there was a Walgreens in the Howard Brown Health Center. How were these non-profits not only endorsing but integrating for-profit entities? The answer is they have to, because our world is changing. Once there were wealthy individuals who set up foundations out of some mixture of guilt, altruism, and the need for a tax haven. Today there are corporations run by shareholders who

make decisions on facts (not personal values), who are eligible for TIF money, and who hire fancy accountants to skirt their taxes.

Why would a business give money away to the government when they could spend it cultivating influence in customer's communities? Our nonprofits increasingly become a mechanism for social marketing, a factory for good community relations, an interactive product placement commercial. And it works. I shop at Walgreens because HBHC is the best medical provider I've ever had. I spend money knowing that HBHC is more able to provide affirming, quality care to uninsured people because of their relationship with that business. However, on a larger scale, I worry. I worry that the kind of world I hope and dream for is less possible. I worry that this will be the last generation where bright and bold people get Master's degrees in education, social services, community development. Not only are those some of the lowest paid degrees, but I'm getting the message that they aren't even what it takes to be successful in those industries. Why spend 5-8 years in school learning how to do your job well if someone who is successful in business is going to swoop in and call all the shots? Today a leader is a more specific variety of a salesman, one with a vision.

"I worry that the kind of world I hope and dream for is less possible. I worry that this will be the last generation where bright and bold people get Master's degrees in education, social services, community development."

the mechanism that is efficiently restructuring the world economy.

Locally, we see how rhetoric about financial instability has created the context to undermine decades of public policy targeted at improving the lives of everyday city residents. About 50 years ago Lyndon B. Johnson launched the so-called war on poverty by broadening the government's role in education and healthcare, starting programs like VISTA, Job Corps, Head Start, Legal Services and the Community Action Program.

Today, Mayor Rahm Emanuel launched his own war on the poor, closing public mental health clinics, public schools, and defunding community organizations. Simultaneously, he has shifted resources into privately run charter schools, financed a CTA overhaul that lines the pockets of Ventra, and launched the "building a new Chicago" campaign that courts gentrification. Privatization is certainly not new. We saw it rearing its head in ex-Mayor Daley's decision to sell Chicago's parking to a Morgan Stanley partnership. However, 2013 was a strategic year to leverage global financial insecurity to implement sweeping change.

The outcry for smaller government has not been all bad. It also brought about Gov. Pat Quinn's historic decision to close 10 IL-

linois correctional facilities. Two of those prisons were juvenile detention centers and one was a prison where prisoners endured solitary confinement 24 hours per day. The reality is that it's expensive to be the nation leading in number of people incarcerated. Warehousing people is socially unredeeming and expensive. Quinn's decision would have been impossible to imagine in the hard-on-crime climate of the '80s and '90s. Luckily, a growing amount of research indicates that community-based alternatives can strengthen community while supporting individuals in rebuilding healthier lives. Our government's actions set the tone for the economy, not only because of the scale of its spending but also because it circumscribes what is possible.

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.

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Left photo (from left): Heartland Alliance Chief Development Officer Debbie Hinde, board member Doug Elliot and honoree Michael Leppen. Right photo: Vital Bridges co-founder Lori Cannon and former Board President Ron Nunziato. Photos by Tracy Baim

Vital Bridges marks 25 years at annual holiday brunch

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL BLICKENSERFER

The Four Seasons Hotel provided the setting for the Dec. 15 Heartland Health Outreach “Celebrate the Spirit” brunch.

The event commemorated 25 years of service to people with HIV/AIDS through the Vital Bridges Center on Chronic Care. After a quarter-century of work, the organization has provided 12 million meals, 700,000 nights of shelter and 250,000 hours of counseling to more than 10,000 people. Annually, it comes to the rescue of 1,800 people impacted by the disease.

Lori Cannon co-founded Vital Bridges in 1988—then under the name Open Hand Chicago—along with Paul Adams, Ron Arunno, Gabor, Matthew Hamilton, Annette Smerko Henry, Bill Holt, Tom Tunney, Lauren Verdich and Greg Harris. It has since been the city’s only Meals on Wheels and grocery program for the AIDS community. This past Thanksgiving, staffers handed out more than 400 turkeys. “When we started this program we were able to offer compassion and dignity and, for those who lived in isolation, a smiling face from a volunteer,” Cannon said. “It was as meaningful then as it is now.”

One of those volunteers, Troy Gore, said he believes it to be an integral part of the community. “It really helps a lot of people who are displaced and don’t have things that they need,” he said. “They help with housing, they offer a food pantry and case management.”

Looking toward the next 25 years, Heartland Health Outreach Chief Program Officer Ed Stellan said that the work has just begun. “There are some who think the HIV crisis is over,” he said. “But for folks who are really low income, for people who have multiple barriers in their life, it is not over.” He believes that, ultimately, HIV/AIDS can come to an end. “Only through really engaging people and building networks of care that meet their needs,” he said.

Heartland board member Amy Brierly agreed. “The organization has evolved so much over the years,” she said. “It’s gone from hand delivering hot meals to people, to grocery centers to finding housing to healthcare. We want to be able to sustain that.”

Cannon’s priorities do not revolve around spreadsheets or statistics. In 1982, her friends were dying of AIDS and since then, she said, her work has always been about the people who find themselves on the street without a supportive family and with nowhere else to turn. “I find it unfortunate that, to some people, AIDS has become history,” she said. “But it’s living. It’s not over. People still need to eat. They still need housing.”

The brunch opened with Brierly and fellow board member Doug Elliot looking back on the organization’s inception. “Much has changed and been accomplished since that one Christmas Eve 25 years ago, when a group of friends got together to deliver warm meals and com-

passion to people who were dying of AIDS,” Elliot said. “We continue to evolve as our clients’ needs change. Now we are in the position where we can provide food, housing, counseling and medical care.”

Heartland Alliance Chief Development Officer Debbie Hinde presented two “Food for Life” awards. The Greater Chicago Food Depository was honored for its steadfast advocacy and commitment to providing nutritious food to meet the dietary needs of Heartland’s clients. “We could not provide the services we provide were it not for the Greater Chicago Food Depository,” she said.

The depository’s CEO, Kate Maehr, accepted the award. “I can remember thinking to myself ‘how are we going to respond to the incredible need across the community,’” she recalled. “Today, it’s close to 900,000 people that we are serving. But we are a better organization because of Vital Bridges and because of Debbie.”

Michael Leppen, described as one of Chicago’s most important philanthropists, was honored for being a champion in the field of AIDS advocacy. Introducing him, Elliot honored his legacy of support. “For three decades, Michael has been a friend,” he said. “He has been improving the condition of those suffering from the disease.”

Accepting the award to a standing ovation, Leppen said that as a young child, he learned to give until it hurts. “When you give until you feel that hurt, you are giving the greatest gift of your heart,” he said. “It’s not about us. It’s about them.”

A “Fund the Need” drive at the event raised more than \$50,000 in just a few minutes.

Special surprise awards were presented by Ron Nunziato to Vital Bridges staff members Cannon and Hinde.

For more information, go to www.heartlandalliance.org/vital.

Pritzker to chair El gala

Colonel (IL) Jennifer N. Pritzker, IL ARNG (Retired) has agreed to chair the Equality Illinois 2014 Gala.

Among other things, Pritzker is president and CEO of Tawani Enterprises, Inc.; president of the Tawani Foundation; and founder and chair of the Pritzker Military Museum & Library.

In a statement, Equality Illinois CEO Bernard Cherkasov said of Pritzker, “She is a courageous role model who, as a transgender woman, has committed herself to continued service.”

The 2014 All Equality Illinois Gala is Saturday, Feb. 8, in the Hilton Chicago, 720 S. Michigan Ave. In addition to the fine dining experience, the gala will feature public officials, the annual silent auction featuring hundreds of glamorous items, and dancing until midnight.



Col. (IL) Jennifer N. Pritzker.

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COUPLES from cover

Attorney and David Orr's office for a simple certification process. ... It's a great day for people who need to marry now and deal with emergency situations. Marriage is hugely important for same-sex couples, healthy or otherwise, but for those people, they really need it now."

"This was a bittersweet experience, going into court today," added Camilla Taylor of Lambda Legal. "No one should be denied the [chance to] marry the person you love. ... The two couples were able to marry last week, so we're happy for them, and we're proud of the process we put into place that will allow other couples to get married, simply by getting a certification form signed by their doctor."

Jordan Heinz, a lawyer with Kirkland & Ellis, described telling Dorfman and [Elvie] Jordan the news that they would be allowed to wed.

"It was hard for them to really capture it in words," Heinz said. "They've been together for about twenty years each, and it took a while for the two of them to collect themselves, but 'joy' does not even begin to capture what I was hearing on the other side of the phone."

The Dec. 6 petition stated that the plaintiffs contending with illness, and other couples facing similar circumstances, are unfairly treated by having to wait until June for the right to marry.

"If immediate and temporary relief is not granted to Elvie, Challis, Ron, Ken, and the putative subclass, they will be irreparably harmed, because Challis, Ron, and other ill subclass members may not live to see the effective date of the Illinois marriage ban repeal," said the petition. "In light of the unconstitutionality of the State's prior marriage ban, the endorsement by the General Assembly of rights long denied, and the lack of public interest in delay, the issuance of a temporary restraining order and a preliminary injunction is justified."

The petition further makes the case for a speedy implementation of the change to marriage laws: "First, where a group has long been

unjustly denied a basic civil right, the public has an interest in seeing laws rectifying that injustice enforced as quickly as possible. In such a situation, the public has a strong interest in the speedy enactment of legislation that remedies a past constitutional violation. Second, Plaintiffs currently do not have access to federal benefits conferred by State recognition of marriage. ... The public interest is served by granting Plaintiffs immediate access to the default processes enjoyed by married couples, because their ongoing provision for their loved ones will be made more efficient and less burdensome to the State."

Dorfman has been diagnosed with systolic congestive heart failure, and his long-term prognosis is not good, according to the petition.

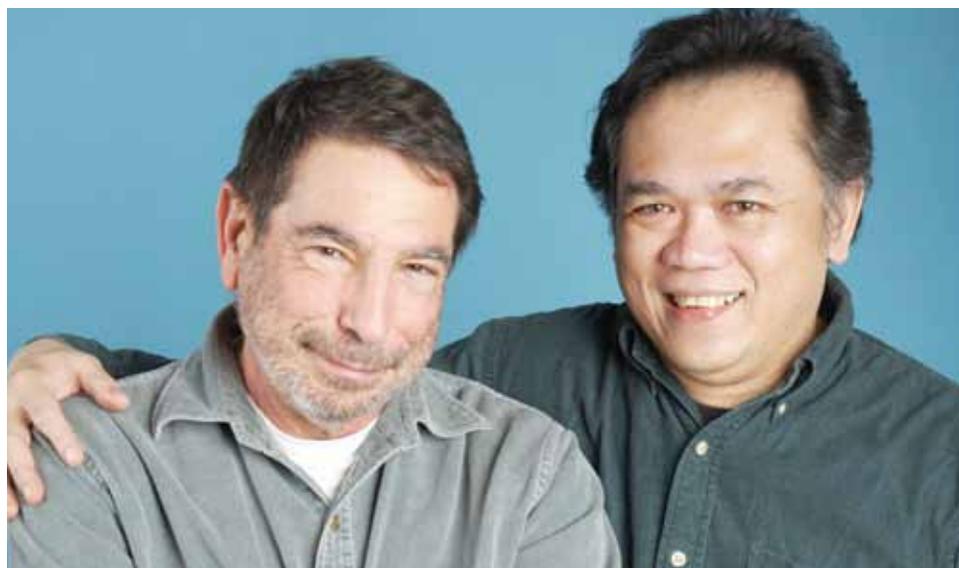
"My cardiologist has therefore urged me to get married as soon as possible," Dorfman said in the complaint. "Ken and I fear that I may not survive to June 2014. I would like to marry him as soon as possible to make sure that we will marry before my health deteriorates completely."

Gibbs was diagnosed with an aggressive form of stage 4 neuroendocrine cancer in November. She and Jordan had planned on waiting until June to marry, but were informed that Gibbs had at most months to live. They were advised to get a civil union as quickly as possible, to ensure Jordan would have access to certain spousal benefits, and did so Nov. 27.

But each partner wanted to have her relationship solemnized as a full marriage. "When I die, I want Elvie to be able to say, 'I lost my wife.' I do not want her to have to say that she lost her civil union partner," Gibbs said in the petition.

During their wedding ceremony, Jordan told Gibbs, "I love you now, and I will love you forever. Your heart is where I live." Gibbs said, simply, "Always."

For more photos and for a video of the Gibbs-Jordan wedding, see <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Two-more-Illinois-couples-get-early-marriage-go-ahead/45537.html>.



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Top: Challis Gibbs (left) and Elvie Jordan were married Dec. 12. Second from top: Ron Dorfman (left) and Ken Ilio. Second from bottom: Lee Edwards and Brenda Lee at a Chicago Urban League marriage-equality event. Bottom (from left): The ACLU's John Knight, Lambda Legal's Camilla Taylor and attorney Jordan Heinz. Credits (from top): Steve Becker, the Chicago Gay History Project, Tracy Baim and Matt Simonette

Human-rights panel looks at challenges and rewards

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Human-rights officials and activists gathered the morning of Dec. 13 to share experiences and advice in observance of International Human Rights Day. The event, "Human Rights: More Than a Movement," took place in the headquarters of State of Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR).

IDHR Director Rocco J. Claps started the discussion by speaking of how Harvey Milk served as his inspiration.

"Even as a young kid I found what he was doing to be fascinating. He was doing what I wanted to do—bringing himself to a job that he was elected to but serving a specific community," Claps said. "...Being director of the Department of Human Rights, I worked with a lot of you to make sure that LGBT people are reflected in the Human Rights Act."

Much of the discussion centered on widening the scope of inclusivity with LGBT civil rights, and acknowledging many persons within the community face battles beyond discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Owen Daniel-McCarter, legal director and staff attorney for TransLife Center and co-founder of the Transformative Justice Law Project (TJLP), said, "When we don't have an inclusive model, we often leave communities behind. ... At TJLP we think of inclusivity as being more than just the 'LGBTQ alphabet' but how that intersects with classism and racism, and how we need to be prioritizing LGBTQ folks who are living in poverty and experiencing other systemic oppression at the same time as homophobia and transphobia."

"We have an enormous amount of work to continue in our state," added Rick Garcia, senior policy advisor for The Civil Rights Agenda. He said one priority should be enforcing anti-discrimination laws that are in place, while the second needs to be getting a handle on the needs of LGBT citizens facing inequality in any realm.

Dalila Fridi, board chair for Equality Illinois' Education Project, added that, after the marriage equality victories in the state, there would be the temptation for many people to no longer engage with activism.

"There are organizations that are turning away the homeless and youth because there is no funding," Fridi said. "We can't just say 'we're done.' Travel 20 miles outside of Chicago and you'll see discrimination."

Kim Hunt, executive director of Affinity Community Services, discussed the difficulties of remaining engaged in struggles for improving human rights conditions.

"Forty-five percent of nonprofits have a budget of under \$100,000," Hunt said, adding that many doing work for LGBT community and persons of color have no tax exempt status either, making it difficult for them to fundraise.

"When you look at the work these organizations are doing on the fringes of the LGBT community, it's mind-blowing," Hunt said. "In the midst of doing work that is already difficult, it is sometimes hard to hold on to your sanity and a sense of who you are as you deal with these issues on a day to day business."

Emmanuel Garcia, project coordinator for Project Vida's RAICES initiative, added that it is important to reflect on the work that has been done before one's own.

"Connect with people who've done the work and get advice from them. ... When you get excited about an issue, [don't] forget that you are part of that thread or fabric of the movement," he said.

Ebonie Davis of IDHR moderated the event, which featured a dance by ASL interpreter Phyl "Shisha" Thomas.

International Human Rights Day was Dec. 10.

Son of local activist Marc Loveless dies

Nathan Alexander Thaddeus Loveless—the son of local LGBT-rights activist Marc Loveless—has died at age 23.

In an email, Marc Loveless stated, "Officials have said that he was killed, others have said it was an accident. I tend to believe it was God's will and God's plan."

"If a car or an accident had the power to take his life he would be gone many times before. If it was a mistake or accident, he [had] those before and he would have been gone. If he [was] killed, then he'd just be gone and there would not be the continuing warmth of his love that we all still feel from him."

Marc messaged Windy City Times that Nathan was quite active in the LGBT community, taking part in events hosted by Broadway Youth Center, Center on Halsted and the Coalition of Justice and Respect, which Marc heads.

Nathan's wake will take place Friday, Dec. 20, 6-8 p.m., at Operation PUSH, 930 E. 50th St. His funeral is slated for Saturday, Dec. 21, at St. Gertrude Catholic Parish, 1420 W. Granville

Ave. (The viewing will be 10-11 a.m., with the funeral Mass at 11 a.m.-12 p.m.)

According to Marc, Leak & Sons Funeral Homes, 7838 S. Cottage Grove Ave., is handling the arrangements. Those who would like to help with funeral costs can visit www.gofundme.com/5qcmjk.

PASSAGES

Ann Muller

Ann Muller—a resident of Chagrin Falls, Ohio, who once lived in Chicago—died Dec. 4. She was 78.

Mrs. Muller, a native of Michigan, was a Chicago writer, activist, and volunteer.

Her book, *Parents Matter, Parents' Relationships with Lesbian Daughters and Gay Sons*, was published in 1987, and she wrote a syndicated column about her family for gay newspapers from 1986 to 1989. She testified on behalf of gay rights legislation in both Springfield and Chicago, Illinois, and in 1981 was one of the first three parents ever to march in Chicago's gay pride parade.

Mrs. Muller also did volunteer work with people with AIDS from 1987 to 1991. "She had

a strong sense of family and a quiet courage," said her husband of more than 60 years, Herman, who survives her. Other survivors include a daughter, Lori (Tarif) Zaim of Chagrin Falls; a son, Jason (Antoine Couture) of Cleveland; and granddaughters, Sarah (Ahmad Alkuda), Nadia and Hannah Zaim.

Donations to Hospice of the Western Reserve would be appreciated.

PASSAGES

Robert A. Vade Bon Coeur

Robert A. Vade Bon Coeur passed away Dec. 6, at his residence in Crete, Ill. He was 77.

A Catholic priest who was ordained in 1963, he was born Dec. 30, 1935, in Papineau, Iroquois County, Ill., to Arthur and Evidelle Stahl Vade Bon Coeur.

Surviving are his partner, Roy Olson; one brother, Dwayne (Jane) Van Bon Coeur; nephews Richard, Timothy, Robert, Gary, Randall, Mark, James, David, Stephen, Thomas and David; and nieces Denise, Melissa, Shelly, Stacy, Lee, Janah and Terri.



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and actually even before, because we knew each other when we were kids, so we always spent time together and it was actually a big surprise when we got together romantically.

WCT: In the papers it says that you guys met at the age of 12. Is that an accurate depiction?

TO: It is true. We both grew up in Southern California, and we both started playing junior tennis at about the same time, when we were about 10 or 11. And then we both kinda got good enough to start playing the tournaments. And at that time in Southern California in the 1960s, Southern California was just a hotbed for tennis—Billie Jean King was emerging, Pancho Gonzales, Maria Bueno played. All of the great players came to Southern California from around the world, and it was just this great place for tennis. So, you know, Sally and I met at some time and some place in Southern California, and basically stayed friends the rest of our lives.

WCT: Billie Jean King was your coach as a junior player. How did that partnership come about?

TO: She was, yes. My mother ran a tennis tournament—I grew up in Fullerton, Calif., which is part of Orange County, and Sally grew up in Los Angeles County in Chino—anyway, my mom invited Billie Jean to play in her tournament, because my mom had a tennis tournament for juniors that'd also have these fun events like father/daughter, mother/son, mixed doubles, double everything. And Billie Jean had not won Wimbledon yet. She was an outstanding tennis player—she had just recently married Larry. Anyway, my mom calls her and says, "You wanna play in my little tournament? Maybe you can play with my daughter?" So Billie Jean and I, we won the women's doubles event, and then Billie Jean said, "Hey, would you like to take lessons from me? I'd love to help you."

And then actually, Billie Jean and I have been friends since that time. I met her when I was I think 13. She's one of my best friends. It's kind of a funny thing with tennis, the tennis community back when Sally and I were growing up, it was so close-knit that many of Sally's best friends and most of my best friends kind of came out of tennis.

WCT: Do you still play?

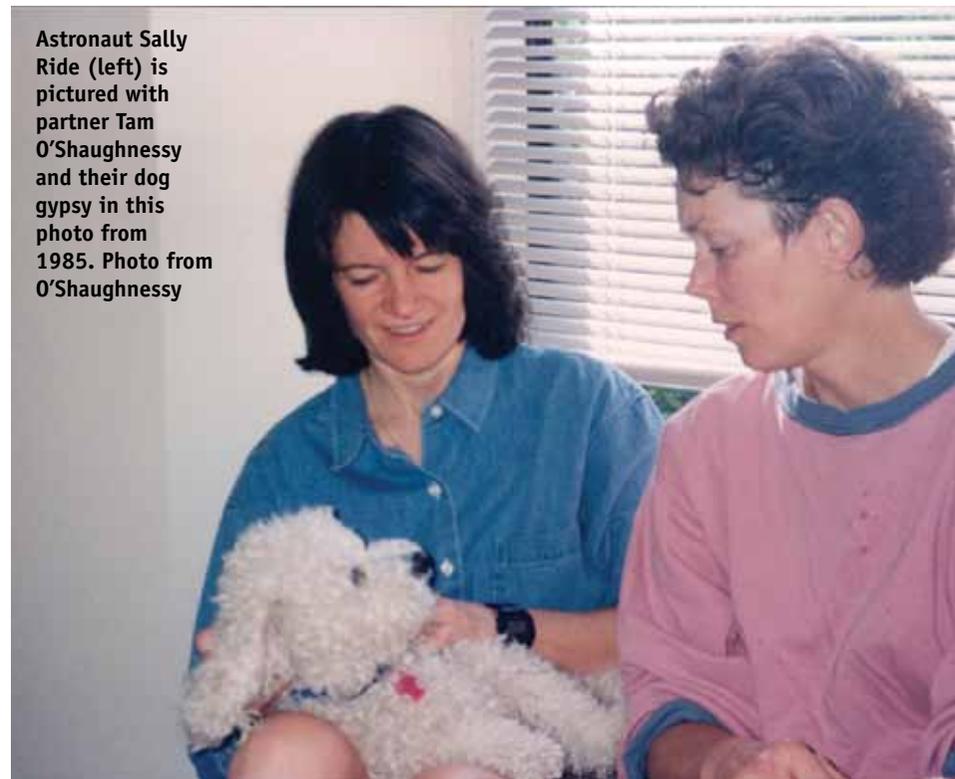
TO: You know, I really don't. I kind of go out and hit about once a decade for about 10 minutes. But it's kind of funny—when Sally died, it was such a horrid loss, that I found myself missing playing tennis, and like a week after she died, I walked to UCSD [University of California, San Diego]—which is just a couple miles from our home—and I hit tennis balls against the

wall. And I found it so comforting, it was really interesting. So I'm actually thinking of joining a tennis club and just hitting. Because it's really a big part of me, and I hadn't realized how much I missed it until Sally died.

WCT: Sally was the first American female astronaut in space, but she was such a private person. It seems like she didn't really let that accomplishment go to her head.

TO: You mean kind of being absorbed by her celebrity?

WCT: Exactly. She was able to keep herself a human being, a normal person that everyone could relate to; she was very quiet. How did that work?



Astronaut Sally Ride (left) is pictured with partner Tam O'Shaughnessy and their dog gypsy in this photo from 1985. Photo from O'Shaughnessy

TO: You know, Sally's ... that's just who Sally was—she was an interesting blend of a person who wanted to do big things and, in a way, wanted to be famous, but only because that meant she did big, important things. But at the same time what Sally loved was a very normal life. She just thrived on having a home life where she could get away from work, get away from any of the demands of celebrity, and just be a normal person—play catch in the back yard, go for walks, go to the grocery store. She liked doing all that stuff herself. So I think it was just her nature.

And she also ... I think because she grew up playing tennis—tennis actually turned out to be a wonderful way to grow up, because it

taught—and I talked to my other friends about this too—it taught all of us really important life lessons. And one of them was it sort of made us immune to celebrity. Because as kids we were around famous people, like Rod Laver ... I don't know if you know these tennis players, but the best tennis players in the world. And then sports figures always attracted movie stars and singers—you know, all these other celebrities.

WCT: What was one of the major life lessons you can recall from that time frame?

TO: As kids, we experienced that if you're a winner, if you're winning, if you keep winning in a tennis tournament, the people in the tennis tournament give you more—the families that

think fear.

Her mother actually turned 90 the day before the Medal of Freedom ceremony, so we had a big party at the Willard Hotel that we were all staying in. We had a really good time and, actually, Joyce Ride had made friends with Gloria Steinem at Sally's first launch in 1983 and Gloria came to the birthday party. [Sen.] Barbara Mikulski came to the birthday party because Barbara was good friends with Sally, and then Barbara Mikulski helped me kind of ... in a way, make NASA do the right thing and help me put on the national tribute for Sally in May at the Kennedy Center in Washington. And we had fun.

WCT: Well, that's what it's all about. At the end of the day it's all about family.

TO: I agree.

WCT: How about your family, then? Were they accepting of your relationship with Sally? Did they know about it?

TO: Even more. I actually played a few years of professional tennis, so I was on very early Women's Tennis Association, Virginia Slims Circuit. And the circuit was very close-knit and, of course, some of the women were gay, many others were not. But people kind of didn't care, so once I realized I was attracted to women, and I was like 22 years old—I was used to a world that was very approving. And so I immediately, next time I was home, took my mother out for Mexican dinner and told her I was gay. And she kind of couldn't talk about it—I think she was shocked.

I don't think she really liked it, but she never said anything bad or ... we basically never talked about it again. But my sisters—I have two sisters, one younger, one older—and they were just wonderful. I told them and they were ... they wanted to try to understand, and they quickly did, and it was kind of no big deal. When I told my family it was the mid-1970s, but they had already lived through the '60s, so I think that helped.

WCT: Let's talk about Sally Ride Science. What was the starting point of the foundation?

TO: It actually kind of evolved. On Sally's side—once she became an astronaut, even before her first flight—she was giving talks around the country to schools, teachers and kids, and corporations, and stuff. And she'd always talk about seeing that sparkle in their eye when she talked about being in space—and the first man on the moon, and she was getting ready to go up there, and just what it might be like. And then after her first flight, of course for a while, she was the most famous person on earth and gave tons of talks. And she'd see that same ... just that teachers and kids, parents, CEOs ... the light would go off in their eyeballs when she'd talk about looking back at earth from space and floating weightless and floating grapes into the mouths of the other astronauts, and all these fun stories. And Sally realized she could use space as a way to motivate and inspire teachers and kids and science.

And she also knew that she really felt like her life got made because she majored in science and physics. And it taught her to think for herself, be able to critically evaluate things about her community, about her own health, whatever. And so she didn't understand why kids didn't really like science, why they weren't good at it, why the scores were horrid. And she kind of started getting into it.

WCT: And what was your focus at this time?

TO: I was a biology major, and I started teach-

come out to watch, the press, they give you more attention. And then as soon as you lose, they don't really ... you're dropped. It taught us, and it taught Sally, to not take celebrity too strongly. It comes and goes, so make sure that what you care about, what you believe in, and who you are, are solid things. And fame is not something to reach for—reach for things you're passionate about and everything else will come.

WCT: That's a really great lesson. And it makes sense. Now I understand that when you went to the White House to accept Sally Ride's posthumous Presidential Medal of Freedom recently, you were there along with Sally's family. Were they always accepting of your relationship?

TO: Oh, absolutely. Sally never verbally, openly told her mother, her father, or her sister, Bear, that she was gay and that we were a couple. But Sally never hid it from them—you know, I went everywhere with Sally, and she went everywhere with me ... in our different careers and with our friends, and for family holidays. So over the almost three decades, I was really part of the Ride family. And her parents are really smart—especially her mother and her sister—they knew a long time ago that we were a couple. And her mother is very progressive.

Sally easily could have told her a long time ago, and Joyce Ride would not have cared, she would not have blinked. But it just shows how strong Sally's sense of privacy was, and also I

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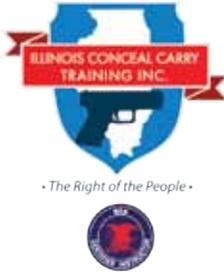
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ing biology—and I saw my students just read a paragraph in a biology textbook (I taught one year of 8th grade biology and then I taught undergraduates) and it was almost the same: 8th grade or a 20-year-old, they'd read the paragraph in a biology book—maybe about photosynthesis—and they just couldn't retain it. They couldn't get the gist of the information, so it's sort of like what's going on here? We've got to help kids at a very young age stay excited about science and really want to do the work to understand science concepts.

When Sally became a professor at UCSD—that was 1989—I was in Atlanta, I moved out; that's when we started living together. We just started talking about science education in our country and we just talked about it. And then we started writing children's science books together.

WCT: How did the desire to release children's books together come to light?

TO: That kind of grew out of that same interest that both of us had, which was we loved to go to bookstores, and we'd look at the science section, but also science fiction, biographies, nutrition, whatever, we just loved book stores. But what we noticed in the mid-1980s was that the science section had like three books in it, and the non-fiction was much slimmer than the fiction for kids. And then we'd pick up science books for kids, and they just weren't very good. They weren't exciting. They weren't interesting. They weren't accurate. Except for—there's always a few good examples. Isaac Asimov wrote great children's science books.

Anyway, we just thought, "Maybe we can do this." And Sally had written one children's science book called *To Space And Back* with her high school friend Sue Okie about her experiences in space. And so she had a little bit of a background and experience—I had none, but I just thought it would be fun to try. Our science writing worked really well and we just loved working on these books. And then it's just like it all came together—in 2001 is when we started the company with a few friends.

WCT: And out of all of this, Sally Ride Science was born?

TO: Sally convinced NASA to fund a middle school project called Earth Cam. She convinced NASA to put a camera to fly aboard the space shuttle and then later the International Space Station. And then set up this whole system where middle school kids and teachers from around the country could learn about orbits, learn about day and night, and select what part of earth they wanted photographed—and that's why it's called Earth Cam—from the space station. And this program has been going for 19 years now and it's still going.

But that turned out to just be a really exciting educational program with mission control for undergraduate students at UCSD and they did all the programming and so on for the camera on the shuttle and then the space station. But then the middle schools from around the country would send their selections to UCSD mission control, they would get relayed to NASA, to real mission in Houston, and then transmitted up to the space shuttle and later the space sta-



O'Shaughnessy accepts Sally Ride's Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Obama. Photo by Patsy Lynch

tion, and the camera would get programmed, the photos that were selected by students would get snapped, and everything would get relayed backwards to UCSD and out to the schools.

All these experiences came together and we started talking to some of our friends about science education in our country not going so well, and maybe we can do something about it. And we started the company—we were very naïve—we didn't know really what we were doing, and we just kind of went by the seats of our pants. But it's worked, and the good news is after Sally passed away, we were all really worried about our sponsors and would people still support the company without its charismatic leader? But they have. And that also is a testament to Sally, because her vision for the company was to really make the company independent of her. That we would create excellent books and programs and events for students and teachers, and corporate America that would stand on their own ... and we lucked out, that's what we did.

WCT: Working so closely with Sally, and also being her partner, and also being somewhat in the closet—especially to the outside world, not your families as much—were there ever moments that were a little bit difficult? Where maybe you didn't agree on something or where the course of your relationship might have shifted because of work? Or did you guys keep that really separate?

TO: Good questions. I think overall we actually

did really well living and working together, and spending a ton of time together. But it was challenging on occasion—both because of the gay issue and because of—it's really hard to separate your personal life from your work life if you do everything together.

Sally was the CEO of Sally Ride Science, and I became the COO, and we would have differences in opinion about the direction of the company or people in the company—whether they were contributing as much as they needed to be contributing, and what to do about it, and whatever. But halfway into the company—it took us a long time to figure this out, probably a little too long—but starting a business is so demanding, and we worked seven days a week.

So we were working too hard and then we were talking about the company too much. And we realized—I can't remember when ... 2004, 2005 some time—that when we came home in the evenings we needed to stop talking about Sally Ride Science and just spend time together and talk about other things—and the same on weekends. And that really helped. We weren't really

arguing, but it's just that we were exhausted and we were putting out too much energy towards the company and a little less on just our personal relationship—and we didn't want to do that. We liked each other too much and we wanted that private romantic side there, too. But it took us a while because the company was just so absorbing.

WCT: What were some differences between you and Sally?

TO: On the gay side of things, Sally and I are very different human beings. We have a ton in common, but Sally very seldom thought about what other people thought of her. She just didn't care. And I'm more a person that ... I'll give you an example: we were always with each other doing things with our friends and acquaintances and colleagues and so on. And Sally might invite me—she was having dinner with a friend or a colleague and, "Come on, Tam, you come." And so I'd go ... and Sally would never introduce me as, "This is my partner," "This is my mate" ... she would say, "This is Tam," "Here's Tam." And, of course, we'd talk about Sally Ride Science and the new books or whatever, all that fake stuff. And Sally just wouldn't even think about if other people were wondering why we were together, who I was personally—it just would not cross her mind. But it would cross my mind, I'd just be thinking, "Oh I wonder what these two are thinking? Are they wondering if we're gay?"

It's kind of funny, but a tad stressful at times, too. In hindsight, Sally and I could've been open. We should've been open quite a few years ago. Quite frankly, starting our company in 2001—we were just really afraid that our company wouldn't get off the ground if people knew that the two of us were together. That we wouldn't get the sponsorships from General Electric, Exxon Mobile, and on and on you go. And I also think the gay movement the last five years has just skyrocketed—I mean it's just changing so quickly now.

I wish I could've married Sally, I would've married her in a heartbeat. We were domestic partners the last 12 years. But the thing I noticed—ever since I made the decision to be open about Sally and I—the response has been nothing but positive. And in my community here, La Jolla, Calif., is very white, very conservative in a way, except—well, I shouldn't say conservative, because the university's here—it's all sorts of things. But I've never felt as comfortable here in La Jolla as I feel in the Bay Area, Seattle, Chicago, New York, Atlanta. And suddenly, everybody knows, and they're completely friendly, respectful, loving, so it's a new world, and it feels really good.

Learn more about Sally Ride Science by visiting <https://sallyridescience.com>.

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Mandela's LGBTQ advocacy falls on deaf ears

As the world mourns the passing of Nelson Mandela—who was oftentimes affectionately referred to by his Xhosa clan name "Madiba," or as "Tata" (Father)—I, too, like so many LGBTQ activists across the globe, give thanks for his unwavering support on behalf of our civil rights.

During his tenure as president, Mandela modeled for the world what an LGBTQ-inclusive democracy entailed.

For example, under Mandela, South Africa's post-apartheid constitution was the first in the world to ban anti-LGBTQ discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. The country was the fifth in the world—and the first on the motherland—to legalize marriage equality. While in office Mandela appointed an HIV-positive gay man, Edwin Cameron, to the nation's highest court. And long before his son, Makgatho Mandela, 54, died of AIDS, Mandela was the country's most vocal and visible HIV/AIDS prevention advocate campaigning against both its stigma and silence.

But, sadly, Nelson Mandela's LGBTQ advocacy and his impact on the motherland as well as African diasporic countries and communities across the globe have shown little or no light.

Much of the opposition to LGBTQ rights deriving from these countries and communities around the globe (Africa, the Caribbean, Europe and the Americas), when not fueled and funded by Western right-wing anti-gay Christian groups,

was that no credible heterosexual Alpha male role model could possibly exist and also be African of a royal patriarchal warrior/chief lineage.

But as a former boxer and son of the chief of the Xhosa-speaking Tembu tribe in South Africa, Mandela was the quintessential paragon of African royalty, Black power and Black masculinity. However, Mandela's forward thinking and actions neither tamped down nor stemmed anti-gay rhetoric, murderous acts or anti-gay witch-hunting.

For example, to hear of human-rights abuses in Uganda is, sadly, not new. The country's anti-homosexuality measure, dubbed the "Kill the Gays bill," criminalizes same-sex relations.

David Kato, father of the Uganda's LGBTQ-rights movement, didn't live to receive either punishment. On a list of 100 LGBTQ Ugandans whose names and photos were published in an October 2010 tabloid newspaper calling for their execution, Kato was murdered in January 2011.

Throughout Africa, there are numerous stories of anti-gay bullying, bashing and abuses of its LGBTQ population. None of us will forget that Zimbabwean despot Robert Mugabe, who treated his LGBTQ citizens with torturous action, has yet to be brought to justice.

If truth be told, Mandela's advocacy has shown very little light, even in his country—the one country you don't expect to hear anti-LGBTQ rhetoric and human rights abuses. But South Africa has a serious problem with its LGBTQ population, and especially with lesbians. And one method employed to remedy its problem with lesbians is "corrective rape."

Corrective rape is a hate crime that, for the most part, goes unreported and unprosecuted in South Africa. And, these rapes are the major contributor to the HIV/AIDS epidemic among South African lesbians.

In the Caribbean, Jamaica is not the most anti-gay island country; it's just simply the most infamous for its anti-LGBTQ crimes.

Anti-gay sentiment in Jamaica goes unchallenged, in that a person can simply speculate about a person's sexual orientation or gender

economic and social justice. We believe that all people deserve equal rights, including the right to marry the person they love.

Now that we've seen what a united coalition can do, there is an opportunity to work with our LGBT allies on other issues that impact communities of color. In a city where more than half of the population is comprised of non-white citizens, there has to be organized community action and engagement that leads to the creation of more opportunities for everyone, regardless of age, race, ability, educational background and sexual orientation. The question is: How do we get there?

According to Kim Hunt, executive director of Affinity Community Services, a group that has served Chicago's LGBT community for nearly 20 years, the answer is literally right in front of us. "Things that affect the broader Black community affect the LGBT community because we live next door to each other," Hunt recently shared. "We have never approached our work as a one issue agenda. It's always been intersectional."

Hunt says, and I agree, that the time is now for leaders in the Black community and those in the LGBT community to collaborate around intersectional issues. We all want better schools, more jobs, affordable housing, safe neighborhoods, business growth opportunities and access to affordable healthcare.

Working as partners, we can increase our advocacy to policymakers and key stakeholders to move the community forward. In order to do this, we must move past our misconceptions, biases, and even our fears, to find common ground among groups.

We can use our combined strength to reach out to leaders—both civic and elected—to advance a collective agenda for the underserved and disenfranchised.

identity and then plot to kill him. The intent to murder LGBTQs is unabashedly announced without fear because the police won't protect them from mob-led murders and violence. As a matter of fact, the police incite the country's anti-gay frenzy—by either being present and inactive during these assaults or by following and watching the members of the LGBTQ community.

And in Jamaica, like other anti-LGBTQ friendly countries, anti-gay violence drives the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Here in the United States, Mandela's LGBTQ advocacy was primarily ignored by most Black churches and their cadre of anti-gay African-American ministers who professed to have marched with Martin Luther King Jr. during the civil-rights era.

In 2013 our first Black president, Barack Obama, was like Mandela in modeling and legislating on behalf of LGBTQ rights, with measures like the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"; the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act; and the repeal of DOMA, to name a few. But there is still a huge vocal and visible anti-LGBTQ contingent of Black Christian ministers and churches.

Some of these ministers support LGBTQ civil rights but draw the line on same-sex marriage. They say their opposition to same-sex marriage is a prophylactic measure to combat the epidemic of fatherlessness in Black families. In scapegoating the LGBTQ community, these clerics intentionally are ignoring the social ills behind Black fatherlessness, such as the systematic disenfranchisement of both African-American men and women, high unemployment, high incarceration and poor education.

Mandela's LGBTQ advocacy and his impact on the Motherland as well as African diasporic countries and communities across the globe has for the most part fallen on deaf ears.

We all need another Mandela to help us evolve.

But as Obama stated in his eulogy to Madiba "We will never see the likes of Nelson Mandela again."

One area we could coalesce around quickly is school funding. In 2008 the Chicago Urban League sued the State of Illinois and the Illinois Board of Education to have the flawed public school funding model declared unconstitutional and in violation of the Illinois Civil Rights Act of 2003. The lawsuit is still in play, and I hope that we can build a broader coalition that will advocate for educational funding change.

A unified coalition can also work to eradicate bullying in our schools and in our communities. Children who are bullied are deprived of the opportunity to learn and, in the most extreme cases, have been deprived of their very lives. We cannot afford to have another child hurt or lost because of mistreatment by their peers. Health and wellness is another area we can unite on. African-Americans continue to be disproportionately impacted by heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity and diabetes. And we are the most impacted by HIV. Intersectional conversations around better access to health-care and preventative services are essential to our survival. The Chicago Urban League stands ready to be a co-convenor of this dialogue with our partners in the LGBT community.

Now that we've shown that a diverse, inclusive coalition can be built to deliver marriage equality to Illinois, we have a tremendous opportunity to strengthen that coalition and leverage it to eliminate the challenges and disparities that prevent the African-American community and its LGBT members from living empowered and healthy lives. Working together, we can pack a powerful punch for equality and inclusion.

Andrea L. Zopp is president/CEO of the Chicago Urban League. This column originally appeared in the Chicago Defender newspaper.



ANDREA
L. ZOPP

Beyond marriage: Uniting for change

Last month Illinois became the 16th state to grant same-sex couples the right to marry when Gov. Pat Quinn signed the Religious Freedom and Marriage Act. This law not only gives same-gender, loving couples a basic human right, but protects the freedoms of clergy and churches that do not condone same-sex marriage.

We applaud the Illinois General Assembly for taking this great step toward equality. We also acknowledge the bold leadership exhibited by members of the Legislative Black Caucus who, despite fierce opposition and threats of "political payback" from those opposed to this bill, stood on the right side of history and voted yes.

The Chicago Urban League has supported this legislation and served on the steering committee for the Illinois Unites for Marriage campaign along with the ACLU of Illinois, Citizen Action Illinois, Equality Illinois, the Human Rights Campaign, Lambda Legal and The Civil Rights Agenda. This coalition also brought in diverse community-based advocacy groups.

At the Chicago Urban League, we believe that supporting marriage equality was the right thing to do. In our 97 years, the Chicago Urban League has been fearless in the pursuit of educational,

GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION

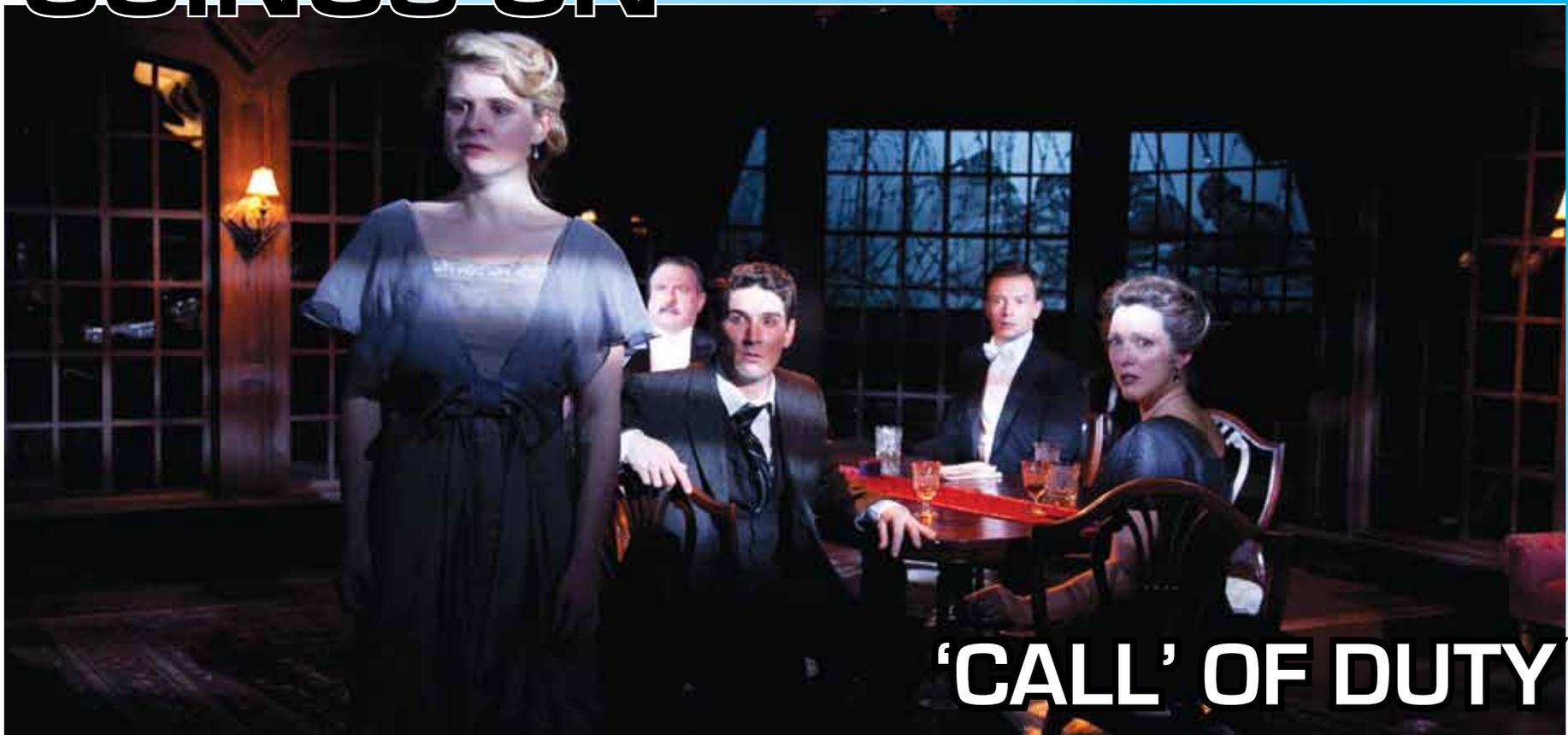
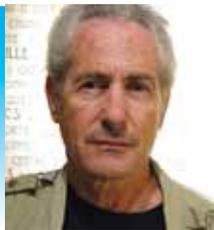


Photo by Johnny Knight

'CALL' OF DUTY

Windy City Times reviews the theatrical production *An Inspector Calls*. Read more on page 12.

BOOKS

Literary 'Landscape.'
Page 15Photo of Barry Gifford
by Matt Dillon

DISH

Mary's expansion.
Page 18Photo at Hamburger Mary's
by Ross Forman

SPORTS

Work of dart.
Page 19Photo of dart throwers
from Eric Pfeifer

SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Light Opera Works'
Rudy Hogenmiller on
'Annie Get Your Gun'

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Light Opera Works artistic director Rudy Hogenmiller was slightly shocked to be outed by theater critic Chris Jones in the Chicago Tribune a few years ago.

"I don't think he meant to do it particularly, but it was an article in the Friday section about theatrical couples. All the other couples were straight and then he included myself and [Jeff Award-winning actor] Jim Harms," Hogenmiller said with a laugh during a recent telephone interview. "And I was just like, 'Chris Jones has outed me in the Tribune!'"

Though Hogenmiller and his longtime partner, Harms, were publicly open about their relationship in theater circles, they hadn't made the leap to acknowledge it in the press.

"I have no problem with it," Hogenmiller said. "Chris Jones had known me for years in theater and stuff, but it was never a discussion we ever had. My partner and I have been together for 40 years."

As Hogenmiller reflects on his past coverage in the press, he's focusing on a legendary American celebrity of the 19th century who had plenty of run-ins with the media throughout her long and now mythologized career. Hogenmiller is directing and choreographing Light Opera Works' upcoming production of Irving Berlin's 1946 musical *Annie Get Your Gun*, which is about the celebrity sharpshooter Annie Oakley who rose from humble backwoods beginnings to world-

wide fame headlining Buffalo Bill's touring Wild West Show.

Although an established classic of the U.S. musical-theater repertory, *Annie Get Your Gun* has faced criticisms over what many see as politically incorrect depictions of Native Americans (particularly in *Annie's* big Act I finale number "I'm an Indian Too") and a perceived anti-feminist capitulation at the end. Some attempts to address these concerns were partially addressed in the revised Tony Award-winning 1999 Broadway revival (when "I'm an Indian Too" was cut), but Hogenmiller has opted to stick with the licensed 1966 Lincoln Center revival of *Annie Get Your Gun* for Light Opera Works.

"That's just the way it is in terms of the time and sensibility," Hogenmiller said of the 1966 production, which many wags dubbed as "Granny Get Your Gun" since star Ethyl Merman was re-creating the title role 20 years after originating it on Broadway.

"Many people on my staff brought up those concerns and we had many discussions about it, and [the 'I'm an Indian Too' number] is a whole comedic scene and it's almost a little ballet onto itself and we're not making any kind of attempt to do any authentic Indian representation," Hogenmiller said. "It's very much a theatrical musical theater happening and everything that she says and does in that scene—she never says anything maliciously and all of the Indians find her very amusing and they don't take offense at it."



Light Opera Works artistic director Rudy Hogenmiller.

Hogenmiller also opted for the 1966 version because it offers a fuller orchestration which fits with Light Opera Works' mission of presenting classic musicals and operettas with their original orchestrations as much as possible. (A 28-piece orchestra is advertised for *Annie Get Your Gun*, something that wasn't available with the reduced orchestrations created for the 1999 revision.)

Hogenmiller has been artistic director of Light Opera Works since late 2004, largely putting his acting career mostly on the back-burner as he handled directing, choreographing and administrative duties for the 33-year-old arts organization. Yet Hogenmiller has been making more of an effort to cross in front the footlights recently, since he starred as the Emcee in Light Opera Works' Cabaret earlier this season. Hogenmiller is also slated to play the devil, Mr. Applegate, in Light Opera Works' forthcoming June production of *Damn Yankees*.

"A lot of the people [and subscribers] at Light Opera Works don't know my career from the work I had done in Chicago as a performer," Hogenmiller said about acting again. "There was a lot of buzz within our circle of people and

our friend and patrons. It was such a response that I thought maybe financially this will be a wise move to kind of capitalize on the situation rather than to let it go as a one-time thing."

As Light Opera Works' artistic director, Hogenmiller has faced a few challenges. One is the realization that the company needs to program more recognizable Broadway musicals as opposed to former bread-and-butter programming of 19th- and early 20th-century operettas in order to bring in audiences. (Hogenmiller noted how Light Opera Works' last production of *Sweethearts* by esteemed operetta composer Victor Herbert was a financial bomb.) Cuts in arts funding has also meant that Light Opera Works has veered away from too much adventurous programming.

Hogenmiller says there is also concern of competition from the Lyric Opera of Chicago, which is now producing a Broadway musical at the end of its regular season. Since the Lyric is a larger organization, it's able to obtain and hold the rights to titles before Light Opera Works.

But on the plus side, Light Opera Works has recently obtained its own rehearsal and office space in Wilmette, which it also rents out to other companies for rehearsals and exercise classes. Hogenmiller also says subscriptions are up.

"It's a big deal for a company that's been in existence for more than 30 years," Hogenmiller said about previously having to rehearse in church basements and cafeterias. "Now we have a really nice open rehearsal space with a big dance floor the size of the Cahn Auditorium stage. We're in a really good place right now."

Light Opera Works' *Annie Get Your Gun* plays at Northwestern University's Cahn Auditorium, 600 Emerson St., Evanston, from Saturday, Dec. 21, through Tuesday, Dec. 31. Performances are at 8 p.m. Dec. 21, 27, 28 and 31, with 2 p.m. matinees Dec. 22, 27, 28 and 29. Tickets are \$32-\$92 and \$34-\$94 on New Year's Eve. Call 847-920-5360 or visit www.lightoperaworks.com for more information.



The Merry Wives of Windsor. Photo by Liz Lauren

THEATER REVIEW

The Merry Wives of Windsor

Playwright: William Shakespeare
At: Chicago Shakespeare Theatre at Navy Pier, 800 E. Grand Ave.
Tickets: 312-595-5600;
www.chicagoshakes.com; \$48-\$78
Runs through: Jan. 19

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Sir John Falstaff—the fat, hard-drinking, flim-flamming soldier we met in Henry VI and V—may possibly be Shakespeare's most well-known character. (There was even a beer named after him. Can Hamlet or Romeo make that claim?) First introduced as a pal to a young prince, but later escalating in his amorality to become an unsuitable company for a grown-up monarch faced with ruling a kingdom, he nevertheless commanded a popular affection leading Queen Elizabeth herself to commission a play depicting the street-savvy reprobate smitten by Cupid—perchance to be reformed thereby.

So how does our paragon of appetites and mischief approach the duties of courtship? By trying to seduce not one, but two, married women at the same time. This probably seemed an easy task: One of them has an excessively suspicious husband, and the other, an indifferent spouse more concerned with marrying their daughter to a magistrate's nerdy nephew. Clearly, these misguided men must be taught a lesson, which the clever matrons, assisted by sympathetic servants, proceed to administer—in the process, paving the way for the prospective bride to elope with the “overpaid, oversexed and over here” USAF fighter-pilot she loves.

How's that again? Isn't this supposed to be Shakespeare? Oh, it's the classroom classic, all right, but Barbara Gaines' directorial concept relocates its pastoral village to the years immediately after World War Two, with the citizens of Windsor dancing lindys and tangos, serenading one another with ditties like “Accentuate The Positive,” “The Sunny Side of the Street,” a “Too Fat Polka” affirming a suitor's status as Mister Wrong and a little boy crooning “Them There Eyes” to a fluffy poodle. (Yes, there are four-footed actors in this show.)

There are also madcap full-auditorium chases incorporating front-row spectators into the mayhem, showers of flying snow and laundry, xenophobic stereotypes, bawdy double-entendres

and whatever else is required to facilitate the three chastisements necessary to bring the recalcitrant males to order.

This is a workout far more strenuous than lugubrious tragedy, but chasing away the darkness of a prematurely frigid winter is a serious responsibility. Chicago Shakespeare's 25-strong troupers (counting the canines) acquit themselves with unflagging energy and infectious charm right up to the all-important group-hug ending where the foolish strays, presumably wiser for their punishment, are welcomed back into the community.

CRITICS' PICKS

The Christmas Schooner, Mercury Theatre, through Dec. 29. Imagine Christmas with no brightly decorated trees, then go out and look at the grim wintry lake—the sailors who braved the latter in 1882 to bring the former to Chicago immigrants are celebrated in this homegrown historical musical. **MSB**

Port Authority, Writers Theatre, through Feb. 16, 2014. Exquisite acting, and commonplace speech elevated to poetry, infuse this tender and introspective piece about three Irishmen of different generations who bare their rueful souls about the women who got away. **JA**

A Raisin in the Sun, Timeline Theatre at Baird Hall, through Dec. 29. Lorraine Hansberry's mid-20th century drama of a family struggling to better themselves changed the face of theater forever in our country, and this is your last chance to see this landmark play rendered anew for our time.

We Three Lizas, About Face Theatre at Stage 773, through Jan. 5. Though the setting isn't as nearly as cozy (or audible) as last year, this queer revisionist take on A Christmas Carol with various guises of Liza Minnelli serving as a supernatural inspiration is even better in its new, thoroughly revamped version. **SCM**

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

THEATER REVIEW

An Inspector Calls

Playwright: J.B. Priestley
At: Remy Bumppo Theatre Company at the Greenhouse, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave.
Tickets: 773-404-7336;
www.remybumppo.org; \$37.50-\$52.50
Runs through: Jan. 12

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

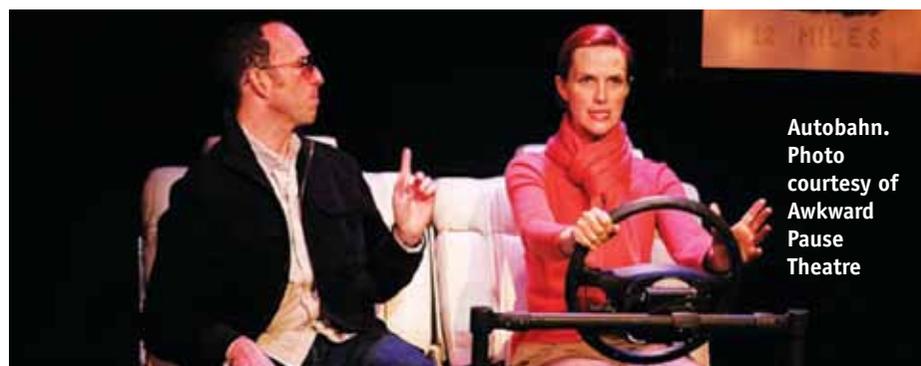
In Western literature, the “uninvited guest” traditionally turns out to be the Death, but this time, the family dinner celebrating the happy (and financially lucrative) engagement of manufacturing-empire heirs is interrupted by an uninvited, well, inquisitor. The intruder identifying himself as Police Inspector Goole informs his hosts that a young woman has recently committed suicide, leaving a diary that implicates one of them in her decision to end her life. He then produces a photograph of the victim and recounts the steps leading to her desperate act. One by one, the prospective bride and groom, along with the former's parents and brother, come to realize how each of them have cruelly wronged the wretched creature lying in the municipal morgue.

On its surface, J.B. Priestley's play—written in 1945, but set in 1914—is a straightforward whodunit, its dramatic query revolving on disclosure of the person responsible for the un-

natural death of an innocent. It could also be a thriller, premised on blameless citizens detained by a menacing stranger (whose accent assumes an ominous regionalism when its owner grows agitated). Gradually, however, the nature of the Birling clan's crimes point to the social criticism inherent in the author's intent.

This brand of dialogue-driven drama is the Remy Bumppo company's stock-in-trade, so it should come as no surprise that this production, directed by David Darlow and featuring a cast of classically-trained troupers led by Nick Sandys as the laconic Inspector Goole, quickly snags its audience's attention through the spectacle of wealthy capitalists at leisure and then proceeds to expose the ugly underside of this complacency. Having allowed ourselves to share in the fantasy, we can only watch in suspense as guilt is meted out where deserved.

It's easy for us Yanks to argue enlightened labor practices and opportunities for economic advancement exceeding those Priestley castigates, but the accusations hurled at the outraged captives are disturbingly applicable to our own society today, where the indifference of the rich and powerful to the suffering of the poor and disenfranchised too closely echoes that of England's pre-World War One industrial counties. By the end of the evening, some of the culprits have taken their lesson to heart, some remain undecided, and some deny their complicity. With whom do you side, as you depart the theater for your comfortable homes?



Autobahn. Photo courtesy of Awkward Pause Theatre

THEATER REVIEW

Autobahn

Playwright: Neil LaBute
At: Awkward Pause Theatre at Den Theatre, 1333 N. Milwaukee Ave.
Tickets: 800-838-3006;
www.awkwardpausetheatre.com; \$10
Runs through: Dec. 29

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Playwright and director Neil LaBute is known for his films and plays that probe the nastier side of men and women, and his 2004 short-play cycle *Autobahn* certainly lives up to LaBute's reputation. The plays of *Autobahn* are also full of wonderful acting challenges, some that are met and just missed in Awkward Pause Theatre's intimate revival at The Den Theatre.

Each of *Autobahn's* seven plays involves two people in a car, and a few are essentially monologues directed at a silent (and often angrily stewing) partner. Many of the tensions are sparked by arguments over opposing understandings over language and communication semantics.

LaBute also finds many chilling and disturbing ways to string audiences along through dialogue to piece together the characters' relationships, their motivations and whether or not what is being said is actually true. American suburban commercialism is ever-present (LaBute name-checks many big-box retailers and chain restaurants), all the while hinting at the banality of people who have (or are committing) emotionally manipulative or physically abusive actions.

For Awkward Pause's revival (the company previously staged *Autobahn* in 2011), director Andrew Jessop has the luxury of casting 10 actors to play 14 characters, requiring only four to double up in roles. While this

casting gives more actors a chance to appear, more role doubling could have showed off more of the performers' acting range and provided more cohesion to the show.

Yet Jessop's casting in many cases is spot on—disturbingly so in the pairing of Tony St. Clair and Alison Hixon as an older man and a teenage girl in the play *Road Trip*. Their casual banter over McDonald's menu options is a cover for a far more frightening situation.

Bench Seat featuring Matt Katzenmeier and Erin O'Shea as an engineering student and his girlfriend is another play that turns chilling by the end. Both are great physically in the scene, though O'Shea might have tipped her hand about her character's true nature a tad too early.

There's also plenty of humor to be had in *Autobahn*, even though the topics touch upon misogynistic slurs, gay male rape and the Nintendo 64 game system. Yet the actors performing in these scenes either feel slightly miscast, or don't probe deeply enough into the pain beneath the humorous surface of the situations.

Some of the actors who have to remain silent have a far more difficult job than the ones doing all the talking, since they need to react (or not) to everything being said and clue the audience in (or not) to what they're thinking internally. Of the mostly silent four, Katzenmeier and Catherine Dildilian do the best at listening and emotionally reacting to the situation.

Awkward Pause Theatre's *Autobahn* revival isn't perfect, though very respectable with solid production work by set designer Joe Schermoly and sound designer Preston Reynolds. It's also great counter-Christmastime programming for those who don't want to see elderly misers redeemed. In *Autobahn*, LaBute drives his characters to often disturbing ends.



Becca Kaufmann sings a song from Scrooge & Marley with the Symphonic Band. Photo by Tracy Baim

Lakeside Pride ensembles hold holiday concert

Celebrating the spirit of the season, the Lakeside Pride Symphonic Band and shhh...OUT! Lakeside Pride Jazz Ensemble hosted a special joint "Holidays in Uptown" Dec. 14 at Preston Bradley Center. There was great cheer in the air and some wonderful holiday spirit.

Special guest vocalist Becca Kaufman joined the Lakeside Pride Symphonic Band for a performance of "Christmas Eve is Coming Soon," an original song written for the gay indie holiday film Scrooge & Marley. Kaufman sang this song in the movie. Members of Lakeside Pride were among the musicians who contributed to recording the original motion picture soundtrack for this film.

This special evening included "A Charlie Brown Christmas," "Sleigh Ride," and selections from the classic animated movie "The Nightmare Before Christmas." There were also selections from "The Nutcracker."

Photo by Tracy Baim; See more pics and videos at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Lakeside-Pride-Music-Ensembles-Holidays-in-Uptown-concert/45536.html>.

SPOTLIGHT



Die Fledermaus is one of the few comic operettas that has an established place in the standard international operatic repertory. See why in the Lyric Opera of Chicago's current sparkling production which features quite a few choice singing imports from Europe and gorgeous sets and costumes borrowed from San Francisco Opera. *Die Fledermaus* continues at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, 20 N. Wacker Drive. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 18, 21, Jan. 18, and at 2 p.m. Jan. 10, 12 and 15. Tickets are \$34-\$274. Call 312-332-2244 or visit www.lyricopera.org. Photo by Dan Rest

'Bible Bingo' at Royal George Jan. 10

Vicki Quade and Nuns4Fun Entertainment have announced the return of the comedy Bible Bingo: An Act of Charity in Two Acts to the Royal George Theatre starting Jan. 10.

It will run Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. Late Nite Catechism stays on the schedule, at 5 p.m. Saturdays and 2 p.m. on Sundays.

Bible Bingo is a comedy about the Catholic culture of fundraising and bingo that features

the character Mrs. Mary Margaret O'Brien, a former nun who now heads a fictitious archdiocese fundraising department.

Tickets are \$30, and group discounts are available. For ticket info, call the box office at 312-988-9000. For more information, go to www.biblebingo.info and www.latenitecatechism.info.

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Joffrey dancers: Anastacia Holden and Aaron Rogers | Dancer photo by: Christopher Duggan | Background photo by: Roger Mastroianni

KNIGHT AT THE MOVIES

BY
RICHARD
KNIGHT JR.

American Hustle; Inside Llewyn Davis; notes

The raves for **American Hustle** and **Inside Llewyn Davis** and the number of Top Ten lists these two movies are on must be making their respective producers very happy. Both are shoo-ins for major awards consideration. And though both have their compensations I didn't fall for them, like the bulk of my fellow film critics.

American Hustle, from Silver Linings Playbook writer-director David O. Russell, is easily the better of the two—an entertaining but bloated, starchy, Grand Hotel-sized con artist caper that looks, sounds and feels like Scorsese without a smidgen of the electricity he effortlessly brings to his pictures. The movie—which is partially based on the Abscam scandal in which high-level politicians were caught taking bribes—focuses on Christian Bale as Irving Rosenfeld, a plus-sized, low-life con man with an elaborate comber. (Bale packed on 40 pounds for the role.) Irving falls hard for Sydney Prosser (Amy Adams), a fellow Jerseyite determined to leave behind her less-than-sophisticated background and have the good life she's glimpsed working as a secretary at *Cosmopolitan* magazine.

So Sydney, wearing designer castoffs left behind at one of Irving's dry-cleaning businesses, adopts a phony English accent and becomes Lady Edith Greensly, reeling in the suckers for Irving's lucrative schemes. Everything goes beautifully for a while until the duo shakes down an undercover FBI agent (Bradley Cooper) who shares the pair's yearning to leave his past behind. The agent decides to use the pair to go after even bigger fish—namely mob bosses, politicians, and even a senator or two—all involved in taking bribes to push through the building of casinos along the boardwalk in Atlantic City. As the stakes are raised and the cat-and-mouse games increase, several wild cards come into play, the wildest of which is Irving's out-of-control wife, Rosalyn (Jennifer Lawrence), whose outbursts and disorderly public conduct might just ruin the entire scam just as its building to its big payoff.

Set in 1978 and meticulously re-created, the movie, which Eric Warren Singer and Russell co-wrote, has all the hallmarks of the disco era with the big hair; the outlandish fashions; the whale-sized cars; the shag-carpeted, plastic interiors; and a plethora of period songs on the soundtrack. When done on this grand scale, the '70s kitsch alone still has the power to entertain, and the movie bumps along from scene to scene while you wait for it to get beneath this glossy, tacky surface—which it never does for long.

When Amy Adams tells Christian Bale, "I'm going to be very, very convincing," therein lies the problem with the entire enterprise because it's, well, not very convincing. One never gets past the façade; the elaborate get-ups each character sports—with Bale there's the prominent gut and the hair; Adams is all about her prominent breasts; and Lawrence, Jeremy Renner and Cooper also sport elaborate hairdos—and these physical tics are repeatedly used as visual punch lines to the point where it's nigh on impossible



Oscar Isaac in *Inside Llewyn Davis*. Photo by Alison Rosa

to get past them and become immersed in the film.

But that's not to say that **American Hustle** doesn't have its share of fun sequences. (Every scene with Lawrence is a winner, as are those with Louis C.K. as Cooper's by-the-book boss, and Renner brings a bit of desperately needed heart to the proceedings, as does Colleen Camp as his wife.) Though this imitation of Scorsese never duplicates the master (which is emphasized when DeNiro himself makes a welcome cameo) and announces itself at every turn ("Look At Me!" it screams over and over again), **American Hustle** offers enough junky pleasures to con most audiences into thinking they're having a better time than they probably are.

As for **Inside Llewyn Davis**, well, it is certainly identifiable as the Coen brothers movie that it is—a gorgeously detailed period piece peopled with the usual assortment of oddballs. However, the central character is such a sour, mean-spirited narcissist—a black hole sucking the energy out of every scene—that to sit through it is somewhat akin to masochism. Sometimes I don't mind having my nose rubbed in the dyspeptic world view that is a given with the Coen brothers. Hell, with *A Serious Man*, I luxuriated in it. (That one, I think, is a masterpiece.) But not this time; not this time.

The movie is set in 1961, when the hip folk music scene in New York's Greenwich Village was about to become the next big wave in American music (thanks to Bob Dylan; Peter, Paul and Mary; and others). Sitting on the edge of this volcano, unaware, is the aforesaid misanthrope, one Llewyn Davis (played by newcomer Oscar Isaac) a struggling folk singer who quite obviously when we meet him has been treading water professionally and personally for quite some time.

Llewyn is a big-time user and as he hardscrabbles his way around Manhattan—scrounging up the odd gig and recording date while trying to make yet another female and scrambling for a place to crash each night—we see that he has left a wake of emotional destruction (not to mention debts) in his quest for greater glory. "Everything you touch turns to shit" yells Carey Mulligan, as another folk singer who he may have impregnated—and she's right. And for 105 minutes we watch as this arrogant jerk lives up to that assessment. Llewyn is talented but lacks the indelible spark that makes a star (or a businessman enough money to invest in him, a fact that is brutally made clear at one point) so what are we left with?

The movie is perfectly realized period piece, so gorgeously shot it looks almost painterly but it's so god-awful grim and, as noted, so tightly focused on such a disagreeable character that I greeted its fadeout as the equivalent of the end of a migraine headache—and the feeling that, somewhere, the Coen brothers are having a nice big laugh at my expense.

Film notes:

—Screening reminder: Out director Rodney Evans' sexy romantic drama **The Happy Sad** is

having a one-night-only screening on Wed., Dec. 18, with Chicago Fire star Charlie Barnett in attendance at 7:30 p.m. at the Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport Ave. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/thehappysadfilm/>

—Almodovar lite: Out writer-director Pedro Almodovar described his latest, the frothy sex comedy **I'm So Excited**, as his gayest film in years and he's right. It plays a return theatrical engagement beginning Sunday, Dec. 15, at 7:30 p.m. at the Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State St. www.siskelfilmcenter.org/im-so-excited

SAG, Golden Globe nominations announced

On Dec. 11, the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) announced its top contenders for the 20th annual SAG Awards.

The film *12 Years A Slave* led the movie field with four nominations—best ensemble, best male actor (Chiwitel Ejiofor), best supporting male actor (Michael Fassbender) and best supporting female actor (Lupita Nyong'o)—while *Breaking Bad* received the same number of nods in the area of television (best actor, best actress, best ensemble and stunt ensemble).

Among film nominees, best actor nods went to Bruce Dern (Nebraska), Chiwetel Ejiofor (*12 Years A Slave*), Tom Hanks (*Captain Phillips*), Matthew McConaughey (*Dallas Buyers Club*) and Forest Whitaker (*Lee Daniels' The Butler*). Leading actress nominations include Cate Blanchett (*Blue Jasmine*), Sandra Bullock (*Gravity*), Meryl Streep (*August: Osage County*), Emma Thompson (*Saving Mr. Banks*) and Judi Dench (*Philomena*).

Television nominees are divided into dramatic and comedic categories. Among the actors receiving nods are Kevin Spacey (*House of Cards*), Claire Danes (*Homeland*), Kerry Washington (*Scandal*), out actor Jim Parsons (*The Big Bang Theory*) and Tina Fey (*30 Rock*).

Behind the Candelabra, an HBO movie about the life of Liberace, scored nods for leads Michael Douglas and Matt Damon.

The Huffington Post noted that snubs included Robert Redford as well as the casts of *The Wolf of Wall Street* and *Saving Mr. Banks*.

In addition, multiple award winner Rita Morena will receive the Screen Actors Guild



Behind
the
Candelabra.

50th Annual Life Achievement Award.

The ceremony will take place Jan. 18, 2014.

The day after the SAG nominations were named, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association announced its nominees for the 71st annual Golden Globes.

Many of the same productions and individuals who received SAG nods also received Golden Globe nominations, including Ejiofor, McConaughey, Parsons, Bullock, Washington, Douglas, Damon and Blanchett.

However, there were some notable surprises and snubs here as well. CBS News noted that Oprah Winfrey was not acknowledged for her role in Lee Daniels' *The Butler*, although she got a SAG nod. (On the flip side, Redford received a nomination here for *All Is Lost*.) Regarding TV, *Homeland* came up empty although it swept the Globes earlier this year. Also, *Mad Men* and *Game of Thrones* did not receive nominations. However, *Orange Is the New Black's* Taylor Schilling did get a nomination, although the show did not.

The Golden Globes will be handed out Jan. 12, 2014, on NBC.

BOOKS

Talking with Barry Gifford: 'Landscape' of an unconventional friendship

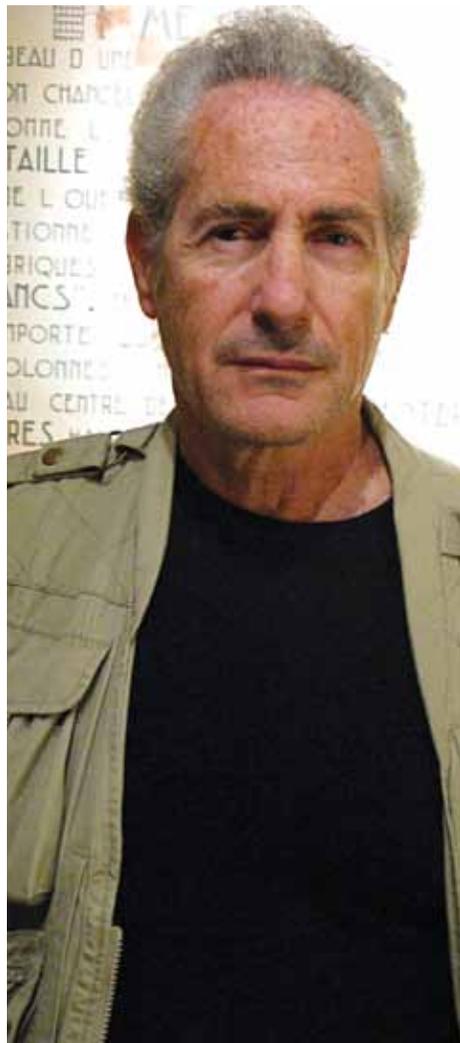
BY GRETCHEN RACHEL BLICKENSERFER

It was 1980, three years after Anita Bryant launched her "Save Our Children" campaign that equated homosexuals to child molesters. According to the General Social Survey, approximately 70 percent of U.S. residents believed homosexuality to be "always wrong."

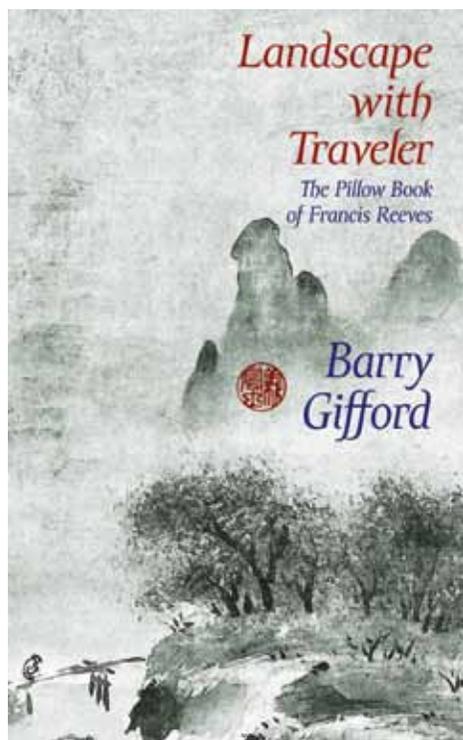
The power of Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority was burgeoning and helped to put Ronald Reagan into office. Stories were emerging from California and New York of healthy, young gay men who were dying of cancer and pneumonia. The CDC would eventually release a report documenting the cases of five of them, the first official recognition in the United States of what became known as the "gay plague." It was during this turbulent year that author Barry Gifford published his first novel, 'Landscape with Traveler: The Pillow Book of Francis Reeves.' The book was drawn from the life of his gay friend, Marshall Clements.

The reaction was surprising. Gifford became the first straight man to make the cover of Christopher Street magazine, one of the most popular gay publications in the United States. Leonard Bernstein and Quentin Crisp wanted to meet him, gay people lined up in droves to have copies signed and, during an interview with Jane Pauley, Gifford was asked, "What did your wife and mother think?"

Gifford was in his mid-thirties at the time. He was born in a Chicago hotel to a father with mob



Barry Gifford. Photo by Matt Dillon



sional haiku about life as a homosexual.

Windy City Times: It's been said that you've mastered the darker side of the American psyche. So I'm curious to know your thoughts on the homophobia in this country. Where do you think the hatred comes from?

Barry Gifford: Anybody who's different. That's always been the answer. It's the fear that most people have always had, whether its color, or sexual habits or because they dress differently. If everyone was exactly the same, they'd argue over nail polish. Last night, I was with a bunch of people having dinner and somebody asked me, "Who were you named after?" And I said, "Well I was named after a gay head waiter at the Beldon Stratford Hotel in Chicago." The thing was, I never heard a racist or homophobic remark from either of my parents and now we're going back to the late '40s, early '50s. My mother never had an attitude like that. She was friends with this guy whose name was Barry and he was an Irishman and he was gay. Anyway, I don't think people change much at all. I think they gather in groups and create a life for themselves but they still encounter prejudice of different kinds.

WCT: You touched on that in Landscape, where the gay character of Francis talks about his friendship with Jim, a straight man. He says, in their need for walls, people "divide homosexuals and heterosexuals. It's a pity, because there's such beauty in everyone."

BG: I accept the differences in people. I always did. I was always interested in it. It's all in the details, you know? That's why I wrote the introduction to Landscape with Traveler, to talk about my friend Marshall, because, when it was published, people couldn't understand why I was writing this book, being this little macho shit that I was. I mean that in the sense that, on

the surface, I was the antithesis of somebody like Marshall, but he was the greatest person I've ever known. What a wonderful thing for me and I was lucky that I was open to a friendship. People were suspicious of his motives and mine but, you know, fuck 'em.

WCT: You lived in San Francisco and Marshall lived in New York. Was the connection you found with him the thing that kept you friends for so long over such a long distance?

BG: I was fortunate for thirty years to be able to go to New York to see him a lot. He was kind of a teacher for me. I had many lacunae, you know, missing parts because I didn't have a formal education and Marshall had such an eclectic knowledge of everything from opera to ballet. But, it was his manner, more than anything that I thought was so special. I miss him all the time. He wasn't perfect, but he knew the world.

WCT: Being LGBT can be a tough struggle, when you're finding your identity. There's this fear of who you are.

BG: I think it is for almost everybody, anyway. If you have a deeper struggle in terms of sexual identity, I can't even imagine how people get through. Marshall learned of his own sexual identity pretty early on and he found it perfectly natural. He never complained.

WCT: Tell me about the initial reaction to the book.

BG: It was a curious case and some people, like reviewers, would confuse me with Francis Reeves.

WCT: But it was embraced by the gay community.

BG: That was the really amazing thing. I didn't know what to expect, but they made it a best seller. But then there was that group who didn't like its more conservative views on sexual practices. I called it a pre-AIDS fervor. They were into sticking their dick into every telephone booth they came to. I didn't think it was a good idea and Marshall had that take. He thought it was too profligate. He was a pretty intelligent guy.

WCT: Once HIV became known, the far right used it to lambast gays. They still do.

BG: To hell with those people, they're idiots. Everything's based on fear. The insurance business wouldn't exist without propagating fear. You might say it's better now because gay people can come out or be in public office. So there's been movement that you might call progressive but Pat Robertson might call "dancing with the devil." People are short-sighted. You don't have to accept it. You have to speak out, at the risk of losing your life in some situations.

When it came to speaking in the voice of a gay man, Gifford will always give the credit to Marshall Reeves Clements, a man unique in his experience who simply knew what he liked and had his opinions. "He was very proud of the book," Gifford said with a smile. "He was happy with it."

'Trans Bodies, Trans Selves' book planned

Transgender authors have come together from around the country to publish Trans Bodies, Trans Selves, by Oxford University Press, in June 2014.

Trans Bodies, Trans Selves is a book project inspired by Our Bodies, Ourselves, a pam-

phlet-turned-international-book-phenomenon organized by the Boston Women's Book Collective starting in the late 1960s.

The 50 chapter authors are all transgender or gender non-conforming people with expertise in a particular area. For example, the legal and immigration sections have authors who are trans lawyers and trans immigrants.

See <http://transbodies.com/>.

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NUNN ON ONE: MUSIC

Mary Wilson bringing Supreme act to Chicago



BY JERRY NUNN

Singer Mary Wilson—a founding member of the iconic group The Supremes—continues her career, performing live and bringing a festive show to Chicago this holiday season.

She is the only member of The Supremes to stay with the group in all its incarnations, and was inducted in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1988 along with Diana Ross and Florence Ballard.

Wilson wrote two books—*Dreamgirl: My Life as a Supreme* and *Supreme Faith: Someday We'll Be Together*.

Windy City Times talked with Wilson at her hotel to find out more about the legacy that this artist continues to maintain.

Windy City Times: Hello, Mary. I read that you lived in Chicago in the past.

Mary Wilson: When I was an infant with the whole migration of Blacks from the South to the North, this was one of the first cities that my family moved to. Then I went on to Detroit, where I grew up. I probably spent about two years here in Chicago. I have had family here ever since so I have been coming here for years.

WCT: Where do you reside now?

MW: I'm in Las Vegas now.

WCT: Have you ever taken a break from performing?

MW: I am 69 years old now and have been performing since 1963, pretty much constantly. I love it. We end up having vacations when we go to some of these places so I am all over the place. Just recently I was in Europe performing with Bill Wyman. We had a ball. We went to Switzerland.

WCT: I just went there and was looking for Tina Turner! What did you think of Motown the Musical?

MW: It was a long time coming. Mr. [Berry] Gordy had been working on it for many years. The music and the whole legacy of Motown—for people who grew up in our era—it was major. It was the soundtrack of our lives. When I went to the opening night on Broadway there were all kinds of people there and all ages. People were moving and grooving. It was so great. It is where it should be. I loved it.

There is a lot to go in there and very difficult to tell the story of Motown but the way they did it was good.

WCT: I saw a preview in Millennium Park here in Chicago; the cast member who played Michael Jackson was just incredible to watch.

MW: Everybody loved him.

WCT: He nailed it.

MW: It sounded like our record up there.

WCT: What was your opinion on Dreamgirls?

MW: I loved it, but it is not the story of The Supremes. I sing "I Am Changing" in my show. People say *Dreamgirls* is about The Supremes but I know it is not because I didn't get paid! The thing is, when I was sitting there watching it on Broadway it was as if the person who had written it was right there with us. It was our story, which was kind of odd.

WCT: It must have been surreal.

MW: It was and hit home. It was still beautifully done. I just wish they had paid me! [Laughs]

WCT: They got around that one.

MW: They did, but it's okay.

WCT: You and Diana Ross have had such a big gay following over the years.

MW: Sure. You have people like Cher, Supremes [and] Carol Burnett, where they love the female artists. I think it is because of the glamour and the showbiz aspect of it. We have had a gay following since we started making records, which was early on. [Gay fans] support us, but more than that they give us the adulation and accolades that a lot of people are not able to give. They really see all the magic and appreciate it. I think it is great. Hey, why not? [Both laugh.]

WCT: This gay man loves some Carol Burnett.

MW: She is a hoot. We had the same dress designer, Michael Travis. He did loads of our gowns and hers as well. They were so heavily beaded. I saw someone on TV ask one time, "What happened to all the beads in the world?" and they responded, "Liberace and The Supremes got them all!" I thought that was so profound. Before Bob Mackie he did them all—Liberace, Dionne Warwick and The Supremes at NBC.

WCT: Your gowns are always on tour, I read. So if you are not traveling, your gowns are!

MW: Yes, they are in museums and traveling around the world.

WCT: Do you want to write more books?

MW: My biggest dream is to write what I call a layman's psychology book. I can't do it until the final stages of my life. I want to sit and write the whole concept of how I view life. That is a big dream of mine.

People don't understand that you don't become an adult when you hit 21 years of age. You answer questions continuously, even though people think you know everything because you are famous. You are still learning. That is what I like about being an entertainer. We have such a quest for learning things and improving ourselves. This is the kind of medium where you do all kinds of things. If you are a normal person you wouldn't have that opportunity to search and become bigger than you are. You are exposed to so much and so many people as well.

WCT: How did this holiday show come together?

MW: It just came about. All of my life I have been trying to grow and become a great entertainer.

I moved to Las Vegas in the late '80s to get my own show there because I had been traveling for so many years; I wanted to be in one place. I wanted to still work. I didn't want to stop working. A production company reached out to me and asked me to play *The Venetian* then told me about doing a Christmas show at the Harris. This all came up only three weeks ago.

WCT: So, all of a sudden.

MW: Yes, and it was unexpected. It is a wonderful opportunity to work with The Four Tops, who I have always loved. They are one of my favorite groups in the world.

Duke Fakir from the group and I have been working together on this show. We have been friends since back in the early days. I recorded a top-10 hit with them, "River Deep Mountain High." We did [the album] *The Return of the Magnificent Seven* with The Four Tops and The Temptations. So we have always worked together but this is the first time that I, Mary Wilson, have had a chance to headline and work with my guys. I am really happy about it.

WCT: You are still working on the set list but I heard some of the songs are ironed out.

MW: Yeah, some of them but things change when you get into actual rehearsal. We want to do not just Christmas songs but more holiday



Singer Mary Wilson.

and seasonal. Duke and I have always wanted to sing together so we want to do a couple of duets.

WCT: "My Favorite Things" from The Sound of Music is a possibility?

MW: That is one of the songs we are thinking about doing. But until you actually finish rehearsal will you know what ones will end up in the show. That is one of our favorites that we want to work on.

WCT: You will be performing some Supremes songs, I am sure.

MW: Oh, yes. We will be doing some of the hits then doing some things together. I understand there will be a choir since it is a holiday show.

WCT: How do you normally celebrate the holidays?

MW: I usually take off Christmas. That is the one holiday that I don't work. Sometimes I don't even work Thanksgiving either but New Years I try to always work. This time I will be working on Christmas, which is something very special. My grandchildren are all grown up now so I don't have that responsibility. I love spending time with them but now I can work whenever I want to.

WCT: Do you ever want to retire?

MW: No, I don't think I ever will.

WCT: I thought since Tina Turner retired recently, maybe you would.

MW: Heck, if I did as well as Tina then I could retire too! I am still growing.

WCT: Still changing...

MW: I am still changing—that is a better way to put it. I really am. I had all those years as a

Supreme, which were just wonderful, but since that time I have been trying for Mary Wilson to have her own legacy. I could retire but I want to continue my dream as Mary Wilson.

WCT: Part of the legacy is staying with The Supremes the entire run of the group. No one else did that.

MW: I do have a few legacies. I am star in my own mind! I think Diana feels this way, too. You are always trying to feel a completion. Even though you have done many things, you still have a dream and it keeps going.

One of my very dear friends just retired: Nancy Wilson. I asked her how she could retire because she has a great voice and she said she just got tired of it. I don't think I will ever get tired of it. I want to keep working. To me that is the ideal way to go.

WCT: Well, it keeps you young. You look amazing.

MW: There is something to that. There is always an inner child and that child still plays. In many jobs you can't play but with this one I can play and that keeps you young. I don't want to ever reach the stage where I can't play. I have matured though. At 69 and a half I think I have finally grown up!

It will be a Mary Christmas at the Harris Theatre, 205 E. Randolph St., when Mary Wilson's Holiday Spectacular Featuring Special Guests The Four Tops jingles Dec. 23-Jan. 5, 2014. Visit www.HarrisTheaterChicago.org or call 312-334-2419 for tickets.

For more on Mary, visit www.marywilson.com.

Chicago Filmmakers to move to Edgewater

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Chicago Filmmakers announced Dec. 12 that it is the finalist to take over and renovate an unused City firehouse at 5714 N. Ridge Ave.

Final approval of the plan is still pending from the city, but is expected in the spring. Chicago Filmmakers expects to pay \$36,000 for the space; renovations will cost about \$600,000 and last about eight to twelve months.

The organization is currently at 5243 N. Clark St. and is responsible for organizing Reeling: The Chicago LGBT International Film Festival each fall. It also presents the Onion City Experimental Film and Video Festival as well as other screenings and classes.

Executive Director Brenda Webb said Chicago Filmmakers had been considering a new location, but was not "actively looking."

Key considerations for the organization were wheelchair accessibility and simply having their own space.

"At some point, we wanted to be in control of our own fate," Webb added.

Chicago Filmmakers had previously considered the space in 2008, but at the time it appeared likely that Chicago Park District would take it over. Those plans never came to fruition, however, and an RFP for the firehouse went out last summer.

Webb said that the new facility would likely have about 75-99 seats, and that Chicago Filmmakers would be making an effort to reach out to Edgewater-area schools and other community resources for partnerships. "I don't think the move is going to change what we do, other than allow us to expand our programming in our main location."

Windy City Performing Arts holds holiday shows

Windy City Performing Arts (Windy City Gay Chorus and the women's choral group Aria) performed its annual holiday concert twice on Dec. 7 at Ebenezer Lutheran Church. Titled "Don We Now..." the theme fit in just

fine with a variety of holiday standards mixed with modern twists for the shows, which raised funds for local HIV/AIDS agency Vital Bridges. The night began with "Hallelujah" and Windy City Performing Arts Artistic Director Paul

Caldwell's heartfelt announcement describing his life of being gay in the South and involved with music. "The Rose" had soloist Shana Harvey walking down the center aisle and the rest of group chiming in with "Lo, How a Rose" all blended together. After "Jingle Bells," the men left the stage, leaving the women's choir Aria to present Vince Guaraldi's "Christmastime is Here" made popular by the Peanuts' television special.

"A PC Christmas" attempted humor by covering all the bases before a quick intermission. The packed church filled again, with "Deck the Halls" leading through "Joy to the World" to finish off the concert. Those interested in joining one of the groups can start the fun beginning Jan. 4, with auditions being held at the same location. For more information, call 773-661-0928 or email join@windycitysings.org.
Text by Jerry Nunn; photo courtesy of Caldwell



Windy City Performing Arts. Photo courtesy of Paul Caldwell

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Hamburger Mary's expanding to Oak Park

BY ROSS FORMAN

Mary's is expanding into the suburbs—with its largest location yet.

Hamburger Mary's, the popular Chicago-based hamburger restaurant, with its flagship location now anchored in Andersonville, plans to open a franchise in Oak Park next summer that also will operate as a microbrewery.

It will be the **Oak Park Brewing Company**, and owner Ashley Wright said Nov. 26 that the Oak Park location will be the chain's largest, surpassing the 7,000 square-foot that Mary's fills in Andersonville.

Wright would not say exactly where the new location will be, nor what the building currently is, though it now is not a restaurant, thus, it must be entirely gutted, he said.

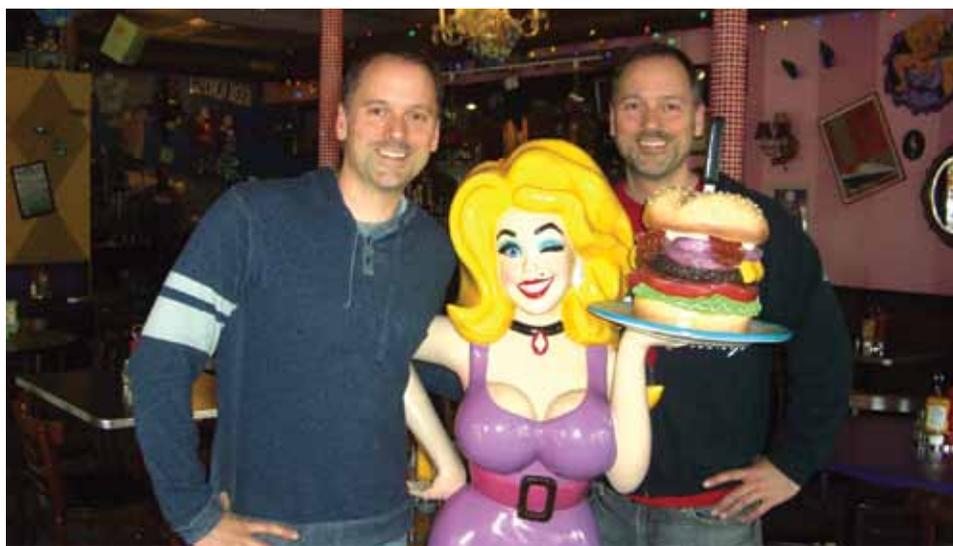
Wright said they likely will sign legal papers to acquire the building in January.

"We've always had our eye to expand ever since we took over the brand nationally in 2007," Wright said. "We don't necessarily want to do another Hamburger Mary's in Chicago, and Oak Park has just always attracted us."

That's because Wright and his twin, Brandon, have participated in that suburb's annual beer-tasting festival. They have considered Oak Park for about a year and truly been in-pursuit of an Oak Park location since this past summer.

"We really didn't think it would be happening this quickly, but everything is just kind of falling into place ... so why not," Wright said.

Wright, 41, said Hamburger Mary's—with 12 domestic locations and one in Berlin—likely will open additional locations in 2014. He would not say in which cities, though California locations



Above: Hamburger Mary's owners Ashley Wright (left) and Brandon Wright at the flagship Clark St. location. Right: More images from the Clark St. location. Photos by Ross Forman

are likely.

"When we took over the brand in 2007, there were only four locations. We've built it to 12 [locations] domestic and one international location—Berlin, Germany, opened this past April.

"Our goal is to open one or two new locations annually, and eventually grow to three or four [new locations] annually. Eventually we'd like to be in every major city."

Wright added, "We opened our Hamburger Mary's as a franchisee in 2006. At the time, we never would have guessed that we would own the brand a year and a half later. I knew it was a good concept and a good brand when we bought

it, but it's definitely taken me places where I didn't necessarily foresee in the beginning. Originally, we just wanted to open a neighborhood Hamburger Mary's, and eventually get to the point where we'd hire a manager and then just sit at the bar and drink all day."

Sara Fuerst, of the Oak Park Development Corporation, said in a statement: "We are very pleased to have the Oak Park Brewing Company and Hamburger Mary's coming to Oak Park. We like their product, as have the patrons at the Micro Brew Review, the annual Oak Park event."

Hamburger Mary's first opened in 1972 in San Francisco.



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Kevin Boyer talks with Christina Kahrl during the event. Photo by Tracy Baim

Openly trans ESPN editor talks about coming out on the job

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL BLICKENSERFER

"One of the greatest crises for transgender people in general is employment," ESPN writer/editor Christina Kahrl told an audience at an Egalite Chicago networking event for Advertising Professionals and Allies.

The evening—the first of its kind for the Chicago chapter of the Publicis Groupe LGBT network—was presented in partnership with the GLAAD Chicago Leadership Council and held at the Leo Burnett Room on December 12. Gay marketing professional Kevin Boyer was the interviewer for the program.

Kahrl is a member of the Baseball Writers Association of America. In 1996, she co-founded Baseball Prospectus, a think tank that publishes analysis of the sport using statistics and is recognized as an industry thought leader. Her writing has appeared in *Sports Illustrated*, *Playboy*, *Salon* and others.

She is an openly transgender woman. Since coming out in 2003, Kahrl has been active in both the transgender communities and the push for equality. She sits on the boards of GLAAD, Equality Illinois, the Trans Life Center at the Chicago House, the You Can Play Project and the Nike LGBT Sports Coalition. She worked to secure the Chicago City Council resolution supporting LGBT athletes and, in 2011, helped launch the Chicago Area Trans-Friendly Bathroom Initiative.

Kahrl said she hopes to encourage employers to view transgender employees as capable co-workers, mentors and leaders. "We can be as effective as anybody else," she said. "We can create this positive message and lead by example."

She recalled coming out to her colleagues at Baseball Prospectus in 2003. "I was selling the fact that 'Guys, I've got a big secret and now it's not going to be a secret anymore,'" she remembered. "I didn't know how they were going to take it." Kahrl viewed the occasion as a "teaching moment," something she maintains all trans-people have to deal with throughout their lives. "It requires us to be really patient with people who may not get what it is to be trans," she said. "We have to win people over with the idea that 'I'm just going to show up and do the same job. I'm not changing who I am. I'm changing one aspect of what I am.'"

Kahrl won over both her colleagues at Baseball

Prospectus and, eventually, the Baseball Writers Association of America. "When I was voted in, it was kind of a big deal," she said. "I got universally accepted by a group of overwhelmingly over-fifty, straight white men."

Kahrl said she believes this sends a message about the importance of sports as a cultural institution. "Sports is a safe topic. It's an effective bridge between people of so many different identity groups," she said. "I couldn't make up a better bridge to the straight world than to say 'I'm going to sit around and talk about baseball with you guys.'"

According to Kahrl, one of the great difficulties for transgender people in the workplace is the inability to keep their identities to themselves. "There is no such thing as stealth in my book," she said. "For me to come out was basically saying 'well you know, next week I'm going to be coming to work in a dress and there's a reason why my hair has been growing out.' You don't get to escape talking about it." Kahrl added that transgender people often have no choice but to out themselves. "If you are selfish and you want to keep relationships in your life, whether friends, family or colleagues or your career, you have to say 'I'm changing my name and gender.'"

However, she challenged transgender people to leave positive impressions on colleagues and the general public. "If I'm the first trans-person they've met, I don't want them to sit there and say 'I don't like these people. They're defensive and angry.' You can be polite and get people used to the idea that 'it's no big deal that I'm here.'"

Off stage, Kahrl told the *Windy City Times* that she hopes transgender people will take a more prolific role in LGBT activism. "We're almost always casting ourselves in the role of 'Debbie Downer' or being the ones who say 'What have you done for us lately?'" she said. "Instead of demanding acceptance, you need to create acceptance through active collaboration and partnerships."

She challenged the transgender community to stop "othering" themselves. "We have a collective responsibility to each other to work together," she said. "It's about what we can do to change the dynamic."



Darts team. Photo from Eric Pfeifer

SPORTS

Darts league looking forward to Gay Games

BY ROSS FORMAN

The local gay darts league, run by the Athletic Alliance of Chicago (AAC), kicked off its fall/winter season Oct. 17—and many participants are already thinking about next summer.

That's when darts returns to the Gay Games, the quadrennial sports and cultural extravaganza that will be held next August in Cleveland. Darts was a part of the Games in 2006 here in Chicago, with more than 100 participants, but excluded from the list of sports in 2010 when the Games were held in Cologne, Germany.

The darts tournament at Gay Games 9 in Cleveland will be run by the same organizers of the AAC league.

Games organizers contacted Chicago members in 2012 and, in early 2013, it was agreed that the Chicago crew will be the darts directors in Cleveland.

"It was a good opportunity for us," said Erik Newton, who, in early 2013, moved to St. Louis after living in Chicago for years. Newton and Mike Pfeifer will run the darts in Cleveland.

Darts at the Games will be held at the host hotel, and Arachnid, based in Loves Park, Ill., has donated 25 boards for the Games, free of charge.

Darts will be played in Cleveland next Aug. 11-15. There will be singles events, doubles events (with partner of your choice), and on last day, a team event (with four people per team). There will be recreational and competitive divisions, an open format and a women's division.

"The Gay Games is such a neat event, with 10,000 of your community members, and seemingly anywhere and everywhere you go, you're meeting people involved with the Games," said Pfeifer, who has competed in the Games in Sydney and Chicago, winning a medal in 2006.

"I've very proud to be a part of the 2014 Games," Pfeifer said.

"It's definitely an honor," Newton added. "It's such a magical event."

The fall/winter AAC league features 16 teams, with eight players per team, including a team captain. The teams are sponsored by such area bars as The North End, The Closet, Crew, Cell Block, Scot's and others. The last matches of the season are scheduled for next April 3, and the annual awards banquet is April 17.

About 90 percent of the league players are male, and there also are some straight participants.

The AAC summer dart season annually runs

from June through August.

Games are played Thursday nights at local bars.

"Sure, there are some competitive players, but the vast majority of players are friends who just want to go out on Thursday nights with their friends, throw darts and drink beer," Pfeifer said. "The darts league annually is a pretty cool way to meet new people, and there definitely are some colorful characters."

Relationships have developed through AAC darts, Pfeifer confirmed.

Pfeifer, 44, who lives in the Edgewater neighborhood and works as a graphic designer, is in his third year as AAC league director. He has played in the league for 10 years.

"I was at [now-closed] T's Bar & Restaurant [in Andersonville] in the early 2000s, and my neighbors were playing darts. I asked what they were doing and they said they played in a darts league. I didn't even know such a thing existed," Pfeifer said. "When I eventually joined the league, I had no idea if I'd be good or bad, and the first game I was in was at Scot's, and there were at least 12 people watching me. I had a lot of butterflies. That feeling, though, was pretty gripping and I was hooked immediately."

Pfeifer has since traveled domestically for dart tournaments, too, visiting such places as Oklahoma City, Denver, Kansas City, St. Louis and elsewhere.

"There definitely are bars [in Chicago] that see the value in having dart boards, especially the sports bars," Pfeifer said. "On a Thursday night, there will be a minimum of 12 people in their bar [playing darts], plus their friends, and they will be drinking for two or three hours."

"I think the bars are really starting to realize, if they didn't already know, that this is a good thing to have."

Pfeifer said there are two or three top-tier teams locally, and then the rest of the teams which are mostly using darts as a social night out, Pfeifer said.

Last year, the league was divided into different divisions: competitive and recreational.

This season, there is only one division.

"The league has been growing over the past few seasons; we've had an influx of new players over the past few seasons, especially younger seasons," Pfeifer said. "The thing with darts is, it is something that everyone can do. There really are no physical requirements; darters come in all shapes and sizes."

CALENDAR

Brought to you by the
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WINDY CITY
TIMES

nightspots

\$45 adults/\$20 students. Tickets online, in person at the Stage 773 Box Office or by phone. 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-software.html?t=tix&e=71ec28fc60d26577717703b8a8b9>

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. 773-4047336 <http://americanbluestheater.com>

BTQ Book Group Group will meet to discuss Jesus in Love by Kittredge Cherry. 7:30pm Gerber Hart Library and Archives 5315 N Clark St <http://gerberhart.org/>

Saturday, Dec. 21

Artemis Singers free Loop concert Chicago's Lesbian feminist chorus will present music in celebration of Kwanzaa and the winter solstice in the pedway of the indoor heated Block 37 shopping mall. 1:00pm - 2:00pm Block 37's Holiday Hub, 108 N. State St., Chicago <http://www.artemissingers.org>

Martina McBride: The Joy of Christmas McBride has won four CMA Female Vocalist of the Year trophies, three ACM Female Vocalist awards, and a Grammy. 7:30pm Rosemont Theatre 5400 N River Rd Des Plaines, IL 60018, Tickets: <http://rosemontboxoffice.com/rosemont-theatre-tickets.php>

Sappho's Salon Solstice Party for Lesbians and Their Friends. \$7-\$10 sliding scale. Holiday treats, eggnog, an Ugly Christmas Sweater contest and a short solstice ritual. Collecting donations for Sarah's Circle, a shelter for homeless women in Uptown 7:30pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

Sunday, Dec. 22

"Divalicious" Sunday brunch Diva Madam X will welcome "Jingle Bell Brunch" guests with a variety of holiday tunes, musicals and seasonal sing-along favorites. Kit Kat's seven projection screens will show holiday movies, from hilarious (Christmas Vacation, Elf) to heartwarming (It's a Wonderful Life, White Christmas). Chef JoAnn Witherell's brunch menu may be paired with an optional drink package for an additional \$10 per person. Reservations by phone 11:00am - 4:00pm Kit Kat Lounge & Supper Club, 3700 N Halsted St., 773-525-1111.

Monday, Dec. 23

HamBINGO Join Mary's for "HamBINGO Mary's" every Monday night at 8pm downstairs in the dining room, with your

host, Velicity 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 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>

Tuesday, Dec. 24

Bi discussion group Every other Tuesday we get together to chat about upcoming bisexual events, concerns, and answer each other's questions about the community. Soft drinks & water are provided by the Center, but feel free to bring anything else you'd like to share, whether it's snacks or a good book! 7:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

Wed., Dec. 25

Red Cup Party Every Wednesday. Featuring DJ Cooper Thomas and tasty drink specials. 9:00pm Scarlet Bar 3320 N Halsted <http://www.scarletbarchicago.com>

You're The Star Karaoke with Honey West Join hostess with the mostess, Honey West for You're The Star Karaoke, 10pm in Roscoe's front bar. Take your place in the spotlight! There's not a bad seat in the house. 10:00pm Roscoe's Tavern 3356 N Halsted St <http://www.roscoes.com>

Tuesday, Dec. 31

Unlock Your Future New Year's Eve night of fun and friends with Equality Illinois. Champagne Toast at midnight, noisemakers and leis. Fabulous door prizes courtesy of Orbitz travel. Complimentary coat check. Limited Valet Parking available at Sidetrack the evening of the event. Your contribution supports Equality Illinois. Contributions are not tax-deductible. 7:00pm Sidetrack, 3349 N Halsted St., <http://www.sidetrackchicago.com>

NYE 2014: Royalty Takes Over Countdown to the New Year with Chicago's very own royals: current reigning Ms. Continental Naysha Lopez and current reigning Miss Continental Plus Farra N Hyte and party the whole the night away to the sounds and beats of DJ Laura B. \$50 or VIP IN/OUT Privileges. Service fee. 8:00pm - 4:00am Hydrate Nightclub 3458 N Halsted <http://www.hydratechicago.com> Tickets: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/524830>

New Year's Eve Monster's Ball Guests dressed in their most horrific, startling attire ring in 2014 with the ghosts and ghouls of Stage 773. \$70 per person/\$120 per couple. Unlimited specialty drinks, di-



GAME NIGHT

Thursday, Dec. 19

A night featuring the new trivia game **That's So Gay!** will take place at Downtown Bar and Lounge, 440 N. State St.

abolically delicious appetizers, live music and a haunted house. 9:00pm - 2:00am Stage 773 1225 W Belmont 773-327-5252 <http://www.Stage773.com>

Replay/Reboot A New Year's Eve Party to benefit Lambda Legal with DJ Moose providing a full on 80s soundtrack remixed and rebooted for 2014 all night long. Hors d'oeuvres and top shelf drink package plus free arcade games. \$40 advance/\$45 at door. 9:00pm Replay Beer & Bourbon 3439 N Halsted St Tickets: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/523164>

Redmoon's New Year's Eve: Revolution. Festive evening of relentless elegance and wild imagination, with signature Redmoon moments of spectacle, ceremony and ritual for an unexpected interpretation of the classic New Year's Eve celebration. \$100 includes five hours (9 pm - 2 am) of open bar and sweets service and free shuttle. Access to one of three Lounge Areas is available through VIP tickets \$150. 9:00pm Redmoon 2120 S. Jefferson St. 312-850-8440 x123 <http://www.redmoon.org>

Saturday, Jan. 4

Ethical Problems in Gender Identity Construction With Hyacinth Piel. Part of Lavender University LGBTQ programs, a nine-month series of LGBTQ educational programs featuring prominent scholars known nationally for their innovative research and work. Reservations online or tickets at door. Questions to publisher@windycitymediagroup.com or lkarlic@centeronhalsted.org 11:00am - 1:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted St., Tickets: <https://community.centeronhalsted.org/lavenderuniversity>

Wed., Dec. 18

Foster and Adoptive Parent Orientation

Attending an orientation is a great way to learn more about what it takes to become a licensed foster parent and to help you determine if foster and/or adoptive parenting is the right decision for you and your family. 1:00pm - 3:00pm Little City Foundation 700 N. Sacramento Ave.; 1-855-WeFoster; www.littlecity.org/foster

GLAAD Annual Holiday Reception to recognize Chicago LGBT activist Kevin Boyer

The reception will celebrate a historic year in the LGBT movement and will include a presentation to leading LGBT advocate Kevin Boyer for his long standing service to the LGBT community. \$25 5:30pm Downtown Bar and Lounge, 440 N State St., Tickets: www.glaad.org/tis-theseason

Health Insurance Open Enrollment event

First come, first served. Bring proof of citizenship, proof of residency, social security numbers or document numbers for legal immigrants, employer and incomes info for every member of household who needs coverage, policy numbers for current insurance plans, and policy info for every job-based health plan for which you or household members are eligible. Info via AffordableCare@howardbrown.org or by phone. 6-9pm Howard Brown Health Center, 4025 N Sheridan Rd., 773-388-8867; www.howardbrown.org

Chicago NOW Annual Membership Meeting & Holiday Happy Hour

Reflect on the year's issues impacting women and girls and the recent victory in securing equal marriage in Illinois, visit with friends, vote on the Board for next year. RSVP to chicagonow.org@gmail.com requested, not required. 6:30pm Hamburger Mary's, 5400 N Clark St., <http://chicagonow.org/>

Thursday, Dec. 19

Volunteer PFLAG Gift Wrapping at Barnes and Noble

To make more people aware of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), to collect donations and to have fun getting to know each other better. 10:00am - 2:00pm Barnes and Noble 47 Chicago Ave. Naperville, IL 60540

LGBTQ Holiday Drinks & Game Night!

(That's So Gay!) Informal game night to play a new trivia game created by Tracy Baim called "That's So Gay! A Game of LGBTQ Discovery. 5:30pm Downtown Bar and Lounge 440 N State St., <http://thatssogaygame.com> Tickets: <http://https://www.facebook.com/>

events/231181850382138/

Rudolph the Red-Hosed Reindeer

David Cerda's parody of the classic children's television special "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer". Now celebrating its 15th year, Rudolph the Red-Hosed Reindeer is the longest running holiday show featuring a transvestite reindeer in the history of Chicago. \$12- \$22 Thurs. - Sat. until Dec. 30 7:30pm Mary's Attic 5400 N Clark <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/131657>

Branden James

Classical Crossover Singer Branden James is a finalist on Season 8 of America's Got Talent. Doors open at 6pm. 8:00pm City Winery Chicago 1200 W Randolph St <http://www.citywinery.com/chicago/branden-james-the-voice-of-christmas-with-special-guest-marisa-bucheit-12-19.html>

Pre-New Year's Eve

Sami Grisafe performs at the 35th Year Encore Performance. All the bells and whistles of a true New Year's Eve, but without the drama, cover charges, and 2 weeks early. Countdown, party favors, and Champagne toast at midnight. 8:00pm The Closet Chicago 3325 N Broadway <https://www.facebook.com/events/462227887221046>

Friday, Dec. 20

Jenny McCarthy Hosts 'Naughty and Nice'

Holiday Bash The View co-host, model and actress returns to her hometown to host a holiday bash with friend Matt Deichl. Passed appetizers and an open bar for an entry fee of \$75. Benefits nonprofit Generation Rescue, a leading national organization that provides hope, information and immediate treatment assistance to families affected by autism spectrum disorders. Info via Alexios Milioulis at Alexios@parliamentchicago.com 8:00pm - 11:00pm, Parliament, 324 W. Chicago Ave., 312-380-0004 <http://generation-rescue.org>; Tickets: <http://parliamentchicago.com>

Paula Sinclair's 9th Annual Christmas Sing-a-long

Front Bar. No cover. 8:00pm Circuit Nightclub 3641 N Halsted St.

We Three Lizas

With a revamped book and expanded score, last year's sparkly, this queer holiday hit will feature many of the original cast members including Scott Duff*, John Francisco*, Sharriese Hamilton, Danielle Plisz (Jeff Award-nominated), Dana Tretta and Andrew Swan in addition to newcomers Mark David Kaplan, James Nedrud and Bethany Thomas. Through Sunday, Jan. 5, 2014

STOP HOMOPHOBIA, DISCRIMINATION AND HATE NOW

3

WHEN THE SALVATION ARMY ENDS ITS POLICY OF RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY AND DISCRIMINATION AGAINST GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER PEOPLE



THEN, AND ONLY THEN, WILL THIS BE A REAL DOLLAR BILL.

STOP HOMOPHOBIA, DISCRIMINATION AND HATE NOW

QUEER DOLLAR

3

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STOP HOMOPHOBIA, DISCRIMINATION AND HATE NOW

QUEER DOLLAR

3

BILLY MASTERS

"I married first, won the Oscar before Olivia did and, if I die first, she'll undoubtedly be livid."—The late Joan Fontaine tells a reporter about her lifelong competitive relationship with sister Olivia De Havilland.

You wouldn't normally expect to get into the holiday season in Hollywood, but think again, people. This year, Billy Masters did more in LA than just his usual ho-ho-whoring. My brief visit to the Left Coast was chock full of festive fabulousness. Most of them revolved around the theater. With Parfumerie in Beverly Hills, Aladdin and his Winter Wish in Pasadena, and Leslie Jordan in Hollywood, it was oodles of fun from beginning to end. You can read detailed reviews of all of these shows on BillyMasters.com.

In what I think is an inspired idea, Fran Dre-



David Hernandez (well, his CD, anyway) is among Billy's holiday suggestions.

scher will soon be making her Broadway debut. Starting Feb. 4, the flashy girl from Flushing will join the cast of Cinderella, playing the Wicked Stepmother for a two-month run. I can't wait—and so close to my birthday!!

These days, even celebrity spawn show up in musicals. Madonna's lookalike daughter Lourdes just played Rizzo in Grease at the LaGuardia High School of the Performing Arts in NYC. And there was Madonna on opening night, with Lourdes' siblings Rocco, David and Mercy, and dad Carlos. The NY Daily News theater critic called Lourdes "terrific." Who knew they review high school shows? Since we've gotten ahead of her singing "There Are Worse Things I Could Do," you can judge for yourself at BillyMasters.com.

I must make a confession—I've enjoyed every short-lived television show Matthew Perry has done since Friends. Alas, the American people don't share my enthusiasm. But as sure as night follows day, I know that a new TV season will bring yet another Matthew Perry project. This time, the material is something familiar. CBS is planning a new version of The Odd Couple for Perry. Now, if Showtime would cancel Episodes, Matt LeBlanc could star alongside his TV roomie. Of course, that would require some fancy footwork, since Matthew Perry has been cast as Oscar Madison. I'm told an extensive search is on for the perfect Felix Unger.

Say what you will about Sean Hayes, but the boy simply won't go down without a fight. De-

spite the tepid response to his sitcom, Sean Saves the World, the show is not only improving in the ratings but also in the quality of the scripts. Helping to generate buzz for the second half of the season is a flurry of fabulous guest stars. Portia de Rossi will be playing Sean's oft-mentioned ex-wife in three episodes. Will & Grace cohort Megan Mullally has been cast as his sister in an upcoming episode. And the dreamy Guy Pearce will pop in as a potential love interest this spring. If that doesn't help, nothing will. But if they decide to cancel the show, I think Sean could bounce back rather quickly as the perfect Felix Unger on this reboot of The Odd Couple.

Time once again for Billy's Holiday Gift Giving Suggestions. We're getting down to the wire, so this is a perfect time to count on Amazon's online fulfillment. (I don't believe their drones are up and running ... yet.) For this week's gifts, I'm sticking with two people I mentioned earlier. Since my love for Leslie Jordan is well-documented, why not make your holidays a little brighter by picking up his book, My Trip Down the Pink Carpet, or the live DVD of the same name? They're both available on Amazon.com, and I can't think of a better gift for the person who has everything—because there's always room for a little levity (and a little Leslie goes a long way).

A few years back, the lovely and talented David Hernandez released a wonderful Christmas CD. But I didn't know about it then, so it's new to me—and I bet it'll be new to most of you. Even better is that you can buy This Christmas not only as a regular CD, but you can also get the music immediately by downloading it from iTunes (or, for those of us not i-oriented, Amazon.com). You know what would make it even more festive? Logging onto BillyMasters.com for some steamy shots of David. He never disappoints.

Speaking of steamy shots, a trio of beautiful boys warrant special attention this week. First off, Colton Haynes (formerly a homoerotic model for XY magazine) took time off from his duties on the TV show Arrow to attend a fundraiser for St. Jude's Children's Hospital. Since it was a holiday-themed event, Colton got into the spirit of things by sitting on Santa's lap. Ho-ho-ho, indeed.

The lovely Ryan Carnes is returning to General Hospital, where he'll once again portray the role of Lucas Jones, the son of Julian Jerome. Since I am a CBS soap watcher, I don't know who any of these characters are. But I certainly remember Ryan Carnes—not only from "Desperate Housewives", but also from the first "Eating Out" film, where he showed all...and I do mean all.

Lastly, Nolan Gerard Funk just shot an ad campaign for Versace's Spring 2014 collection. Not surprisingly, the photos are incredibly impressive—and of course I'm talking about the barely-there underwear shots which show off the taut torso of one of WeHo's most popular go-go boys. Donatella even woke up long enough to yell, "Get out!"—presumably she was referring to the closet. Check out every inch of all three guys on BillyMasters.com.

When I'm bringing in the holidays and da Funk (something I never get tired of saying), it's definitely time to end yet another column. OK, this is it—the final few days before Christmas. You know what makes the perfect last-minute gift for anyone on your list? A subscription to www.BillyMasters.com—the site that stuffs more than just your stocking. And I even take requests—well, not so much requests as answer questions. So send them along to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before Lourdes helms next year's live musical telecast on NBC. (Grease is under serious consideration.) Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.



UN-WRAPPED

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 25
#MEN Wednesday
on Christmas Night
\$3 Fireball Shots • \$3 PBR

Join us **Sunday, Dec. 29** • 9pm for
Our Last Disco Dance Party of 2013

Disco

Dance under our disco balls. No cover.



/SidetrackBar



3349 N. Halsted
SidetrackChicago.com

BOOK REVIEW

Autobiography of My Hungers
by Rigoberto Gonzalez
\$19.95; Univ. of Wisconsin Press; 113 pages
BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Your life is full.

The days are jammed with work and home; evenings, with hobbies and projects and no time to breathe. Between friends and family, chores, and engagements, weekends are back-to-back packed, too.

Yes, your life is full ... and yet, sometimes, you notice a lingering feeling of something missing. In *Autobiography of My Hungers* by Rigoberto Gonzalez, you'll see that you're not the only one with holes in your heart.

When he was a young boy living with his family in Mexico, Gonzalez remembers that his kitchen job was to separate the *pedrita* (pebbles) from the beans before his mother boiled them.

He "enjoyed... the small stones," until they followed him into adulthood.

Back then, he was his parents' oldest child, but he was close to his *abuelo* and *abuela* (grandfather and grandmother, respectively). The entire family was poor, but they "were not going to starve, despite what Abuelo had said the week before." Despite poverty, his *abuela* made sacrifices for him, especially after the family moved north, to America. Her gifts were something Gonzalez didn't fully understand until many years later.

He did understand loss, however, starting with that of his mother, who returned from California to Mexico to die. Gonzalez was still a child when she died and her absence, too, was something he didn't fully grasp until he was a man.

Following his mother's death and his father's remarriage and subsequent departure, Gonzalez continued to live with his grandparents in a tiny apartment, where they all slept in one room. He went to school but felt out-of-place, with one foot in Mexico and one in his new country.

He was devastated when his family moved back to Mexico, leaving him alone to finish his education. Still, college was where he found a girlfriend, and came to terms with his "hungry gay body." It was there that he tried to commit suicide, tried to starve himself, felt unloved and came to confront memories of embarrassment in childhood and the hurt he held from his abusive, alcoholic father.

And New York, post-college, was where he realized that he could fall in love too quickly with a man, but "if the waters got rough, I could always beat him to the exit."

Looking for a quick little pick-me-up read? Well... you'd be half right, if you tried this memoir.

Yes, *Autobiography of My Hungers* is skinny and, at under 120 pages (most of them, partially filled), it'll be a quick book for most people to finish. Still, it seemed to be the longest book I've read this year, because author Gonzalez writes with a deep, soul-crushing sadness that never lets up.

Yes, it could be argued, I suppose, that Gonzalez pens with the beauty of a poet. I'll admit I enjoyed his nuanced observations on the tidbits of life. To find those subtleties, though, is like searching through a garden of despair, which I'm not sure is worth the left-over feeling I got when finished.

No, *Autobiography of My Hungers* is just too full of sorrow.

Want more? Look for *Black Blossoms* or *Butterfly Boy: Memories of a Chicano Mariposa*, both by Rigoberto Gonzalez.

Gay hockey team's Christmas video goes viral

BY ROSS FORMAN

There's still no reply from Mariah Carey—not even a showing-some-holiday-cheer tweet. But members of the Chicago Gay Hockey Association (CGHA) remain optimistic that their just-released playful version of her classic "All I Want For Christmas Is You" somehow finds its way to the singing sensation.

"If anyone knows her, please show her the video," said Andrew Sobotka, president of the CGHA, which released the light-hearted video on Thanksgiving and has since watched it sail through cyberspace. As of Dec. 12, the video had been viewed more than 138,000 times.

"We wanted to make the video just for fun; we really love the song and we thought it would be a great way to show that we have fun and it would be good to send to our friends from [other] gay hockey associations instead of a traditional Christmas card," Sobotka said. "The response has been amazing. We didn't anticipate that so many people would find the song and enjoy it. We really were shocked when people started Tweeting and sharing the video. We didn't realize it would go viral and get picked up by so many media outlets."

CGHA skater and board director Brian Hull added, "Considering our singing and dancing skills, I don't think anyone thought this was going to blow up the way it did."

But there has been some negative feedback to the video too, Sobotka confirmed: "[Some] people can't seem to wrap their head around the fact that we're branded as a 'gay hockey association.' [But] we really want to emphasize that we're all-inclusive and we have players that are straight, gay and everything in between."

The video was shot at American Heartland Ice Arena in Lincolnwood Nov. 16, the same venue

used for ice hockey for the Gay Games in 2006 and a past gay hockey tournament the CGHA hosted. They recorded the vocals at Handwritten Recording on Belmont Avenue in about 90 minutes. There were six CGHA players in the studio to record the song, and each of the six had a solo. Stephen Leonard, who skates for the team and has shined locally as a singer too, came up with the plan for the vocals since he has the most experience producing music, Sobotka said.

"As with everything we do, the goal is to inform people about our organization, so that we can continue to expand and add more Red Liners teams," Sobotka said of the team's nickname. "We also wanted to make sure that the video had a good message about acceptance and tolerance for all."

Hull added, "The best part of this whole experience is just bringing awareness of the CGHA, and gay athletes in general, to the broader Chicago community. A lot of gay teens give up high school or college sports that they're very successful at due to the fear of coming-out and dealing with homophobic teammates and coaches. For younger gay athletes, we want them to have the courage to keep playing their sport and know that we've got their back. And for the more mature gay hockey players, we want to let them know that there's a community of competitive, fun-loving, athletic people out here that are just like them and waiting with open arms."

Dan Savage was one of the first to tweet the video, "and his comment that the gays 'out market' the Catholic Church was pretty funny," Sobotka said.

Sobotka, 28, lives in Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood, and has been skating for the CGHA for almost four years. He is still a Detroit Red Wings loyalist, though, hailing from Michigan.

"I'd venture to say that my vocals are the



Chicago Gay Hockey Association's video done by Glam Tie Media.

weakest of the group, and that matches nicely with my atrocious dance moves," he said, laughing. "Some people somehow seem to find my singing endearing since it's so imperfect."

Sobotka said the team was recently approached by Red Eye to film a follow-up, which should come out before Christmas. "It's similarly fun and even pokes fun at ourselves," he said.

"The video has opened up our organization to our widest audience yet," Sobotka said. "In the past, we've had [mainstream] media expo-

sure for doing big things, [such as] having the Stanley Cup in the 2010 Gay Pride Parade, but this video has reached beyond just the gay community and beyond the hockey community."

The CGHA has four teams and an adult instructional program, with about 65 members, ranging in age from 21 to 50.

About 15 players were at the video shoot.

To watch the CGHA video, visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=L64ABFtgek.

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Ray is a legal authority on all of his practice areas, which include probate, trusts, guardianship, estate planning, and elder law, including the litigation of those areas. He is a longtime advocate for and member of the LGBT community, and is involved in several charitable groups, community associations, and professional organizations. Ray is a member of Clark Hill PLC, a full-service law firm consisting of a diverse team of attorneys and professionals committed to our clients and our communities.

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