



PAGE 32

**NATE BERKUS  
(CENTER) ON HIS  
NEW REALITY  
SHOW**

# WINDY CITY TIMES

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

**MARCH 19, 2014**

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**SINGER ANNE  
STEELE SETS  
SIGHTS ON  
CHICAGO**  
PAGE 26



**CHICAGO  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
COMMISSIONER  
BRIAN BANNON**  
PAGE 14



**KEITH ELLIOTT  
MOVES OUT OF  
CHICAGO, LEAVES  
DANCE LEGACY**  
PAGE 29

## LGBTs react to Vatican poll

BY CHUCK COLBERT

Recently released survey results from thousands of US Catholics show widespread rejection of church teaching on contraception, sexual morality, gay relationships and divorce. And while these results, coinciding with any number of findings from public opinion polling are not new, what is new and noteworthy is an attitudinal gap of decreasing animosity to LGBTs from the hierarchy down to the grassroots.

For example, as the geography of the institutional entity became more local—from diocesan to parish to small faith community level—attitudes toward LGBTs were viewed to be less hostile and condemning, according to the survey.

When respondents were asked to gauge attitudes at diocese, parish, or small faith community levels, more than one-third (37 percent) viewed their dioceses as hostile and condemning of marriage equality and

same-sex couples (35 percent).

But at the parish level, only 11 percent viewed their parish as hostile or condemning of marriage equality, with 13 percent saying their parish held similar views of same-sex couples. A smaller number of respondents, three and four percent respectively, said their faith communities were condemning or hostile of marriage equality and same-sex couples.

Sure enough, findings on marriage equality for same sex couples are strikingly at odds with hierarchical leaders, who often vociferously oppose legal gay wedding. At the same time, however, support for marriage equality for same-sex couples is “extremely important” for 47 percent of respondents and “very important” for another 26 percent among the laity. In all, a whopping 73 percent of respondents strongly favor marriage equality.

Nonetheless, for Marianne Duddy-Burke, executive director of DignityUSA, the nation’s oldest LGBT Cath-

olic organization, hostility and condemnation point to suffering—feelings of rejection and ostracism experienced by many LGBTs.

“One of the saddest things the survey revealed is how many people feel pain due to church teaching about relationships and families,” she said, referring to the nearly three-quarters of respondents who said couples are aware when their relationships are not accepted by the church and the nearly 70 percent who said these couples feel marginalized.

“These numbers are tragic and heart-breaking. It indicates a deep pastoral crisis in our Church, and is a good indication of why we see so many people leaving the Church,” Duddy-Burke said in press statement.

“The evidence continues to mount about the huge gaping chasm between the attitudes, beliefs, and

**Turn to page 4**

## SPRING THEATER PREVIEW

Warm up to theater this spring in Chicago with such options as (L-R) Road Show at Chicago Shakespeare Theatre (photo by Michael Brosilow), Rent at Aurora's Paramount Theatre (photo by Liz Lauren) and About Face Theatre's Brahman/i: A One-Hijra Stand Up Comedy Show (photo by Joe Mazza).



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this week in

## WINDY CITY TIMES

## NEWS

LGBTs react to Vatican poll	4
Tenn. judge orders injunction	5
Pro-marriage GOP pol facing heat	6
OBITS: Boos, Gravemier	7
Activist Strub visits Chicago	12
Gay CPL commissioner Bannon	14
Gay in the Life	15
VIEWS: Lettman-Hicks; Pizzoli	16

Images on cover (left, from top): Photo of Monica Pederson, Nate Berkus and Eddie George from NBC; photo of Anne Steele from Steele; photo of Brian Bannon from Ruth Lednicer; photo of Keith Elliott by Ed Negron

## ENTERTAINMENT/EVENTS

Scottish Play Scott	17
Theater reviews	18
SPRING THEATER SPECIAL	24
Knight: Bad Words	30
Movies: The Homestretch	31
TV: Talking with Nate Berkus	32
Books: Off the Rocks; ...Cat to Sit	33
Dish; classifieds	34
Billy Masters	37

## OUTLINES

Classifieds	34
Calendar	36

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## SCHOOL DAZE

Roosevelt University Grant Ladniak (left) talks about the freedom he has found there—and away from his previous school in Michigan.

Photo by Gretchen Rachel Blickensderfer



Singer Johnette Napolitano talks about Chicago venues and obsessive lesbians. PR photo



Fashion designer Boris Powell (above) held his fall fashion show at Block 37. Photo by Ed Negron

## 'CITY' LIFE

WCT sat in on the Chefs and the City kickoff event—and found out why Vital Bridges is changing the usual date and place.

## 'SHY' GUY

Dr. Frank Spinelli's memoir, Pee-Shy, is reviewed.

## THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

Find out the latest about Graham Norton, Neil Patrick Harris and Joan Collins.

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## SUBURBAN ACTION



ALMA (Association of Latinos/as Motivating Action) held a get-together at Antronio's in Berwyn. Photo by Jerry Nunn

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## VATICAN from cover

practices of ordinary Catholics and the stance and actions of our church leaders," she added during a recent telephone interview. "The credibility of the hierarchy has eroded very quickly and has policy implications as well as pastoral implications."

### Survey's genesis and purpose

In November, 15 U.S. Catholic church reform organizations responded to the Pope Francis' call for bishops globally to survey Catholics on family issues, including same-sex couples and families.

The online questionnaire was completed by more than 16,000 Catholics in English and Spanish.

Analyzed independently by Dr. Peter J. Fagan, M.Div., PhD., from the Department of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, located Baltimore, Maryland, the survey results highlight seven core issues of concern, including pastoral care; pedagogical and evangelism challenges; separated, divorced and remarried Catholics; same-sex marriage; women in the Church, sexual abuse scandals, skepticism and hope, according to a press release.

In all, 53 percent of survey respondents self-identified as weekly Mass-goers, which is higher Mass attendance than the overall U.S. Catholic average of 31 percent in 2011.

The Midwest US Census region had the largest number (32 percent) of respondents even though Midwest accounts for just 22 percent of the nation's Catholic population.

In December 2013, a short summary of the quantitative data and a document containing each and every written comment and response was sent to Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri, General Secretary of the Synod on the Bishops and the Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz, President of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The survey analysis was delivered to the U.S. cardinals attending a recent consistory, or assembly of cardinals and pontiff in Rome, in preparation for the Synod on the Family in October 2014, and to Cardinal Baldisseri.

The report is available in full, online: [www.mycatholicfamily.org](http://www.mycatholicfamily.org)

### Local reaction

In Chicago, Catholic gay-rights activists and church reform leaders voiced a variety of views on the survey results, which some believe ought to influence Pope Francis as he considers a new spiritual leader for the local archdiocese, which is the nation's third largest.

Chris Pett, a former president of Dignity/Chicago, said, "While the results of this survey are disturbing, those of us in the LGBT Catholic community are not surprised at the depth of alienation and lack of pastoral concern for those the institutional Church continues to marginalize and disrespect.

"The responses reflect a pervasive experience of a church hierarchy that holds on to its ecclesial power—under the guise of its teaching authority and its perceived mission to preserve the truth as they see it—without any real experience of people's lives, their challenges and their desire to come closer to a God who extends unconditional love to all.

"As Pope Francis considers his appointment of a new archbishop of Chicago, we trust that he will choose a leader who is bound less by the demands of orthodoxy and more by the Gospel imperatives of love, healing and the acceptance of all who seek God and a spiritual home in the church.

"Since Francis was elected pope and as he quickly raised his voice calling the church to accountability to its true mission, our hope has been that the calculus for selecting bishops will change and that Francis will raise up true shepherds. Chicago represents a significant appointment with national implications. Now is the time for Francis to live up to his own expectations and appoint an archbishop who actually understands the pain of those the church



**Jim Fitzgerald, executive director of Call To Action. Photo from organization**

has alienated and who will be a source of welcoming and healing for the church of Chicago."

Voicing similar sentiments, gay-rights and Catholic activist Rick Garcia said, "This survey confirms what those of us who are practicing Catholics know. There is a great divide between the bishops of our Church and the people of the Church. American Catholics overwhelmingly support gay and lesbian people's civil rights, same-sex couples, and those who are divorced and remarried. This survey should be a wake-up call to our bishops who are largely out of touch with their flock."

"It is noteworthy," he added, "that the Vatican has asked for Catholic's opinions on this issue and while some countries' bishops have taken that seriously the American hierarchy has largely turned a blind eye to the Vatican's desire to know the mind of the faithful. This is unfortunate. But, I hope that this pontificate will continue to engage Catholics in the pews and challenge the bishops to be responsive to them and their needs."

For his part, Joe Murray of the Rainbow Sash Movement, voiced concern that "the plight of LGBT families with children is not lost in the shuffle."

"It is my hope that every attempt be made to include individual LGBT families in the upcoming synod's discussion about them," he added.

Murray went further in his survey-assessment thoughts. In his view, Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory of Atlanta ought to be the pope's choice to replace Cardinal Francis George.

"We are witnessing a paradigm shift in the Church," Murray said, referring to Pope Francis' emphasis on "love over the Church's authority as the law giver."

For that reason, Murray said, Gregory would be a suitable successor.

"Gregory is a progressive and tends to prefer dialogue over authoritarianism," explained Murray. "My experience with Gregory, when he was in Chicago, was on the whole positive.

"Whoever is George's replacement, he will have a different mindset with the focus on love and outreach which will be reflective of Pope Francis."

George, 77, is now two years past the church's mandatory retirement age for prelates.

A former Chicago seminarian, Gregory, who is African-American, served as president of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops from 2001-2004, was Bishop of Belleville, Ill., from 1993 to 2004, and auxiliary bishop of Chicago from 1983 to 1993.

The executive director of the Chicago-based Call to Action said survey results point to church reform.

"Once again, Catholics made clear their needs and hopes for a just and inclusive Church," said, Jim Fitzgerald, adding, "These significant survey findings must lead to substantial changes for the good of the church we love."

Asked about what the survey suggests about the next local spiritual leader, he said, "Like all Catholics, Chicago Catholics want a pastoral

leader who can show compassion, inclusion, sensitivity, and love to the entire community."

"The [Holy] Spirit is moving amongst the people and a leader who will listen to their hopes will be critically important moving forward," said Fitzgerald, referring to the 73-percent favorability response for marriage equality in survey results.

"Chicago Catholics want leaders who will work with them in creating a church where dialogue, consultation, and consensus are valued," he explained. "Catholics want a leader who will move church teachings and pastoral care into the 21st century and be relevant to the ordinary lives of Catholics. The next leader in the Chicago Archdiocese will need to be able to respond to a serious yearning for a better, more inclusive church."

Nearly 40 years old, Call To Action is a national organization of Catholics working to transform the Catholic Church, with an aim of "to educate, inspire, and activate Catholics to act for justice and build inclusive communities through a lens of anti-racism and anti-oppression principles," according to its mission statement.

### National reaction

Just as Chicago LGBTs weighed in on survey results, theologians and LGBTs active in ministry offered their perspectives.

Francis DeBernardo, executive director of New Ways Ministry, sounded a positive chord in his assessment.

"This news is hopeful in a number of ways," he said referring to the survey. "First, the sheer volume of the laity's response means that bishops cannot ignore such obvious empirical evidence. Second, the fact that these responses are coming from people who are concerned enough about the future of Catholicism to respond to the questions means that bishops will have to pay attention to these results. Third, a number of European bishops have already noted that these results are opening their eyes to realities they did not know existed."

Nevertheless, DeBernardo voiced "caution about becoming too optimistic that sweeping change is right around the corner." As he explained, "Change in the church is evolutionary, not revolutionary."

Altogether, "The best part of this survey is that it has set up an example of dialogue," said DeBernardo. "I think that example will be emulated by bishops and pastors who may have previously been fearful of opening such a discussion."

New Ways Ministry's co-founder Sister Jean-nine Gramick also welcomed the survey's findings.

"The survey results confirm the mission of New Ways Ministry as one of justice and reconciliation of LGBT Catholics with the wider Church," she said, "giv[ing] us hope to continue our work."

"The major challenge for us is the U.S. hierarchy, mostly appointees of Popes Benedict

XVI and John Paul II, who are resisting Pope Francis' call for a pastoral approach," Gramick explained. "In the future, we can reasonably expect even greater acceptance from Catholics in the pew, but welcome by pastors and bishops will be slower to come by.

"New Ways Ministry continues to urge LGBT Catholics, their families, and allies to tell their stories to Church leaders because personal contact is the basis for conversion of heart."

For her part, Lesbian feminist theologian Mary E. Hunt, Ph.D., co-founder and director of the Silver Springs, Maryland-based Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual (WATER), offered a more sobering assessment.

The survey data make clear that same-sex loving people and their families find scant welcome and plenty of rejection in most parishes," said, pointing to "One [Maryland] parish I know" that "had sign up times after Masses to oppose a same-sex marriage referendum with no opportunity for the other side to speak much less gather support."

For Hunt, real hope lies outside the institutional church. "It is only because of DignityUSA, women-church groups, and other progressive Eucharistic communities that LGBTIQ Catholics have any reliable links to their tradition," she said.

"My view is that those groups, rather than the hierarchical church, are the carriers of the Gospel in our time. Perhaps the hierarchy will one day learn from them," Hunt added. "In the meantime, I urge people to engage in sacrament and solidarity where their lives are respected and their loves are taken seriously."

### European, Asian bishops' survey reports

Unlike their counterparts in Germany, Switzerland and Japan, U.S. bishops have not reported survey results.

Japanese and German bishops, moreover, were blunt in their publicized comments.

As the German bishops' 18-page report put it: "The church's statements on premarital sexual relations, on homosexuality, on those divorced and remarried and on birth control ... are virtually never accepted, or are expressly rejected in the vast majority of cases."

German Catholics are about 30 percent of the overall population, which is 82 million.

Equally pointed, Japan's bishops, in a 15-page report, said, "Contemporary [Japanese] Catholics are either indifferent to or are unaware of the teachings of the Church.

The number of Japanese Catholics is small—only .35 percent of the population, which is 127.6 million.

DignityUSA, Call to Action, and WATER were among the 15 sponsoring groups for the survey.

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## NYC, Boston mayors boycott parades

Hundreds of thousands of people attended St. Patrick's Day parades in New York City and Boston. However, the leaders of those cities were missing.

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio did not march in the nation's largest St. Patrick's Day parade, skipping one of his city's signature celebrations because the event organizers refuse to let participants carry pro-gay signs, according to LGBTQ Nation. de Blasio became the first mayor in decades to sit out the traditional march along Fifth Avenue. In the parade, groups such as colleges or firefighter groups that march can identify themselves; however, LGBT groups cannot.

Boston Mayor Martin Walsh did not participate in the city's annual St. Patrick's Day

parade because organizers are excluding gay groups, according to the Associated Press. Before the event, Walsh said in an email he was disappointed he wouldn't participate because parade plans prevent all Boston residents from participating fully. Walsh and U.S. Rep. Stephen Lynch tried to broker a deal that would have allowed a gay group to march, but the negotiations broke down.

In addition, Irish brewer Guinness did not participate in New York City's St. Patrick's Day parade this year, Reuters noted. Sam Adams brewer Boston Beer Co and Heineken dropped their sponsorship of parades in Boston and New York, respectively, over the issue of equality.



# Tenn. judge orders injunction on marriage

BY LISA KEEN  
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

In an important but narrow ruling, a U.S. district court judge in Nashville issued a preliminary injunction March 14, barring the state of Tennessee from denying recognition of marriage licenses obtained by three same-sex couples in other states.

The order applies only to these three couples and only while their lawsuit challenging the state's refusal to recognize marriage licenses obtained by same-sex couples else is pending, said Shannon Minter, legal director for the National Center for Lesbian Rights. But it represents yet another important victory for marriage equality, and another advance in a Southern state.

NCLR and long-time lesbian legal activist Abby Rubenfeld filed the lawsuit, *Tanco v. Tennessee*, on behalf of four couples last October. (One couple subsequently dropped out of the lawsuit.) It challenges both the state constitutional language and statutory laws that ban recognition of the marriages of same-sex couples. Like so many other lawsuits filed in more than two dozen states around the country, the Tennessee lawsuit argues that the bans violate the couples' rights to due process and equal protection under the U.S. Constitution.

Judge Aleta Trauger (a Clinton appointee) said in the order she issued that "all signs indicate that, in the eyes of the United States Constitution, the plaintiffs' marriages will be placed on an equal footing with those of heterosexual couples and that proscriptions against same-sex marriage will soon become a footnote in the annals of American history."

Trauger also noted that other pending lawsuits in other states may well determine the ultimate outcome of the Tanco challenge.

Minter pointed out that the lawsuit which just concluded a two-week trial in Detroit, for instance, could be appealed to the Sixth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals relatively soon and potentially deciding the law for other Sixth Cir-

cuit states, such as Tennessee.

The lead plaintiffs, Drs. Valeria Tanco and Sophy Jesty, are both professors of veterinary medicine who married in 2011, while living in New York. Other plaintiffs include Sergeant First Class Ijpe DeKoe and Thomas Kostura married while living in New York, and John Espejo and Matthew Mansell, who married in California.

Trauger's order noted that each couple, "When they interact with Tennessee officials or fill out official forms to identify themselves as married, they brace themselves for degrading experiences that often occur because of Tennessee's refusal to recognize their marriages."

The Tennessean newspaper reported that the state's attorney general is expected to defend the state's ban; there is no word yet on if the state will attempt to challenge Trauger's very limited order.

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## Military report faults transgender ban

A commission that former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Joycelyn Elders co-chairs has released a report concluding that the Pentagon's ban on transgender military service is not based on sound medical reasoning, according to the Associated Press.

The Palm Center, a research initiative of the Department of Political Science at San Francisco State University, sponsored the commission.

In one of the first and most detailed assessments of the basis and impact of the current policy, the Transgender Military Service Commission examined all medical and psychological aspects of transgender military service, and found inaccuracies in the Pentagon's rationale for the policy, which remains in effect despite the nullification of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."

Among the findings are that:

—Eliminating the ban would advance numerous military interests, including enabling commanders to better care for their service members; and

—Medical conditions related to transgender identity are the only gender-related conditions requiring discharge irrespective of fitness for duty.

In a statement, Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Vice President for Government Affairs Alison Herwitz said, "Our military, like employers across the United States, is best served by ensuring every qualified and talented individual can serve, without regard to gender identity."

## Father arrested in lesbian couple's murder

In Texas, James Larry Cosby, 46, has been charged with two counts of tampering with evidence in connection with the death of his daughter, Britney Cosby, and her girlfriend Crystal Jackson, both 24, according to a Huffington Post article.

The Galveston County Sheriff's Office told local ABC affiliate KTRK that the alleged murders of both women appear to have taken place in James Cosby's home. Britney Cosby reportedly died from blunt force trauma, while Crystal Jackson was shot.

Earlier in the week, James Cosby spoke to KTRK in regard to his daughter's death. "You can't really put something like this into words," he said at the time.

Jackson was reportedly a mother to a 5-year-old girl.

## Gay couples to get ACA coverage

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on March 14 announced that, beginning in 2015, all insurance companies offering coverage to opposite-sex couples in the Health Insurance Marketplace will have to offer the same coverage to same-sex couples.

"Today, we are clarifying that, starting next year, if an insurance company offers coverage to opposite-sex spouses, it cannot choose to deny that coverage to same-sex spouses," wrote Matthew Heinz, MD, director of Provider & LGBT Outreach, on HHS' blog. "In other words, insurance companies will not be permitted to discriminate against married same-sex couples when offering coverage. This will further enhance access to health care for all Americans, including those with same-sex spouses."

The rule applies whether or not the state the couple resides in recognizes their marriage, and follows a lawsuit brought by an Ohio couple, married in New York, who was denied family coverage through the Marketplace because Ohio does not recognize gay marriage, Bloomberg reported. In January, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina cancelled the policies of about 20 couples who had already purchased couples policies through the Marketplace, according to the [Raleigh] News & Observer.

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# Pro-marriage equality GOP rep. taking heat in bitter primary

BY KATE SOSIN

"I didn't go to Springfield just to play defense and take votes that were just safe and easy," state Rep. Ron Sandack said after he announced support for marriage equality last May. Cue the firefight.

Sandack's vote for marriage equality has taken center stage in an ugly primary runoff against Republican opponent Keith Matune, a local teacher and school board member. The campaign has embroiled the 81st District, which encompasses parts of Downers Grove, Woodridge, Darien, Westmont, Bolingbrook and Naperville.

Sandack was one of just three House Republicans to vote for marriage equality. He voted against civil unions as a state senator in 2010.

Sandack told Windy City Times that he had a change of heart following that vote.

"It became pretty clear to me that there's always been a fundamental difference between a state or secular civil license and a religious ceremony," he said. "So this became for me about fundamental fairness, equality and freedom. This was a pro-family bill to me and that's my conversion, my thought process."

But not everyone in his district had the same evolution.

A barrage of mailings criticizing Sandack's vote on equal marriage have hit area residents, and some are calling the mailings homophobic.

The mailers come from Illinois Family Action, a political arm of the Illinois Family Institute and Liberty Principles PAC.

Both groups aim to tie Sandack to Gay Liberation Network founder Andy Thayer, who Republicans have depicted as a radical activist. The mailers use a copyrighted Windy City Times image, reprinted without permission, that shows Sandack standing next to Thayer at a rally in his district.

Sandack stood next to Thayer at the rally because he spoke after him to a crowd of same-sex marriage supporters. He also spoke to a contingent of protesters opposed to the bill moments before. Sandack is believed to be the only state rep. to appear in person at a string of rallies held around the Chicago area last fall in regards to marriage equality.

But Dan Proft, a WLS radio talk show host and head of the Liberty Principles PAC, said that Sandack's appearance next to Thayer raises important questions about his associations and further clouds his credibility.

Proft takes issue with characterizations of his mailings as anti-gay.

One of his mailers criticizes Sandack's switch on the same-sex marriage issue, alongside a picture of Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel in dance leotard. It reads, "Now we know where Ron Sandack learned to dance."

Lucy Lloyd lives in the district has strongly criticized the mailings and Keith Matune on her ChicagoNow.com blog. She said she feels the marriage issue was on any easy one for the district, but a lot of her neighbors felt the mailers went too far, she said.

"People are pretty disgusted," she said. "They think it's horrible."

But Proft contends that his mailings target Sandack over his changing stance on the issue, not on his support for same-sex marriage. He says he is not homophobic, nothing that his PAC has backed candidates who support civil unions and same-sex marriage.

"My mail pieces have very little to do with marriage everything to do with trust," Proft said.

Asked whether the reference to Emanuel dancing might be seen as a play on anti-gay assumptions, Proft said the mailer referred to

Emanuel's own stance on marriage equality and politicking, not on his sexuality.

"Now who's stereotyping?" Proft said. "If you dance, you're gay? I don't think so."

Proft says he is funneling between \$150,000-200,000 into the Sandack primary.

A committee disclosure reflects that Proft's PAC has already spent more than \$106,000 on the race, including more than \$53,000 in cable advertisements. When PAC contributions exceed \$100,000 in rep. races, campaign spending caps are lifted.

Also named in the Matune/ Sandack effort has been Dick Uihlein, owner of Uline, Inc., which donated \$1.5 million to Proft's PAC in January, according to Illinois State Board of Elections filings. Uline Inc distributes near Chicago, among other locations, according to its website. Uihlein could not immediately be reached at his corporate offices, but Proft said

Read the  
March 18 primary  
election results  
online at  
[www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

that Uihlein is like other donors to his PAC.

"They want to see candidates who are committed to the economic liberty policy agenda win elections, simple as that," Proft said.

Matune has also been tackling criticisms over allegations that he tried to cover-up his arrest record. Matune wrote on his Daily Herald candidate questionnaire that he had never been arrested. But multiple media reported that Matune had been arrested in May 1991 on Virginia warrant for passing a bad check and again in Indiana for public indecency the following year. According to the Chicago Tribune, Matune accused Sandack of threatening to release information about his arrest. Sandack denied the allegations of threatening Matune.

Proft defends Matune as a veteran award-winning teacher and school board member. Matune did not respond to a request to comment.

Sandack told Windy City Times in his candidate interview that as for the marriage issue, he polled his district and found that 54 percent favored it.

"If people want to vote for someone who said, 'these are my positions, and they're unflinching, and I'll never change my mind,' that's certainly one representative," Sandack said. "I changed my mind. I listened to the people of the 81st [District]. I didn't just listen to Republican Primary voters."

Windy City Times Publisher Tracy Baim is demanding that any of its images used without permission be removed from any fliers, brochures or websites.



State Rep. Ron Sandack. Photo by Kate Sosin

## WCT attacks use of copyrighted photos in anti-gay campaign

Windy City Times newspaper is demanding that groups mailing bigoted, anti-gay attack fliers against state Rep. Ron Sandack immediately stop using its copyrighted photos.

Literature sent by the Illinois Family Action and the Liberty Principles PACs both use the same image of Sandack at a marriage equality rally in 2013, taken by Windy City Times staff photographer Kate Sosin. The Liberty Principles PAC also sent literature out in favor of Sandack's opponent, Keith Matune, who has criticized Sandack's support of same-sex marriage.

"Conservatives claim to respect property rights," said Tracy Baim, publisher of Windy City Times.

"Our Constitution protects the rights of these

groups to send divisive, hate-filled mailings such as these," Baim added. "But they are using our image to sell a product, hate, and we did not give them permission. We ask that they immediately stop using copyrighted photos."

The literature also attacks Sandack for receiving donations from gay groups and individuals.

Sandack was one of three House Republicans among the 61 reps voting for marriage equality in Illinois last fall. He represents the 81st District in the southwest suburbs.

Windy City Times is also pursuing other options, including possible legal action, to stop the unauthorized use of its images.

More details on the funding behind these attacks can be found at <http://www.allvoices.com/contributed-news/16686957-matunes-lies-about-criminal-history-put-wls-host-dan-proft-in-ugly-light> and <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Pro-marriage-equality-GOP-rep-taking-heat-in-bitter-primary/46612.htm>.

## Outing threat no laughing matter

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A purportedly satiric article threatening to out five city council members unless they respond to the demands of Chicago taxi drivers has sparked objections from gay-rights advocates and community members.

The article, which the taxi-related trade publication The Chicago Dispatcher published March 6, said that the newspaper "has learned that five of the city's 50 aldermen are closeted homosexuals. In the next issue ... we will disclose their names unless our demands are met. We did not want it to come to this but our city government has been allowing unfair competition in violation of the law."

Among the demands listed in the article, which Dispatcher publisher George Lutfallah wrote, are enforcing existing taxicab ordinances; banning ride-sharing permanently; and "requiring all rideshare drivers to go to the DMV." The article also makes jokes about female drivers: "Taxi driving is a male-dominated profession and it should remain that way. The last place for a woman is behind the wheel."

The Dispatcher publishes many satiric articles—other topics include "Cabdriver Accidentally Picks Up Black Man" and "Leaning Tower of Niles to be Straightened"—but the outing article is not clearly labeled as satire. Officials from Equality Illinois did not find the issues Lutfallah portrayed to be a matter for comedy.

"If the publication thought such a commentary would further the cause in the taxi drivers' ongoing dispute with the city, it will

surely backfire," said Equality Illinois CEO Bernard Cherkasov in a statement March 11. "No one likes to be threatened or ridiculed, whether individually or as an institution, and with its commentary this publication surely has injected more cynicism and distrust instead of raising awareness about their concerns. Such comments as were contained in the article are simply not funny and are not to be excused."

The Illinois Transportation Trade Association concurred. "The ITTA and our affiliated taxi companies unequivocally condemn the piece that ran in today's Chicago Dispatcher and the hateful message it sends," ITTA spokesperson Angela Benander told CBS2 March 11. "This misguided attempt at parody has no place in this discussion and demonstrates an extreme lack of judgment or sensitivity. This shameful editorial certainly does not represent the beliefs of our association, the thousands of hardworking employees in the transportation industry nor those of our valued customers."

## Groups prepare for Advocacy Day

The Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health, ACLU of Illinois and Chicago Abortion Fund are hosting an Advocacy Day (April 3) to raise awareness and ask for a repeal of the parental notification of abortion law in Illinois.

Advocacy Day 2014 will focus on amplifying the stories of youth while encouraging intergenerational conversations around sex, sexuality, pregnancy, abortion and the ways people can work together to create safe spaces for these conversations.

Email [tiffany@icah.org](mailto:tiffany@icah.org) or call 312-427-4460, ext. 236.





D.J. Boos. Photo courtesy of Brooke Benjamin

## PASSAGES

## D.J. Boos

D.J. Boos (Danny W. Boos, Jr.)—formerly of Beaverton, Mich., and 1997 Mr. Chicago Leather—passed away unexpectedly March 14. He was 48.

In 1989, after serving in the U.S. Marine Corps, D.J. moved to Chicago, where he embarked upon a long bartending stint at Bucks and Touche, which led to a career as a supervisor at Service Is Us staffing, serving many high-end catering clients.

He loved and was deeply loved by his second family and friends in Chicago. D.J. was also the beloved son of Jamie L. Boos of Beaverton.

In addition, he was the devoted eldest sibling of Melissa L. Yager, Christine K. Boos and

Donnaliegh R. Christie. He is survived by Aunt Judy (Richard) Tipton and Chuck (Pat) De Young.

D.J. was the beloved uncle of Jamie E. Yager, Kimber K. and Keenan J. Boos-Harless, Maxine and Jessie Christie, and the late Brandon Boos.

He was the dearest friend of many in Chicago's LGBT community, for whom he often donated his expertise and service at fundraising events.

He will be deeply missed by all.

The visitation took place March 16 at Herdergen-Brieske Funeral Home, 1356 W. Wellington Ave.

The final disposition will occur in Beaverton.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his name to Test Positive Aware Network ([www.tpan.com](http://www.tpan.com); 773-989-9400).

## Longtime activist Greg Gravemier passes away

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Greg Gravemier, 60, a longtime human-rights activist, passed away March 15 in Sterling, Va. The cause of his death has not yet been determined, according to his partner of 37 years, Leland Roth.

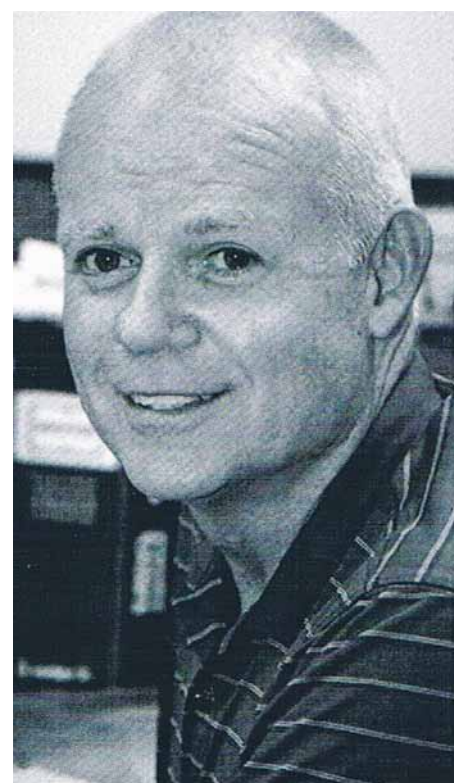
A native of Linton, Ind., Gravemier was especially active in progressive causes in Decatur, Ill., where he lived for a number of years. He was an early member of the Gay and Lesbian Association of Decatur (GLAD), and stepped in as that organization's second president in 1993. He also served on the Decatur Human Relations Commission, among many local organizations.

Gravemier had been editor of a newspaper in Casey, Ill., so he was especially savvy about utilizing local media in his activism work, said Rick Garcia, now of The Civil Rights Agenda, who frequently worked on LGBT causes alongside Gravemier.

Garcia remembered GLAD's contribution to a statewide initiative called, "Equality Begins at Home" in 1999. "You would think that they would have just organized a rally in Decatur, but instead they bought five billboards," said Garcia. "Under his leadership, they had great visibility almost overnight."

Gravemier was an early winner of Equality Illinois' Freedom Award in 1998, back when the organization was known as the Illinois Federation for Human Rights. He and Roth moved to Virginia in 2001, where Gravemier worked for a printing business.

Garcia said that Gravemier "stepped up to the plate and organized in the heart of the Heartland. It's one thing to do that in Boyston and another thing to do that in Decatur.

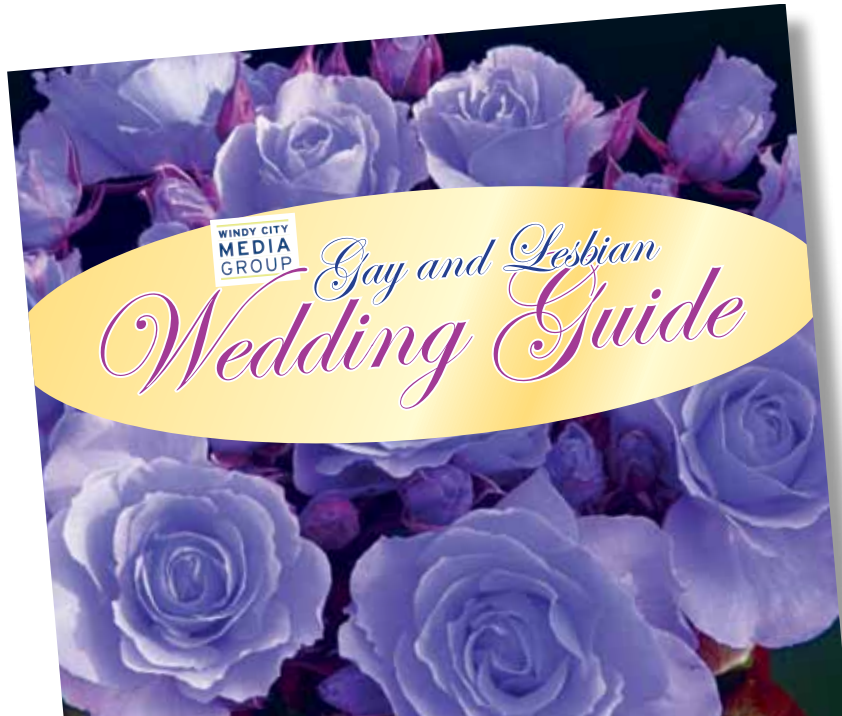


Greg Gravemier. Photo courtesy of Leland Roth

He understood where the power was, and how to get things done, just by being a regular Central Illinois kind of guy."

In May 2012, Gravemier wrote a letter to GLAD's member newsletter, looking back on his and Roth's time in Decatur and the people they met there: "Once in a while we corner a friend or two and tell them some of the many experiences we had in Decatur. We will always be grateful to the Decatur community, both gay and straight, for how they treated us during our Decatur tenure."

"He touched a lot of lives," said Roth of his partner. "I'm very proud of him."



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Out at CHM is supported by gifts from Robert Kohl and Clark Pellett, from Dr. Raymond Crossman, and with additional support from Lakeshore Beverages.

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Sean Strub at Center on Halsted. Photo by Tracy Baim

## Strub reflects on past and present AIDS activism

BY MATT SIMONETTE

For writer and activist Sean Strub, the early days of AIDS activism were about “getting people together and building communities.” Though those years were stressful and difficult, activists “showed the best face of what the broader community was about.”

Strub, who founded both the Sero Project and Poz Magazine, visited Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., on March 12 to read from and discuss his memoir, “Body Counts: A Memoir of Politics, Sex, AIDS, and Survival.”

He wrote the book because he was concerned that the history of AIDS activism in the 1980’s and 1990’s was being forgotten. Strub also said that while activists can rightly point to failed responses from institutions such as the government, media and healthcare industry, “We haven’t looked as critically at our own community’s responses.”

The people involved with AIDS activism from that era represented disparate backgrounds and interests. In June 1983, many advocates who had gathered for a health conference in Denver compiled a manifesto, the Denver Principles.

“The existing delivery structure didn’t serve queer people at all, let alone people with AIDS. It was the first time in the history of humanity when people with a disease gathered to have a voice in their case,” Strub noted, adding that such a strategy was also revolutionary for patients with other diseases. “The principles were not original—they were codifications of what were in women’s movement.”

Women’s roles in AIDS activism are often overlooked, Strub said. Many women, many of them lesbians, acted as caregivers for persons with AIDS. Also, female activists very often schooled their white male compatriots, who until the epidemic had rarely had a time when the system had failed them, in confronting institutions against whom they had no voice.

“It was women who were teaching about racism and sexism and supercharging the activism. ... One of ACT UP’s first actions was shutting down the New York Stock Exchange. I can tell you that if ACT UP had been started by people of color and women, the New York Stock Exchange probably would not have been their first focus,” he added.

One of ACT UP New York’s most famous actions, which it undertook alongside Women’s Health Action Coalition (WHAM!), was their disruption of a mass being given at St. Patrick’s Cathedral in December 1989. Strub took part in that demonstration, which resulted in 111 arrests.

The respect for the action has increased over the years, he said, adding that the Church at the time was trying to interfere in New York state’s sex education rules as well as discouraging condom use. “[The demonstration] helped in a period of peak Catholic influence in American politics and society,” said Strub, who was raised in a Catholic family.

The influence of AIDS activist groups began to dwindle in the mid-1990s, moving to what Strub called a “benefactor-victim” paradigm of advocacy. But numerous issues still face persons with HIV, among them draconian notification laws that can find individuals persecuted and incarcerated for not telling sexual partners when they are HIV-positive. About two-thirds of the states, including Illinois, have such laws.

Strub said the laws create “a new viral underclass” but admitted they had support from many in the gay community—a recent survey said that 79% of young gay men favor such laws.

“Every person with HIV in the U.S. is one disgruntled partner away from a courtroom,” said Strub, noting the irony that such laws privilege not knowing your status—the only way to be innocent of not disclosing being positive is not knowing it at all. “They are horrific public health policy ... There is zero evidence that they work. It’s become, ‘Take the test and risk arrest.’”

Strub was asked where the gay community would be had the AIDS epidemic not happened. He answered that he was not sure, but looked at how AIDS activism paved the way for other victories in the community.

Prior to the 1980s, coming out was largely the province of either wealthy men whose money and privilege could shield them from many indignities visited upon disenfranchised communities, or, conversely, members of those disenfranchised communities, who had little to lose.

“We created a movement that has enabled a vastly greater range of people to come out of the closet,” Strub said. “That ended up dragging the movement towards middle class values like marriage and military service and quite frankly away from the epidemic.”

Strub called current seroconversion rates among gay men, especially younger gay men, “astounding and terrifying.” He said that, if the rates continue unabated over the next several years, half of all gay men who are now of college-age will be HIV-positive by the time they reach age 50. For young gay Black men

of college age, the numbers are even worse: Half of them will be HIV-positive by age 35 at today’s rates.

He also discussed how some members of the gay community are contributing to the stigmatization of HIV. In the 1980s and 1990s, that stigmatization came from the community at large, and stemmed both from a fear of casual contact spreading disease, and an outright fear of homosexuality. “Now the stigma is much more about an individual judgment of that person,” said Strub. “It’s not external; it’s [coming from] other gay men.”

He pointed to online articles and discussions

### Local cinema to run Focus on Family documentary

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A downtown theater is currently scheduled for a one-night showing of a film that the Colorado Springs, Colo.-based anti-gay group Focus on the Family is sponsoring.

The film, titled Irreplaceable, is a documentary lamenting the loss of so-called “traditional” families. While the film’s online trailer and promotional materials have no anti-gay content, the connection with Focus on the Family is highlighted. The film is scheduled to be broadcast nationally May 6 at several theaters, among them the Show-Place ICON Theatre, 1011 S. Delano Ct. E.

ICON General Manager Gene Hobbs was not aware of the event and said that it would have been arranged through one of the theater’s bookers, NCM Fathom, which specializes in alternate entertainment events for movies theaters. Among NCM Fathom’s other offerings are the popular Metropolitan Opera Live broadcasts.

Representatives from NCM Fathom, based in Centennial, Colo., did not immediately return a request for comment.

The Southern Poverty Law Center says on its website that, “No one has spread the anti-gay gospel as widely, or with as much political impact, as James Dobson, the former child development professor and spanking enthusiast who founded Focus on the Family in 1977.” The organization heavily lobbied for gay-marriage bans.

Wayne Besen, founder of the Chicago-based organization Truth Wins Out, said that Focus on the Family’s pro-family message is “based on a paradigm of family that is a complete fraud. They are trying to imply they’re all about a biblical idea of marriage. The biblical idea of marriage is that women were property—if we had someone living in a ‘biblical’ marriage in Chicago, we’d call the cops on them. This movie will appeal to a few older Americans in their base, and won’t go much further than that.”

The announcement for the film is at <http://bit.ly/1oUo5BU>.

### LGBT scholarship database launches

Campus Pride has announced the launch of the National LGBT Scholarship Database in partnership with Point Foundation, according to a press release.

The new online dynamic database is free and provides LGBT and ally students with the largest, most comprehensive source of LGBT scholarship and funding resources in the nation.

Site visitors can view available scholarships by national designation, on a state-by-state basis or student type (undergraduate, graduate, athlete, etc.), among other factors.

For example, in Illinois, options include the Acorn Equality Fund Scholarship, the Chancellor’s Committee on the Status of LGBT Concerns (based at the University of Illinois at Chicago), the James C. Hormel

about HIV transmission as proof. “Go down and read the comments that follow. They are more hateful and painful than anything we ever experienced before. It used to be that if you became positive, you were wrapped in support from the community. Today, its kind of like you’re kicked out.”

He added that the solution to raising awareness and understanding about health issues is moving away from a focus on preventing just one disease and promoting an idea of overall healthiness in the LGBT community. “The only way to do that is to empower the stigmatized individual,” Strub said.

Dissertation Fellowships in Lesbian and Gay Studies (at the University of Chicago), the Jean Paul Ohadi Scholarship, the Joseph Harry Endowed Scholarship (Northern Illinois University) and the U. Chicago School of Law Stonewall Scholarship.

See [CampusPride.org/Scholarships](http://CampusPride.org/Scholarships).

### Jackson County issues first same-sex marriage licenses

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Downstate Jackson County is the most recent addition to the growing list of Illinois counties allowing marriage equality ahead of the previously planned June 1 start date.

Jackson County Clerk Larry Reinhardt told the Southern Illinoisan that Attorney General Lisa Madigan’s affirming the right of county clerk’s to issue same-sex marriage licenses spurred his decision.

“We were only three months away from (the legislation’s original) implementation,” Reinhardt said. “I didn’t think it was worth the chance to open us up for a lawsuit.”

Joe Powers and Duane Cole, who have been together for 33 years, were the first gay couple to receive their marriage license. They were also the first couple to get a civil union in Jackson County back in June 2011.

“It was important because we have waited so long,” Cole told the Southern Illinoisan. “We never believed this day would come. It has been a very slow process.”

After Judge Sharon Coleman declared Illinois’ gay marriage ban unconstitutional Feb. 21, she ordered that marriages for same-sex couples could begin immediately in Cook County. Some other Illinois counties followed suit and began issuing licenses as well in subsequent weeks. Other county authorities have said they want to wait until June 1, which was the planned effective date of the Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act, for fear of complicating divorce and probate litigation with the early start date.

Madigan said March 4 that by not offering licenses to gay couples, counties might be opening themselves up to lawsuits, and added that her office would likely intervene on behalf of the couples.

### HBHC seeks applicants for advisory board

Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC) is seeking new applicants for its Community Advisory Board (CAB), an organization that provides feedback on HBHC’s community health programs.

The board will meet once a month, and CAB will have between seven and 15 members.

To apply, visit [howardbrown.org/application](http://howardbrown.org/application) and download the application form. The form can be submitted in person at any HBHC location, or emailed to Andie Baker at [CAB@howardbrown.org](mailto:CAB@howardbrown.org).

The application deadline has been extended to March 31.





## Man without health insurance forfeits cell phone to pay medical bills.

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# Library commissioner talks changes, technology

BY ANDREW DAVIS

In the time he has headed the Chicago Public Library (CPL), openly gay Commissioner Brian Bannon has made quite a few changes.

Among the implementations is the YOUmedia program, which provides teens across Chicago with digital learning experiences. It was these changes that resulted in CPL being recently named the top library system in the country—and the third-best in the world, ahead of such locations as Singapore and London.

Windy City Times recently spoke with Bannon in his office at the Harold Washington Library about the changes, budgeting and other issues. (CPL Director of Marketing Ruth Lednicer sat in on the conversation.)

**Windy City Times: Congratulations on the number-one national ranking. How did you find out about it?**

Brian Bannon: It was a group of German researchers that was interested in the role libraries play in supporting the competitiveness of a “knowledge city.” So they selected 31 cities about a year prior to the study coming out. I had forgotten about it, but they visited Chicago.

They visited a lot of cities around the world, and put together a complicated rubric. So they put together this assessment, and they met with library directors, including myself. They did rankings and codings, things like that. The study came out in late December [2013]. Once Ruth saw it we reached out to them and got a copy of the study—and word got around.

One of the [items] they looked at was the long-term role that the Chicago public has played in social media—and Ruth is actually our social-media department. *[All laugh.]* Apparently, we’re a standout leader in that way: Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr.

Here are a couple other examples they gave. They looked at the services we provide in a knowledge economy. One involves the digital-media work we’re doing with teens, and another is the Maker Lab, as an example of a creative space. They didn’t find other cities that were making those kinds of investments.

**WCT: Could you talk a bit about the new media work? I understand CPL did something with the mayor [on Feb. 20].**

BB: *[Bannon and Lednicer nod.]* The program was piloted in 2009, and the Pearson and MacArthur foundations came to us and funded it. It was a very successful pilot that turned into something we really wanted to do. We didn’t have a big citywide initiative for teens and adults—until new media came, which has not only informed how we want to work with teens throughout the city.

Last year was a big year for us because we hired our first batch of librarians who specialize in teen services. As part of the 2014 budget, the mayor was really interested in the success of new media, and so we had a half-million dollars to our budget for these librarians. We were able to leverage that in our discussions with MacArthur to come back and do a sustainability grant, which is an addition \$2 million over three years. So the private investment is allowing us to spread this work around many more neighborhoods.

**WCT: When you say you’re working with neighborhoods, are there any particular ones you’re prioritizing?**

BB: Yes. Over the last two years, we added four additional new media sites. They’re in Humboldt Park...

Ruth Lednicer: Thurgood Marshall on the South Side, [Rudy] Lozano branch in Pilsen, Richard M. Daley in west Humboldt Park, and

Humboldt Park Branch Library.

BB: And so this year, we’ll be adding six additional sites. New media was a breakout success pilot, as it was modeled in other cities across the U.S. We thought this was a great idea to use this model for teen services.

**WCT: I’m just curious. Which is trickier: securing the funding, or budgeting/allocating the funding when you get it?**

BB: It’s never hard to spend funding. *[Laughs]* As for allocating, we’re going through a strategic planning process right now [regarding] investments. I would say that all those pieces have those moments of being tricky. I think the challenge is to have a strong vision for what we want to achieve, and how we want success to look. It makes it a little easier for those pieces to line up.

RL: I’d say we’ve been really good that, when we secure the funding, we’ve gotten the budgeting in line so what you’re looking for matches up with what you need to spend.

**WCT: I’m going to ask you something I asked you about last time [in October 2012]—and you said to ask you again in a year. If you had an unlimited budget, what would you do?**

BB: I may have said this before. There’s this quote from Marissa Mayer, who is now the CEO of Yahoo!: “Creativity loves constraints.” So I’m almost throwing that back at you, as I prefer to live and work in an environment that has constraints. I have never lived in an environment without constraints. What I’ve found is that having constraints around a budget spurs innovation and creative thinking.

**WCT: But having more funds would provide more options.**

BB: Yes—having more funds. The thing is, I think we’re doing a lot of those things. As we look at our priorities, one of them is definitely youth. Then there’s the work with very young children and their parents; we’ve increased



CPL Commissioner Brian Bannon. Photo courtesy of Ruth Lednicer

our investments there, and I’d like to increase them even more. Also, we’re looking at being even more strategic with teens.

Another area that we’re looking to put more resources in (but we want to have a better vision before doing so) is supporting workforce and the city’s economic vitality. The library plays a role in basic computer access so more people can find employment. One of the things I’d like to look into is how we can be even stronger in that early entry point for people who want to get the skills to get a job.

**WCT: How are you helping people on the other end: seniors, particularly retired individuals?**

BB: One of the things we’re looking at is providing basic access. We want to support learning from zero to however long you live. The other area is how we can have libraries strengthen our communities in general. It’s a little squishier, but some examples include the programs we have in the Winter Garden—

there’s something tangible when you’re in a room with another 500 people listening to a Supreme Court justice like Sonia Sotomayor talking about her book. That’s the kind of community-strengthening program we do all over the city.

We have a partnership with Steppenwolf Theater Company that involved bringing a full play that had insight about violence. We think the library plays a part in bringing people together and having them exchange ideas. We think someone with an active brain is going to be more active in helping to improve the city. All ages benefit from that.

**WCT: Could you briefly talk about the Maker Lab?**

BB: Sure. The Maker Lab is a pilot program that is stretching on longer than we thought it would *[laughs]*—but that’s not a bad thing. It was a pilot to look at advanced manufacturing. It involves designing objects in 3-D and creating them on the spot. Right now, 3-D printing is available—but most people can’t afford them. We just want people to learn this technology. It’s like fabrication before your eyes.

We’ve had roughly 30,000 people walk through the space, and about 4,000 have completed a class. But what’s even more interesting is that this is a demographic you don’t see in the other Makers spaces in the city. It’s about 50-percent women, and it’s a much broader age range. One of the things we have experienced is community-building; people help each other in the labs. We think it’s kind of a cool role for a library to play.



Brian Bannon and Gerber/Hart Library President Carrie Barnett. Photo by Tracy Baim

## CPL’s Bannon at Gerber/Hart event

Brian Bannon, the commissioner of the Chicago Public Library, was the special guest speaker at “Nerd Talk,” a fireside chat to benefit Gerber/Hart Library. The event was held at the home of Derek Truesdale, a Gerber/Hart board member, and his partner, Michael Gisondi.

About two dozen people attended the event. Bannon, who is gay, spoke at length about “The Future of Libraries,” including the goals of CPL. He gave ideas for how niche libraries such as Gerber/Hart, the city’s LGBT library and archives, can innovate for the future.

Gerber/Hart Library President Carrie Barnett also addressed the audience, discussing the board’s desire to better serve the current and future needs of the LGBT community.

A video of the event can be seen with the online version of this article.

## LGBT caucus panels at MPSA conference April 3-6

The Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) will hold its 72nd annual conference April 3-6 at the Palmer House Hilton, 17 E. Monroe St.

There will be several LGBT-related caucus panels at the event. Among them are “Testing Backlash: The Influence of Political Institutions on Public Attitudes Toward Gay Rights,” “Putting the LGBT in International Human Rights,” “Why are the Kids Alright?: The Origins of Young People’s Liberalism on Gay Rights” and “Coming Out For LGBT Issues: Issue Selection in Congressional Elections.”

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



# GAY in the LIFE

## Johnny Begale

TEXT BY JOE FRANCO  
PHOTOS FROM BEGALE

**Age**  
26

**Neighborhood**  
Roscoe Village

**Job title**  
Manager at Paulina Meat Market;  
and founder of Equality America, a  
nonprofit group

**Relationship status**  
Single

**Hobbies**  
"Fishing, volleyball, beach going,  
grilling, gymming it up, traveling,  
hanging with my family and friends,  
meeting and getting to know new  
people, learning new things"

**Favorite actor and actress**  
James Franco and Zooey Deschanel

**Dream vacation destination**  
Egypt

**Favorite movie**  
I Love You, Man



There is nothing typical about Johnny Begale. He grew up the middle child of three in Niles, Ill., and attended Notre Dame High School for Boys. Begale got his undergraduate degree in accounting from Illinois Wesleyan University and, from there, was confused with what he wanted to do. He tried working in the private sector but found that work unfulfilling.

His mother became ill with recurrent uterine cancer and had to help out as an accountant at his family business, Paulina Meat Market. Family is important to Begale and he stayed on with the meat market, learning the trade of a butcher and finally settling into his role as manager of Paulina's sausage kitchen. (Yes—he manages sausage.)



Begale, still pushing himself, started selling wristbands for Equality America, an organization originally started to raise awareness for marriage equality. Its Facebook page now has nearly 2,000 fans and plays host to Begale's own vlog posts. "I wanted to give others some insight on what it means to be gay. I wanted to help others who, like me, struggled with their sexuality," said Begale.

As for his future, Begale wants to continue to see his non-profit organization grow and continue to reach out to those who are confused or those who need to hear and see a face associated with being gay that, like him, was confused and scared and completely unaware of what it meant to be gay. Eventually, Begale sees himself stepping into the public arena and serving others as a Chicago alderman or as a Congressman. Begale said, "I want to be involved. I love to serve others. It's what it's all about, isn't it?"

For more information on Paulina Meat Market, visit [www.paulinameatmarket.com](http://www.paulinameatmarket.com). For more information on Equality America, visit [www.equalityamerica.net](http://www.equalityamerica.net) or "like" Equality America on Facebook.



Begale (second from left) with fellow members of Equality America.



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The festivities will begin on Saturday night, May 31st and official ceremony will begin when clocks strikes midnight on June 1st.

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## VIEWPOINT

WINDY CITY  
TIMES

VOL. 29, No. 25, March 19, 2014

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Community Marketing, Inc.

SHARON J.  
LETTMAN-  
HICKSThe state of Black  
LGBT people and  
their families

While the America we live in today is more tolerant and accepting than decades and centuries past, we still have a long and arduous road ahead. Despite false claims that we live in a "post-racial" society, African-Americans still face prejudice and systemic racism regularly. LGBT people still combat discrimination and are denied access to basic protections. When you exist at these intersectional identities, simply trying to provide for yourself and your family becomes a battlefield.

At the National Black Justice Coalition, we have been fighting for over a decade to help LGBT African-Americans live fully empowered, authentic lives. We know that Black LGBT people can struggle to find acceptance not only in mainstream America, but also within their own LGBT and African-American communities. Now we have the figures to back up what we witness firsthand daily.

In 2012, NBJC released a landmark report, LGBT Families of Color: Fact at a Glance, which highlights the specific challenges faced by LGBT families of color. Now the Williams Institute at the University of California Los Angeles has crunched the numbers from three nationwide surveys—the U.S. Census, the Gallup Poll, and the American Community Survey—to shed more light on the lives of the more than one million LGBT African-Americans in America today and paint a fuller portrait of our Black family.

Approximately 3.7 percent of all African-Americans identify as LGBT, with 84,000 African-Americans living in same-sex couples and roughly a third of those couples raising children. Black individuals who identify as LGBT are disproportionately young and disproportionately female: 58 percent of Black LGBT

people are women.

Where do they live? Washington, D.C., tops the charts with the highest percentage of Black LGBT individuals and couples, most likely thanks to the high number of African-Americans who live in the District of Columbia. The Williams Institute report finds that Black LGBT individuals live, for the most part, where other African-Americans—not other members of the LGBT community—live. More than a quarter of all Black LGBT individuals live in Georgia, New York, Maryland, and North Carolina.

If some of these places strike you as less than gay-friendly, just consider that the top 10 states where Black LGBT couples live include Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, North Carolina and Alabama.

Discriminatory state policies may help explain why Black LGBT people are struggling more than their white LGBT or heterosexual Black counterparts. More LGBT African-Americans (15 percent) are unemployed than the general population of African-Americans (12 percent). When you compound two historically marginalized identities—Black and LGBT—the blow of discrimination strikes this community twofold.

Likewise, the Williams Institute reports that fewer individual LGBT African-Americans have completed college than non-LGBT African-Americans—17 percent compared to 25 percent. Interestingly, it is more likely that a member of an African-American same-sex couple will have a college degree than a member of a heterosexual African-American couple—41 percent versus 33 percent. LGBT African-Americans are also less likely to have health insurance and less likely to partner with another African-American. Without access to the same educational and health care opportunities as their heterosexual Black counterparts, LGBT African-Americans aren't given an equal shot at thriving—professionally, physically, mentally or emotionally. Their well-being is compromised.

How you're doing as an LGBT African-American also depends a lot on whether you have children and whether you are in a male same-sex couple or a female same-sex couple. Our 2012 report found that same-sex couples of color are more likely to have children or to be foster parents than their white counterparts. Why does this matter? In general, African-Americans in same-sex couples with children fare less well demographically than both African-Americans

on answering lots of questions on how this genetic alteration of cells can be molded into an effective treatment strategy.

How does the genetic modification process work?

We all have a protein called CCR5. The protein is a "doorway" through which HIV infects cells. The doorway is on each CD4+ T cell, the cells that help us fight infection.

Some people have a naturally occurring genetic version of CCR5 that does not allow HIV to enter CD4+ T cells. Through a safe, genetic modification process, scientists altered the CCR5 protein to mimic the naturally occurring version in people who fight off or more slowly experience HIV infection. Modification of the CCR5 protein does not allow HIV to infect cells.

Scientists collected CD4+ T cells from each of 12 HIV-infected volunteers whose virus is controlled by HIV medicines. These collected cells were then treated in the laboratory with molecular tools called zinc-finger nucleases (ZFNs). The ZFNs were designed to snip the DNA within the gene that codes for the CCR5 receptor. This process introduced a genetic mutation that made the CCR5 receptors unable to be infected by HIV. Then, the cells were stimulated to multiply, and each patient received an infusion of 10 billion of their own CD4+ T-cells. After the infusion, patients had roughly one-fifth of their CCR5 genes now mutated.

with kids in heterosexual couples and other LGBT African-American couples without kids: they are less likely to have completed college, less likely to have health insurance, and report lower median household incomes.

Family is the epicenter of the Black community. For Black LGBT people, this rings just as true. But the sad reality, according to LGBT Families of Color: Fact at a Glance, is that 32 percent of children being raised by Black male gay couples live in poverty, compared to 13 percent of children being raised by married heterosexual Black parents and just 7 percent being raised by married heterosexual white parents.

The statistics are worse if we look at our Black sisters. Existing gender disparities in income are exacerbated in two-female households. For example, the median income of a same-sex African-American couple is \$59,200 compared to \$61,000 for a heterosexual African-American couple. There is a far greater difference between the median incomes for Black gay households and Black lesbian households—a difference of more than \$20,000. (It is even higher—close to \$30,000—when you compare average household incomes between gay and lesbian households.)

Perhaps even more interesting, African-American females in same-sex couples are three times more likely to enter the military than non-LGBT counterparts—nine percent versus only three.

These statistics speak volumes about the Black LGBT community and the disparities we face in America. However, the work of the Williams Institute has begun to strip away the veil of invisibility. We finally have a clear picture and frame of reference for where we are and where we need to go.

The article originally appeared in *The Huffington Post*.

Sharon J. Lettman-Hicks serves as the executive director and CEO of the National Black Justice Coalition (NBJC), which is a national civil rights organization dedicated to empowering Black LGBT people.

NBJC's mission is to end racism and homophobia. As America's leading national black LGBT civil rights organization focused on federal public policy, NBJC has accepted the charge to lead black families in strengthening the bonds and bridging the gaps between the movements for racial justice and LGBT equality.

"We call the modified cells 'edited' cells because we have changed them," Fauci explains.

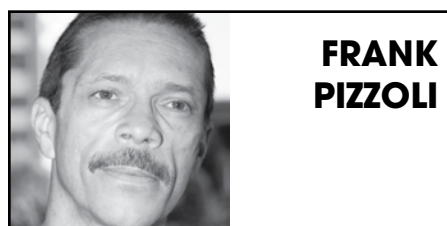
Four weeks later, one-half of the 12 patients stopped taking their HIV medicines for eight to 12 weeks as a planned step in the study. Investigators found that the experimental treatment was generally safe, and that the genetically modified cells appeared to be protected from HIV infection. In one volunteer who naturally had the desired mutation in half of his CCR5 genes, HIV replication was controlled during the entire 12-week time period when no HIV medicines were taken.

Where does the research go from here?

Future research will include evaluating the experimental treatment in more volunteers. Investigators will also have to figure out how to have an infected individual "keep" genetically modified cells in the body to inhibit HIV infection. It is not known, for example, if one infusion of mutated cells is sufficient or how long the desired cell alteration may last or if altered infusions must occur over time or on a regular basis.

"We do not know if patients need partial or complete replacement of all CD4 cells or how long partial or complete cell replacement with modified cells may last," Fauci cautions.

To volunteer for the study, ask your HIV doctor about enrollment through NIH.

FRANK  
PIZZOLITreat HIV infection  
without drugs?

"This is elegant scientific research that needs lots of further study," Dr. Anthony Fauci told Windy City Times about the blockbuster news (out March 5) that investigators had initial success with thwarting HIV through an intentional genetic altering of human cells.

Funded by the National Institutes of Health, a study with 12 HIV-infected individuals indicates it is possible to curb HIV disease by removing key cells from infected individuals and genetically modifying the cells to resist HIV infection and then returning them to those people.

The novel approach eventually might help people control the virus without drugs. "This type of research has been tried with cancer as well," Fauci explains. He stresses that the success of this study is exciting but only a start



## GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION

Photo by  
Tyler Core

## A 'ROSE' BY ANY OTHER NAME

From front: Sydney Charles is the title character and Harmony France is Ruth in the theatrical production *Dessa Rose*. See page 18.

## THEATER

**'Myth' understanding.**  
Page 19

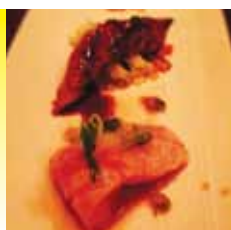
Photo from *American Myth*  
by Johnny Knight



## DISH

**Ora exam.**  
Page 34

Photo of sushi at Ora  
by Meghan Streit



## BOOKS

**'Days' of our lives.**  
Page 31

Photo of cover of  
*The Days of Anna Madrigal*



## SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

## Talking with the out director of 'Cicada'

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Born and raised in Mississippi, out writer/director/actor/designer Jerre Dye has gone on to live and work in many cities including Los Angeles, New York, Chicago and Memphis—where he was the artistic director of the Tennessee-based Voices of the South Theatre Company for eight years.

But ultimately Dye feels it is his artistic destiny to end up in Chicago.

"Chicago is the most electric theater community there is," said Dye, offering up reasons why he and partner Scott Duff, an actor and founding artistic associate of About Face Theatre, relocated back to the Windy City. "I've been a bit of a vagabond my whole life, and I have to say nowhere is theater more kind of wildly diverse in style and content as Chicago."

Since Dye has been back, he's already shown off some of his multitasking abilities by designing sets for About Face Theatre's remount of *We Three Lizas* this past December. Soon Dye's skills as a playwright will be on display with the regional premiere of his drama *Cicada*, a 2011 winner of the Bryan Family Foundation Award for Dramatic Literature from the Fellowship of Southern Writers.

After *Cicada* received a warm reception last fall as part of a reading series presented by Route 66 Theatre Company, the organization fast-tracked the play to appear as part of its first official subscription season. Route 66 Theatre Company stages Dye's *Cicada* at the Greenhouse Theater Center April 9 through May 25, with support from Hear/Tell Productions, a new company committed to exploring new voices in

the theater by lending production support to immersive performance experiences that celebrate a desire for human connection (sponsors of Hear/Tell include Chez Moi, d.luke design, Speedpro Imaging and Windy City Media Group, which publishes Windy City Times).

"I was really drawn to, when I first heard [*Cicada*] aloud, not just the poetry of it, but the world that it created felt so inviting and the characters felt so real and profound," said Route 66 Associate Artistic Director Erica Weiss, who not only directed the *Cicada* reading, but is also in charge of its fully realized staging. "It was a story and a play that I had not ever seen before in Chicago, certainly, and I think that it really brings the spirit of the South to the stage, but not in a way that makes those of us who are not from that world feel alienated from it. It's a very welcoming and inviting play."

Dye describes *Cicada* as a "family story, essentially about letting go of what's no longer necessary." The play largely focuses on the lives of an artistically sensitive 17-year-old boy named Ace and his mother, Lily, who both try to dig their way out of the past in rural Mississippi.

"[The family home] is kind of being reclaimed by the world around it, so to speak," Dye said, adding that there is also a "chorus of family ghosts who live in and inhabit the house—not ghosts in the classical 'woo-woo' sense, but ghosts as almost like real, fleshy, present people in their lives."

Dye also says the play's insect title is something of a symbolic metaphor for *Cicada*, though he stresses that "if you're from the South ...



*Cicada* director Jerre Dye. Photo courtesy of Em Hall

that sound during the summer months is just ever-present."

Dye has worked with director Weiss on making revisions and tightening the script for *Cicada*'s second major production. He's also immensely impressed with the stellar cast that Weiss has assembled, which includes Steppenwolf Theatre ensemble member Robert Breuler, Aaron Kirby (Luna Gale) and particularly out actor Amy Matheny, who plays the mother Lily, which Dye describes as "quite an operatic role—lots of highs and lots of lows."

Matheny, whose credits include *Enron* with TimeLine Theatre and *Float* with About Face Theatre, is a longtime friend of Dye. Matheny caught *Cicada* at its Memphis world premiere and worked closely with Dye and Here/Tell Pro-

ductions to help bring it to Chicago (Matheny is also host of Windy City Queercast and a senior account manager for Windy City Media Group).

"The play itself has a lot of meat in terms of actors really being able to kind of grab it with both fists and say something," said Dye, eager to see how Chicago actors and audiences respond to his brand of heightened Southern poetry and drama. "It's big and beautiful and elegant at the same time."

**Route 66 Theatre Company's Chicago premiere of Jerre Dye's *Cicada* from April 9 through May 25 at the Greenhouse Theater Center, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave. Preview performances are at 8 p.m. Wednesday through Friday, April 9-11, with an official 8 p.m. press opening April 12. Regular run performances are 8 p.m. Thursdays through Fridays, 4 and 8 p.m. Saturdays and 4 p.m. Sundays.**

**Tickets are \$30 for previews and \$35 during the regular run. Student tickets are \$20, with discounts available for groups of 10 or more. Call 773-404-7336, or visit [www.greenhousetheater.org](http://www.greenhousetheater.org), [www.cicadatheplay.com](http://www.cicadatheplay.com).**





Ghost Bike. Photo by Justin Barbin

## THEATER REVIEW

### Ghost Bike

**Playwright:** Laura Jacqmin  
**At:** Buzz22 Chicago at the Greenhouse, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave.  
**Tickets:** 773-404-7336;  
**www.greenhousetheater.org;** \$20  
**Runs through:** April 6

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Most adults have learned to accept death as a sad inevitability, but for young people first confronting it, the sudden disappearance of a loved one—*forever*—calls into question the order of the entire cosmos. A playwright writing about this experience must understand its cataclysmic proportions, and the despair too often exacerbated by parents and peers demanding a premature cessation to its unsettling repercussions.

Laura Jacqmin acknowledges her heroine's crisis of faith by allowing the bereaved Ora, after fleeing a squad of oppressive therapists, to embark on a journey through the realm of the dead, equipped only with her bicycle, a magic GPS device and a few talismans associated with the deceased friend (significantly named Eddie) who long ago taught her to ride the velopedal wind. Since an adolescent's grief encompasses the entire universe, a panoply of necrodeities—Greek, Hindu, Buddhist, Norse—are recruited to assist the teenaged crusader determined to restore her comrade to the living, whatever the sacrifice.

Oh, but Buzz22 Chicago—the ensemble that conjured a Dungeons-and-Dragons fantasy kingdom in the Steppenwolf Garage for Qui Nguyen's *She Kills Monsters* in 2012—doesn't stop at allegorical hypotheses. Instead, John Wilson's scenic design configures the Greenhouse's upstairs auditorium into a labyrinth of contained and ramped paths for George Bajalia and Molly Fitzmaurice's dazzling array of wheeled vehicles—neon-hued BMXes, baroque modified Huffies, inline skates, rolling walkers, kick-scooters—conveying the underworld denizens on their assigned activities. Izumi Inaba's costumes and Jeff Glass' lighting likewise evoke a multicultural pantheon ranging from the, literally, two-faced Hel and the scavenging Datsue-ba to a band of Lethewater-swilling slackers and a roiling river of malcontents ferried by a weary Charon.

This is a staggering load of tech-spec to pack into 90 minutes, even with Matt Deitchman's original score and Nathan Drackett's choreog-

raphy facilitating swift changes in the subterranean landscape, making for a few moments of opening-night lag. A playbill insert acquainting us with the myriad phantoms we encounter would also expedite our orientation to each new locale. The lesson underlying all religious myth, however—that we are powerless to control our fates—is never eclipsed by the theatrical legerdemain. When Eddie finally speeds Ora on her way back to the light, our elation is as manifest as our epiphany upon sighting the sidewalk shrine erected to his memory (coincidentally, called a “ghost bike”).

## CRITICS' PICKS

**Into the Woods**, The Hypocrites and Mercury Theater Chicago, extended through April 5. Director Geoff Button's approach to Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's 1987 fairy-tale musical mash-up is one that emphasizes imaginative playtime in a nursery with a talented cast taking on multiple roles. SCM

**Rose and the Rime**, The House Theatre of Chicago at Chopin Theatre, through March 23. Want the best fairy tales? Go to The House. You won't see the final twist coming in this tale of a town beset by endless winter (not Chicago). The meta-theatrical means charm rather than distract, and there's a great witch! JA

**The Roper**, Den Theatre, through April 13. Grave-robbers target Lincoln's Tomb in Will Dunne's stranger-than-fiction heist play, directed by Ron Wells with a comedic drollery as dark as Honest Abe's stovepipe hat. MSB

**Seminar**, Haven Theatre Company at Theater Wit, through April 13. Four students and a teacher wrestle with their destinies in the world of professional writing until they accidentally stumble across the secret to happiness and success. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

## THEATER REVIEW

### King Hedley II

**Playwright:** August Wilson  
**At:** Congo Square Theatre Company at the Athenaeum, 2936 N. Southport Ave.  
**Tickets:** 773-935-6875;  
**www.athenaeumtheatre.org;** \$35  
**Runs through:** April 6

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

August Wilson's 10-play cycle is best approached as you would a 19th-century novel—that is, a multigenerational saga written to be consumed, chapter by chapter, like a PBS miniseries. If this mandates increasing amounts of expository baggage for each successive episode, be assured that playgoers arriving with comprehensive recall of the characters' histories are rare, so it's perfectly acceptable to ignore allusions to past events and focus on the story under immediate scrutiny.

Our play, set in the 1980s, not only tracks the further adventures of the neighbors introduced by Wilson in his 1940s-era *Seven Guitars*, but shares that earlier work's structure, its action focusing on two men—one with his destiny ahead of him and another with it behind him. Two secrets also play a part in their fates—the first concerning the lineage of ex-convict King Hedley, and the second turning on the murder of a husband whose widow aging-gambler

Elmore vows to marry. Amid the violence and despair of the Pittsburgh ghetto, however, the only choices left to wives and mothers are whether to embrace the suffering of these social outcasts or to distance themselves from angry rebels doomed to untimely destruction.

Audiences looking for another ripped-from-the-headlines docudrama will not find it here, though. The woes of these disenfranchised citizens may be exacerbated by poverty and racism inviting extreme solutions, but Wilson's overriding tone is that of classical tragedy—manifested most noticeably in the self-styled shaman named Canewell, but called “Stool Pigeon” by his peers, who erects a shrine to the community's recently deceased matriarch in the alley next to King's vain attempt at sowing a garden in the barren soil.

The language likewise resounds with operatic grandeur but—far from overwhelming us in the Athenaeum's tiny third-floor studio—the close quarters serve to lend the dramatic action an urgency that propels us to our crisis at what feels like breathtaking haste, despite a running time of nearly three hours. Some of this may be credited to director Daniel Bryant's deft utilization of overlapping dialogue, but more than mere orchestration is the Congo Square actors' facility for creating spoken-word symphonies from the music of Wilson's prose to render us spellbound right up to the final explosive ending.

## THEATER REVIEW

### Dessa Rose

**Composer:** Stephen Flaherty;  
**Book and lyrics:** Lynn Ahrens  
**At:** Bailiwick Chicago Theater at Richard Christiansen Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.  
**Tickets:** 773-871-3000 or  
**www.bailiwickchicago.com;** \$40  
**Runs through:** April 5

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

The Bailiwick Chicago collective of artists have proven to be especially prescient by producing *Dessa Rose*.

This 2005 off-Broadway musical by composer Stephen Flaherty and lyricist Lynn Ahrens focuses on the title runaway slave and an abandoned white Southern woman in the Deep South circa 1847. Though not the Chicago-area premiere of the show (Highland Park's defunct Apple Tree Theatre produced it in 2005), Bailiwick Chicago's *Dessa Rose* arrives hot on the heels of the Best Picture Academy Award-win by the film *12 Years a Slave*. It also bowed in the same week that Flaherty and Ahrens' latest musical, *Rocky* (based upon the 1976 film), opened on Broadway.

So with its weighty subject matter and the great track record of the show's writers behind other acclaimed musicals like *Ragtime*, *Once on This Island* and *Lucky Stiff*, *Dessa Rose* unfortunately comes off as a second-tier work.

The problem is largely with Flaherty and Ahrens' adaptation of Sherley Anne Williams' novel as their source material. There are some jolting shifts in the show's episodic structure, and Flaherty and Ahrens don't succeed at making what is compelling on the page into an easily unfolding drama on stage (the final dramatic confrontation and resolution are also let downs).

Yet director Lili-Anne Brown and her hard-working cast do make the most of what elements are good in the show. Brown's decision to have the ensemble begin and end *Dessa Rose* in modern dress for the number “We Are Descended” is a wonderful framing device to remind audiences that we're still very connected to the stain of slavery in America.

There are also some great central performances in *Dessa Rose* to be treasured.

Sydney Charles in the title role wrenches all the emotion out her Act I closer “Twelve



Sydney Charles in *Dessa Rose*. Photo by Tyler Core

Children,” in which Dessa Rose tells her newborn the sad history of 11 siblings in her family. Charles also plays off well opposite Harmony France's strong take on Ruth, who blossoms with daring once she abandons her color prejudices and starts to work with the many runaway slaves who find a refuge at her remote plantation.

Watching Charles' *Dessa Rose* and France's Ruth make the journey from initially seething distrust to sharing respect for each other is fulfilling as they bravely challenge societal constraints.

Jayson “JC” Brooks is great in the supporting role of the runaway slave Nathan who cooks up a daring get-rich scheme to help his friends gain freedom, while David Schlumpf has fun playing the dual roles of Ruth's ne'er-do-well gambler husband the obsessive author Adam Nehemiah.

So take in *Dessa Rose* for its solid performances and its cultural timeliness. Just be aware that it's a less-than-best work by writers who have done better in the past.





American Myth. Photo by Johnny Knight

## American Myth

**Playwright:** Christina Gorman

**At:** American Blues Theater at the Greenhouse, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave.

**Tickets:** 773-404-7336;

**www.americanbluestheater.com; \$29-\$39**

**Runs through:** April 6

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Did I actually work with John Carradine in summer stock when I was 19, or did I only pull the curtain while he played Dracula?

Professor Douglas Graham is an award-winning historian and author noted for impeccable scholarship and brilliant lectures, with a waiting list for his classes. He also was an Eagle Scout, a collegiate track star and a Vietnam vet-turned-war protestor, but these things might be fabrications. They have nothing to do with his professional stature and cannot advance his career, so why make them up? Author Christina Gorman asks this very question after first exposing Graham through investigative reporter Peter Finnerty, a rising young journalist as driven as Graham to uncover historical truths and falsehoods, for he was Graham's star pupil.

This world premiere is written with high intelligence and stage crackle, but it never really explains "why," a question that applies to Finnerty as much as Graham. Finnerty doesn't seem so craven a careerist that he would destroy Graham to advance himself, but he does. Yet Graham's fibs have nothing to do with what, or how, he taught Finnerty. Alas, the scenes of them together chiefly are innocuous flashbacks that neither reveal their once-close relationship nor why it apparently fell apart. Finnerty's older, wiser editor guides him through his first big story, but it's never clear why it is a big story. (The play positions it as national news.) The result is that American Myth is smart and engaging but lacks a satisfactory conclusion.

The closest thing to an explanation lurks in Graham's fixation on founding father John Adams (our second president), whose talents and personality made his leadership inevitable but unpopular. The play draws parallels that are fairly obvious, with Graham seemingly compelled to be popular as well as a leader in his field. To its credit, the play also virtually requires its audience to examine the ways in which we exaggerate or embellish our own lives and accomplishments.

Under veteran director Steve Scott, each actor makes a great deal more of his/her role than exists on the page, especially Terry Hamilton, who breathes life and nuance into the two-dimensional role of the college dean. Mick Weber is marvelous as Graham, with a pointed blend of insouciance and seriousness. He's matched by an appealing newcomer to Chicago, Jordan Brodess, as the humorless Finnerty. Brodess very much is up to Chicago standards. Steve Key as Finnerty's editor brings some charm to the small role, and Cheryl Graeff is all quiet strength as Graham's wife, Lanie. Scenic

designer Grant Sabin takes inspiration from an arts-and-crafts bungalow for his handsome set, adorned with stained-glass windows.

To my credit, I've never claimed I worked with John Carradine.

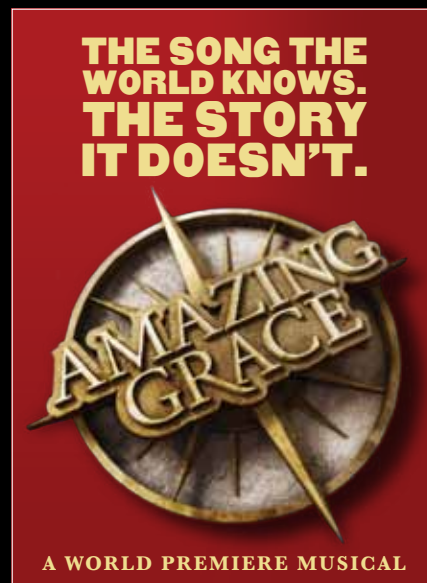
## SPOTLIGHT



American Idol alums and husband-and-wife team Ace Young (season five top 10) and Diana DeGarmo (season three runner-up) co-star in Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's **Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat**, that Bible-inspired pastiche musical full of incessantly catchy earworm tunes. Tony winner Andy Blankenbuehler (*In the Heights*) directs and choreographs this brand new North American tour. *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* continues through Sunday, March 30, at the Cadillac Palace Theatre, 151 W. Randolph St. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays (also Sunday, March 23), 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays (also Wed., March 26). Tickets are \$15-\$112; call 800-775-2000 or visit [www.broadwayinchicago.com](http://www.broadwayinchicago.com). Photo of Ace Young and Diana DeGarmo in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* by Daniel Swalec

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## What is STRIBILD?

STRIBILD is a prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before. It combines 4 medicines into 1 pill to be taken once a day with food. STRIBILD is a complete single-tablet regimen and should not be used with other HIV-1 medicines.

**STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 infection or AIDS.** To control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses you must keep taking STRIBILD. Ask your healthcare provider if you have questions about how to reduce the risk of passing HIV-1 to others. Always practice safer sex and use condoms to lower the chance of sexual contact with body fluids. Never reuse or share needles or other items that have body fluids on them.

## IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

### What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?

**STRIBILD can cause serious side effects:**

- **Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis),** which is a serious medical emergency. Symptoms of lactic acidosis include feeling very weak or tired, unusual (not normal) muscle pain, trouble breathing, stomach pain with nausea or vomiting, feeling cold especially in your arms and legs, feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Serious liver problems.** The liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and fatty (steatosis). Symptoms of liver problems include your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice), dark “tea-colored” urine, light-colored bowel movements (stools), loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, and/or stomach pain.
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or serious liver problems** if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking STRIBILD for a long time. In some cases, these serious conditions have led to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any symptoms of these conditions.

- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** If you also have HBV and stop taking STRIBILD, your hepatitis may suddenly get worse. Do not stop taking STRIBILD without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to monitor your health. STRIBILD is not approved for the treatment of HBV.

## Who should not take STRIBILD?

**Do not take STRIBILD if you:**

- **Take a medicine that contains:** alfuzosin, dihydroergotamine, ergotamine, methylergonovine, cisapride, lovastatin, simvastatin, pimozide, sildenafil when used for lung problems (Revatio®), triazolam, oral midazolam, rifampin or the herb St. John's wort.
- **For a list of brand names for these medicines,** please see the Brief Summary on the following pages.
- **Take any other medicines to treat HIV-1 infection,** or the medicine adefovir (Hepsera®).

## What are the other possible side effects of STRIBILD?

**Serious side effects of STRIBILD may also include:**

- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do regular blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before and during treatment with STRIBILD. If you develop kidney problems, your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking STRIBILD.
- **Bone problems,** including bone pain or bones getting soft or thin, which may lead to fractures. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicines.
- **Changes in your immune system.** Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new symptoms after you start taking STRIBILD.

**The most common side effects** of STRIBILD include nausea and diarrhea. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or don't go away.

## What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking STRIBILD?

- **All your health problems.** Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have or had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis virus infection.
- **All the medicines you take,** including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. STRIBILD may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how STRIBILD works. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist. Do not start any new medicines while taking STRIBILD without first talking with your healthcare provider.
- **If you take hormone-based birth control** (pills, patches, rings, shots, etc).
- **If you take antacids.** Take antacids at least 2 hours before or after you take STRIBILD.
- **If you are pregnant** or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if STRIBILD can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking STRIBILD.
- **If you are breastfeeding** (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk. Also, some medicines in STRIBILD can pass into breast milk, and it is not known if this can harm the baby.

**You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch), or call 1-800-FDA-1088.**

Please see Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information with **important warnings** on the following pages.





STRIBILD is a prescription medicine used as a complete single-tablet regimen to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before. STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.

## I started my personal revolution

Talk to your healthcare provider about starting treatment.

**STRIBILD** is a complete HIV-1 treatment in **1 pill**, once a day.

Ask if it's right for you.

**STRIBILD™** 

elvitegravir 150mg/ cobicistat 150mg/ emtricitabine 200mg/ tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300mg tablets



## Patient Information

### STRIBILD™ (STRY-bild) (elvitegravir 150 mg/cobicistat 150 mg/emtricitabine 200 mg/ tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300 mg) tablets

Brief summary of full Prescribing Information. For more information, please see the full Prescribing Information, including Patient Information.

#### What is STRIBILD?

- **STRIBILD is a prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before.** STRIBILD is a complete regimen and should not be used with other HIV-1 medicines.
- **STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.** You must stay on continuous HIV-1 therapy to control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses.
- **Ask your healthcare provider about how to prevent passing HIV-1 to others.** Do not share or reuse needles, injection equipment, or personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them. Do not have sex without protection. Always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.

#### What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?

##### STRIBILD can cause serious side effects, including:

1. **Build-up of lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis).** Lactic acidosis can happen in some people who take STRIBILD or similar (nucleoside analogs) medicines. Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Lactic acidosis can be hard to identify early, because the symptoms could seem like symptoms of other health problems. **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms which could be signs of lactic acidosis:**

- feel very weak or tired
- have unusual (not normal) muscle pain
- have trouble breathing
- have stomach pain with nausea or vomiting
- feel cold, especially in your arms and legs
- feel dizzy or lightheaded
- have a fast or irregular heartbeat

2. **Severe liver problems.** Severe liver problems can happen in people who take STRIBILD. In some cases, these liver problems can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis). **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms of liver problems:**

- your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice)
- dark “tea-colored” urine
- light-colored bowel movements (stools)
- loss of appetite for several days or longer
- nausea
- stomach pain

**You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking STRIBILD for a long time.**

3. **Worsening of Hepatitis B infection.** If you have hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection and take STRIBILD, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking STRIBILD. A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before.

- Do not run out of STRIBILD. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your STRIBILD is all gone

- Do not stop taking STRIBILD without first talking to your healthcare provider
- If you stop taking STRIBILD, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly for several months to check your HBV infection. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or unusual symptoms you may have after you stop taking STRIBILD

#### Who should not take STRIBILD?

##### Do not take STRIBILD if you also take a medicine that contains:

- adefovir (Hepsera®)
- alfuzosin hydrochloride (Uroxatral®)
- cisapride (Propulsid®, Propulsid Quicksolv®)
- ergot-containing medicines, including: dihydroergotamine mesylate (D.H.E. 45®, Migranal®), ergotamine tartrate (Cafergot®, Migergot®, Ergostat®, Medihaler Ergotamine®, Wigraine®, Wigrettes®), and methylergonovine maleate (Ergotrate®, Methergine®)
- lovastatin (Advicor®, Altoprev®, Mevacor®)
- oral midazolam
- pimozide (Orap®)
- rifampin (Rifadin®, Rifamate®, Rifater®, Rimactane®)
- sildenafil (Revatio®), when used for treating lung problems
- simvastatin (Simcor®, Vytorin®, Zocor®)
- triazolam (Halcion®)
- the herb St. John’s wort

##### Do not take STRIBILD if you also take any other HIV-1 medicines, including:

- Other medicines that contain tenofovir (Atripla®, Complera®, Viread®, Truvada®)
- Other medicines that contain emtricitabine, lamivudine, or ritonavir (Combivir®, Emtriva®, EpiVir® or EpiVir-HBV®, Epzicom®, Kaletra®, Norvir®, Trizivir®)

**STRIBILD is not for use in people who are less than 18 years old.**

#### What are the possible side effects of STRIBILD?

##### STRIBILD may cause the following serious side effects:

- **See “What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?”**
- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before you start and while you are taking STRIBILD. Your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking STRIBILD if you develop new or worse kidney problems.
- **Bone problems** can happen in some people who take STRIBILD. Bone problems include bone pain, softening or thinning (which may lead to fractures). Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people who take HIV-1 medicine. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck (“buffalo hump”), breast, and around the middle of your body (trunk). Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The exact cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known.
- **Changes in your immune system** (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome) can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you start having any new symptoms after starting your HIV-1 medicine.



**The most common side effects of STRIBILD include:**

- Nausea
- Diarrhea

**Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.**

- These are not all the possible side effects of STRIBILD. For more information, ask your healthcare provider.
- Call your healthcare provider for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

**What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking STRIBILD?****Tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including:**

- If you have or had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis B infection
- If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if STRIBILD can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking STRIBILD.
  - There is a pregnancy registry for women who take antiviral medicines during pregnancy. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Talk with your healthcare provider about how you can take part in this registry.
- If you are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you take STRIBILD.
  - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
  - Two of the medicines in STRIBILD can pass to your baby in your breast milk. It is not known if the other medicines in STRIBILD can pass into your breast milk.
  - Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

**Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements:**

- STRIBILD may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how STRIBILD works.
- Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you take any of the following medicines:
  - Hormone-based birth control (pills, patches, rings, shots, etc)
  - Antacid medicines that contains aluminum, magnesium hydroxide, or calcium carbonate. Take antacids at least 2 hours before or after you take STRIBILD
  - Medicines to treat depression, organ transplant rejection, or high blood pressure
  - amiodarone (Cordarone®, Pacerone®)
  - atorvastatin (Lipitor®, Caduet®)
  - bepridil hydrochloric (Vascor®, Bepadin®)
  - bosentan (Tracleer®)
  - buspirone
  - carbamazepine (Carbatrol®, Epitol®, Equetro®, Tegreto®)
  - clarithromycin (Biaxin®, Prevpac®)
  - clonazepam (Klonopin®)
  - clorazepate (Gen-xene®, Tranxene®)
  - colchicine (Colcrys®)
  - medicines that contain dexamethasone
  - diazepam (Valium®)

- digoxin (Lanoxin®)
- disopyramide (Norpace®)
- estazolam
- ethosuximide (Zarontin®)
- flecainide (Tambocor®)
- flurazepam
- fluticasone (Flovent®, Flonase®, Flovent® Diskus, Flovent® HFA, Veramyst®)
- itraconazole (Sporanox®)
- ketoconazole (Nizoral®)
- lidocaine (Xylocaine®)
- mexiletine
- oxcarbazepine (Trileptal®)
- perphenazine
- phenobarbital (Luminal®)
- phenytoin (Dilantin®, Phenytek®)
- propafenone (Rythmol®)
- quinidine (Neudexta®)
- rifabutin (Mycobutin®)
- rifapentine (Priftin®)
- risperidone (Risperdal®, Risperdal Consta®)
- salmeterol (Serevent®) or salmeterol when taken in combination with fluticasone (Advair Diskus®, Advair HFA®)
- sildenafil (Viagra®), tadalafil (Cialis®) or vardenafil (Levitra®, Staxyn®), for the treatment of erectile dysfunction (ED). If you get dizzy or faint (low blood pressure), have vision changes or have an erection that last longer than 4 hours, call your healthcare provider or get medical help right away.
- tadalafil (Adcirca®), for the treatment of pulmonary arterial hypertension
- telithromycin (Ketek®)
- thioridazine
- voriconazole (Vfend®)
- warfarin (Coumadin®, Jantoven®)
- zolpidem (Ambien®, Edlular®, Intermezzo®, Zolpimist®)

**Know the medicines you take.** Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine. Do not start any new medicines while you are taking STRIBILD without first talking with your healthcare provider.

**Keep STRIBILD and all medicines out of reach of children.**

This Brief Summary summarizes the most important information about STRIBILD. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can also ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about STRIBILD that is written for health professionals, or call 1-800-445-3235 or go to [www.STRIBILD.com](http://www.STRIBILD.com).

Issued: August 2012



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## SPRING THEATER SPECIAL

# Spring ain't coming—so go see a show!

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Someplace there is a disco stuck in the '70s that plays nothing but "It's Raining Men" and "I Like the Nightlife," and that disco is peopled with unadventurous souls. They live in a city where the local theaters dare not present a new play, because their audiences only want to see shows they know, or which come with an advance reputation from New York.

Fortunately for us, Chicago—with all its problems—is not that city of tired disco and tired theater and uninspired people. Here, we thrive on the new, the unknown: the world-premiere play, which is why nearly half of all shows produced by our local theaters are new works. As we move toward summer (I'm skipping spring; I'm not sure we will have one), here are a dozen world premieres worthy of attention.

**The Roper**—The Den offers a curious caper about an 1870s conspiracy to steal the entombed body of Abraham Lincoln and hold it for ransom. Author Will Dunne presents his tale with comic grotesquery more than outright ghoulishness, but only you can say whether or not Will Dunne is well-done. Continuing through April 13.

**Folk's and Hope's Just-So Stories**—Strawdog Theatre offers a new adaptation of several of Rudyard Kipling's stories for children, but the adapters say that their version is suitable for adults. We wonder if it will stir up accusations of racism as *The Jungle Book* did at the Goodman Theatre last season. It runs Monday and Tuesday nights only, through April 27.

**Darlin'**—An interesting Chicago writer, Joshua Rollins, teams with an interesting Chicago

director, Ilesa Duncan, for a new play about a woman on the run who checks into a cheap Iowa motel where she meets the locals, who just may want to know more about her than she is willing to tell. Step Up Productions at the Athenaeum, through April 13.

**Folk Bound**—This first production by a brand-new theater company incorporates music and dance in the tale of a young woman on a quest through a world made up of folk stories. As Daniel Burnham said, "Make no small plans." Anne Walaszek is the author, with music by Pamela Maurer (aka Baby Money) and choreography by Annaleah Tubbin. Presented by the Duplicity Ensemble at Zoo Studios, March 28-April 19

**The Haunting of Hill House**—Novelist and short story writer Shirley Jackson may be relied upon for a good creep-out, and one imagines this new stage adaptation will keep all the chills and thrills intact. Adapted and directed by Paul Edwards at City Lit Theater, this runs March 28-May 11. (NOTE: From April 25 it will run in repertory with another world-premiere adaptation, *Confederates in the Attic*, from Tony Horwitz's non-fiction book.)

**L'Imbecile**—Cut! Slash! Stab! Crunch! It's a swashbuckling new work by Aaron Adair based on Verdi's opera, *Rigoletto*, with a gender-bending twist or so, they promise. Of course, Verdi and his collaborator, Piave, took the story from Victor Hugo, who receives no credit in this new version. *L'Imbecile* will be sliced and diced by Babes with Blades at Rivendell Theatre; it previews April 5 and runs April 12-May 10.

**The Way West**—Mona Mansour's new play concerns a mom who shares death-defying tales of pioneer crossings with her two squab-



The Roper. Photo by Joe Mazza/Brave Lux

bling adult daughters as she waits for her bankruptcy to come through. It's billed as a comedy about the modern family and will have a fine cast directed by Amy Morton, whose long career has made her one of the best actors and directors in town. Steppenwolf Theatre Company, previews April 3, runs April 12-June 8

**Principal Principle**—The Chicago Public Schools served as inspiration for Joe Zarrow's new play, co-produced by two companies which value important social content in their work, Stage Left Theatre Company and Theatre Seven of Chicago. At Theater Wit, April 18-May 18

**In the Garden: A Darwinian Love Story**—Creationists stay away, or else arrive with open minds (which probably isn't possible or you wouldn't be creationists in the first place). No, Sara Gmitter's new play isn't about Evolution, exactly, but it is about Charles Darwin in love. His wife, apparently, was a woman of strong religious faith which sets up a dynamic of evolution vs. salvation for the young couple. Jessica Thebus directs for Lookingglass Theatre at the Water Tower Pumping Station; previews April 16, runs April 26-June 15.

**The Next Thing**—It's a Hollywood love story

of sorts, as two stars fall in and out of love and relationship while their careers overlap through seven movies over 18 years. And it's a Hollywood musical, too, with book by Ronan Mara and music and lyrics by Jon Steinhagen, both members of the Signal Ensemble and both authors of tested mettle. At Signal, May 1-June 7

**The White Snake**—Think Chinese legend, think slinky and mysterious costumes and lighting and music, think sensuality, and think Tony-winning adapter and director Mary Zimmerman (*The Arabian Nights*, *Metamorphoses*) back in her element. The Goodman Theatre previews May 3 and runs it May 12-June 8.

**The Passions of Emma Goldman**—Red Emma, the late 19th-early 20th-century anarchist, socialist and ardent campaigner for reproductive rights and free love, was arrested and deported, but no one could stop or silence her. She's brought to life in a one-woman show written and performed by Jeff Award-winning veteran Rosalind Alexander, with Dennis Zacek directing. ShPIel (sic) is presenting at Stage 773, May 16-June 1, and then at the Skokie Theatre, June 4-22.

## Partners for cancer theater event named

Collaboration has announced its network of community partners who are supporting "This is Not a Cure for Cancer," the company's upcoming world-premiere live theater event attacking cancer, its treatment and the way people live.

The partners include The American Cancer Society, Gilda's Club Chicago, The Heartwood Foundation, Mary Andrus Art Therapy, the Metropolitan Chicago Breast Cancer Task Force, Merz Apothecary, the Ovarian Cancer Symptom Awareness Organization, Rainbow Hospice and Palliative Care, and A Silver Lining Foundation.

Performances of "This is Not a Cure for Cancer" are Sundays through March 30 at 3 p.m. at Collaboration, on the third floor of the Flat Iron Arts Building, 1579 N. Milwaukee Ave.

Visit [collaboraction.org](http://collaboraction.org) or call 312-226-9633.

## TheatrePros.com preview April 6

TheatrePros.com will hold a mass spring-theater preview Sunday, April 6, at Greenhouse Theater, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave., at 8 p.m.

Ten member theaters will perform 10-minute previews of their upcoming spring shows. Participating theatres include 20% Theatre Company, AstonRep Theatre, Mondisa Monde Productions, The Rum & Coke Collective, The Plagiarists, Fury Theatre, Piccolo Theatre, Cor Res Theatre, Three Cat Productions and Organic Theater Company.

Early-bird tickets are \$10 each; visit the Greenhouse Theater Center's website or <http://www.tix.com/Event.asp?Event=627997>.

## 'Out at Raven' on March 21

Raven Theatre invites listeners for "Out at Raven"—a free wine-and-cheese reception just before a performance of *Good Boys and True*—on Friday, March 21.

*Good Boys and True* is a contemporary play by Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa, set in 1989. In this era before "sexting" became common, a salacious video makes the rounds of an elite Washington, D.C., boys' prep school. The star quarterback, who has some confusion around his own sexual orientation, is the prime suspect.

"Out at Raven" will take place 7-8 p.m., preceding the performance at 8 p.m. Tickets to the play are \$36 general, \$31 for seniors and \$15 for students. Call 773-338-2177 or visit [www.RavenTheatre.com](http://www.RavenTheatre.com).

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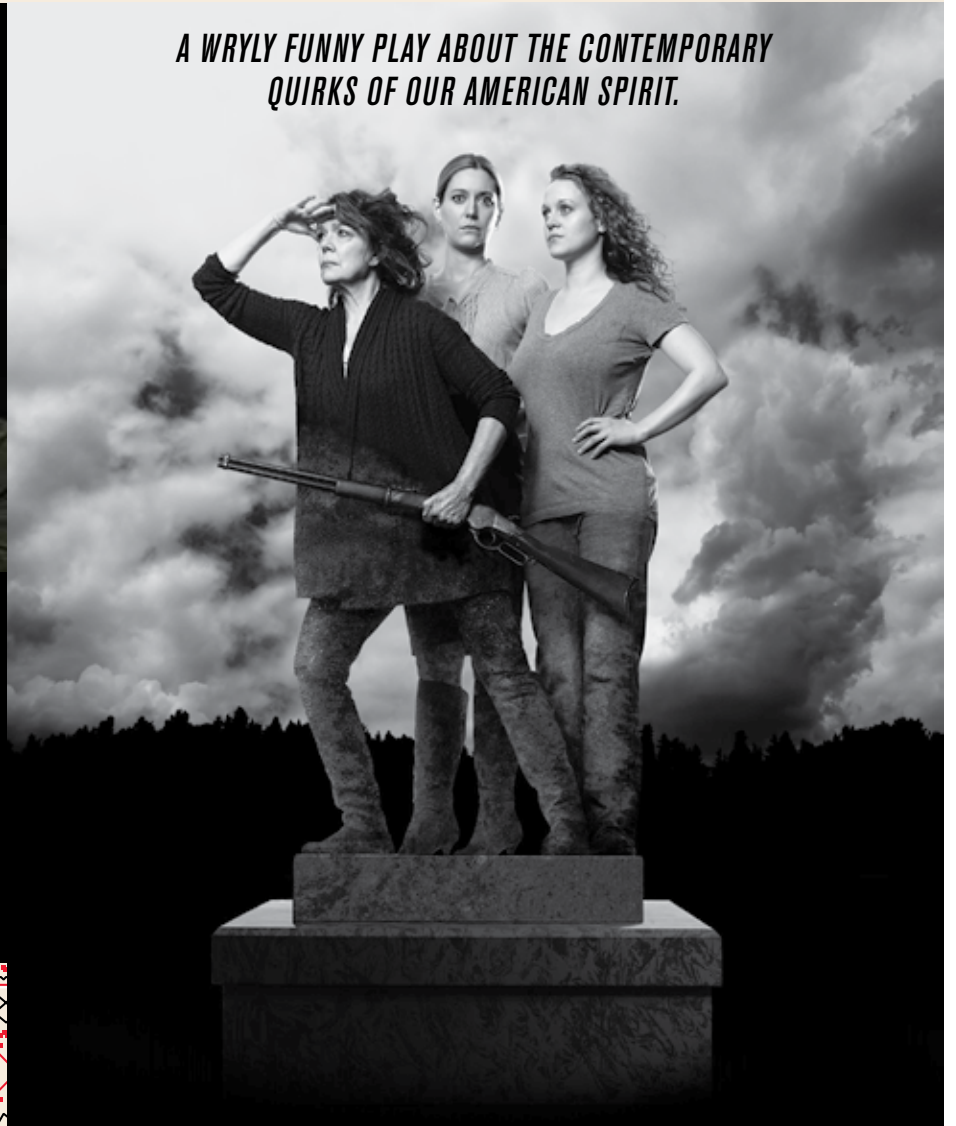


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BY ROBERTO AGUIRRE-SACASA  
DIRECTED BY CODY ESTLE

MARCH 11 – MAY 3

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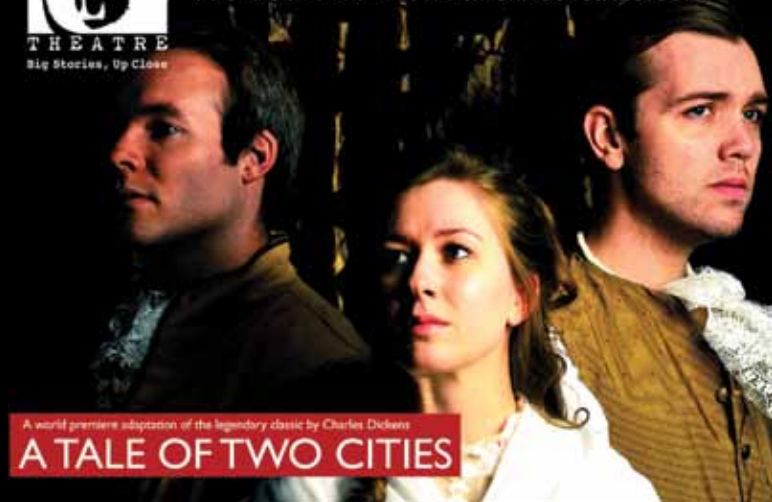
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Anne Steele. Publicity photo

## MUSIC

# Anne Steele sets her sights on Chicago

BY SARAH TOCE

Chicago has New York City's Anne Steele on loan for two coveted nights only—April 11-12, at the Chicago cabaret club Davenport's, 1383 N. Milwaukee Ave. The catchy pop (with a flare of Broadway baby) singer is expanding her wings from her hometown Manhattan to the Windy City just in time for spring and, boy, is she ready to fly!

Off-stage has been very eventful for the newly married mom of four. Her relationship with r Family Vacations co-founder Kelli Carpenter took a turn into Doubleville as the duo tied the knot June 1, 2013, in a private ceremony at their Chestnut Ridge home in New York. With so many new beginnings ever-present, one can only imagine the possibilities.

**Windy City Times:** Anne, you will be making your Chicago debut at Davenport's on April 11-12. Why did it take you this long to visit our Windy City? We're excited to have you!

Anne Steele: Chicago has always been one of my favorite cities. I grew up in the Midwest and always loved that Chicago is a big city but has a Midwestern heart. So far I have focused my career in the New York City area because it is my home and [I've] built a substantial following there. I felt like it was time to branch out and begin to grow audiences in other cities throughout the U.S.

**WCT:** Musical director Nate Buccieri will join you on the piano. What can the audience expect to hear from both you and Nate?

AS: Nate has been my musical director and partner for many years. We have a wonderful rapport on stage. He makes me feel comfortable enough to explore all styles of music knowing he is there backing me up. You can expect to hear music ranging from Broadway to Pop to Standards - all tied together with stories of my life and growing up in the Midwest then moving to NYC and my coming out experience.

**WCT:** Speaking of stories, what will you be sharing at Davenport's?

AS: The stories will be relevant and touching to each person attending the show. I think they need to come see the show for some good laughs and amazing music.

**WCT:** Congratulations on your wedding to a wonderful gal, Kelli Carpenter! How is married life treating you?

AS: Married life is better than I ever thought it could be. We have a wonderful balance between family and career. We both have many similar interests such as travel and cooking, but are different enough in our personalities that we provide a perfect balance in our relationship. Mostly, we have a ton of fun together!

**WCT:** In your opinion, what is one common misconception about marriage?

AS: I do not understand why people consider marriage as the end to the fun in a relationship. Our lives are far from boring and we look forward to many more adventures together.

**WCT:** In addition to becoming a wife, you've also become a mom to Kelli's children. Has the adjustment affected your work/home/life balance?

AS: Yes, of course having children now has had an impact on balancing other parts of my life. However, it is one of the most rewarding things that I have done. We work as a team in parenting and in the home, so we both feel supported in our day-to-day lives.

**WCT:** Have any tips to share with other modern moms out there?

AS: Don't sweat the small stuff. Enjoy the time with your children as it goes by way too quickly!

**WCT:** For those who have not had the opportunity to see you perform in person, how might you describe your sound?

AS: As a cross between a Kelly Clarkson and Sara Bareilles, with a hint of Barbra Streisand

**WCT:** If you could choose one person, living or dead, to duet with, who would it be?

AS: Whitney Houston. She helped shape the singer that I am [today] and is well-represented in my show.

**WCT:** What would you sing?

AS: Anything she wants! It could be the phone book and that would work for me.

**WCT:** Have a Chicago story to share with us?

AS: Not yet! I hope to have plenty after the show.

Visit [www.davenportspianobar.com](http://www.davenportspianobar.com) to purchase tickets to see Anne Steele in concert at Davenport's Piano Bar and Cabaret on April 11 at 8 p.m. and April 12 at 10:30 p.m.

## Queen + Adam Lambert in Chicago June 19

Queen + Adam Lambert will launch a North American summer tour sat the United Center in Chicago on Thursday, June 19.

Brian May, Roger Taylor + Adam Lambert will come together for the first time in New York, Los Angeles, Toronto, Dallas, Las Vegas, Montreal and other cities.

Tickets will be on sale beginning Friday, March 14 through the Live Nation mobile app and at LiveNation.com.



## SPRING THEATER SPECIAL

# In like a lion: Activism dominates spring theater season

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

It wasn't that old-time religion that drew record audiences to side-by-side plays about Joan of Arc—**The Lark** and **Saint Joan**—during our subarctic winter (the latter outselling even the popular **Pygmalion** for ShawChicago), but her status as western culture's first female war veteran. How else to account for the abundance of warrior heroes dominating the spring schedules?

These include the gamer-turned-bomber in the recently closed **Leveling Up** at Steppenwolf (cross your fingers for a summer remount at Theater on the Lake), as well as currently running productions of **American Myth** (American Blues at the Greenhouse through April 6; 773-404-7336), **Ithaka** (Infusion at the Chopin through April 13; 773-278-1500), **Rites and Sacrifices** (Idle Muse's update of Euripides at the Flatiron, through March 23; 773-340-9438) and **Three Soldiers** (Red Theatre at the Den through March 23, [www.thedentheatre.com](http://www.thedentheatre.com)). Upcoming sagas of men-in-arms include **Henry V** at Chicago Shakespeare (April 29-June 15, 312-595-5600) and **Water by the Spoonful** at Court (through April 6; 773-753-4472).

This doesn't mean that the Home Front gets short shrift. Lynn Nottage's **Ruined** enjoys its first post-premiere Chicago revival under the auspices of Eclipse Theatre (April 21-May 25; 773-935-6875), while Remy Bumppo's **Our Class** (April 7-May 11; 773-404-7336) offers a glimpse of social upheaval preceding World War II as troubling as that following a revolution in Ariel Dorfman's **Death and the Maiden** at Victory Gardens (June 13-July 13; 773-871-3000).

However distant the threat of hostile invasion may seem from Promethean's steampunk-trimmed **Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead** (subtitled "Waiting For Hamlet" and running April 18-May 24; 773-935-6875), Interrobang's Ibsen-in-Berlin **Doll's House Project** (May 8-June 8; 773-935-6875) or Redtwist's **Look Back in Anger** (May 24-June 15; 773-728-7529), its repercussions are manifest. Marching bands can't drown out domestic issues, though—Teatro Vista's **A View from the Bridge** explores the plight of assimilating immigrants—no different today in than in 1959 when Arthur Miller wrote of Italians in Red Hook—while Will Dunne's **The Roper** continues at The Den through April 13 ([www.thedentheatre.com](http://www.thedentheatre.com)), touches upon anti-Irish prejudice in America.

You don't have to be a foreigner to feel alienated: Shattered Globe's **Mill Fire** documents Sally Nemeth's account of Alabama factory-worker widows (April 24-June 7; 773-975-8150), Raven Theatre's **Vieux Carré** brings us Tennessee Williams' group portrait of boarding-house residents in New Orleans (May 6-June 28; 773-338-2177) and Writers Theatre's **Dance of Death**, Strindberg's observations on a marriage in decay (April 9-July 20, 847-242-6000), but look for the season to be dominated by individual anomie. The protagonist of Congo Square's **King Hedley II** is an ex-convict (through April 6; 773-935-6875), that of House Theatre's **Dorian** a vain youth (April 14-May 28; 773-278-1500) and that of the Babes With Blades' **L'Imbecile**—based on a Victor Hugo story sharing roots with Verdi's **Rigoletto**—a jester to a cruel monarch (April 12-May 10; 773-904-0391).

For those wanting to celebrate with something more sunshiny, the Dead Writers Theatre Collective presents Michael Bloom's page-to-stage transfer of Jane Austen's **Emma** (April 23-May 25; 773-327-5252), Northlight presents

Neil Simon's autobiographical **Lost in Yonkers** (May 2-June 8, 847-673-6300) and Timeline brings us **Juno**, the 1959 musical adaptation of J.M. Synge's *Juno and the Paycock* (April 23-July 27; 773-281-8463). Also, Fox Valley Rep resurrects **Cheaper by the Dozen**, Frank Gilbreth's nostalgic memoir of his 12 children (March 27-May 18; 630-584-6342).

The show to mark on your calendars NOW, however, is the long-awaited remount of **Hit The Wall!**, sponsored by the Chicago Commercial Collective and reuniting most of the original artists that made Ike Holter's close-up-and-sweaty panorama of the Stonewall Riots a runaway success inaugurating Steppenwolf's Garage Rep in 2012 (April 30-June 29; 773-404-7336). If you see only one show before Memorial Day, make it this one.



Daniel Cantor and Charin Alvarez in *Water by the Spoonful*. Photo by Michael Brosilow

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# '14 LGBT spring theater preview

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

There's a wealth of offerings when it comes to LGBT theater this spring. There are a plethora of world and Chicago premieres, plus a number of returning favorites for you to catch if you've missed them the previous times they've played the Windy City. All shows in Chicago unless otherwise noted.

## New and new-to-Chicago:

**Cock**, Profiles Theatre, The Main Stage, now through April 6. A woman sexually lures away a man who was previously part of a troubled gay couple, causing the jilted partner to retaliate in Mike Bartlett's hit London and off-Broadway comedy. [www.profiles theatre.org](http://www.profiles theatre.org)

**Seven Homeless Mammoths Wander New England**, Theater Wit, now through April 27. A romantic triangle involving jealous lesbian academics is complicated by the shuttering of a dated natural history museum in the Chicago premiere of Madeleine George's 2011 comedy. [www.theaterwit.org](http://www.theaterwit.org)

**Road Show**, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, now through May 4. This 2009 off-Broadway musical by out composer Stephen Sondheim

missing memories when a childhood friend reappears with claims of being sexually abused by his own father. Kimberly Senior directs the Chicago premiere of this acclaimed work. [www.nexttheatre.org](http://www.nexttheatre.org)

**A Place in the Woods**, The Fine Print Theatre at The Alley Stage of Profiles Theatre, April 5 through May 4. This world premiere drama by Erik Gernand involves a gay man in Chicago who must return to his rural hometown of Hunter, Ind., when he's faced with his aging mother's growing dementia. [www.thefineprint-theatre.org](http://www.thefineprint-theatre.org)

**Cicada**, Route 66 Theatre Company at Greenhouse Theater Center, April 9 through May 25. A domineering mother and her artistic son are at the center of Jerre Dye's coming-of-age ghost story involving a small southern family, soon to receive its Chicago premiere. [www.route66theatre.org](http://www.route66theatre.org)

**Buyer and Cellar**, Broadway Playhouse at Water Tower Place, May 6 through June 15. Direct from off-Broadway, Michael Urie (Ugly Betty) stars in Jonathan Tolins' acclaimed one-man show imagining what it might be like to be an out-of-work gay actor finding employment working in the mall built into the base-

looks like a prep school football team captain and a girl from a different school stirs up controversy over issues of class and sexuality in Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa's 2007 drama that previously debuted at Steppenwolf Theatre. A special "Out at Raven" reception for the LGBT community is at 7 p.m. Friday, March 21. [www.raventheatre.com](http://www.raventheatre.com)

**Dorian**, The House Theatre of Chicago at Chopin Theatre, April 4 through May 18. Ben Lobbies and Tommy Rapley's acclaimed dance-drama adaptation of Oscar Wilde's famous novel about inner wickedness and outer beauty is revived in a production featuring out company member Patrick Andrews. [www.thehousetheatre.com](http://www.thehousetheatre.com)

**Hit the Wall**, Chicago Commercial Collective and The Inconvenience at Greenhouse Theater Center, April 22 through June 29. Ike Holter's acclaimed 2012 drama with music that re-imagines what the seminal 1969 Stonewall Riots might have been like returns in a production featuring many members of its original cast. [www.chicagocommercialcollective.com](http://www.chicagocommercialcollective.com) or [www.greenhousetheater.org](http://www.greenhousetheater.org)

**Cabaret**, Citadel Theatre, Lake Forest, April 25 through May 25. Gay author Christopher Isherwood's Berlin Stories inspired this musical by songwriters John Kander and Fred Ebb about a bisexual U.S. writer who falls under the spell of a cabaret singer and other fleshy pleasures of Weimar Republic Berlin in the early 1930s. Somehow, Citadel Theatre obtained the rights to this Tony-winning musical just as it is being revived again on Broadway in Joe Masteroff's

**Mamma Mia!**, Cadillac Palace Theatre, May 13 to 18. The gay plot point in this jukebox musical that grafts the pop hits of ABBA to Catherine Johnson's flimsy script comes at the end to help provide an all-too-tidy conclusion to this globally successful smash hit. [www.broadwayinchicago.com](http://www.broadwayinchicago.com)

**M. Butterfly**, Court Theatre, May 8 through June 8. Court Theatre artistic director Charles Newell helms a revival of David Henry Hwang's 1988 Tony Award-winning drama about a French diplomat who falls in love with a Peking Opera singer who is also a communist spy. [www.courttheatre.org](http://www.courttheatre.org)

**Caged Dames**, Hell in a Handbag Productions at Mary's Attic, May 28 through July 13. Chicago's celebrated camp theater company revives its 2006 musical comedy heavily inspired by the 1950s film noir drama Caged about a housewife who must face down a butch and sadistic prison matron when she gets wrongly thrown into prison. [www.handbagproductions.org](http://www.handbagproductions.org)

## Concerts:

**Windy City Gay Chorus and Aria**: The combined ensembles of Windy City Performing Arts perform It Gets Better: The Concert, inspired by the LGBT anti-bullying youth movement co-created by advice columnist Dan Savage and his husband, Terry Miller. The concert features the premiere of the song "You Are Beautiful" ("Vwy Prekrasny") by artistic director Paul Caldwell and Sean Ivory, written in support of Russia's oppressed LGBT community. Perform-



Far left: 5 Lesbians Eating a Quiche. Photo by Dixie Sheridan. Left: Cock at Profiles Theatre. Photo by Michael Brosilow. Right: Fawzia Mirza stars in Brahman/i. Photo by Joe Mazza/Brave Lux

and playwright John Weidman is actually the final version of their show Bounce that played the Goodman Theatre in a critically dismissed 2003 production. Like Bounce, Road Show is based upon on the talented and conniving real-life Mizner brothers, one of whom briefly had a happy gay relationship in Florida. [www.chicagoshakes.com](http://www.chicagoshakes.com)

**Brahman/i**: A One-Hijra Stand Up Comedy Show, About Face Theatre and Silk Road Rising at Historic Chicago Temple, March 27 through April 27. Fawzia Mirza stars in the title role of the Chicago premiere of Aditi Brennan Kapil's play that explores the history, mythology and high school existence behind an Indian intersex person, or "hijra." [www.aboutfacetheatre.com](http://www.aboutfacetheatre.com) or [www.silkroaddrising.org](http://www.silkroaddrising.org)

**Songs from an Unmade Bed**, Pride Films and Plays at Apollo Theater Studio, March 29 through April 27. Lyricist Mark Campbell collaborated with 18 different composers for this 18-number song cycle about the experiences of gay men living in a major metropolitan city. Though the original 2005 off-Broadway production only featured one performer, Pride Films and Plays has engaged three ensemble members for this Chicago premiere. [www.pridefilmsandplays.com](http://www.pridefilmsandplays.com)

**Happy Endings**, Second Thought Theatre Company at Stage 773, April 3 through May 4. Matt Tassell's world-premiere drama concerns a young gay man named Eddie who is faced with a dilemma when his ill straight friend, Stella, confesses that she's in love with him. [www.secondthoughttheatrecompany.com](http://www.secondthoughttheatrecompany.com)

**The Great God Pan**, Next Theatre, Evanston, April 3 through May 11. Playwright Amy Herzog is behind this mysterious drama or a young man who must contemplate disturbing

ment of Barbra Streisand's Malibu home. [www.broadwayinchicago.com](http://www.broadwayinchicago.com)

**Gay Play Weekend**, Pride Films and Plays at the Center on Halsted's Hoover-Leppen Theatre, May 9 to 11. The finalists of this year's Great Gay Play Contest receive staged readings before the ultimate winner is announced. Finalist plays include The View UpStairs by Max Vernon, Michelangelo and Tommaso by James Rosenfield, Who Killed Joan Crawford? by Michael Leeds, The Book of Andy by Michael J. Mejia and Gentle Passage by Paul Elliott. [www.pridefilmsandplays.com](http://www.pridefilmsandplays.com)

## Classics and revivals:

**Gypsy**, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, now through March 23. Out director Gary Griffin takes on this classic 1959 Broadway musical by out playwright Arthur Laurents, composer Jule Styne and out lyricist Stephen Sondheim. See why the role of Madame Rose is often considered on par with King Lear when Tony nominee Louise Pitre (Mamma Mia) plays the ultimate "stage mother from hell" in this highly mythologized story about the childhood and rise to fame of burlesque star Gypsy Rose Lee. [www.chicagoshakes.com](http://www.chicagoshakes.com)

**Rent**, Paramount Theatre, now through April 6. This Aurora-based theater that has been producing Broadway-caliber work closes out its season with a new production of the late Jonathan Larson's 1996 Pulitzer Prize-winning musical Rent. Jeff Award-winning out director Jim Corti stages this La Boheme-inspired story of love, friendship and loss among of group of bohemian New Yorkers in the age of HIV/AIDS. [www.paramountaurora.com](http://www.paramountaurora.com)

**Good Boys and True**, Raven Theatre, now through May 3. A sex video involving what

revised 1998 version. [www.citadeltheatre.org](http://www.citadeltheatre.org)

**At the Flash**, Pride Films and Plays rehearsal space, 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 29. This one-man show that Sean Chandler and its star, David Leeper, co-wrote looks at different decades of gay life and activism in a bar known as The Flash. It returns for a one-night-only fundraising performance before it heads off to Ireland to be a part of the Dublin Gay Theatre Fest. [www.pridefilmsandplays.com](http://www.pridefilmsandplays.com)

**The Wizard of Oz**, Cadillac Palace Theatre, April 30 through May 11. No, there aren't any overt gay characters or plot lines in this great American fairy tale, but the classic 1939 MGM film version is culturally significant to the LGBT community in oh so many ways. This national tour is based upon the recent London version that includes new songs thrown in by composer Andrew Lloyd Webber. [www.broadwayinchicago.com](http://www.broadwayinchicago.com)

**5 Lesbians Eating a Quiche**, Chicago Commercial Collective and The New Colony at Chopin Theatre, May 1 through June 8. Evan Linder and Andrew Hobgood's Eisenhower Eraset comedy returns after a critically acclaimed off-Broadway run. See what happens when five women who comprise the leadership of the Susan B. Anthony Society for the Sisters of Gertrude Stein cope with a nuclear holocaust in the midst of their annual summer quiche breakfast. [www.chicagocommercialcollective.com](http://www.chicagocommercialcollective.com) or [www.thenewcolony.org](http://www.thenewcolony.org)

**Vieux Carre**, Raven Theatre, May 6 through June 28. This semi-autobiographical drama by Tennessee Williams premiered on Broadway in 1977 and concerns a newly transplanted writer facing poverty and his burgeoning homosexuality in 1930s New Orleans. [www.raventheatre.com](http://www.raventheatre.com)

mances are at 5 and 8 p.m. Saturday, March 22, at Ebenezer Lutheran Church, 1650 W. Foster Ave. Tickets are \$15 and \$10 for students and seniors; visit [www.windycitysings.org](http://www.windycitysings.org) for more information.

**Chicago Gay Men's Chorus**: The few years of new Broadway musicals (like Kinky Boots and The Book of Mormon) and significant revivals (like Pippin) are the source materials for the concert Bouncing Off the Walls: Broadway Our Way. Performances are at three locations: North Shore Center for the Performing Arts, 9501 Skokie Blvd., Skokie, at 8 p.m. Saturday, May 17; Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph Drive, at 8 p.m. Saturday, May 31; and North Central College's Wentz Concert Hall, 171 E. Chicago Ave., Naperville, at 8 p.m. Sunday, June 1. Tickets vary by venue, so visit [www.cgmc.org](http://www.cgmc.org) for more information.

**Artemis Singers**: Chicago's Lesbian Feminist Chorus celebrates the eve of the statewide availability of same-sex marriage licenses in Illinois with A Feminist Mosaic Concert & Dance at 7 p.m. Saturday, May 31, at Broadway United Methodist Church, 3338 N. Broadway. Tickets are \$15-\$20 and \$10 for seniors or kids and are available by visiting [www.artemissingers.org](http://www.artemissingers.org).

**Tony Tunes!**: Pride Films and Plays' fundraising concert features non-Equity Jeff nominees and winners performing songs from Tony Award-winning musicals at 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 3, at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St. Tickets are \$20. Visit [www.pridefilmsandplays.com](http://www.pridefilmsandplays.com) for more information.

**Note**: Scott C. Morgan is a member of Windy City Performing Arts and has also previously performed with the Chicago Gay Men's Chorus.



## SPRING DANCE SPECIAL

# Keith Elliott leaves behind a legacy of philanthropy

BY LAUREN WARNECKE

In May 2010, Keith Elliott took a job at the Ruth Page Center for the Performing Arts.

Longtime director and master teacher Larry Long had recently passed away, the Ruth Page endowments had changed and much of the organization was in shambles. Elliott was brought on with no real job description, other than to help get "The Page" back in order. He quickly got to work, taking over managing the theater, which was dirty, underutilized and outdated. Thinking outside the box is how Elliott got the space back in order, plus a number of grant initiatives affording him some updated equipment. The space is now clean, organized, and (most importantly) booked, nearly every weekend through 2016. "We are a destination now," he said in a recent conversation with Windy City Times. Essentially, this is what Keith Elliott does, and has been doing for nearly 30 years.

In the summer of 1990, Keith Elliott the dancer used a layoff from Joseph Holmes Chicago Dance Theater to brainstorm about a dance show to benefit organizations committed to HIV/AIDS. "I didn't want to sit around over the summer," he said. With the help of co-founder Todd Keich, the show opened the follow year to sold-out audiences, and now, 23 years later, Dance for Life remains one of the most successful events of its kind. More than just a one-night dance gala for HIV/AIDS awareness, Dance for Life has initiated, hosted and supported numerous additional events throughout the years, including "Chicago Takes Off," a Burlesque show now called "The Tease," which premiered March 1. "It's Dance for Life with less clothing!" Elliott said.

Additional satellite programs are getting youth involved in philanthropy. The recent Next Generation at Wheeling High School is one such example, raising \$16,000 in one day. It was a particularly special event, marking not only the widespread impact of the movement, but also the last Dance for Life event of Elliott's tenure in Chicago.

A friend and colleague pitched the idea to him last November to open a nightclub in Scottsdale, Ariz. Hesitant at first, Elliott eventually decided to take a leap of faith and bring his entrepreneurial spirit and talent for performing arts management and philanthropy to a new city. "What other time am I going to do this? I might as well! Chicago has afforded me so many amazing opportunities to be active in the community. I was able to do so much; I now want to continue that somewhere else as well. The theater community is really big [in Scottsdale]; there's just nowhere for them to perform."

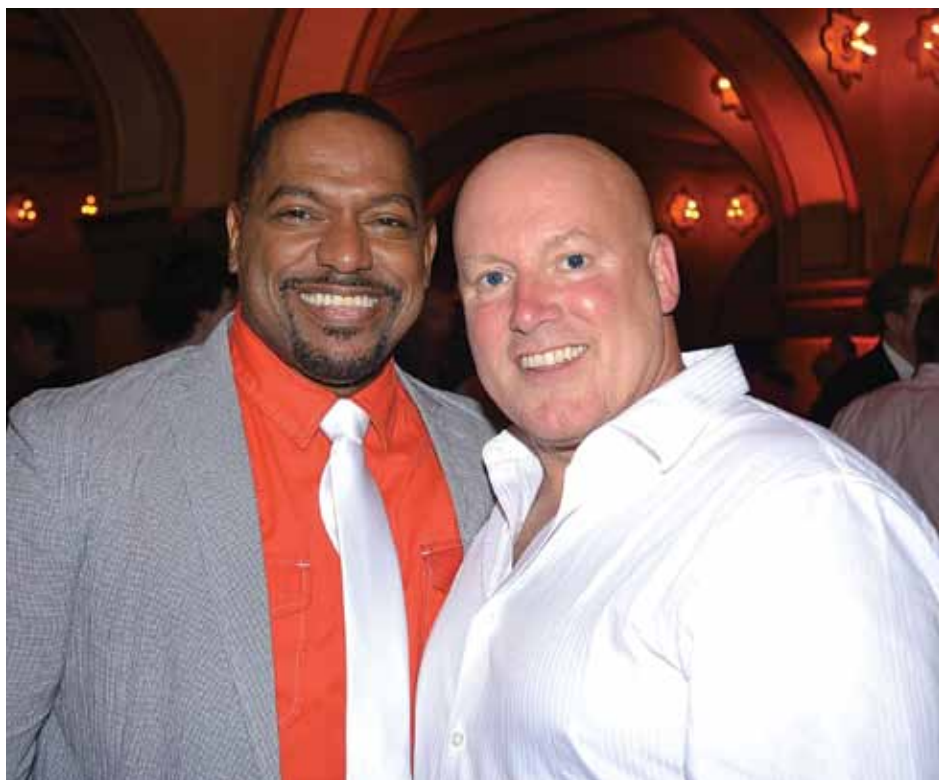
What will happen to Dance for Life? "I'm still staying connected," said Elliott, and the philanthropic empire that has raised millions of dollars for AIDS-service organizations is strong. General Manager Anthony Guerrero will take on many of Elliott's former responsibilities. "I just hope one day we don't have to do it," said Elliott. In the meantime, he has every confidence that he's leaving the organization in good hands.

Surely a man with such a talent for non-profit management and philanthropy in the arts has scores of degrees in arts management. Thirty years after the fact, Elliott applied old credits from an unfinished education degree, his life experience and a few recent algebra courses to the University Without Walls program at Northeastern Illinois University, where he just graduated with a BA in arts management. He claims to have learned organization through his dad, volunteerism through his mom, and the rest through careful observation of what others were doing. Upon arriving in Chicago many years ago, he got involved early and often in causes about which he is passionate. "I guess I was just wide-eyed enough to see what the pieces were," he said. The degree is likely to come in handy as Elliott embarks on the next phase of his life: opening a

cabaret club and events space in Scottsdale. The degree also gives him the chops to back up his "street cred."

As he rides his motorcycle off into the Arizona sunset, what does Keith Elliott want Windy City Times readers to know? "Thank them all, for one! Continue to stay involved and committed to things you feel are important. ... The effect is big by staying involved. So stay the course, baby!"

—Save the date: **Dance for Life Chicago 2014** will be Saturday, Aug. 16, including appearances by local dance companies Giordano Dance Chicago, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, The Joffrey Ballet and River North Dance Chicago. The program will feature world premieres by Randy Duncan and Harrison McElDowney & Jeremy Plummer. Gala reception is 5 p.m. at the Hilton Chicago Grand Ballroom, with 8 p.m. performance at the Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University. Look for ticket information this May. [danceforlifechicago.com](http://danceforlifechicago.com)



Local dance legends Keith Elliott (right) and Randy Duncan. Photo from Anthony Guerrero

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# KNIGHT AT THE MOVIES

BY  
RICHARD  
KNIGHT JR.

## Bad Words; Le Week-End; film notes

The list of dreadful things that Guy Trilby does in the black comedy **Bad Words** in pursuit of the championship of a kids' national spelling bee is very long, indeed.

The first, to begin with, is his gall in entering the bee. Trilby, a 40-year-old with either a genius IQ or a photographic memory, has found a loophole in the rules (he never graduated high school) that allows him to enter the contest. After winning at the local level, he heads to the finals, where his intimidating behavior toward the other contestants (most of it while on stage, towering over his pint-sized competitors) is utterly appalling. The mystery is why Trilby is even on stage with a bunch of preteens.

Without the mystery as a relief from the Bad Santa behavior or the fact that Trilby is played by the enormously likeable Jason Bateman, the movie wouldn't have a chance of redeeming itself (and forget about a lot of Trilby's jaw-dropping audacity). But with those factors in place, it holds—hilariously so—for a long time. It doesn't hurt that Bateman—making his directorial debut and working from a script by first-time writer Andrew Dodge—surrounds himself with comic actors with crack timing who make even the film's weakest moments sizzle. (Kathryn Hahn as an insecure, love hungry journalist, Allison Janney as the head of the bee, Rachael Harris as the seriously pissed-off mom of another contestant, Beth Grant as a speechless pageant official and Steve Witting as a proctor are standouts.)

The heart of the film is the growing relationship between Trilby and Chaitanya (Rohan Chand), a perky 10-year-old Indian contestant with no friends who swats away the verbal brickbats like so many flies and whose innocence doesn't seem too affected by Trilby's attempts at corrupting him. The relationship is a variation of one that the movies have always

loved: the cranky old sourpuss paired with the endearing child whose optimism redeems the codger. The arc of this friendship gives the film somewhere to go as the mystery element is revealed too quickly, is not particularly satisfying and is too pat. (It involves Philip Baker Hall, as the bee's elder statesmen.)

But Bateman, who I've noted before, is one of those actors whose immense warmth can't be concealed no matter how disagreeable the character (Sandra Bullock has this same effect on audiences) and he manages (along with those funny actors—though Janney should have been kept around much longer) to keep the fraying edges in *Bad Words* forgivable.

**Briefly noted:** Jim Broadbent is surely one of England's greatest character actors. Broadbent, who first broke through in film in 1991's *Enchanted April*, has essayed dozens of notable characters since. (He is probably most memorable as the club owner/ringmaster in *Moulin Rouge*.) Broadbent adds to his growing gallery of wonderful characters in **Le Week-End** with Nick Burrows, a philosophy professor at a University in Birmingham who heads to Paris with Meg (played by the always welcome Lindsay Duncan), his still-luscious wife, so the couple can celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary in the city where they honeymooned.

From the start, things do not go well. Then they do. Then they don't again. And on and off the marriage merry-go-round goes on for the rest of this life-changing weekend that reaffirms not only a lot for this complicated couple but a lot for the audience who will recognize in their all-too-human frailties, fantasies and foibles many of our own. It's not often that we get a film centered on characters more than 60 years old (a breath of fresh air in itself)—and certainly not a romantic comedy. *Le Week-End* is not quite a comedy (even though there are many humorous moments) but it is very romantic and director Roger Michell utilizes the Paris locations as a lush point/counterpoint to all the nitpicking and ruminating that these two wonderful actors engage in as Nick and Lindsay wander about the City of Lights in this insightful little movie.

### Film notes:

—**The 17th Annual European Union Film Festival**, the yearly series celebrating the best of the EU, has been going on at the Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State St., since the beginning of the month. The fest is always a great place to be the first in Chicago to see a slew of great indie flavored movies—including the occasional queer-themed one as well. Though the fest has already screened the riveting *What Now? Remind Me*, the Portuguese docudrama and *Run & Jump*, an Irish entry starring Will Forte, there are a few more on the horizon worth noting.

The first of these is Angela Christlieb's *Naked Opera* from Luxembourg, in which a middle-aged man with a chronic illness decides to indulge his passion for opera by traveling around



From left: Rohan Chand and Jason Bateman in *Bad Words*. Photo from Focus Features

Europe seeing as many productions of Mozart's "Don Giovanni" as he can while engaging in a lot of gay sex with rent boys and porn stars along the way. The film is presented as a documentary though it's pretty clear that many of the set pieces were staged. The film is a quasi-Auntie Mame with the man lecturing his tricks on the importance of art and literature. Screens Saturday, March 22 at 9:15 and Wed., March 26, at 8:15 p.m.

The other film with major queer themes is Jan Hřebejk's *Honeymoon*, the fest's closing-night feature from the Czech Republic. The movie centers on the wedding weekend of a very photogenic couple (the groom is a heavy-set dead ringer for Michael Fassbender) attended by family and close friends. The festivities are interrupted by the arrival of a mysterious stranger who wants the bride to know exactly what kind of man she's marrying. It's not the usual closeted gay thing one expects and makes for a very compelling movie. The movie screens twice—Sunday, March 30, at 3 p.m. and Thursday, April 3, at 6 p.m. Hřebejk will attend the latter screening. Complete festival information at [www.siskelfilmcenter.org](http://www.siskelfilmcenter.org)

—**Cinema Q IV**, the fourth annual LGBT-themed movie series, continues tonight with the delightful German gay themed coming-of-age dramedy *Summer Storm*, about a summer camp for rowing teams. The arrival of the Queer Strokes—the gay rowing team from Berlin shakes up the discipline of the camp

and causes one young man to realize his true sexuality. The Goethe-Institut co-sponsors the screening.

The series concludes Wed., March 26, with a 6:30 p.m. screening of the 2004 biopic/musical *De-Lovely* about the gay composer Cole Porter. It stars Kevin Kline as Cole and Ashley Judd as his mostly understanding wife. The screenings will take place at Claudia Cassidy Theater within the Chicago Cultural Center, 73 E. Washington St. The Queer Film Society (of which I'm president), the Legacy Project, Reeling Film Festival and Affinity Community Services are presenting the series in partnership with the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events. Windy City Times, ChicagoPride and the Reader are media sponsors. The screenings are free. [www.queerfilmsociety.org](http://www.queerfilmsociety.org)

—The Rainbow Alliance of the Unitarian Church of Evanston, 1330 Ridge Ave., presents the 2009 lesbian romantic drama **Hannah Free**, from director Wendy Jo Carlton, on Friday, March 21, at 7 p.m. (Doors open at 6:30.) Sharon Gless stars in the film, which is based on Claudia Allen's award-winning play that was shot locally and featuring many familiar Chicago actors. Windy City Times Publisher/Executive Editor Tracy Baim produced the film and will be part of a panel discussion following the screening that will also feature editor/producer Sharon Zurek as well as actors Taylor Miller and Maureen Gallagher. <http://ucevanston.org/>



Jim Broadbent and Lindsay Duncan in *Le Week-End*. Photo from Music Box Films



## tellofilms' #Hashtag explores lesbian love online

tellofilms, which calls itself the "HBO of lesbian content," is presenting #Hashtag, a new Web series about the online lives and loves of a pair of lesbian twentysomethings.

#Hashtag stars/writers Caitlin Bergh and Laura Zak, both formerly of Chicago and presently of the West Coast.

#Hashtag follows Skylar (Bergh), who's

struggling with the bad effects of her long-term relationship on her comedy career, and her best friend Liv (Zak), whose Instagram obsession is interfering with her OkCupid goals.

The series guest stars Cowgirl Up favorite Marnie Alton, Kate Black Spence (from tello's *The Throwaways*), Jim Bennett, Amy Thompson and other Chicago actors.

New episodes will be released every Sunday starting March 16. See [www.tellofilms.com](http://www.tellofilms.com).

## Fourth season of 'Thrones' starts April 6

The Emmy- and Golden Globe-winning *Game of Thrones* returns for its 10-episode fourth season Sunday, April 6 (9-10 p.m. ET/PT), exclusively on HBO, followed by other episodes on subsequent Sundays at the same time.

Based on George R.R. Martin's best-selling fantasy book series, the hit series is an epic story of treachery and nobility set on the continent of Westeros. The series stars Peter Dinklage, Lena Headey, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, Kit Harington, Emilia Clarke, Natalie Dormer, Maisie Williams, Jack Gleeson, Iain Glen and Diana Rigg, among many others.

The season (based on the first three episodes) continues with plot twists, such as the death of a major character, and certain themes, including pansexuality.





Kasey in *The Homestretch*. Image courtesy of Kartemquin Films

## MOVIES

# Chicago homeless teens featured in 'The Homestretch'

BY SARAH TOCE

There are certain things most U.S. teenagers don't have to worry about: the privacy to take a shower; where their next meal will come from; where they will find a quiet spot to study for an exam; what address they can use to put down on a job application so that they can afford to survive; and where they are going to safely sleep that night. For three teens depicted in *The Homestretch* (Kartemquin Films, 83 minutes), these scenarios are anything but fiction—in fact, it's their entire lives.

Throughout the film, Kasey, Roque and Anthony brave Chicago winters, the pressures of high school and life alone on the streets in an effort to build a brighter future than anything they have ever known. Issues of self-worth, trust, abandonment and the stigma that comes with homelessness are played out on the big screen for a compassionate story arc that is both tragically surreal and 100-percent honest.

According to the Forty to None campaign, there are more than 19,000 children, youth and unaccompanied youth registered in the Chicago Public Schools. There is an estimated 1.6 million young people struggling with homelessness each year. It is estimated that 40 percent of homeless youth are LGBT. While *The Homestretch* is not specifically gay in its reckoning, it is a universal story that affects the LGBT and straight communities just the same.

Born and raised on the South Side of Chicago, Kasey spent more than a year bouncing around between friends, family members, and sleeping on the street, ultimately dropping out of high school her senior year. We meet Kasey in the film as she just enters a new transitional home and is re-enrolled in school. Kasey is a poet, a painter and is shown as a tremendous source of support for her huge network of friends.

Due to immigration complications, Roque was forced to separate from his family and fend for himself on and off, beginning his sophomore year of high school. With an unstable family and housing situation, Roque spent several years bouncing around. One of his teachers introduced him to Shakespeare and acting and he became inspired to finish high school and go to college.

Anthony spent his childhood in the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and went out on his own at the age of 14. After years of jumping from school to school and

being homeless, he is proud to be self-taught. He recently passed his GED and was accepted into the Year Up Chicago Program where he has an internship in telecommunications. He is a poet, rapper and entrepreneur.

At the start of the story, Anthony asks, "How are you going to make your story better? How are you going to write the next chapter in your life?" These two pointed questions take on a whole new meaning when put into the context of *The Homestretch*.

A poignant project four years in the making, *The Homestretch* offers a rare glimpse into the Chicago Public School System, The Night Ministry's "Crib" Emergency Shelter and Teen Living Programs. Chicago-based co-directors/producers Anne de Mare and Kirsten Kelly bravely go beyond the exterior of the issues involved in homelessness and into a world of fear-based society where nothing is promised and your life is earned. As Kasey so earnestly puts it in the film, "I got to do better for myself. I can't be out here like this."

"Our goal was to not look at the just the 'situation' of being homeless. We wanted to break the negative stereotypes of what people think of as homeless youth—we didn't want to reinforce the misconception that these kids are all drug addicts sleeping under the bridge," Kelly said. "We see many people and organizations that do incredible work in supporting these youth—but they are incredibly underfunded and cannot keep up with the rising numbers of this crisis."

As if anything was stable to begin with, the transition from graduation into the real world is a shock to the students at the center of this film. Their semi-skewed high school reality seemed to offer a miniscule amount of security—hot water, friendship, structure—but they soon find out the adjustments necessary to make it in a high-functioning technologically-driven society.

Kelly's hope for the film is to bring a greater awareness to the issues involving homeless youth.

"The number-one obstacle that homeless youth advocates and social service organizations face in getting more support is getting the general public to overcome negative stereotypes of homeless youth," Kelly said. "The film will bring a human face to this crisis and through the surprising journeys of these three kids—kids who have tremendous potential—it will build empathy and awareness of the reali-

ties of obstacles that homeless youth face."

Kelly added, "We hope to build momentum for local community support and national policy change. Our two-year Impact Campaign will include a series of local events and screenings with city-wide partners and include a Capitol Hill screening in September and national screenings and events across the country."

The MacArthur Foundation, the Sundance Institute, Chicken & Egg Pictures, The Chicago Community Trust, Polk Bros. Foundation and Pierce Family Foundation have, in part, funded the film. Public donations for as little as one

dollar are being accepted through Kickstarter ([www.kickstarter.com/projects/kirstenandanne/the-homestretch-feature-documentary](http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/kirstenandanne/the-homestretch-feature-documentary)) until March 28.

**Find out more about *The Homestretch* online at [www.kartemquin.com/films/the-homestretch](http://www.kartemquin.com/films/the-homestretch).**

**For details on the 2014 Chicago LGBTQ Homeless Youth Summit, hosted by Windy City Times May 2-5, see <http://chicagosummit.lgbthomelessness.com>.**

## ARMISTEAD MAUPIN

*The Days of Anna Madrigal*



## BOOK REVIEW

**The Days of Anna Madrigal**  
by Armistead Maupin  
**\$26.99; Harper; 270 pages**  
BY CARRIE MAXWELL

In his final *Tales of the City* novel, Armistead Maupin's *The Days of Anna Madrigal* returns to the colorful characters that have delighted readers for more than 25 years.

The book begins with the now-fragile and bawdy 92-year-old transgender matriarch Anna Madrigal, who is determined to "leave like a lady" and weaves in the stories of her young caretaker Jake Greenleaf, former tenant Brian Hawkins and his daughter Shawna as well as Mary Ann Singleton and Michael Tolliver. This eclectic bunch composes Anna's logical family that has expanded to include Jake's boyfriend, Amos; Brian's new wife, Wren; and Michael's much younger husband, Ben.

For the uninitiated *Tales of the City* readers, Maupin gives just enough background on each of the characters while also moving the story forward.

The flashbacks to the Depression-era Winnemucca, Nev.—when Anna was still Andy and living at the Blue Moon, a whorehouse run by his mother—are especially gripping and the best part of the book. It is there that readers discover how and why Anna chose her name following her transition.

Maupin's ability to weave concurring stories are on full display here. While Michael, Ben, Jake, Amos, Shawna and Mary Ann are off to Burning Man, Brian and Wren take Anna back to Winnemucca so Anna can attend to unfinished business.

Learning about the ins and outs of the Burning Man experience was a revelation. Each of the characters had specific reasons for the journey and it was interesting to find out the different neighborhoods that are created out of nothing in the Black Rock Desert of Nevada.

Maupin's use of everyday places like Trader Joe's, Costco and locales specific to the Bay Area; Internet sites like Facebook, Twitter

and Craigslist; current events such as the Chick-Fil-A boycott; and his use of slang specific to the present time, like "throwing shade" and "chillax," ground the book in the reality of the 2010s.

Moving, poignant and funny, *The Days of Anna Madrigal* is a celebration of a life fully lived.

For readers who have loved Maupin's stories, especially Anna Madrigal's journey, I would highly recommend this book.

## April 7 comedy event to benefit LGBT program

The event "Don't Tell My Mother!" will take place Monday, April 7, at Laugh Factory Chicago, 3175 N. Broadway, at 8 p.m.

IMPACT, the LGBT health and development program at Northwestern University, will benefit from the event.

This evening will feature stories from Los Angeles actress Jen Kober (*The Mindy Project*, *Curb Your Enthusiasm*) and creator/host Nikki Levy, as well as local Chicago talent Fawzia Mirza (*Kam Kardashian*), Lisa Cordileone (*Easy Abby*) and singer JC Brooks (*JC Brooks & The Uptown Sound*). The Joans will perform.

Tickets are \$30 (general admission) and \$50 (VIP, which includes the 6:45 p.m. VIP reception and reserved seating). See <http://donttellymother.com/tickets/>.

## 'One Hit Wonders' at Black Ensemble May 18-June 29

Black Ensemble Theater Founder and CEO Jackie Taylor have announced that the world-premiere musical *One Hit Wonders*, by Black Ensemble Theater Associate Director Rueben D. Echoles and Dawn Bless, will run May 18-June 29 at the Black Ensemble Theater Cultural Center, 4450 N. Clark St.

This musical spans some of the world's biggest hits of the '60s, '70s, '80s and '90s. Songs will include "I Will Survive," "It's Raining Men," "Kung Fu Fight," "Doin' Da Butt," "Ooh Child," "Funkytown," "Ice Ice Baby" and "Macarena," among many others.

Tickets are \$55-\$65 each; see [www.blackensemble.org](http://www.blackensemble.org) or call 773-769-4451.

## GayCo holding 'Fives of March' fundraiser

Chicago sketch comedy mainstay GayCo Productions is holding its annual "Fives of March" fundraiser throughout the month.

The company asks for any and all donations that include the number five: \$5, \$25, \$105, etc. All donations are tax-deductible since GayCo is a 501(c)(3) organization.

In support of the fundraiser, GayCo will be performing in several variety shows across the city throughout March, creating all-new video and satirical online content and even holding an all-you-can-drink live fundraiser at The Waterhouse, 3407 N. Paulina Ave., on March 29. Visit [www.gayco.com](http://www.gayco.com).



## TELEVISION

# Nate Berkus 'Builds' a new reality show



BY JERRY NUNN

Making over homes comes naturally to designers like Nate Berkus, although on NBC's *American Dream Builders* it's a whole new ball game.

The reality-competition show has 12 contestants fighting for the chance to win best designer after an elimination each week. In the final episode the last two designers will battle it out with two Southern California homes to see who wins.

Executive producer and host Nate Berkus serves as judge, along with former NFL player/architect Eddie George and interior designer Monica Pederson.

Back in 2002 Berkus began on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, rocketing to worldwide success with a line of home products, two best-selling books and his own talk show. His Chicago-based design firm, Nate Berkus Associates, was founded in 1995. He is quickly gaining a back-ground in executive producing with this project and past ones like the movie *The Help*.

In addition, his fabric collection, Calico Corners, launched this past January.

We called the out, loud and proud Nate Berkus, as well as Pederson, to deconstruct the builders.

**Windy City Times:** Hi, Nate. How do you manage juggling judging, hosting and executive-producing *American Dream Builders*?

Nate Berkus: Well, what you do is you make sure that you're working with people you think are the best in the business because no one can possibly do all of those things. So for me, as the executive producer I was involved in the concept of this show long before any cameras were turned on.

That involved the casting and the location scouting; reviewing people's portfolios; [and] talking about the different design challenges and the architectural styles that we moved through. Also, [there was] using my relationships to make sure that the designers had fantastic vendors that would give them access to vintage, antiques, salvaged and fine contemporary art and all the things that they need or that they're used to working with.

A host is a host, and I hope I did okay.

**WCT:** I thought you did great with that job especially.

NB: As judge I got to work with Eddie and Monica. All three of us have very different sort of perspectives and opinions. I think that that was something that became very interesting through the course of the show.

**WCT:** There are some twists, with the Neighborhood Council being added into the mix.

NB: We built that into the show where each week they got to pick which of the two homes they preferred. Eddie, Monica and I had to send someone home from the losing team. So that actually made judging sometimes more difficult, sometimes it made it easier.

**WCT:** What did you think of the Neighborhood Council overall?

NB: We didn't always agree with what the

Neighborhood Council had to say, but it was a balancing act for me, but one that I was really happy to be involved with because it's design. It's what I love. It wasn't my talk show. I wasn't trying to make a chicken.

**WCT:** [Laughs] Well, I think you have done a great job. How did the designers get a spot on the show?

NB: The designers and home builders [who] comprise the 12 contestants were absolutely, unequivocally booked on their design talent alone. The fact that we got very lucky and have some really varied, extremely competitive people competing on this show was really a by-product.

First, they had to be able to design within an inch of their life because we wanted week after week the audience to be able to see absolute cover of a magazine worthy makeovers and the highest possible level of inspiration. So you can't cast for character if you really have to be focused on the results and what the design will be week after week when we complete these two full renovations.

**WCT:** Do we get into the personal lives to know which ones are LGBT designers?

NB: Eddie. No, I'm just kidding. There really isn't a tremendous amount of time to dive into their personal lives. Obviously, when you take 12 people who are consummate professionals, who are very established in their fields, and you put them in a competition setting with not a lot of time, and they're divided into teams which are not necessarily their choosing, you get a lot of the interpersonal dynamic between the designers and competitors on the show.

In terms of personal life, each hour of this show is so packed. It's the most ambitious design show that's ever been done with two full-scale renovations per hour. So you do definitely get to know the characters, and we certainly want people to know them, be rooting for them, and connect with them if they have something in common or they just connect with their taste. But this show is really not about delving into their personal lives.

**WCT:** How do you put aside your feelings and judge them on what they have done?

NB: We don't. We fought the three of us the whole time.

**WCT:** Really?

NB: Yeah, of course. I mean design is very subjective. There's not one way to do anything, but I think all three of us brought a different perspective to the show. There are many times that Eddie and I didn't agree, many times that Monica and I went sort of head to head.

I think it's about our authentic opinion and wanting them to succeed because they were picked to be a part of this competition and because they're all fantastic designers. I wasn't looking to be mean or to be demeaning or negative.

To be a judge, you're inherently judgmental. And that's fair, right Monica? We were laughing sometimes, like, "How do you like that?" And Monica's like, "How do you not? What's wrong with you?"

We really, I think, were very just straightforward about how we truly felt about everything that they did.

Monica Pederson: We wanted everybody to do their best. As designers, we know that they were working outside of their comfort zone. It's not the way they normally work in the real world of design. They're really good, and they're able to deliver. So I think we were very fair. I walked away feeling really good about it. If I was in their shoes, I would have been appreciative of the constructive criticism.

NB: Me, too.

**WCT:** How do you know when you are being too harsh?



From left: Monica Pederson, Nate Berkus and Eddie George on *American Dream Builders*. Publicity photo courtesy of NBC

NB: You know, it's not personal.

MP: Yes.

NB: You're judging what they were able to do and what they were able to accomplish. I think Eddie was very focused on how they were functioning as a team in the beginning of the competition.

I was very focused on what design ideas I had seen before anywhere. From the very first week of the show, my advice to them was if I've seen it before or if it's some trick or tip that means the audience has seen it.

So what I'm looking for is die hard creativity. If you cop out and do something just because it's the easy way out and it's something that everyone is familiar with, you're not going to win, from my perspective. You have come in every week and show me stuff that I've never seen before.

MP: There are things that I personally may love because it's my taste or Nate or Eddie may love, but there also some just really good design principles. We looked at that furniture layout, where are your draperies mounted, what's the color scale? These are all basic things that when you hire a designer, you know that they're going to deliver.

These are some of the big challenges that do-it-yourselfers have. So we also looked at it really from okay are they bringing those high end design principles to the table? If they're not, then that's a problem.

NB: Some of them tried to fight, but we didn't let them get through.

MP: It's not a food show, so it's not like Nate, Eddie, and I can sit there and go, "This is delicious, America." They're going to see it, so we have to reflect what other people are thinking.

**WCT:** When are you coming back to visit us in Chicago, Nate?

NB: I'm back and forth all the time. My design firm's still based there. I came in, like, a week ago and had the worst weather in the history of the world, cancelled my office meet-

ings, sat in my hotel and then flew back to New York.

**WCT:** I don't blame you. This winter was the worst.

NB: It was awful. I'll be back this summer for sure.

**WCT:** You should be our grand marshal for Gay Pride.

NB: We can talk about that. Maybe if Monica agrees to be on the float...

MP: I will be there cheering you on.

NB: I get to pick your outfit.

MP: Please do. I look like a drag queen. I'd be good!

**American Dream Builders tears down walls on NBC beginning March 23. Keep up with Nate's dream at [www.nateberkus.com](http://www.nateberkus.com).**

## Internat'l Vintage Poster Fair March 28-30

The International Vintage Poster Fair, the world's oldest and largest sale and exposition of original vintage posters, returns to Chicago March 28-30 at the Chicago Cultural Center, 77 E. Randolph St.

Thousands of posters, dated from the 1890s-1980s, will be on display and available for purchase throughout the weekend. Exhibitors from Belgium, France, Great Britain, Switzerland and the United States will be at the event. Styles include the popular Art Deco and Modernism posters as well as classic Art Nouveau, Victorian images and more.

The cost is \$15 for a weekend pass (Saturday and Sunday only), and \$35 for the March 28 evening preview benefit. Email [info@posterfair.com](mailto:info@posterfair.com) or visit [www.posterfair.com](http://www.posterfair.com).



## BOOK REVIEW

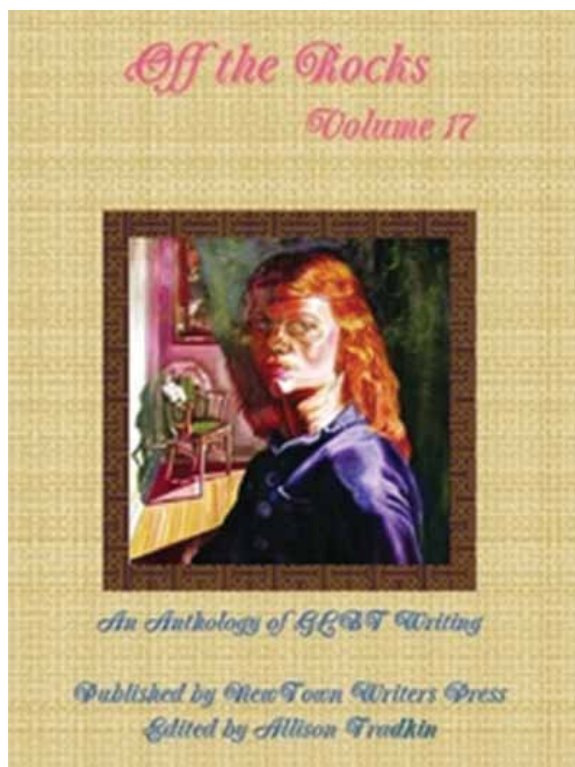
Off the Rocks,  
Vol. 17

edited by Allison Fradkin  
\$13; NewTown Writers  
Press; 159 pages  
BY SALLY PARSONS

I always look forward to reviewing the annual volume of this anthology series, put out by Chicago's NewTown Writers Press. This year's theme: subtext. We all recognize what that is, right? Maybe, maybe not, hidden under the surface as it is. As the Press puts it, subtext is "reading between, behind, beneath and beyond the lines." And whose subtext are we looking for—the author's, the characters' or our very own? Whatever: This collection of 28 short stories and poems provides a delightful potpourri of sad, sweet, funny, and reflective glimpses into the lives of an assortment of folks.

For example: the couple having a romp in apples. Or Gabriel, distraught over his lover's suicide in 1961 Seattle, who summons his "cousins" to witness his despair. Or the snide cocktail party attendee anxious to leave with his lover. Or Brady, the gay Mormon, who makes a surprising request of Lucas, his straight friend since childhood. Or overweight Gabriella, sweet on Meredith in their high school homeroom. Or Oscar and Warren nearing the end of their life together, filled with the richness of fairytales.

One of the joys of an anthology, aside from the diversity of perspectives, is that you can dip in for a short delectable, and jump out again at the end of a piece without the gnawing guilt that you've stranded new friends in the middle of some dilemma. And then you look forward to another dip, as time allows.



Many of these pieces are so rich you'll want to revisit them again to find new thoughts to nibble on. Enjoy!

Many of the submissions you'll find in these pages were penned by writers from the Chicago area, but this volume also includes authors based in other parts of the country, as well as in Turkey. The NewTown Writers mission is to foster queer literature and provide the local, national, and international queer community with opportunities to "... speak up and speak out, and to be heard loud and queer." Volume 17 of Off the Rocks succeeds admirably. It is dedicated to writer, performer and Chicagoan Cookie Crumbles.

## BOOK REVIEW

Teaching the  
Cat to Sit

by Michelle Theall  
\$24.99; Gallery Books; 273  
pages  
BY SALLY PARSONS

What is it about a memoir that is often so compelling? An account of a real person's life journey, recounted with considerable writing talent and courage, can convey more punch (because it is real? contemporary and therefore more relevant?) than a well-crafted fiction tale.

Theall's memoir is a prime example. She writes about her struggle for acceptance of her chosen family (partner Jill and their son Connor) by the Catholic Church and by her own parents. An award-winning professional writer, she records her story with skill and humor. Since much of her truth has its roots in her childhood, she interweaves chapters of growing up in Bible-Belt Texas with chapters that focus on her adult struggles. She is painfully honest in doing so.

Theall was raised in a small nuclear family consisting of her sister Kathy and her parents, all faithful, practicing Catholics. She was a lonely child and found purpose in running on the track team at school until she was kicked out of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and outed for being gay (before she knew she was).

Rationalizing about her daughter wanting to compete in sports, her mom told her dad that Michelle wasn't that good and if she lost enough times, maybe she'd lose interest. To which Theall replied, "Nice. My own mother wants me to lose."

As a young adult, Theall struggled to identify her sexuality. She experimented by dating men until she was certain the hetero life was not for her. Violated by a neighbor as a child, she read a self-help book and attended a support group for survivors of childhood sexual abuse. She



confronted her abuser. She told her parents she was gay. While Theall herself wrestled with all this, her parents, too, began a long and painful journey to process and accept their daughter's sexuality and chosen lifestyle.

Theall then entered a new period in her life. She quit her job and moved to Boulder, Colo., where she met her partner Jill. They adopted Connor and, their son nearly four, began the steps that would lead to his baptism into the Catholic faith. Theall thought she had her bases covered, checking with the baptismal director in her parish, who assured her the fact Connor had two mommies was not an issue. Father Bill started waffling, however. "We want our son to know God," Theall told him. "How can that be a bad thing?"

After the baptism, Theall was shocked to learn from another lesbian mom that the event wasn't what she thought. Instead, it had been

a "closet baptism." Father Bill had set the time for late in the day so it wouldn't occur at a regular mass where the other parishioners would know.

Theall eventually confronted Father Bill: "Connor doesn't need to prove himself worthy of the Church. The Church needs to prove itself worthy of him." Yet, it did not. She and Jill finally left the Catholic Church in search of a religious community that would embrace their family. She remained tormented, though, and was brutally honest with herself. "Why can't I make peace with it [the decision to leave her faith]? Why do I want to go back?" A part of her, she knew, "... still believes that a church that accepts gay people isn't much of a church at all."

Theall knew she needed to stand up for her son and put to bed her shame of long standing. Part of her struggle in putting her story to paper was the fear that, in order to be a good mother, she might have to be a bad daughter and risk losing the love of her parents for good. Additionally, there was the strain caused by her mother's inability to fully accept Jill as Theall's partner and Connor's mom.

Theall finally realized she was betraying herself by remaining silent about the hypocrisy she experienced in her parish. She contacted a reporter and thus began her journey that eventually resulted in this memoir. She also made a final stand with her mother about accepting her family with Jill and Connor.

If you like to enfold yourself for a brief time in the lives of others who struggle against prejudice and for self-acceptance, and who tackle all of this with clarity, humor, and great honesty, you will find this book worthwhile.

Michelle Theall teaches writing and photography. She won a GLAAD Media Award nomination in 2011 for an essay that inspired this memoir. She founded Women's Adventure magazine. Theall lives with her partner, their son, and three dogs in Boulder.

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WEEKLY DINING GUIDE IN **WINDY CITY TIMES**



## Ora

BY MEGHAN STREIT

I finally made my way to Ora, a small sushi spot on the south end of the Clark Street strip in Andersonville. I was a big fan of Hamamatsu, the sushi restaurant that previously occupied the space, so I was pleased to discover that Ora is every bit as good as its predecessor, and then some.

The space is quite small, so prepare for a wait during peak times. The dining room is dimly lit with dark brown furnishings. It's nothing extraordinary, but it's cozy enough for a date or dinner with friends.

While the décor may not shine, the sushi most certainly does. The rolls are inventive, full of both unique and traditional flavors, presented beautifully, and most importantly, the fish tastes remarkably fresh. Best of all, Ora is very reasonably priced. The regular rolls are a steal at \$5 to \$8 a pop, and the signature maki is well worth the \$13 or \$14 you'll spend for ample portions of sushi goodness. And, Ora is BYOB to boot, so you can spend your cash on food instead of marked-up booze. Grab some sake, crisp white wine or a cold Goose Island Sofie beer—which I recently learned pairs perfectly with sushi.

My favorite roll was the surf and turf, a delightful combination of bright golden tempura



Ora. Photo from restaurant's Facebook page.

shrimp, cream cheese, asparagus and scallop that is all topped off with a thin slice of lightly seared beef. Each bite is an indulgent little meal in and of itself. I also enjoyed the dynamite roll, which is stuffed with a creamy concoction of scallop, shrimp, fish cake, cream cheese and wasabi aioli. It tastes like a baked seafood dip rolled up into sushi form, and while sushi purists will turn up their noses, the

rest of you will love it.

For something a bit more straightforward, the blue shell crab is a crowd-pleasing choice. I was also impressed by Ora's version of my favorite roll, the Philly, which was made with fresh and flavorful salmon smeared with just the right amount of cream cheese.

That said, you can tell a lot about sushi when it's not hiding behind all kinds of wasabi mayo and bits of tempura, so I'm happy to report that Ora also succeeds in the nigiri and sashimi department. Not only are the single pieces reasonably priced at an average of \$3 each, they are stunningly fresh. I couldn't help but order seconds of the escolar, which has a mild but rich flavor and distinct buttery texture. I also took my knowledgeable and helpful waitress's suggestion and ordered the salmon belly nigiri, which was ridiculously tender. The succulent piece of fish easily could have stood on its own, but the subtle ginger and citrus soy glaze it's brushed with only adds to its deliciousness. Many of the nigiri and sashimi offerings are dressed up with glazes and sprinkles

of garlic chips or chives, which I thought could be overkill, but because the extra ingredients are added with delicate restraint, they totally work—so well, in fact, that regular sashimi might seem a bit naked after you've tried Ora's creative preparations.

The selection of non-sushi offerings is small, but worthwhile. The edamame is given an upgrade with fragrant bits of chunky garlic salt. The seaweed salad is tart and crisp, and makes a fine pre-sushi nibble. But, the do-not-miss appetizer at Ora is the oyster motoyaki, a deliciously seasoned baked oyster. A spicy garlic sauce adds some unexpected heat to the tender oyster and Japanese egg sauce creates a crisp and golden, almost baked cheese-like, topping.

**Ora is located at 5143 N. Clark St.; call 773-506-2978.**

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

## Celebrations MARRIAGE: Rescigno/DeBello

Dawn Rescigno and Angela DeBello were married March 8 after 19 years together. Guests joined the couple for a celebratory brunch after the ceremony. The couple resides in Chicago with their 6-year-old daughter, Miuccia. The couple previously had a commitment ceremony in 2005 to celebrate their tenth anniversary.



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### GAY BARS RESEARCH PROJECT

**I'M A GRADUATE STUDENT DOING RESEARCH ON THE HISTORY OF GAY BARS.** I'm trying to find copies of Bob Damron's Address Book for 1994 and earlier, and Damron Women's Traveler for 1993 and earlier. If you have any that you would be willing to donate, I'd greatly appreciate it. When the study is complete, all will be donated to the LGBT Special Collection, Northern Illinois University. Thanks for helping further my research on the Gay community and preserving a record of our history! **Please send copies to: Urban Geography Project P.O. Box 1332 Woodstock IL 60098 (3/26/14-4)**

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# CALENDAR

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## Wed., March 19

**Affinity Forty Plus Meeting** Includes but is not limited to individuals who identify as lesbian, bisexual, or transgender women who are at least 40 years of age. Led by Glynis Morris. Activities defined by participants. Meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month. 7:00pm Affinity Community Services 1424 E. 53rd St., Suite 306 <http://www.affinity95.org>

**Baton's 45th Anniversary** Celebrate 45 years of glamour at The Baton with special shows all night. Kickoff of a big anniversary weekend. 6:00pm - 2:00am Baton Show Lounge 436 N Clark St., <http://www.thebatonshowlounge.com>

**Cinema Q IV Film Series: Summer Storm** (2004) Free film series celebrates fourth year with 10th anniversary screenings of four LGBT movies. Summer Storm (2004): Teams from all across Germany converge on a quiet camping ground for an annual rowing competition - including the defiantly gay team from Berlin whose arrival threatens to shake up the world of the closeted Tobi. 6:30pm Chicago Cultural Center 78 E. Washington St. [http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp\\_info/cinema\\_q.html](http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/cinema_q.html)

**Smash Out Cancer Drag Show** RU Proud and Alpha Phi Omega. Hosted by Victoria Vandekamp, a Roosevelt student. Doors open at 6pm. 7:00pm Congreg Lounge, Roosevelt University, Chicago [https://www.facebook.com/events/639705402749295/?ref=3&ref\\_newsfeed\\_story\\_type=regular](https://www.facebook.com/events/639705402749295/?ref=3&ref_newsfeed_story_type=regular)

**Music for Langston Hughes Poems** Chicago Pianist/Composer Stuart Mindeman creates music inspired by jazz, soul music, West African and Caribbean musical styles and the stories of the poems themselves. \$10. 7:00pm eta Creative Arts Foundation 7558 S. South Chicago Ave., <http://www.charlesheathpresents.com>

**Achy Obejas, Megan Bayless, editors Immigrant Voices** Anthology of short fiction by immigrants 7:30pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

**Renee Fleming and Jonas Kaufmann** Lyric's annual Subscriber Appreciation Concert conducted by Lyric Music Director Sir Andrew Davis includes selections by Verdi, Massenet, Gounod, and others. 7:30pm Lyric Opera Civic Opera House 20 N. Wacker Dr. 312-827-5600. <http://lyricopera.org>

## Thursday, March 20

**LGBTQ Happy Hour with Jewish United Fund's Young Leadership Division** Cocktails and learn more about the Jewish United Fund's Young Leadership Division. \$12 advance / \$15 door. Includes one drink ticket. 6:00pm - 8:00pm Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St <http://www.juf.org/yld/lgbtq.aspx>

**Lesbians Who Tech (and friends) March, Chicago Happy Hour** Lesbians Who Tech is global community of over 3,000 queer women in and around tech. Whether you work at a tech company, have a technical job or are just obsessed with every new app that comes out. Get geeky with techy folks just like you. Enjoy tasty adult beverages, Land gigs, make new friends and connections 6:00pm - 8:30pm Downtown Bar and Lounge 440 N State <https://www.facebook.com/events/655163644540302/>

**Congregation Or Chadash Explores "Judaism with a Queer Perspective"** Free seven-session course, "Hidur Keshet: Strengthening the Rainbow-Judaism with a Queer Perspective," on Thursdays through May 8 (excluding the week of Passover). 7:00pm - 9:00pm Congregation Or Chadash at Emanuel Congregation 5959 N Sheridan Rd., <http://www.orchadash.org>

**Newtown Writers** Chicago's premiere homophile (LGBT) writing workshop. More info: Barry Frauman, [barryfrauman@gmail.com](mailto:barryfrauman@gmail.com) or by phone. 7:30pm Contact for location 773-528-3637

## Friday, March 21

**Hannah Free screening** Hannah and Rachel grew up in the same small Midwest town, where traditional gender expectations eventually challenge their deep love for one another. Following the film will be a panel discussion with editor/producer Sharon Zurek, actors Taylor Miller and Maureen Gallagher and producer Tracy Baim. Admission is \$10 donation. Tickets online or by phone. 7:00pm Unitarian Church, 1330 Ridge Ave., Evanston 847-864-1330 <http://www.hannahfree.com>

**Out at Raven** Free wine & cheese reception just before a performance of GOOD BOYS AND TRUE. Long before "sexting" became common, a salacious video makes the rounds of an elite Washington DC boys' prep school. The star quarterback, who has some confusion around his own sexual orientation, is the prime suspect.

\$36 general, \$31 seniors, \$15 students. 7:00pm Raven Theatre, 6157 N. Clark St., Chicago 773-338-2177 <http://www.raventheatre.com>

**The Snow Ball: A Benefit for MidTangent Productions' Snow White & the Seven Drag Queens** Come support the upcoming production and meet the cast and have a fabulous fairy tale of an evening with drinks, prizes, and performances. \$10 at the door gets you two top shelf cocktails and an evening of magic, music and special surprises. Performances from Debbie Fox, Sari Greenberg and a preview of our upcoming show by Katerina Papadatos and the cast. 7:30pm - 10:30pm Hydrate Nightclub 3458 N Halsted St., <http://www.midtangentproductions.com>

## Saturday, March 22

**Frontrunners/ Frontwalkers Chicago Fun Run/Walk** A club for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transexuals and friends who are interested in running and walking together along Chicago's great open lakefront, meeting twice weekly, on Saturdays at 9am and Tuesdays at 6:30pm 9:00am Totem Pole in Lincoln Park <https://www.facebook.com/groups/52950773133/>

**Chicago Flower & Garden Show: Do Good.** Educational seminars, hands-on floral and produce workshops, how-to instructional classes, wonderful cooking demonstrations with leading chefs, marketplace where. Through March 23. Presented by Mariano's. 10:00am - 10:00pm Navy Pier 600 E Grand Ave <http://www.chicagoflower.com>

**Windy City Performing Arts' Spring Concert: It Gets Better, The Concert** Inspiring music and stories presented to remind us all that we are not alone, we are beautiful just the way we are, and that life will-and does get better. Tickets online and at door. Seniors \$15, or Students and Children \$10 will be available only at the door. First show 5pm. 8:00pm Ebenezer Lutheran Church 1650 W Foster Ave., <http://windycitysings.org>

**So You Think You Can Drag: Finals** All the winners from the preliminary SYTYCD competitions compete this night for the big win. Bring friends to vote for you because the audience has a say in who is the winner. Don't miss out on this epic event of the closing of season 2 where up to 8 girls will be competing. 8:00pm - 3:00am Club Krave 13126 S Western Ave., Blue Island, Ill., 60406 <http://www.clubkrave.com>

## Sunday, March 23

**Ethical Humanist Society of Chicago** Meeting every Sunday from 10:30 to noon, featuring a speaker on a variety of topics—personal ethics, education, psychology, politics, philosophy, medical care, equal rights, the environment, etc., followed by a coffee hour. Free and open to the public. Also Sunday School, weddings,



## GLESS IS MORE

### Friday, March 21

**Sharon Gless (left) and Maureen Gallagher co-star in Hannah Free, which will be shown at Evanston's Unitarian Church.**

Photo by Hal Baim

service projects, book group, film group. 10:30am - 12:00pm Ethical Humanist Society of Chicago 7574 N. Lincoln Ave. Skokie, IL 60077 <http://www.ethicalhuman.org>

**Scott Duff hosts LGBT radio talk show** LGBT-specific talk show "Out Chicago" on politics, entertainment, celebrity gossip 11:00am - 1:00pm WCPT 820 AM

**Gay & Lesbian Wedding Expo** Feature garden wedding giveaway. RSVPs are requested to attend this event by the Rainbow Wedding Network. 1:00pm - 4:00pm Holiday Inn Chicago Mart Plaza 350 W. Mart Center Dr. Tickets: <http://www.SameLoveSameRights.com>

**Holly Near** Holly Near inspire people to celebratw the human spirit. Celebrating 40 creative years of music, acting, songwriting, humanitarian work, and singing doe peace, justice, and feminism. \$26 general, \$24 members 7:00pm Old Town School of Folk Music 4544 N Lincoln Ave <http://www.hollynear.com> Tickets: <http://www.oldtownschool.org/concerts/2014/03-23-2014-holly-near-7pm/>

## Tuesday, March 25

**Frontrunners/ Frontwalkers Chicago** A club for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transexuals and friends who are interested in running and walking together along Chicago's great open lakefront, meeting twice weekly, on Saturdays at 9am and Tuesdays at 6:30pm. Totem pole in Lincoln Park, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/52950773133/>

**C.R.U.'s Real Talk!** Real Talk! Join us for fish bowl! Discuss 20 questions about love and sex. FB Event: <http://on.fb>

me/OfVrR2 C.R.U.'s FB Page: <http://www.facebook.com/thepecru> 6:30pm - 8:30pm Project VIDA 4045 W 26th Street <http://www.facebook.com/events/1394516904146864/>

## Wed., March 26

**Cinema Q IV Film Series: De-Lovely (2004)** The Queer Film Society fourth annual series celebrating outstanding LGBT movies. De-Lovely (2004): Anything goes in this vibrant, sophisticated musical biopic that frankly examines the life and complicated marriage of the legendary gay songwriter Cole Porter. 6:30pm Chicago Cultural Center 78 E. Washington St. [http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp\\_info/cinema\\_q.html](http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/cinema_q.html)

**Elton John: The Million Dollar Piano** Captured live from Elton's residency at The Colosseum at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, the epic concert experience features all of Elton's greatest hits. List of locations online. 7:00pm Various Illinois movie theaters <http://www.fathomevents.com/event/million-dollar-piano/more-info/theater-locations>

## Thursday, March 27

**Brahman/i: A One-Hijra Stand Up Comedy Show** About Face Theatre and Silk Road Rising present the Chicago premiere by Aditi Brennan Kapil, directed by AFT Artistic Director Andrew Volkoff, with Fawzia Mirza in the title role. Provocative play masquerading as a stand-up comedy routine, an Indian intersex person, or hijra, explores history, mythology, gender roles. Through April 27. Start times to come. 12:00pm Silk Road Rising, Pierce Hall at the Historic Chicago Temple Building, 77 W. Washington St., 312-857-1234 ext. 201 <http://www.silkroadrising.org> Tickets: <http://aboutfacetheatre.com>

**Dangerously Explicit: Painting the Gay Male Experience** David Getsy of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago chats with scholars Jim Vopat and Kate Pollasch-Thames about the work of Etienne, Roger Brown, and others. 5:30 PM Reception 6:30 PM Program \$20, \$15 for members (Includes open bar reception) 5:30pm - 9:00pm Chicago History Museum 1601 N Clark <http://www.chicago-history.org/planavisit/upcomingevents/out-at-chm> Tickets: <http://www.chicago-history.org/planavisit/upcomingevents/out-at-chm>

**Former President Jimmy Carter** Signing his new book, A Call To Action: Women, Religion, Violence, and Power, a book about women's rights. Tickets are required. A purchase of A Call to Action from Women & Children First for \$30.60 comes with a free ticket to the book signing. Pre-order a book and secure your ticket online or by phone. 6:00pm - 8:00pm The Swedish American Museum Center 5211 N. Clark St., 773-769-9299, <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

## 'Queer Queens of Qomedy' at Mayne Stage on April 13

The all-lesbian revue "Queer Queens of Qomedy" tour will stop at Mayne Stage, 1328 W. Morse Ave., on April 13 at 7:30 p.m.

The headliners will be Jennie McNulty, Sandra Valls and Poppy Champlin.

Tickets are \$25-\$25; see [www.MayneStage.com](http://www.MayneStage.com) and [www.QueerQueensOfQomedy.com](http://www.QueerQueensOfQomedy.com).

## Jimmy Carter coming to Andersonville on March 27

Former President Jimmy Carter is coming to Chicago to promote his new book, A Call to Action: Women, Religion, Violence, and Power, on Thursday, March 27, 6-8 p.m.

Women & Children First Bookstore is hosting the event at the Swedish American Museum, 5211 N. Clark St. The event will be a signing only.

Tickets are required. A purchase of A Call to Action from Women & Children First comes with



Poppy Champlin. Photo from Champlin

a free ticket to the book-signing. The book publishes on March 25; the price including tax is \$30.60. Call 773-769-9299 or go to [www.womenandchildrenfirst.com](http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com) for more information or to pre-order a book and secure your ticket.

Carter's A Call to Action is being published in

late March and is a book about women's rights. In the president's travels around the world, he has noted many abuses against women and girls, as well as the religious beliefs that are sometimes used to justify those abuses. The president is the author of numerous other books, most recently the controversial Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid.

## Dustin Lance Black at Elmhurst on May 8

Openly gay and Oscar-winning screenwriter Dustin Lance Black (Milk) will be at Elmhurst College's Frick Center Thursday, May 8, at 7 p.m.

In addition to Milk, Black's credits also include the movie J. Edgar and the play 8, which portrays the closing arguments in the federal trial that led to the overturning of California's Proposition 8 and the establishment of marriage equality in the nation's largest state..

Visit [http://public.elmhurst.edu/cultural\\_events](http://public.elmhurst.edu/cultural_events).

## Against Me! performing in Palatine April 4

Against Me!—a band headed by trans Chicago singer Laura Jane Grace—is touring to support the CD Transgender Dysphoria Blues, which was released Jan. 21.

Among the cities on the North America tour are Austin, Texas (SXSW festival); Denver; Vancouver; Indianapolis; Asheville, N.C.; and Las Vegas. The band will perform in Palatine, Ill., on April 4.

See [www.againstme.net](http://www.againstme.net).

## Katy Perry adds second show at United Center

Katy Perry will now also perform Aug. 8 at Chicago's United Center, following the sold-out Aug. 7 show in the same venue.

The shows are part of the Prismatic world tour. Part of the tour will be with lesbian musical duo Tegan and Sara (although the Chicago shows will feature Capital Cities instead).

See [www.KatyPerry.com](http://www.KatyPerry.com) and [www.Ticketmaster.com](http://www.Ticketmaster.com).



# BILLY MASTERS

"She's a choreographer, she's not a director. I'm sorry, but there's a difference. ... I love Susan and I love her work, but I resent choreographers-turned-directors and NOT directing."—Patti LuPone shares her opinion on Susan Stroman, "director" of the upcoming *Bullets Over Broadway*. This may also explain why Patti isn't playing Helen Sinclair!

I don't want to alarm anyone, but I have just learned about a catastrophe of international proportions: We are in the midst of an acute shortage of clowns. Yes, clowns. Believe it or



Diana Ross is trying to turn back time, Billy says. Photo by Jerry Nunn

not, becoming a clown is a less appealing career option than it once was. Perhaps because we now have reality shows—as was evident while watching the finale of *The Bachelor*. Juan Pablo has worked overtime to earn the title of the most hated bachelor ever.

Here's what you probably don't know—throughout this process, Juan Pablo had no idea he was the most hated man in Bachelor history ... and that takes some doing after Jake Pavelka. But since he loves to samba, he assumed that after the show wrapped, he'd smoothly segue over to *Dancing with the Stars*. In fact, he was told as much by the producers. He and Nikki planned to move to Los Angeles and continue on the road to stardom. However, in light of some questionable comments about gay people, producers at DWTS realized that Juan Pablo was box-office poison and made a last-minute decision to dump him. This is what he meant when he said plans for the future were up in the air. He said he got some information two weeks earlier from the production team and everything "changed drastically." Speaking of drastic changes, he most certainly planned to propose to Nikki on live television. But once ABC cut him loose, he decided to stop playing ball. Being as gracious as ever, the moment "After The Final Rose" was over, Juan Pablo and Nikki stormed out of the studio. He nixed all exit interviews, including a trip to NYC to appear on *Good Morning America* the next day. A rose by any other name...

The guessing game as to who will replace Piers Morgan has already begun, and the first person to toss his name in the ring was the guy he replaced. Larry King let it be known that he's ready and willing to return to work—if someone would just remind him what that job was! The popular choice within CNN for a replacement is Anderson Cooper. Also on the short list is Anthony Bourdain, who I'm told is incredibly popular. Ann Curry is being considered, as is Joy Behar—she formerly of HLN and Al-Jazeera. But the most interesting name to surface is someone who wasn't on anyone's

list: Rosie O'Donnell! After reading rumors that she was a contender, Rosie had her agents call CNN. Their response? "We're not interested; we were never interested." Says O'Donnell, "It was never true, but I would have loved it." However, given her interest, I hear she is actually now being considered.

The Broadway smash *Motown: The Musical* will soon open in London's West End, and it could have an interesting cast member. The original Queen of *Motown*, Miss Ross, has let it be known that she would be interested in appearing in the show—playing HERSELF! Bear in mind the musical covers the early years of The Supremes, when Diane was teenager embarking on an affair with Berry Gordy. Not a problem to Miss Ross—after all, she also successfully campaigned to star in *The Wiz*!

Many outlets are reporting there was a diva smackdown last week. And if there's anything we enjoy more than a rumor, it's one that involves divas smacking each other. And it happened at the White House! Aretha Franklin and Patti LaBelle were celebrating "Women of Soul." Aretha entered through a crowd of people. On the video, LaBelle reaches out to greet her and appears to be dismissively shoved. Of course, there's two times you don't get in Aretha's way—when she's headed to a stage or an all-you-can-eat buffet! Patti's lucky she didn't lose an arm.

Frank Ocean proved that sometimes it's easier to give back the money than deliver. The singer signed a contract with Chipotle to record a cover of "Pure Imagination" for an ad campaign and they paid him half his fee. Problem is, Frank never delivered the song. He claims he was deceived—that he was told the song would be used for a PSA to promote responsible farming, and that he would be given final approval (two points which allegedly do not appear in the contract). When Chipotle filed breach of contract suit, he sent them back a check for \$212,500.00 (which is the amount he had been paid) with the notation "FUCK OFF." Well, that says it all!

Our "Ask Billy" question comes from Gary in Austin: "I read that Jake Gyllenhaal was filming a nude scene and photos are circulating. What is the movie and do you think you could track down the photos?"

I'm almost insulted—insulted that you would think I didn't already have the photos! The film in question is called *Everest*, and it's about climbing Mount Everest. Now why people climbing a mountain covered in snow would be running around naked is anyone's guess—maybe it's a dream sequence. It certainly would be a dream come true for me after being disappointed by Jake one too many times. Sure, he's teased us with his sexy Santa dance in *Jarhead* and riding bareback in *Prince of Persia*. We even settled for his stunt double in the *Brokeback Mountain* nude scenes. Finally, Jake is showing all—or is he??? The photos are fascinating not only for what they show, but what they don't. Sure, Jake is almost completely nude. But he is wearing what is known in the business as a "cock sock" over his nether regions. But unlike most of these devices, this one seems larger than usual. In fact, it appears to be more of a flap attached with some flesh-colored adhesive tape. Oh, and the flap is black. Strangely, the photos have been wiped from the web—except for the ones on BillyMasters.com.

When I'm off to climb ev'ry mountain, it's definitely time to end yet another column. Like Jake, this column was slightly longer than usual. So let us quickly remind you to check out [www.BillyMasters.com](http://www.BillyMasters.com)—the site that often requires extra oxygen at its peaks! If you have a question for me, send it along to [Billy@BillyMasters.com](mailto:Billy@BillyMasters.com) and I promise to get back to you before Juan Pablo turns up on *So You Think You Can Dance*! Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

## 'Hannah Free' showing March 21

The Rainbow Alliance of the Unitarian Church of Evanston (UCE), 1330 Ridge Ave., will present Hannah Free on Friday, March 21, at 7 p.m.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for a dessert and coffee salon. Following the film will be a panel discussion. Admission is a \$10 donation.

Members of the panel are editor/producer Sharon Zurek, actors Taylor Miller and Maureen Gallagher, and producer Tracy Baim.

UCE is a "welcoming congregation" within the Unitarian Universalist Association. As a welcoming congregation, UCE pledges to address the needs of LGBT people at every level of congregational life, and celebrate the lives and loves of all people in the spirit of the first principle of Unitarian Universalism. The Rainbow Alliance carries out the goals of UCE's welcoming congregation.

Tickets are on sale; visit [ucevanston.org](http://ucevanston.org) or call 847-864-1330.

## Near, Ferrick, Honey at Old Town School of Music

Singers Holly Near and Melissa Ferrick are among the upcoming acts at Old Town School of Music, 4544 N. Lincoln Ave.

Near will be in concert with pianist John Buccino and Emma's Revolution on Sunday, March 23, at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. (Tickets are \$24-\$26.) Her newest CD is *Peace Becomes You*.

Sweet Honey in the Rock, as part of its "Forty & Fierce 40th Anniversary Tour," will be in concert Saturday, April 12, at 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. Admission is \$43-\$45.



Holly Near. Photo by Donna Korones

Alt-rock singer Ferrick will perform Sunday, June 22, at 7 p.m. (Tickets are \$26-\$28.)

Upcoming acts/events include the Chicago Reel global dance party (March 28), Hugh Masekela (March 28), John Cale (April 17), Joni Mitchell's *Blue: A Celebration* (May 4) and Suzanne Vega (May 15), among many others. Nanci Griffith's shows, originally slated for April 5-6, have been postponed.

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

## Matt Goss out with 'I Do'

British crooner Matt Goss has released an EP featuring "I Do," which he has described as "the perfect proposal song that is as inclusive as it is romantic."

Other tracks include "Mustang," "Lovely Las Vegas," and "There's Nothing Like This," all of which will appear on Goss' full-length album, *Life You Imagine*, in the spring.

His weekly performance of Matt Goss Live at Caesars Palace has been called the "hottest show in Vegas" by the *Los Angeles Times* and was recently extended through June.

See [www.iammattgoss.com](http://www.iammattgoss.com).





Billie Jean King.

## Billie Jean King to speak at CFW annual luncheon

Activist/tennis icon Billie Jean King will be the keynote speaker at the Chicago Foundation for Women's (CFW's) 29th Annual Luncheon on Sept. 18 at the Hyatt Regency Chicago, 151 E. Wacker Dr.

The luncheon will celebrate the achievements of women and girls by bringing together a diverse audience that includes business, philanthropy, government, nonprofit, media and community members. Proceeds help CFW achieve its mission to connect need, money

and solutions for women and girls throughout metropolitan Chicago.

A networking reception will take place 11 a.m.-12 p.m. The luncheon and keynote address will take place 12-1:30 p.m.

Visit [www.cfw.org/luncheon](http://www.cfw.org/luncheon).

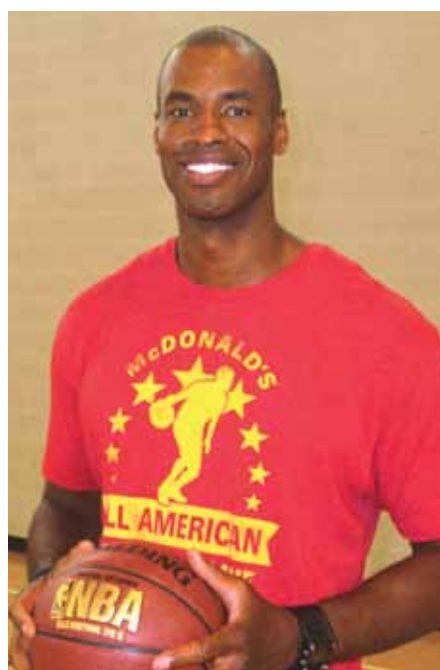
## Chicago Force QB out with music video

Chicago Force quarterback Sami Grisafe has released a video for her song "Carousel."

Grisafe is an out award-winning singer-songwriter and all-star athlete whose music embodies a folk-rock style. This past fall, Grisafe, an equality advocate, headlined the Rock the March concert with her new song, "Brand New Fairy Tale," at the March on Springfield for Marriage Equality.

Grisafe is on tour promoting her second album, *Atlantis*, and the new feature documentary, *The Tackle Girls: One Team, One Mission*, which stars Grisafe and features her original music.

The video is at <http://youtu.be/6pKLSHIONk0>.



Jason Collins. Photo by Ross Forman

## Nets sign Collins for remainder of season

The NBA's Brooklyn Nets signed center Jason Collins for the remainder of the season on March 15, according to ESPN.com.

Sources said that the internal expectation all along was that Collins would be a Net for the rest of the season, from the moment he signed his first 10-day deal.

Collins is averaging 9.8 minutes per game off the bench in eight appearances since his historic debut against the Los Angeles Lakers last month, which made him the first openly gay athlete in North America's four recognized major team sports.

## Sochi event March 19

The University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) Learning Community will present "Sports, Sexuality and International Politics: Sochi 2014" on Wed., March 19, at the Richard J. Daley Library, 801 S. Morgan St., at 12 p.m.

The event will feature Cai O'Connell and Brittany James, who were interpreters at the 2014 Olympic and Paralympic Games; they will discuss their behind-the-scenes accounts of the games. Associate Professor of Slavic and Baltic Languages and Literatures Colleen McQuillen will also be at the event.

Lunch will be served. RSVP at [glc@las.uic.edu](mailto:glc@las.uic.edu).

## MLS to introduce pro-gay initiative

At the inaugural Out in Law summit, an LGBT initiative for senior leaders in the legal profession, New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman announced Major League Soccer's (MLS') decision to introduce new measures to protect gay players from discrimination and harassment, according to OutLeadership.org.

Todd Sears—founder of Out Leadership, the organization behind the summit—said, "The 'Don't Cross the Line' initiative will ensure greater protection for current and future gay players from harassment and discrimination. The Attorney General has a long and distinguished record as an advocate of LGBT equality and we applaud him and MLS for taking an active stance on this issue."

"Their leadership demonstrates an understanding that business and the legal community can work together to advance equality. It also shows their shared belief that whether in the boardroom or on the playing field, winning takes teamwork."

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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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