

ALVIN AILEY DANCERS
RETURN TO CHICAGO

PAGE 13

WINDY CITY TIMES

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

FEB. 11, 2015
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REMEMBERING
ANDREW
PATNER
PAGE 6



HENRY GERBER
HOUSE MAY
BECOME A
LANDMARK
PAGE 5



'PARIAH' AMONG
BLACK HISTORY
MONTH MOVIE
SUGGESTIONS
PAGE 18

Lesbian feminist remains focused

BY SARAH TOCE



Barbara Smith. Publicity photo

Steadfast Black lesbian feminist activist Barbara Smith has never colored in the lines, and after 40 years fighting for equal rights, she isn't about to start now.

"I see all of my work as being connected. So although some people would say, 'You're a publisher;' 'you're a Black feminist activist;' 'you were involved in the civil-rights movement, but also in the LGBT movement;' you were involved in building Black feminism and Black women's studies'... I see all of those things as being connected," Smith said. "Because they certainly were driven by my sense of priorities and consciousness about what I thought was important to do at the time. And all of the work that I've done certainly has a multi-issue perspective, an inclusive perspective, and a coalition-building perspective."

Becoming an elected official seemed the logical next step for Smith in the early 2000s.

"I ran for office for the first time in 2005. I'm no longer an elected official, but [for a time] I was on our city council—it was called the Common Council," Smith said. "I saw the work as an elected official as being very connected to the Black feminist organizing and the commitment that I had."

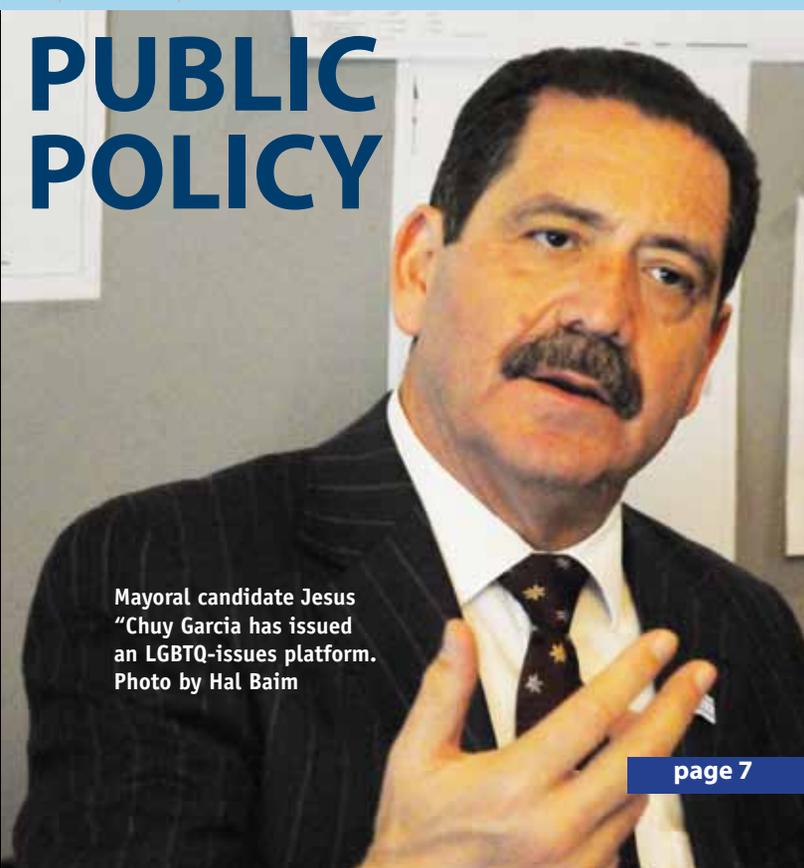
While connected to the work she'd engaged in pre-public life, some things were different.

"It was different because it was basically working on reforms and policy changes as opposed to working on movement issues. I sponsored legislation about immigrant rights the year before Arizona came out with their really, really repressive anti-immigrant legislation. Now, the resolution that I sponsored, it was virtually the opposite of what Arizona came out with a year later," Smith explained. "We talked

Turn to page 17

★ ★ 2015 CHICAGO ELECTION CHART ★ ★ page 9

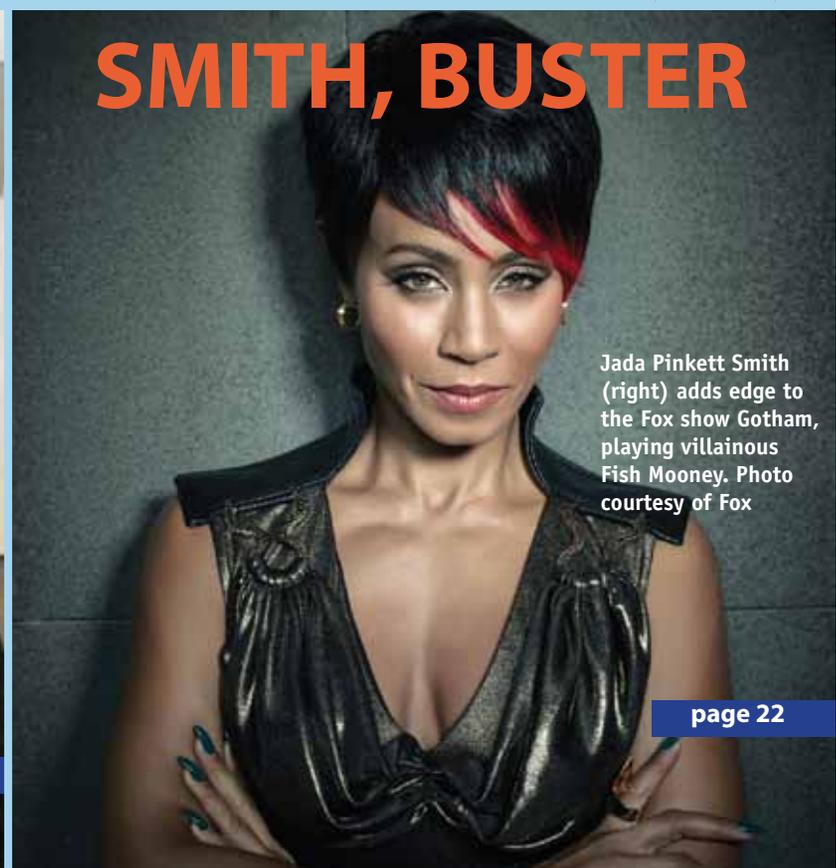
PUBLIC POLICY



Mayoral candidate Jesus
"Chuy" Garcia has issued
an LGBTQ-issues platform.
Photo by Hal Baim

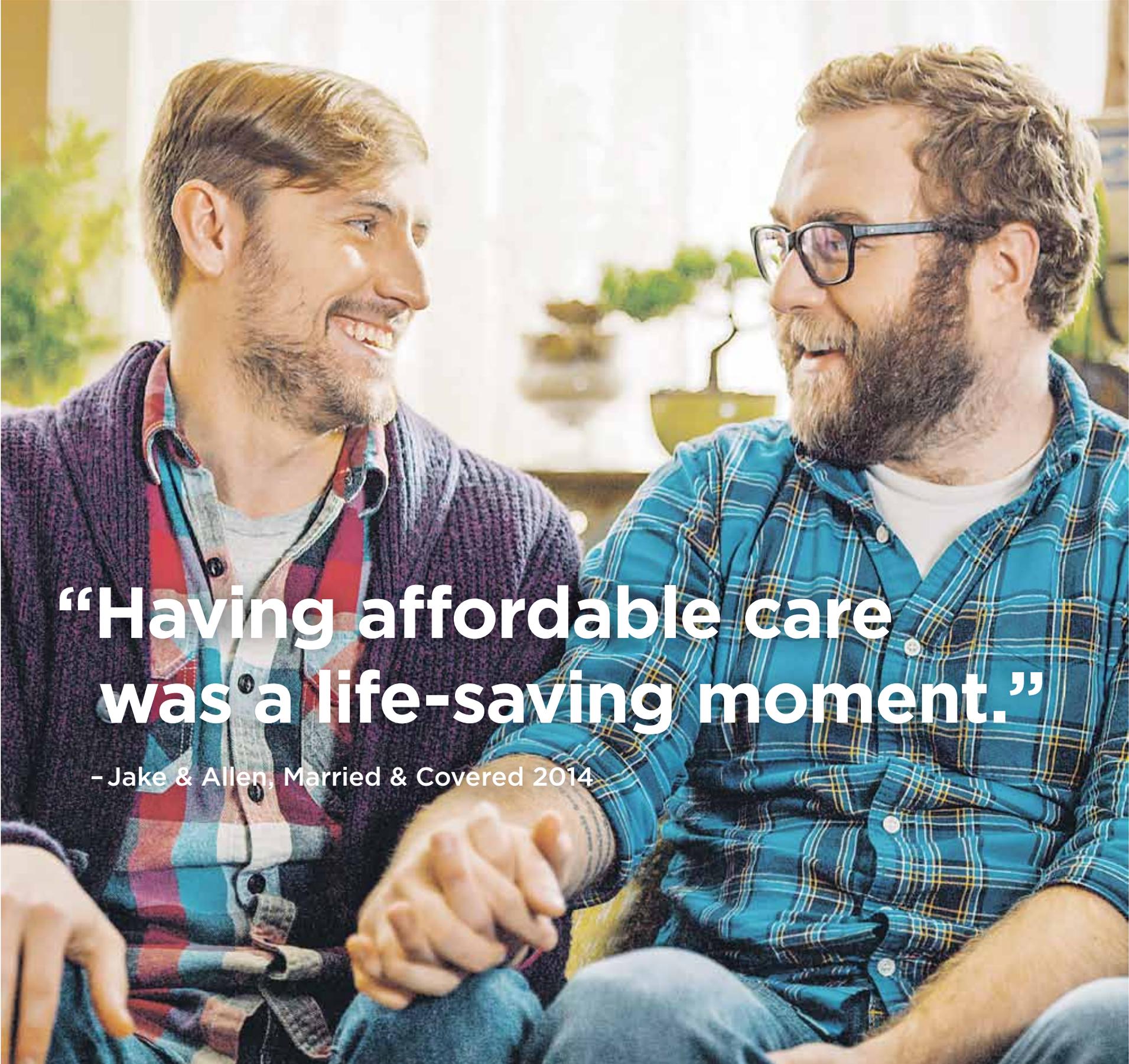
page 7

SMITH, BUSTER



Jada Pinkett Smith
(right) adds edge to
the Fox show Gotham,
playing villainous
Fish Mooney. Photo
courtesy of Fox

page 22



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NEWS		ENTERTAINMENT/EVENTS	
African-American HIV/AIDS Day	4	Dancin' Feats	13
Gerber House may be landmark	5	Lesbian feminist Barbara Smith	17
Andrew Patner remembered	6	Knight: 'Fifty Shades,' Oscar gold	18
46th Ward debate	7	Dish	19
40th Ward interviews	8	Hockey at Soldier Field	20
Political charts	9	Jada Pinkett Smith	22
Viewpoints: Monroe, Brooks	12		
		OUTLINES	
		Classifieds	19
		Calendar	20
		Billy Masters	21

Images on cover (left, from top): Photo of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater dancers by Paul Kolnik; photo of Andrew Patner by Israel Wright; photo of Henry Gerber; still of Pariah from Focus Features

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LEGAL EAGLE
About to step down, Masen Davis (left) reflects on time spent leading the Transgender Law Center.
Photo from Transgender Law Center



IDOL WORSHIP
Legendary singer Billy Idol brought his "Rebel Yell" to Chicago's Riviera.
Photo by Jerry Nunn

CARY ON
Musician Cary NoKey will open the "RuPaul's Drag Race: Battle of the Seasons" show Feb. 19 at House of Blues.

HEAR MY VOICE
Recognize: The Voices of Bisexual Men has writings from bisexual, polysexual, transgender and sexually fluid men.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT
Find out the latest about Robbie Rogers, Eva Longoria and Zachary Quinto.



THINKING INSIDE THE BOX
Music Box Theatre held a reception for its new concession stand and lounge additions.
Photo by Ed Negron

plus **DAILY BREAKING NEWS**

nightspots

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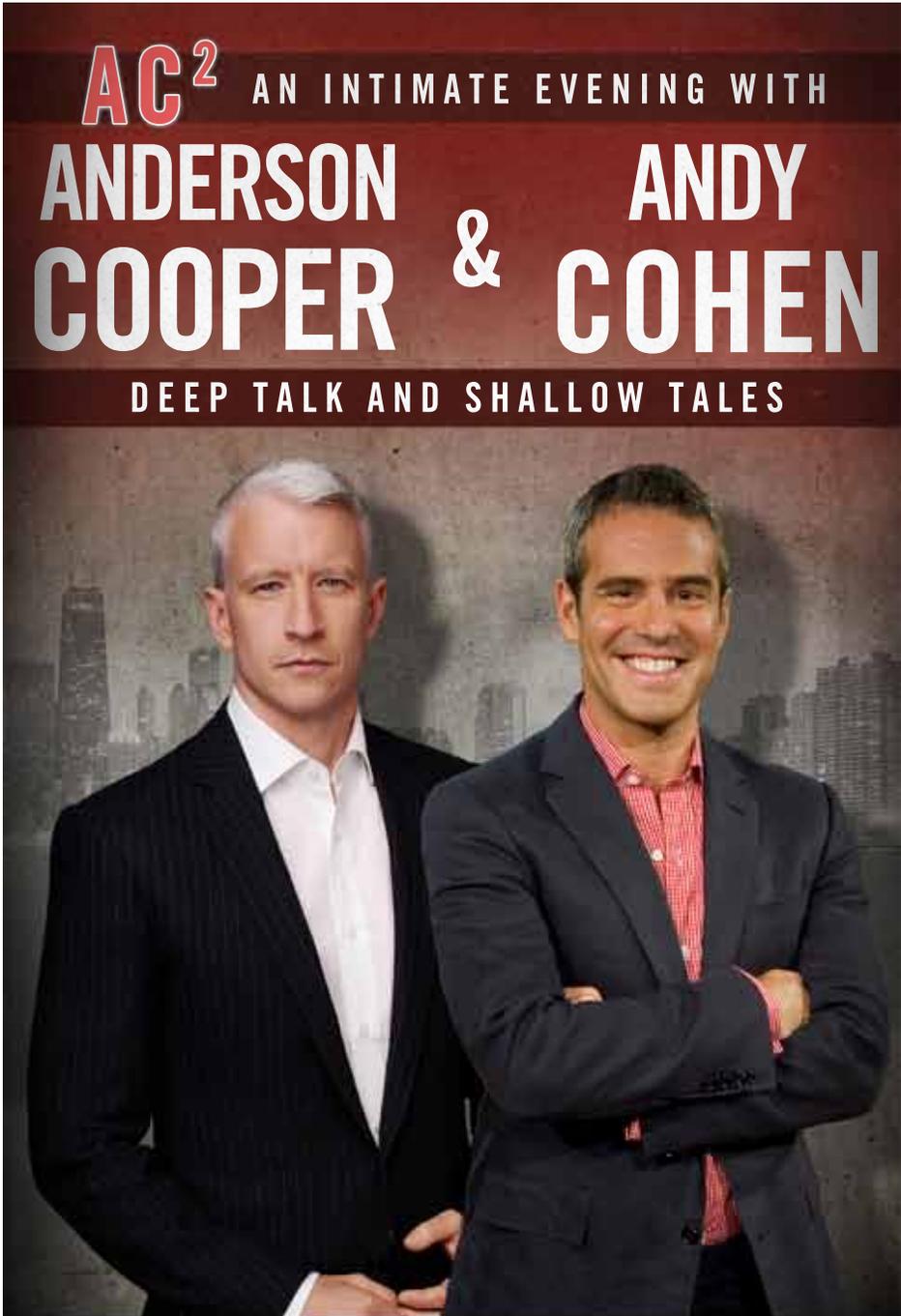
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Officials, activists observe National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Health officials, activists and community members gathered Feb. 6 at Mile Square Health Center, 1220 S. Wood St., to observe National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.

Among those who took part in the gathering were U.S. Rep. Danny Davis, state Rep. La Shawn K. Ford (D-Chicago), Rev. Doris Green, activist Marc Loveless, AIDS Foundation of Chicago President/CEO John Peller and Chicago Department of Public Health Deputy Commissioner Nanette Benbow.

While most noted that significant advances had been made in the state's efforts to combat new infections and provide meaningful care for people with HIV/AIDS, African Americans still made up a hugely disproportionate number of new infections.

"Currently 44 percent of people diagnosed with HIV are African American," said Atara Young, Westside HIV/AIDS Regional Planning Council chair, who hosted the gathering. "They are 41 percent of people, nationally, living with AIDS. In the Chicago community alone, we know there are increasing diagnoses for people with HIV, specifically if you look at the number of youth and young adults, from ages 19-24, we know that they are a growing part of the continuum of HIV/AIDS that needs to be addressed."

Ford added, "There are still 43,000 people living with HIV in Illinois, many of them undiagnosed. These numbers should inspire us to take bold actions. With more tools and opportunities to fight the spread of HIV than ever before, now is the time to reverse those numbers."

A key concern for many participants has been the disappearance of \$1.5 million appropriated for state organizations in grants under the auspices of the African-American AIDS Response Act Fund. Those funds were awarded to a number of state organizations in early 2014, but, for reasons that have not yet been determined, the money was never transferred from the state to the Illinois Department of Public Health. Since most of those organizations had already prepared budgets based on the awards, the state's failure to follow through left them in disarray.

"While the impact of not replenishing the Response Act Fund can be measured in services not provided, what is equally important is the impact that this lack of funding has on the already frail infrastructure for HIV prevention work in African American communities across the state," said Kim Hunt of Affinity Community Services and Service Provider Improvement Network, a coalition working to restore the funding.

Activist Keith Green added, "For some of these organizations, funding from the African American AIDS Response Act was their largest source of income. As a result of not receiving funds this fiscal year, many of these organizations have had to lay off well-trained staff or cut back on HIV prevention services, or, worse, close their doors in communities that are already under-resourced."

State Rep. Thaddeus Jones (D-Dolton) has introduced a resolution in the legislature, HB 128, declaring Feb. 7 as National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day in Illinois. The resolution includes a provision for restoring the lost funding.

Mildred Williamson, who was until recently HIV/AIDS section chief at Illinois Department of Public Health, spoke at length about raising awareness for the challenges faced by Black Americans with HIV/AIDS.

"Black lives matter," Williamson said. "This



State Rep. La Shawn Ford. Photo by Matt Simonette

powerful soul emerged from the grassroots, from widespread outrage, with the ease from which Black people—men, women and youth, including transgender individuals—can be criminalized, even killed, just because of appearance. It also has meaning for today's domestic HIV epidemic. Black lives matter. This 15th year of commemorating this awareness day, we highlight the toll of this epidemic on African Americans, along with the good news of scientific progress moving at lightening speed. Now treatment is indeed prevention.

"Yet lingering, persistent disparities remain, reflecting too often unequal power in society and in relationships, unequal knowledge about PrEP [Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis] and its prevention power, uneven practice and mastery of using condoms for prevention, and, among those living with HIV, differentials of who lives virally suppressed with high quality of life versus those who progress to AIDS and/or die prematurely."

Maurice Chapman, director of South Suburban HIV/AIDS Regional Clinics, commended Williamson on her position as part of Presidential Advisor Group on HIV/AIDS, Midwest Region, but said her speech "should also represent why so many of us are upset at the governor's decision not to keep her in her post of Section Chief of HIV/AIDS. That's a personal statement—I'm not representing anyone else right now."

Davis interjected, "That represents me, too." In his remarks, Davis was optimistic about the future, attributing his hope to the commitment of the individuals in the room.

"I remember years when we always were uncertain about funding, whether or not community health centers were going to last, whether or not we were going to get the resources that we need, to really promote awareness of about HIV and AIDS," he said. "Are we going to get enough money to make sure that those individuals beneath the surface really understand safe health habits and practices? ... When I see all these HIV/AIDS activists, all of them engaged in the community, and when I see my good friend, state Rep. La Shawn Ford, I know that we will march on until the victory is won."

Writing For Justice

BY CAROLINE SIEDE



Black Youth Project 100 is changing the world one meeting at a time

Oprah Winfrey made headlines recently when she suggested the current "Black Lives Matter" movement is lacking in leadership. While she supports those protesting police brutality, she also worries they lack clear demands. To those who share Ms. Winfrey's concerns, I'd like to introduce you to Black Youth Project 100, a Chicago-based national activist organization that is changing the world one meeting at a time.

Rather than center on the charismatic male leadership associated with the civil-rights movement, BYP 100 is forging its own kind of activism. Formed in 2013 in the aftermath of George Zimmerman's acquittal for the death of Trayvon Martin, BYP 100 is an organization of Black 18-35 year olds committed to community-based leadership. They approach activism through a "radically inclusive" queer and feminist lens. In other words, they lift up voices of Black women and Black LGBT youth while making issues specific to those communities a priority. BYP 100's work includes everything from voting drives to educational workshops to policy agendas to protests. Attend an event organized by BYP 100 and you'll likely hear chants of "Trans lives matter!" and the names of female civil-rights activists like Ella Baker and Diane Nash proudly celebrated.

Along with two co-chairs and a coordinating council, National Director Charlene Carruthers oversees BYP 100 chapters in Washington, D.C., New York City, Oakland, New Orleans, and Chicago. Each chapter has its own structure of co-chairs, leadership committees, and members who attend meetings every two weeks. Remarkably, Carruthers is the only full-time staff member of the expansive national organization. Everyone else either works for a small stipend or as a volunteer, sometimes devoting 20 or more unpaid hours each week. Janaé Bonsu and Larry Dean, full-time students and the respective co-chair and secretary of the Chicago chapter, know that reality all too well.

Yet despite being underfunded, BYP 100 is committed to fighting for justice in all kinds of ways. In the wake of Darren Wilson's non-indictment for the murder of Mike Brown, Bonsu, Dean, and the rest of Chicago's BYP 100 chapter organized a 28-hour sit-in outside of Mayor Rahm Emanuel's office. Everything about the event was strategic; even the time period represented the statistic that a Black person is killed every 28 hours by police or vigilante justice. The more than 200 attendees raised their voices in chants, held teach-ins about police brutality, and participated in symbolic die-ins. Protestors eventually decided to leave peacefully rather than be arrested when the building closed. Like everything BYP 100 does, the decision was reached democrat-

ically.

Since its founding, BYP 100 has combined art and activism in events all over the city. This holiday season the group organized "Black Holiday," a seven-day Kwanzaa celebration that included open mic nights, flashmobs, writing workshops, and protests to demand reparations for the survivors of police torture under the reign of Jon Burge. BYP 100 also recently participated in "Reclaim MLK Day," a massive march co-lead by more than 25 activists groups who hoped to reclaim Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy while showing solidarity with incarcerated youth in Chicago.

But in addition to protesting, BYP 100 is also doing "less flashy" long-term work like public policy advocacy. Bonsu recently co-authored The Agenda To Keep Us Safe, which lays out clear steps for ending the criminalization of Black youth, including demilitarizing the po-



Photo from BYP 100's Facebook page.

lice, establishing more community review boards, requiring officers to wear body cameras, and decriminalizing marijuana, which is disproportionately responsible for the arrests of Black youth. The Agenda, which is available online, effortlessly challenges the idea that the "Black Lives Matter" movement is lacking in concrete goals.

One of BYP 100's proudest achievements is creating inclusive Black communities for its members. Even when members disagree or argue, they do so like a family, always returning to a place of love at the end. Dean, a West Coast transplant, credits BYP 100 with introducing him to a powerful community of unapologetically Black youth here in Chicago. According to Carruthers, her favorite part of her job is "breaking bread" with young activists from around the country.

BYP 100 is always looking for support from the larger Chicago community, particularly from the white LGBT community who so often struggle with similar issues of marginalization. In addition to attending events and showing solidarity online, that support comes from doing the "less tangible" work of fighting racism in ones own community.

To learn more or to make a donation of money, space, or services, visit the group's website www.byp100.org. You can also follow them on Twitter @BYP_100.

Caroline Siede is a freelance writer living in Chicago where the cold never bothers her anyway. You can also find her work on The A.V. Club and Boing Boing.

Gerber House to be considered as national landmark

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The Henry Gerber House—at 1710 N. Crilly Ct. in Chicago—is being considered as a National Historic Landmark.

Gerber organized the first known homosexual-rights organization—the Society for Civil Rights, which lasted from 1924-1925—at the house, which is located in the Old Town Triangle Chicago Landmark District. It was designated a Chicago landmark in 2001.

The National Park System Advisory Board National Historic Landmarks Committee will convene in Washington, D.C., Feb. 12-13 to consider new nominations for National Historic Landmark status. The house would be the second LGBT location to obtain such status; the first is the Stonewall Inn in New York City.

Rainbow Heritage Network, which advocates for the recognition and preservation of historic LGBT sites, said in a statement, “Recognition of the Gerber house as an NHL will pay tribute to the pioneering work of Gerber and the Society for Human Rights, which he founded in 1924 and was the first chartered organization publicly advocating on behalf of an oppressed homosexual minority. The ongoing campaign for equal treatment under the law of all lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer citizens traces its origin and much inspiration to this pioneer and his organization.

“Recognition will be fully in keeping with the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Heritage Initiative announced by Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell on May 30, 2014. As one of the most significantly un-

derrepresented communities in the National Park Service’s inventory of historic places, the LGBTQ community will have instantly doubled its representation if the Gerber home is accepted.



Henry Gerber.

“Recognition of the Gerber house will acknowledge the extraordinary significance of 1710 North Crilly Court not only to LGBTQ citizens but to the nation’s own account of its civil rights struggles. Rainbow Heritage Network encourages all Americans to support recognition of the Gerber house.”

The nomination can be read at <http://www.nps.gov/nhl/news/committee.htm>.



The site at 1710 N. Crilly Ct. Photo courtesy of the Chicago History Museum

Schock aide resigns; rep has decor situation

A senior advisor to Illinois Republican Rep. Aaron Schock has resigned in disgrace hours after racially insensitive posts he wrote on Facebook came to light, ABC News reported.

“I am extremely disappointed by the inexcusable and offensive online comments made by a member of my staff,” Schock wrote in a statement released by his office. “I would expect better from any member of my team. Upon learning about them I met with Mr. Cole and he offered his resignation, which I have accepted.”

Before joining Schock’s office, Cole posted a series of videos and comments on Oct. 13, 2013 mocking two African-Americans outside his apartment in Washington, D.C.,

comparing them to zoo animals.

Also, a watchdog group thinks there’s something wrong with Schock’s Downton Abbey-inspired office decorations, The Huffington Post reported.

Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington filed a complaint with the Office of Congressional Ethics after The Washington Post reported that Annie Brahler, an Illinois-based interior decorator, designed Schock’s office for free. In its complaint, CREW says that by accepting the gift, Schock violated House rules, which prohibit members from accepting gifts, including “gifts of services.”

Schock subsequently said he plans to pay for all of the redecorating, The Washington Post noted.

The ABC News article is at <http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/senior-aide-rep-aaron-schock-resigns-racist-facebook/story?id=28756347>.

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Friends and colleagues remember Andrew Patner

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Andrew Patner, a longtime Chicago critic in print, radio and television, passed away Jan. 3. He was 55.

The cause of death was a sudden bacterial infection, according to his partner, Tom Bachtell. In a Facebook post, Bachtell wrote of Patner's unexpected passing, "Our Andrew is no more."

Patner was active within Chicago's fine-arts world along with its LGBT and Jewish communities. He was a commentator on WFMT radio, and his criticism appeared in Chicago Sun-Times; he wrote for Chicago Magazine, among numerous other publications, as well. He was inducted into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame in 2013.

In the days following his death, colleagues, friends and acquaintances spoke of his passing.

"Andrew's voice, keen intelligence and great spirit will be sorely missed at this radio station, which was part of his professional life for many years," noted WFMT General manager Steve Robinson in a statement. "Our thoughts and prayers go out to Tom and to Andrew's family ... Rest in peace dear friend. Your many contributions to WFMT and to this community will never be forgotten."

Chicago Symphony Orchestra Music Director Riccardo Muti said in a statement, "I am very sorry to learn of the passing of Andrew Patner this morning. I had enormous respect for him as a man of great culture and deep humanity. We had a sincere friendship, and his death is a tragic loss to the cultural life of Chicago.

My profound condolences to all his family and friends."

Lyric Opera of Chicago Dramaturg Roger Pines said that Patner was the first journalist he met upon arriving in Chicago 20 years ago.

"I was both gratified by Andrew's friendliness and impressed by his breadth of knowledge," Pines said. "There were a few occasions early on when he kindly let me tag along with him at performances—how invigorating it was to compare notes with him! I was always delighted whenever we happened to be sitting next to each other at an event, whether a performance, a press conference or a lecture.

"Of course, I frequently saw Andrew at Lyric Opera performances, at the CSO, and at various Chicago theaters. It seemed that anything worth seeing and hearing, anywhere in Chicago, he made time for—always. ... All of us in Chicago are poorer without his propagation of the arts and humanities, his intelligence, his energy, and his passionate belief in the imperishable value of culture to enhance our lives," Pines added.

Patner's Chicago Sun-Times colleague Neil Steinberg said in his column Jan. 4 that Patner's passing was "an unexpected blow to Chicago's cultural scene. It's as if the Water Tower collapsed overnight. Nobody will replace him. Oh, there will be people who will write of music, and host programs. But who will do so with his verve, this enthusiasm, his depth of knowledge?"

Members of the LGBT community paid tribute to his activism, particularly noting the time

sault and battery of a police officer. He has been ordered to undergo a psychiatric evaluation.

The original article is at <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/coast-guardsmen-fixated-lesbian-victim-mass-cops-article-1.2106705>.

Indiana woman in 1st same-sex marriage dies

Niki Quasney—the Munster, Indiana, woman who, along with her wife Amy Sandler—became one of the most prominent figures in the movement last year to legalize same-sex marriage in the state, has died at age 38, the Indy Star reported.

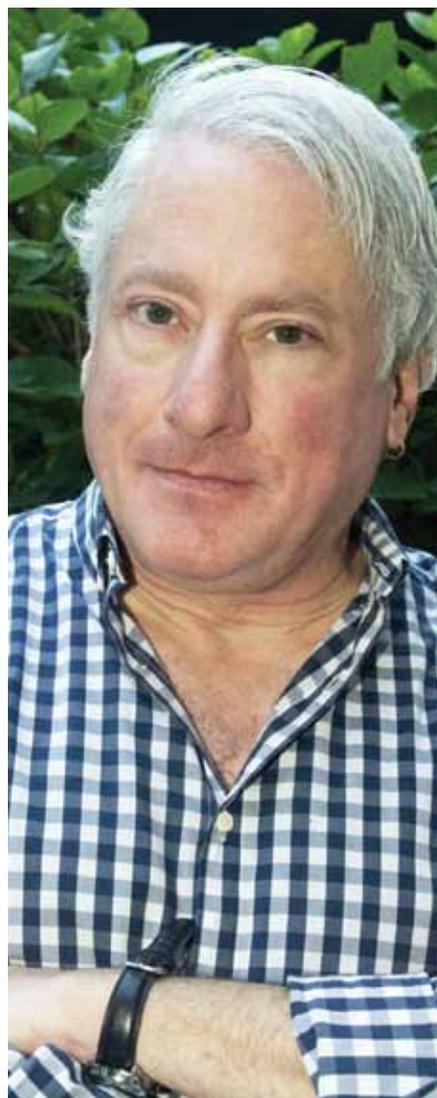
She died Feb. 5, more than five years after she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer.

Last spring, a federal judge granted an emergency request to recognize their Massachusetts marriage, a decision that made them the first—and, for a time, only—legally married same-sex couple in the state. The order led to widespread recognition of same-sex couples in Indiana, and it has been legal throughout the state since last October.

Lambda Legal (which has Quasney as a plaintiff) issued a statement. Staff attorney Paul Castillo said, in part, "Niki spent the last year of her life on earth very publicly fighting for her family and doing everything she could to make sure that her wife and daughters were protected. Although our hearts are heavy, we celebrate Niki's life and take comfort in knowing that Niki and her family were able to know—through their own efforts—what equality feels like.

"We thank Niki and Amy for their courage to stand up for their family and lead the fight for marriage in Indiana. We all owe them an enormous debt of gratitude."

The original article is at <http://www.indystar.com/story/news/2015/02/08/munster-woman-indianas-st-sex-marriage-dies/23050723/>.



Andrew Patner. Photo by Israel Wright

landed on his feet and found a home in Chicago for his unique and talented comments on the arts and life."

Legacy Project Executive Director Victor Salvo remembered first meeting Patner when the critic first volunteered to facilitate a retreat for the Chicago March on Washington Committee in early 1987.

"It had a transformative affect on the efficiency of a bunch of inexperienced, though well-intentioned, activists," Salvo said. "Andrew offered to do that because he saw the value in our work, to make sure Chicago was represented at the March. The committee took off afterwards and became an award-winning team... all because Andrew cared enough to step up. We went to Washington—and nothing was ever again the same—for us or for Chicago's LGBT community.

"We were part of the same circle of activists who had survived the plague and were still here working on our passions—it was our shared, unspoken obligation to our community because, for some reason, we had been allowed to survive AIDS," he added.

Salvo said he had been looking forward to having Patner take part in a drive to have Leonard Bernstein added to the Legacy Walk.

"To have Andrew be a part of it was going to be so wonderful, so right," he said. "Who knows what will happen now? It has been 20 years since the days when losing a contemporary was commonplace. This brings the finiteness, the mortality, and the preciousness of each of us into clear, crystalline view."

Activist William Kelley reflected, "Andrew's shockingly sudden death means that Chicago and his many friends have lost a brilliant intellect, a multifaceted man of innumerable accomplishments who was as quick to discern talent in others as he was to deploy his own.

"He seemingly never forgot a detail and could tell you who did what and how and with whom, whether it involved politics, the arts, social circles, or history he had absorbed. He was a generous source of information and advice, and his aesthetics were of comprehensive scope and well thought out," Kelley said.

Cannon recalled her first encounters with Patner, back in the early days of Chicago House, where they both volunteered. She noticed that he was quite often impeccably dressed, frequently sporting a seersucker suit and the occasional bowler. "I asked him, 'Andrew, do you think you really connect with your clients, dressed like that?' He answered, 'Lori, I've got to be me.' He always did it his way. He always fought for people who were suffering."

Kelley added, "I had counted on having him around for at least as many more years as I have left, and, along with others who felt likewise, I'll miss him more than I can say."

and energy that Patner contributed to help persons with HIV/AIDS.

Activist Lori Cannon remembered Patner's devotion in caring for his friend and roommate, David Edmonds, who was dying of AIDS in the late 1980s. "Andrew was so helpful at caregiving," she said. "He became an around-the-clock 'brother' to him."

Edmonds was a former lead soloist for the Chicago Children's choir so Patner arranged a private performance before his death in 1990, Cannon recalled.

"The last sound David remembered as he transitioned were these beautiful voices," she said, adding that Patner's devotion to Edmonds' caregiving took a harsh toll on his professional life. He lost his job reporting for the Wall Street Journal because of it.

"But he was invested in doing what was right," Cannon noted. "That's how Andrew's parents raised him and all his brothers. He

Nominations sought for 30 Under 30 Awards

CHICAGO—Windy City Times is seeking to recognize 30 more outstanding LGBT individuals (and allies) for its annual 30 Under 30 Awards.

Nominees should be 30 years or under as of June 30, 2015, and should have made some substantial contributions to the LGBT community, whether in the fields of entertainment, politics, health, activism, academics, sports or other areas.

The deadline to nominate individuals is Friday, April 17.

Windy City Times Managing Editor Andrew Davis coordinates the awards program for the paper. Hundreds of people have been honored by the paper in the more than 10 years since the awards were established. Most honorees have gone on to great success in their careers and educations, including working for the Obama presidential campaign and administration, plus individual successes in

music, legal, professional and academic careers and much more.

Individuals, organizations, co-workers, etc. can nominate a person by emailing Andrew@WindyCityMediaGroup.com or faxed to Andrew Davis' attention to 773-871-7609. Self-nominations are welcome.

The nomination should be 100 words or fewer, and should state what achievements or contributions the nominee has made. Nominators should include their own names and contact information as well as the contact information and the age of the nominee.

Note: Following the policy instituted in 2005, individuals can only win once. Those have won the award since that year are ineligible for this year's awards.

Honorees will be notified in May and recognized at a free ceremony Wed., June 24, at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St.



Anna (left) and Lisa Trubnikova. Facebook photo

Obsessed man attacks lesbian couple, kills one

Virginia Coast Guardsman Adrian Loya was apprehended after he attacked a lesbian couple in their Massachusetts home, fatally shooting one woman and gravely injuring her wife because he was obsessed with one of the women, according to The New York Daily News.

Coast Guard Petty Officer Lisa Trubnikova, 31, died at the scene of the rampage in Cape Cod. Her 30-year-old wife, Anna Trubnikova, also a petty officer, remains hospitalized with severe injuries.

Relatives told the Boston Globe that Loya had been pursuing Lisa Trubnikova for years, beginning when all three were stationed in Alaska.

Loya pled not guilty Thursday to charges including murder, attempted murder and as-



From left: Amy Crawford, Denice Davis and Ald. James Cappleman. Crawford head shot; photo of Davis by Matt Simonette; Cappleman head shot

ELECTIONS 2015

46th Ward candidates sound off in debate

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The three candidates vying for the 46th Ward's city council seat—incumbent Ald. James Cappleman, lawyer Amy Crawford and activist Denice Davis—faced off in a debate over the neighborhood's issues in a debate at People's Church, 941 W. Lawrence Ave., on Feb. 8.

Cappleman said that development had flourished under his watch—pointing to the renovation of the Wilson Ave L-station as an example—and said that crime in the neighborhood was going down. Davis invoked her experience as chief of staff to Cappleman's predecessor, Helen Shiller, and said that she'd be the best choice for residents to reliably access services and communication with the alderman's office. Crawford, for her part, said that Cappleman and Davis both had “polarizing voices,” and that she would be the best choice to take the ward into a new direction, especially with regards to development and crime prevention.

Candidates were allowed to ask their opponents one question. Cappleman first asked Davis what she would have done differently when she worked for Shiller. Davis refused to play into the question, however, and did not list any regrets. Instead, she said that, “We would continue in the vein that [Shiller] did, in terms of listening to the people in the ward.”

Cappleman then asked Crawford what work she had previously done to promote public safety in the ward. She said that she mostly had been “listening to my neighbor's worry. ... I realized that the next alderman really needed to be engaged on this issue.”

Davis then took Cappleman to task for his role in the Wilson Avenue renovation, insisting that the project had been in the works for two years prior to his taking office. He answered that he committed wholeheartedly to the project when he took over, and emphasized that point in a conversation with Mayor Emanuel in one of their early conversations. He discussed that conversation a second time when Crawford questioned how voters could trust him not to just “rubber-stamp” the mayor's initiatives since Emanuel's Political Action Committee had backed Cappleman.

Cappleman said he told Emanuel, “There are three things that are important to me: one—whatever is discussed, it must approach me with a sense of fairness; two, I must understand the negative repercussions of whatever is discussed ... and three, I want to make sure it is based on evidence-based best practices. ...

My sense is that when I voted for something, I was able to negotiate well. The mayor knew I negotiated well.

Crawford conversely asked Davis how she would be able to engage the Emanuel administration when her critical remarks risked alienating the mayor.

“I think he's already alienated himself,” Davis answered. “He closed down 50 schools across the city of Chicago. We don't have an elected schoolboard. ... I think he's done a pretty good job of doing that to himself.”

Davis also asked Crawford about her activist and advocacy credentials, saying that her children attended Christopher House, which Crawford said she's worked with, and added that she had never seen her there.

“I worked with Christopher House back in 1999 and did so until about 2001,” Crawford answered. “I'm friends with the executive director and she is a supporter of my campaign. I'm really proud of the work that I've done there, and I've been on the board of the North Side Credit Union since 2009. ... I'm also a volunteer at Howard Brown Health Center. I help raise funds for a number of years and have been active in LGBT civil rights cases.”

The candidates were asked about their campaign financing. Cappleman, who has been criticized for taking contributions from developers, insisted that 60 percent of his donations have come from residents and small businesses.

“They know that I have their back,” he said. “That's the role of a public servant, and that's been my commitment. However, I do fiercely believe we need campaign reform. ... I will not accept any campaign donations from any developer requesting an up-zone. I will not tolerate pay-to-play politics, not in this ward.”

Davis said that she had looked at both Cappleman and Crawford's financial reports and said that Cappleman's was “smothered with developers” and that Crawford's was “smothered with corporate [interests]. I, on the other hand, truly don't have any money. The great thing about it is that I have built so many relationships around the 46th Ward within the past 25-30 years that people believed in me, so they're volunteering their services for me.”

Crawford said that her contributions came from close acquaintances who believed in her vision, noting, “I've never ran for office before, so I can't call on developers to give me money. ... I deeply, deeply think we need finance reform, so we can conduct the process with integrity and no more pay-to-play.”

ELECTIONS 2015: MAYORAL RACE

Garcia releases LGBT-issues platform

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Mayoral candidate Jesus “Chuy” Garcia, among the challengers looking to unseat incumbent Rahm Emanuel in the Feb. 24 election, released an extensive platform documenting his positions on LGBT issues on Feb. 9.

Among those issues addressed in the platform are LGBT participation in city affairs; LGBT seniors, youth and veterans; HIV/AIDS; and challenges facing the transgender community.

In a statement preceding the platform, Garcia said, “I have been a steadfast supporter of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) communities throughout my 30 years of public life, even when it was not politically expedient. I will be a Mayor for all of Chicago, and the LGBTQ community will be an important part of my coalition.

“I strongly believe in full equality under the law for everyone regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. I support marriage equality as a Constitutional right. As an elected official, I was an early supporter of laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. I also believe in aggressively enforcing the laws protecting LGBTQ rights.”

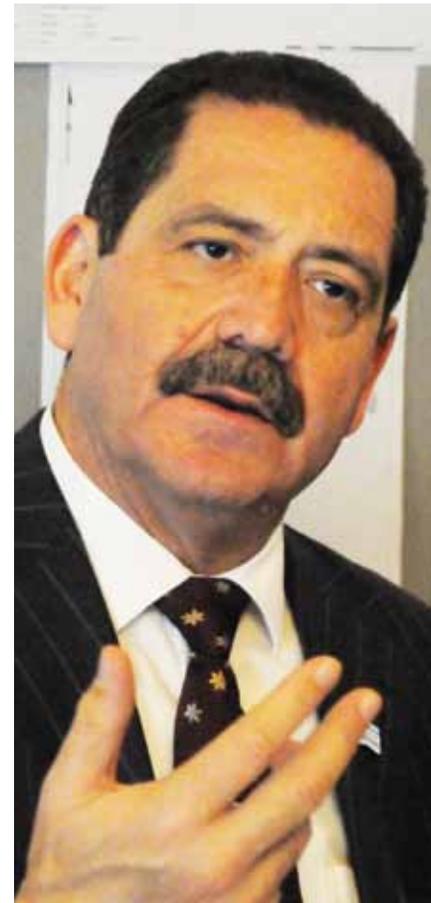
The statement said that Garcia's administration would be sensitive to challenges faced by LGBT Chicagoans of color.

“I will work to make sure there is racial and ethnic diversity in my proposed revival of the Human Rights Advisory Councils and in all groups addressing issues facing LGBTQ people in the city. I also believe that the current administration has neglected people in the neighborhoods throughout Chicago, and I will work closely with LGBTQ advocates to make sure the needs of all members of this diverse community are met in all neighborhoods on all sides of the city,” he said.

Garcia pledges to seek out participation in civic affairs from the LGBT community as well as reinstating the City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations Advisory Council on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues. He also says he will reinstate a liaison between the Mayor's Office and the LGBT community. Both the council and liaison were eliminated under the Emanuel administration.

The needs of transgender individuals are also addressed. The platform proposes extensive training for Chicago Police Department officers on transgender issues as well as a municipal identification card that would refer to transgender residents by their preferred gender.

Garcia would direct the Chicago Housing Authority to release unused funding and resources to address the disproportionate number of homeless youths who are LGBT,



Jesus “Chuy” Garcia. Photo by Hal Baim

and would support resources being made available through Chicago Public Schools.

Additionally, “I recognize that LGBTQ seniors face unique challenges, and I will work with the Chicago Housing Authority and community organizations to ensure that low-income housing is available for LGBTQ seniors,” Garcia said.

The platform calls for “a community approach” to HIV/AIDS, entailing comprehensive sex education as well as coordination between city and county health departments. It also pledges to engage city AIDS organizations and agencies.

Garcia also supports establishing a community center for LGBT veterans, according to the platform.

“My history with the LGBTQ community is a long one, going back to the mid-80s, when I had the opportunity to get to know people in the community in a more holistic way, and develop new friendships and relationships and really heighten my awareness of the community and its existence throughout Chicagoland, including in the district I represented,” Garcia told Windy City Times. “... It's been a great learning and growing opportunity, establishing relationships and getting to know the community, and it needs an aspiration.”

VOTE FEBRUARY 24 2015

MARK THOMAS 44

for 44TH WARD ALDERMAN

PUNCH 51

Photo by: Jasmin Bleu Pellegrino

ENDORSED BY

ROBIN COOK

FORMER ALDERMANIC CANDIDATE OF THE 44TH WARD

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**ELECTIONS 2015:
40TH WARD**

'Political outsider' Dianne Daleiden makes aldermanic bid

BY ANGELIQUE SMITH

Spirited 40th Ward challenger Dianne Daleiden has lived in the ward for three decades, and is a middle-school teacher and active member of West Andersonville Neighbors Together (W.A.N.T.).

As a community activist, Daleiden has regularly come up against her opponent, Ald. Patrick O'Connor, regarding ward issues such as jet noise complaints and charter school expansions.

Windy City Times: What distinguishes your campaign from O'Connor's?

Dianne Daleiden: My campaign is distinguished from O'Connor's because we're progressive. We represent the 40th Ward and I don't think Pat O'Connor fits our ward anymore.

WCT: What specific goals do you want to accomplish in your ward?

DD: One of my goals, other than regular ward issues, is that we need participatory governance in the 40th Ward. We have to replace our voter apathy with civic engagement. We have terrific neighborhood organizations and voice to listen to in the community. I would really like to have a more open, and not top-down, management in existence.

WCT: As a community activist, you've been very vocal about TIF transparency and accountability in your ward.

DD: I think TIF money could be used to help small businesses get open and stay open. There are many areas in our ward, although most of us think of Andersonville, Edgewater, Ravenswood, etc., but the Lincoln Avenue corridor could use TIF money for small businesses, community organizations and social service organizations that need to service the community and provide jobs. TIF money would be a good use to local businesses instead of connected commercial real estate developers.

WCT: What are your thoughts on the recent minimum-wage increase?

DD: I think it's going in the right direction, but it's not enough. We need \$15 an hour now, and I'd like that to be from large corporations who can afford it. And then look at what small businesses need and then graduate that level somehow so all workers end up with a living fair wage.

WCT: What issue is not getting enough attention?

DD: I'm active in many community organiza-



Dianne Daleiden. Official head shot

tions and my local Catholic parish, I'm a CPS teacher ... and what I hear from people when they express apathy is that they feel there is nothing that can be done. One of the biggest issues, citywide and ward-wide, is top-down parental-style management with no input from everyday residents who want a fair shake.

WCT: What are your views on the Chicago Public Schools in your ward and overall?

DD: I've canvassed hard to help get an elected school board on the ballot in the 40th Ward in February. Until that happens, nothing's going to change. We need educational leaders, parents, teachers, principals, and students to help run the school at the school board level; not connected corporations and business partners of politicians. I'd also like fully funded public education in every single neighborhood.

WCT: Would you advocate for mandatory anti-bullying policies/training in Chicago public schools?

DD: Oh, absolutely. I think it needs to be mandatory and monitored. Input from educators would be welcome in terms of how to best disseminate that program.

WCT: What do you think are the causes of, and the solutions for, the crime rate in Chicago?

DD: I have given that a lot of thought. I think we need to fight poverty at every level in every part of our city. I think we need to have fully-funded services in every neighborhood, including schools and mental health clinics. We need to have accessible, safe, and better public transportation in some neighborhoods. We need to give neighborhoods options—the minimum wage plays very hard into my fight against poverty. We also need a fully staffed, fully trained, well-rested police force would help. Overtime is not a successful policy for keeping police on the street.

WCT: What do you think would help the relationship between police and marginalized groups, such as the transgender community and people of color?

DD: Transparency in all conversations in Chicago is needed. Again, instead of the top-down management in which we live in many cases. A community-based police force needs to go hand-in-hand with neighborhood organizations and community leaders in terms of communicating wants and must-haves. We probably need more effective programs in public schools to reach out to communities and that better suit the needs of those communities.

WCT: What is your position on abortion as it pertains to the law?

DD: I'm a child of the '50s—I was in high

school when *Roe v. Wade* passed and I'm a proponent of all people having choice over their bodies.

WCT: Would you install a written policy in your office regarding sexual-orientation and gender-identity discrimination?

DD: Would I write something and enforce it? Absolutely! There is no wiggle room when it comes to people's rights.

WCT: Do you favor marriage equality (marriage between two people of the same gender)?

DD: Yes.

WCT: Do you favor hate-crimes legislation that increases penalties for crimes committed based on the sexual orientation or gender identity of the person attacked?

DD: Absolutely, I abhor discrimination in all forms.

WCT: Do you believe that LGBT individuals have the right to adopt children or become foster parents if they are qualified?

DD: Yes, if they're qualified, they're entitled to the same rights as everyone else and the child would be lucky to be in a qualified home.

WCT: What do you think is one of the most interesting or appealing features in your ward?

DD: We have a melting pot of a ward. It's interesting to me that it hasn't spread citywide in a way. We have a wonderful community and it has many types of people living many types of ways and we're all part of building and maintaining it. I never cease to be amazed by the human spirit and that's apparent in our ward.

For more information on Dianne Daleiden, visit <http://www.dianne4ward40.com/>.

ELECTIONS 2015

Guide to the gays

In the 33rd Ward, lesbian Ald. **Deb Mell** will face off against Tim Meegan, a social studies instructor at Roosevelt High School; Annisa Wanat, a nonprofit consultant; and Tyler Soloria, a student and activist for veterans' causes.

Openly gay Ald. Tom Tunney faces challenges to his 44th Ward seat from businessman Mark Thomas and management consultant and activist Scott Davis. State Restaurant General Manager Robin Cook withdrew from the race and is backing Thomas.

Openly gay 46th Ward Ald. **James Cappelman** will run against lesbian candidate **Amy Crawford**, an attorney, as well as Denice Davis, an activist who is the former chief of staff to former Ald. Helen Shiller.

Carlos Ramirez-Rosa is challenging incumbent Rey Colon to represent the 35th Ward. In September, Ramirez-Rosa told *Windy City Times*, "I am tired of the direction our city is going in. I see our public dollars handed out to private pockets while our potholes aren't being fixed and our schools are neglected. I also see the need for elected of-

ficials who are ... building relationships with community and advocacy groups."

Openly gay **Joe Laiacona**, who in 2010 ran against Mell in the House primary race, is this year challenging longtime Ald. Margaret Laurino for her seat representing the 39th Ward. Laiacona told NBC-5 that he is running because the district is changing and he thinks that Laurino has become disconnected from her constituents. Robert Murphy and Mary Hunter are also running.

Jocelyn Hare, who identifies as queer, has been a board member of the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance for six years, is a supporter of increasing the minimum wage, and believes in a woman's right to choose. She is one of several candidates challenging incumbent Ald. Leslie Hairston.

Lastly, on a related note, 15th Ward Democratic Committeeman **Raymond Lopez** has the backing of the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund (as do Mell, Tunney and Cappelman). Lopez and his family have called Brighton Park home for the last several years. He is one of several candidates battling to replace Ald. Toni Foulkes, who is now running in the 16th Ward.

—Matt Simonette



at Chicago City Winery on February 16

Host Elysabeth Alfano invites 3 celebs AND YOU to a dinner created by a known chef. Over food, cheese, beer, bread, water, cupcakes, performances & Twitter, the conversations & the unexpected flow at Chicago City Winery. Frank Catalano opens it up!

Jan 12: Chef Guillermo Tellez of Tippling Hall cooks for Rachel Ray's Dr. Ian Smith, Destiny Child's Michelle Williams, Hollywood Director, Cathryn Michon & YOU!

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Election 2015

WCT - In this election cycle, **Windy City Times** mailed questionnaires to every registered citywide and aldermanic candidate, to their address on file with the board of elections.

The questions were about a wide range of issues, LGBT, HIV/AIDS, minimum wage, crime, youth experiencing homelessness, and more. Some questions did not have a yes/or no or "correct" answer, but involved more nuance and detailed narrative answers. Therefore, this cycle we are rating candidates on an A-F scale, not by numbers. Readers will note not very many were below a "C" because those candidates likely did not even bother to respond to a survey from an LGBT newspaper. One surprising "C" was 3rd Ward Ald. Pat Dowell, who noted her opposition to marriage equality, despite being progressive on most other questions.

Also this year, we are doing something different, since some candidates really took the time to explain their positions in detail. We will be posting all surveys, as turned in by candidates, on our website. Look for a link under the Politics button at the top of our website, or search for the headline "2015 Election Survey Responses."

Windy City Times does not endorse in any elections, but we hope our survey educates readers who are making tough choices for citywide and aldermanic races Tuesday, Feb. 24. Unfortunately, no local LGBT political organizations are engaged in this election cycle, despite the important decisions ahead for LGBT Chicagoans and our allies. However, there are endorsements from organizations this publication deems to be relevant.

In addition, readers are urged to check out the mayoral and aldermanic candidates' responses to questionnaires from the Active Transportation Alliance (<http://www.activetransportation.org/blog/kwhitehead/where-do-chicago-candidates-stand-active-transportation-check-out-our-2015-voter-gui/>) and Organization Neighborhoods for Equality: Northside, or ONE: Northside (<http://onenorthside.org/aldermanic-candidate-questionnaire-responses/>).

Also, responses to Access Living's questionnaire are at <https://www.accessliving.org/1410ga87>. Access Living is committed to fostering an inclusive society that enables Chicagoans with disabilities to live fully engaged and self-directed lives.

IVI - Independent Voters of Illinois Independent Precinct Organization

CAI - Citizen Action Illinois

GIA - Grassroots Illinois Action

SEIU - Service Employees International Union

CTU - Chicago Teachers' Union

In addition, the **Victory Fund** has endorsed the following candidates for Chicago City Council: Raymond Lopez (15th); Deb Mell (33rd); Tom Tunney (44th); and James Cappleman (46th).

CHICAGO MAYOR

Rahm Emanuel (incumbent)
 Willie Wilson
 Robert W. "Bob" Fioretti
 Jesus "Chuy" Garcia
 William "Dock" Walls, III

CHICAGO CITY CLERK

Susana A. Mendoza (incumbent)

CHICAGO CITY TREASURER

Kurt A. Summers (incumbent)

CHICAGO CITY COUNCIL

ALDERMAN - 1st WARD

Proco "Joe" Moreno (incumbent)
 Anne Shaw
 Andrew Hamilton
 Ronda Locke

ALDERMAN - 2nd WARD

Stephen Niketopoulos
 Bitá Buenrostro
 Brian Hopkins
 Alyx S. Pattison
 Cornell Wilson
 Stacey Pflingsten

ALDERMAN - 3rd WARD

Pat Dowell (incumbent)
 Patricia Horton

ALDERMAN - 4th WARD

Tracey Y. Bey
 William D. "Will" Burns (incumbent)
 Norman H. Bolden

ALDERMAN - 5th WARD

Leslie A. Hairston (incumbent)
 Tiffany N. Brooks
 Jocelyn Hare
 Robin Boyd Clark
 Jedidiah L. Brown
 Anne Marie Miles

ALDERMAN - 6th WARD

Roderick T. Sawyer (incumbent)
 Richard A. Wooten
 Brian T. Garner

ALDERMAN - 7th WARD

Joseph J. Moseley, II
 Gregory L. Mitchell
 Lashonda "Shonnie" Curry
 Keiana Barrett
 Flora "Flo" Digby
 Natasha L. Holmes (incumbent)
 Bernie Riley
 Margie Reid

	WCT	IVI	CAI	GIA	SEIU	CTU
Rahm Emanuel (incumbent)	A-					
Willie Wilson	A-					
Robert W. "Bob" Fioretti	A+	Y	Y	Y		Y
Jesus "Chuy" Garcia						
William "Dock" Walls, III						
Susana A. Mendoza (incumbent)						
Kurt A. Summers (incumbent)						
Proco "Joe" Moreno (incumbent)	A-				Y	
Anne Shaw	B	Y				
Andrew Hamilton	B-					
Ronda Locke	B					
Stephen Niketopoulos	A					
Bitá Buenrostro	A					
Brian Hopkins	A-		Y		Y	
Alyx S. Pattison	A					
Cornell Wilson	A	Y				
Stacey Pflingsten						
Pat Dowell (incumbent)	C	Y	Y		Y	
Patricia Horton						
Tracey Y. Bey	A-	Y			Y	
William D. "Will" Burns (incumbent)						
Norman H. Bolden						
Leslie A. Hairston (incumbent)	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Tiffany N. Brooks	A+					
Jocelyn Hare						
Robin Boyd Clark						
Jedidiah L. Brown						
Anne Marie Miles						
Roderick T. Sawyer (incumbent)		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Richard A. Wooten	B+					
Brian T. Garner						
Joseph J. Moseley, II	B-					
Gregory L. Mitchell				Y		
Lashonda "Shonnie" Curry	B					
Keiana Barrett		Y				
Flora "Flo" Digby	B					
Natasha L. Holmes (incumbent)						
Bernie Riley						
Margie Reid						

ALDERMAN - 8th WARD

Michelle A. Harris (incumbent)
 Faheem Shabazz
 Tara F. Baldrige

ALDERMAN - 9th WARD

Anthony A. Beale (incumbent)
 Michael E. Lafargue
 Harold "Noonie" Ward
 Theodore "Ted" Williams

ALDERMAN - 10th WARD

John A. Pope (incumbent)
 Susan Sadlowski-Garza
 Richard L. Martinez, Jr.
 Frank J. Corona
 Samantha M. Webb
 Olga Bautista
 Juan B. Huizar

ALDERMAN - 11th WARD

John K. Kozlar
 Patrick Daley Thompson
 Maureen F. Sullivan

ALDERMAN - 12th WARD

George Cardenas (incumbent)

ALDERMAN - 13th WARD

Marty Quinn (incumbent)

ALDERMAN - 14th WARD

Edward M. Burke (incumbent)

ALDERMAN - 15th WARD

Adolfo Mondragon
 Raymond A. Lopez
 Rafael Yañez
 Eddie L. Daniels
 Otis Davis, Jr.
 Raul O. Reyes

ALDERMAN - 16th WARD

JoAnn Thompson (incumbent, deceased)
 Cynthia Lomax
 Toni L. Foulkes (incumbent)
 Jose A. Garcia
 Stephanie Coleman

ALDERMAN - 17th WARD

Glenda Franklin
 David H. Moore
 James E. Dukes

ALDERMAN - 18th WARD

Lona Lane (incumbent)
 Derrick G. Curtis
 Michael A. Davis
 Chuks Onyezia
 Consandra Harris
 Brandon Loggins

ALDERMAN - 19th WARD

Matthew J. O'Shea (incumbent)
 Anne Schaible

ALDERMAN - 20th WARD

Willie Ray, Jr.
 Andre Smith
 Willie B. Cochran (incumbent)
 Kevin Bailey
 Ernest Radcliffe, Jr.

ALDERMAN - 21st WARD

Marvin McNeil
 Jeffrey Baker
 Howard B. Brookins, Jr. (incumbent)
 Joseph C. Ziegler, Jr.
 Doris Lewis Brooks
 Patricia A. Foster
 Ken Lewis

ALDERMAN - 22nd WARD

Ricardo Muñoz (incumbent)
 Neftalie Gonzalez
 Raul Montes, Jr.
 Robert Martinez

ALDERMAN - 23rd WARD

Michael R. Zalewski (incumbent)
 Martin Arteaga
 Anna Goral

ALDERMAN - 24th WARD

Frank M. Bass
 Regina D. Lewis
 Wallace E. "Mickey" Johnson
 Sherita Ann Harris
 Roger L. Washington
 Vetress Boyce
 LaDarius R. Curtis
 Darren Tillis
 Larry G. Nelson
 Michael Scott, Jr.

	WCT	IVI	CAI	GIA	SEIU	CTU
Michelle A. Harris (incumbent)	B+		Y	Y		
Faheem Shabazz	A	Y				
Tara F. Baldrige						
Anthony A. Beale (incumbent)						
Michael E. Lafargue						
Harold "Noonie" Ward						
Theodore "Ted" Williams						
John A. Pope (incumbent)	A+		Y	Y		Y
Susan Sadlowski-Garza						
Richard L. Martinez, Jr.						
Frank J. Corona						
Samantha M. Webb						
Olga Bautista						
Juan B. Huizar						
John K. Kozlar	A+			Y	Y	Y
Patrick Daley Thompson						
Maureen F. Sullivan						
George Cardenas (incumbent)						
Marty Quinn (incumbent)						
Edward M. Burke (incumbent)						
Adolfo Mondragon	A	Y	Y	Y		Y
Raymond A. Lopez						
Rafael Yañez						
Eddie L. Daniels						
Otis Davis, Jr.						
Raul O. Reyes						
JoAnn Thompson (incumbent, deceased)						
Cynthia Lomax			Y	Y	Y	Y
Toni L. Foulkes (incumbent)						
Jose A. Garcia						
Stephanie Coleman						
Glenda Franklin	A-	Y	Y	Y		Y
David H. Moore						
James E. Dukes						
Lona Lane (incumbent)		Y				Y
Derrick G. Curtis						
Michael A. Davis						
Chuks Onyezia						
Consandra Harris						
Brandon Loggins						
Matthew J. O'Shea (incumbent)						Y
Anne Schaible						
Willie Ray, Jr.	C	Y	Y		Y	
Andre Smith						
Willie B. Cochran (incumbent)						
Kevin Bailey						
Ernest Radcliffe, Jr.						
Marvin McNeil	B	Y			Y	
Jeffrey Baker						
Howard B. Brookins, Jr. (incumbent)						
Joseph C. Ziegler, Jr.						
Doris Lewis Brooks						
Patricia A. Foster						
Ken Lewis						
Ricardo Muñoz (incumbent)		Y	Y	Y	Y	
Neftalie Gonzalez						
Raul Montes, Jr.						
Robert Martinez						
Michael R. Zalewski (incumbent)					Y	Y
Martin Arteaga						
Anna Goral						
Frank M. Bass	C	Y				Y
Regina D. Lewis						
Wallace E. "Mickey" Johnson						
Sherita Ann Harris						
Roger L. Washington						
Vetress Boyce						
LaDarius R. Curtis						
Darren Tillis						
Larry G. Nelson						
Michael Scott, Jr.						

CHART CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

	WCT	IVI	CAI	GIA	SEIU	CTU		WCT	IVI	CAI	GIA	SEIU	CTU	
ALDERMAN - 25th WARD Ed Hershey Daniel "Danny" Solis (incumbent) Jorge Mujica Roberto "Beto" Montano Byron Sigcho	A-				Y	Y								
ALDERMAN - 26th WARD Roberto Maldonado (incumbent) Adam Corona Juanita Irizarry	A-													
ALDERMAN - 27th WARD Gabe Beukinga Walter Burnett, Jr. (incumbent)	A-	Y	Y	Y		Y								
ALDERMAN - 28th WARD Jason C. Ervin (incumbent)						Y								
ALDERMAN - 29th WARD Deborah L. Graham (incumbent) Lawrence Andolino Bob Galhotra Chris Taliaferro LaCoulton J. Walls Zertina A. Smith Oddis "O.J." Johnson Stephen Robinson	A	Y		Y		Y								
ALDERMAN - 30th WARD Ariel E. Reboyas (incumbent)	C													
ALDERMAN - 31st WARD Sean C. Starr Irma Cornier Milagros "Milly" Santiago Regner "Ray" Suarez (incumbent)	B	Y												
ALDERMAN - 32nd WARD Scott Waguespack (incumbent) Elise Doody-Jones	A B		Y	Y	Y	Y								
ALDERMAN - 33rd WARD Tim Meegan Deborah L. Mell (incumbent) Annisa Wanat	A+ B	Y				Y								
ALDERMAN - 34th WARD Carrie M. Austin (incumbent) Henry Moses Shirley J. White Charles R. Thomas, Sr.														
ALDERMAN - 35th WARD Rey Colón (incumbent) Carlos Ramirez-Rosa	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y								
ALDERMAN - 36th WARD Christopher M. Vittorio Omar Aquino Gilbert Villegas Alonso Zaragoza	A-													
ALDERMAN - 37th WARD Leroy Duncan Emma M. Mitts (incumbent) Maretta Brown-Miller Tara Stamps			Y	Y		Y								
ALDERMAN - 38th WARD Jerry Paszek Tom Caravette Heather Sattler Nicholas Sposato (incumbent) Michael C. Duda Carmen Hernandez Belinda Cadiz			Y	Y	Y	Y								
ALDERMAN - 39th WARD Margaret Laurino (incumbent) Robert Murphy Joseph "Joe" Laiacona	A- A- A	Y												
ALDERMAN - 40th WARD Patrick J. O'Connor (incumbent) Dianne Daleiden	A A										Y		Y	
ALDERMAN - 41st WARD Mary O'Connor (incumbent) Joe Lomanto Anthony V. Napolitano		Y												
ALDERMAN - 42nd WARD Brendan Reilly (incumbent)														
ALDERMAN - 43rd WARD Caroline Vickrey Jennifer "Jen" Kramer Michelle Smith (incumbent) Jerry Quandt	C B													
ALDERMAN - 44th WARD Mark Thomas Tom Tunney (incumbent) Scott Davis	B+ A		Y											
ALDERMAN - 45th WARD John Garrido John S. Arena (incumbent) Michelle R. Baert Michael S. Diaz	A+ B		Y	Y	Y	Y								
ALDERMAN - 46th WARD James Cappleman (incumbent) Amy Crawford Denice L. Davis	A A+ B	Y		Y							Y		Y	
ALDERMAN - 47th WARD Ameya Pawar (incumbent) Rory A. Fiedler														
ALDERMAN - 48th WARD Harry Osterman (incumbent)														
ALDERMAN - 49th WARD Joe Moore (incumbent) Don Gordon	A B	Y												
ALDERMAN - 50th WARD Debra L. Silverstein (incumbent) Shajan M. Kuriakose Zehra Quadri				Y										

Windy City Times rates the mayoral candidates

Below are the results of the surveys mailed to the five candidates for mayor of Chicago, as of press time, Tue., Feb. 10. To view the full surveys, follow this link:

<http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/2015-Election-Survey-Responses/50447.html>



Rahm Emanuel (incumbent)



Willie Wilson



Robert W. "Bob" Fioretti



Jesus "Chuy" Garcia



William "Dock" Walls, III

For previous political coverage and interviews: <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/gaynewsarticles.php?k=Politics>

**ELECTIONS 2015:
40TH WARD**

Ald. Pat O'Connor: More than 30 years in Chicago politics

BY ANGELIQUE SMITH

Not without his share of controversy, Pat O'Connor has been a Chicago Alderman since the '80s, with a self-professed passion for government. An attorney and father of five, O'Connor favors marriage equality, a woman's right to choose and fully supports increased penalties for crimes committed based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Windy City Times: What has been your most significant achievement in your last term?

Ald. Pat O'Connor: From a citywide standpoint, I helped do the citywide remap for the first time, not resulting in extended litigation, millions of dollars in legal fees, and changes to the map with special elections taking place. Locally, I think getting the nature preserve purchased and designed and now being built is probably one of the nicest things I've done in the neighborhood in the last couple of years.

WCT: Tell us about some of the pieces of legislation you worked on.

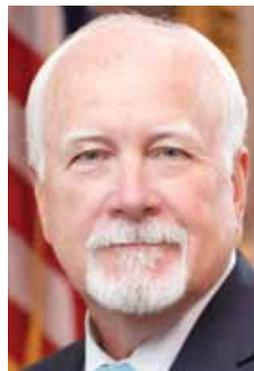
POC: I've worked on all the labor-union contracts that have taken place in the last four years. I've helped do some negotiating for police and fire contracts; I've been involved in some of the pension-related issues. I've done some good anti-crime stuff that helped the average person. The number one crime that takes

place now in terms personal crime is theft of cell phones. A lot of times people will steal a cell phone and then they can take to another place to get it unlocked ... wouldn't have to prove ownership, wouldn't have to prove that they purchased it. So, I passed some legislation to change that. I also actually helped do a lot of the legislation for the new Wrigley Field, which is basically going to be one of the only baseball fields in the country that's built without taxpayer dollars.

WCT: As chairman of the Workforce Development and Audit Committee, you oversaw meetings on the recent increase in the city's minimum wage. Can you tell us why you supported the measure?

POC: I think the data is pretty clear that the minimum wage is not something that keeps up, because it doesn't get changed often enough. The idea is if the minimum wage were to be increased as the economy fluctuates, it will keep people on pace with what the economy is doing. The city spent a lot of time and we had a fairly aggressive work force group that studied other places that had done this. We took a blended approach where we step increase it over the course of the next several years, but also tie it into an inflationary quota so that we don't have to revisit and wait every decade to change it.

WCT: Your challenger, Dianne Daleiden, has



Ald. Patrick O'Connor.

been very vocal about TIF [tax-increment funding] transparency and accountability in the 40th Ward. Additionally, there was an ethics probe into your campaign finances last year. Any thoughts?

POC: My question would be, "Give me a for instance of where that hasn't occurred?" because the TIF development in our ward has almost been exclusively for public benefit—park development, police station development, library development, fire station development, new school additions. It's hard to figure out how much more transparent you can be on a public project that is publicly bid and publicly paid for. When TIF dollars go to private projects, then there is a need to make sure that the public is informed.

The only private project that we've really done with any TIF money over the last several years was twofold: one helped to expand the emergency room at Swedish Covenant Hospital and the other created a woman's health center at Swedish Covenant Hospital. Both of which were the subjects of extensive public meetings both in the neighborhood and downtown, were well advertised and are open and running.

WCT: What would you recommend to have a better relationship between police and the citizen they serve, including people of color and the transgender community?

POC: Education is important both at the level

in the police department and the public. The CAPS program, which was originally designed to improve relationships between community and police and to improve the local patrol element, needs to be reinvigorated. Some of the things that the Superintendent McCarthy has tried to bring forward, and continues to work on, are training for the police officers. Improving opportunity for the police and the community to interact in situations that are not dire or where an arrest is not imminent, those are the type of things that are going to reinforce a trust factor that needs to be there. I think that type of education both in the academy and then reeducation once police are out in the field for a period of time are necessary. The public component, getting the public to understand what is expected from them, is also very important.

WCT: What do you think are the causes and the solution for crime in Chicago?

POC: Whether people believe it or not, major crimes are down, murders are down. Across the nation, crime is trending downward, but the level of violence is trending up. The types of things that need to be strengthened but can't be done at a municipal level are gun control, enhanced penalties for people that violate gun laws, access to weaponry ... In this city, we have enacted significantly strenuous gun laws, and each time we get taken to court, those laws are stricken or significantly reduced in terms of their effectiveness by a very powerful national gun lobby. Cities themselves can't take on national gun lobbies. It has to be the national government or, at least, state governments.

WCT: Are any of the members of your current staff openly LGBT?

POC: Yes; the guy who runs my ward office is openly gay and recently married.

For more information on the 40th Ward incumbent: <http://www.aldermanconnor.com/>.

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VIEWPOINTS

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Remembering the Lovings this Valentine's Day

On this upcoming Valentine's Day, I am reminded of no greater challenge to marriage equality than same-sex marriage that many LGBTQ activists are still struggling for in their states. However, the precedent for same-sex marriage was set by an African American woman named Mildred Loving (1942- 2008), who I am honoring as one of my heroes for Black History Month.

Loving and her white spouse violated the nation's anti-miscegenation edit.

The trial judge stated the following to the guilty couple:

"Almighty God created the races white, black, yellow, Malay and red, and He placed them on separate continents. And but for the interference with His arrangement there would be no cause for such marriages. The fact that He separated the races shows that He did not intend for the races to mix."

The trial judge suspended their sentences on the condition the Lovings leave Virginia and not return to the state together for 25 years. The Lovings initially agreed and left, but soon after returned, and decided to fight their case.

On June 12, 1967, Chief Justice Earl Warren wrote for the court stating the following:

"Marriage is one of the 'basic civil rights of man,' fundamental to our very existence and survival. ... Under our Constitution, the freedom to marry, or not marry, a person of another race resides with the individual and cannot be infringed by the state."

On June 12, 2007, Freedom to Marry joined several of the nation's leading civil-rights organizations to hold a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. to commemorate the 40th anniversary of *Loving v. Virginia* decision for affirming the freedom to marry as a "basic civil right" of every American.

Lending her support to the commemoration, Mrs. Mildred Loving wrote, "When my late husband, Richard, and I got married in Washington, D.C., in 1958, it wasn't to make a political statement or start a fight. We were in love, and we wanted to be married. Not a day goes by that I don't think of Richard and our love, and how much it meant to me to have that freedom to marry the person precious to me, even if others thought he was the "wrong kind of person" for me to marry. I believe all Americans, no matter their race, no matter their sex, no matter their sexual orientation, should have that same freedom to marry. I am proud that Richard's and my name are on a court case that can help reinforce the love, the commitment, the fairness, and the family that so many people, black or white, young or old, gay or straight, seek in life. I support the freedom to marry for all. That's what Loving, and loving, are all about."

In quelling the tension between older Black activists who stated that marriage equality for LGBTQ Americans is not a civil right, one of the organizations that spearheaded the Loving

case, the NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund (LDF), Inc., marked the 40th anniversary of Loving by stating the following: "It is undeniable that the experience of African Americans differs in many important ways from that of gay men and lesbians; among other things, the legacy of slavery and segregation is profound. But differences in historical experiences should not preclude the application of constitutional provisions to gay men and lesbians who are denied the fight to marry the person of their choice." And in April 2006, NAACP LDF filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the case brought by New York same-sex couples challenging their exclusion from marriage.

A resolution authored by Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin passed the House of Representatives on June 11, 2007, by unanimous consent commemorating the 40th anniversary of the *Loving* decision that ended the ban on interracial marriage in the United States and recognizing that marriage is one of the "basic civil rights of man" at the heart of the 14th Amendment protections.

Since the beheading of St. Valentine in Rome in 270 A.D., marriage has been controlled by church heads and heads of states and not by the hearts of lovers. When Emperor Claudius II issued an edict abolishing marriage because married men hated to leave their families for battle, Valentine, known then as the "friend to lovers," secretly joined them in holy matrimony. While awaiting his execution, Valentine fell in love with the jailer's daughter and in his farewell message to his lover, he penned "From your Valentine!"

May the "Loving spirit" of Mildred and the acts of St. Valentine be with us on this day.

Happy Valentine's Day!



CORNELL
WILLIAM
BROOKS

Pauli Murray: A great American hero

[In honor of Black History Month, Marriage Equality USA reached out to our friends at the NAACP to share with our members about some of important LGBTQ work within the African-American community, as well as the organization's commitment to full equality.]

History can often be divided into two categories—the celebrated and the forgotten. We catapult some figures into the realm of legends while leaving others, even those who have fought selflessly against injustice, behind.

Black History Month provides a unique opportunity to uplift the stories of pioneers whose impact reverberates throughout our daily lives. While many are unfamiliar with the name and the story of Anna Pauline "Pauli" Murray, her legacy is one that everyone should know.

Murray was an activist, feminist, Christian and a member of the LGBTQ community who understood that justice could not function as a special lottery by which the luckiest and most privileged among us win. During her 50-year career as an organizer, lawyer and Episcopal priest, Murray spent her entire career working to end racial and gender discrimination and to ensure that the contributions of women to the Civil Rights Movement were known and acknowledged.

Murray's pioneering civil-rights work on behalf of African-Americans and women would

earn her many high honors. Thurgood Marshall called Murray's 1950 book, *States' Laws on Race and Color* the "bible" of the civil rights movement. She would also aid in founding two prominent civil rights organizations—the National Organization for Women and the Congress on Racial Equality.

Born in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1910 and raised in Durham, North Carolina, Murray immersed herself in the struggle for civil and human rights after earning a degree from Hunter College in New York. She campaigned to enter the all-white University of North Carolina in the 1930s to pursue a graduate degree. With the support of the NAACP, Murray's case received national publicity, though she never received admittance.

Soon after, Murray became involved in attempts to end segregation in public transportation. In 1940, she was arrested for refusing to sit at the back of a Virginia bus—15 years before the Montgomery Bus Boycott began.

In 1941, Murray enrolled in Howard University's School of Law. Soon after, she helped to form the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)—a civil-rights organization—working alongside George Houser, James Farmer and Bayard Rustin.

After receiving law degrees from Howard University and University of California, Murray worked as a deputy attorney general of California. She also spent time in private practice before pursuing a doctorate in law at Yale University in 1960s. When she finished her doctorate in 1965, Murray became the first African-American to be awarded a J.D.S. degree from the university.

In 1960, President John F. Kennedy appointed her to his Committee on Civil and Political Rights. While serving on the committee, Murray wrote a paper commissioned by President Kennedy's Commission on the Status of Women, arguing that the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment guaranteed equal protection for women.

This document would later serve as inspiration for then ACLU Women's Rights Project Director Ruth Bader Ginsberg, who wrote her brief in the landmark case of *Reed v. Reed*, a landmark equal protection case that forbade discrimination based on gender. While words in the celebrated brief belonged to Ginsberg, she gave authorship credits to Murray among others in recognition of her pioneering work for women's rights.

In 1977, Murray became the first African-American woman to become an Episcopal priest.

Murray's life and legacy reminds us that all lives matter. All are created equal. No one should be exempt from the promise of justice, fairness and equal protection under the law. Yet the matter of marriage equality remains a heated and controversial debate.

LGBTQ couples in 36 states can now marry. When our Board of Directors resolved to publicly endorse marriage equality in 2012 they did it because injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. Advocating on behalf of marginalized communities is who we are and who Pauli Murray was.

The NAACP won't stop fighting until the civil rights of every American in this country has the right to marry.

Our mission has always been to ensure the political, social and economic equality of all people. Our Association has opposed and will continue to oppose any national, state, local policy or legislative initiative that seeks to codify discrimination or hatred into the law or to remove the Constitutional rights of LGBTQ citizens. In order to form a more perfect union, we must recognize and pay tribute to the enduring sense of humanity that abides in us all.

Cornell William Brooks is president and CEO of the NAACP.

The original post can be found at http://www.marriageequality.org/pauli_murray_a_great_american_hero.

GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION

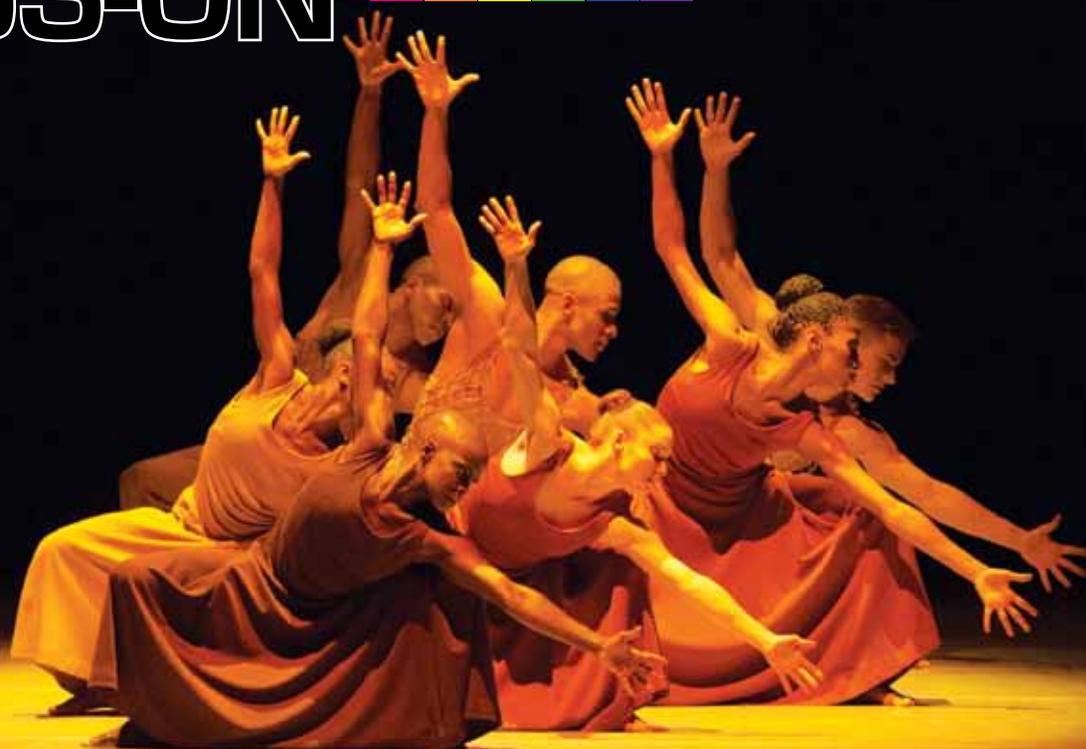


Photo by Rosalie O'Connor

MARY, MARY—QUITE CONTRARY

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is returning to Chicago. See below.

THEATER

Real 'Estate.'
Page 14Photo from *Dividing the Estate*
by Dean La Prairie

DISH

Sweets for the sweet.
Page 19Photo of cake at Magnolia
Cupcakes by Andrew Davis

BOOKS

Goal standard.
Page 20Photo of Chicago Gay Hockey Assn.
player from CGHA

DANCIN' FEATS

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater returns to Chicago

BY LAUREN WARNECKE

Alvin Ailey held his first dance concert in March, 1958 at the 92nd Street Y in New York City. Nearly 60 years later, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is synonymous with American contemporary dance, boasting more than 235 dances in its rep and one in particular that never gets old.

A trip to the theater for an Ailey concert is not complete without its iconic closer—Alvin Ailey's 1960 suite of dances, called *Revelations*. Following Ailey's death in 1989 due to complications from AIDS, Judith Jamison lead the company for more than 20 years before passing the torch to current Artistic Director Robert Battle in 2011. Coincidentally, this past World AIDS Day, on Dec. 1, marked the 25th year since Ailey's passing. For a dance company to survive, or even thrive for this long is rare, but what makes this company so special is it has found an ideal balance between celebrating its past and looking toward the future.

Following a successful season opener at its home in New York City, the company kicked off for an 18-city national tour Feb. 3. True to tradition, Ailey returns to the Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University—its Chicago home for the last 45 years—this spring. The prestigious training company Ailey II will remain in New York for a newly formed independent season including eight performances at the Joyce Theater.

Included on the tour are repertory standards

such as Ulysses Dove's 1989 *Episodes* and—needless to say—Alvin Ailey's *Revelations* (1960) with some interesting new inclusions. Ailey dancer Matthew Rushing premiered his *ODETTA* during the company's season opener at Lincoln Center, alongside *The Pleasure of the Lesson*, a first-ever collaboration with San Francisco-based superstar Robert Moses. Other interesting and notable additions include Christopher Wheeldon's 2005 *After the Rain Pas de Deux*, David Parsons' stunning solo *Caught* (1982) and Ohad Naharin's *Minus 16* (famously adopted by Hubbard Street Dance Chicago in 2000). Wheeldon, who Chicagoans may recognize from his highly successful new staging of *Swan Lake* performed by the Joffrey Ballet last fall, set his acclaimed duet created for New York City Ballet on the Ailey company last year. After the *Rain Pas de Deux* and *ODETTA* are joined by older works for the company's Chicago leg of the tour at Auditorium Theatre.

Joining the company on the tour are newlywed dancers Antonio Douthit-Boyd, 33 and Kirven Douthit-Boyd, 30. Married June 7, 2013, the two are the first legally married same-sex couple in company history. The Ailey company also has deep ties to Chicago: Dancer Ghrai DeVore joined the company in 2010 after stretches with *Deeply Rooted Dance Theater* (where her mother, Elana D. Anderson, has danced for two decades), Hubbard Street 2 and *Dance Works Chicago*. Veteran dancer Vernard J. Gilmore, who joined Ailey in 1997, attended the now defunct Barat College Conservatory



The wedding of Alvin Ailey dancers Antonio and Kirven Douthit-Boyd. Photo by Ellyxandria Ferguson

of *Dance in Lake Forest*. As a Chicago native, Gilmore recently visited for the Auditorium Theatre's 125th-anniversary celebration earlier this winter.

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater tours to the Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, 55 E. Congress Pkwy., on March 6-15. Tickets start at \$27; call 800-982-ARTS (2787) or visit auditoriumtheatre.org.

Also at the Auditorium Theatre

Opening this weekend for two weeks is the Joffrey Ballet's annual program featuring contemporary choreographers, this year titled "Unique Voices." Following last year's smash hit *Episode 31*, Swedish choreographer Alexander Ekman returned to stage the U.S. premiere of his 2012 *Tulle*. True to its name, *Tulle* is a ballet—Ekman's first using pointe shoes—incorporating traditional costumes and candid (if not hilarious) commentary on ballet. "What is ballet?" Ekman asks in his report of the piece on his website. "Where did it come from? Why

are they wearing those hard shoes? Why is *Swan Lake* so famous? Why do we need ballet?! Do we need ballet? All these questions popped up in my head and became the core concept for the piece."

Included on the program with *Tulle* are company premieres of Canadian Choreographer James Kudelka's *The Man in Black*—a bit of Americana complete with cowboy boots and music by Johnny Cash—and Stanton Welch's *Maninyas*. Welch's elaborate restaging of *La Bayadere* was quite successfully adopted by Joffrey in 2013; his 1996 series of duets and trios *Maninyas* is on loan from San Francisco Ballet for the upcoming program.

The Joffrey Ballet of Chicago presents Unique Voices as part of its 2014-15 programming at the Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, 55 E. Congress Pkwy., Feb. 11-22.

Tickets are \$32-155; visit the Joffrey Ballets box office, 10 E. Randolph St.; or www.ticketmaster.com.



David Hess and Gene Weygandt in *La Cage aux Folles*. Photo from Mark Campbell Photography and The Marriott Theatre

THEATER REVIEW

La Cage aux Folles

Playwright: Harvey Fierstein (book), Jerry Herman (music & lyrics) from Jean Poiret's play

At: The Marriott Theatre, 10 Marriott Dr., Lincolnshire
Tickets: 1-847-634-0200;
www.MarriottTheatre.com; \$50-\$55
Runs through: March 22

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Thirty-two years after its Broadway premiere, *La Cage aux Folles* should be an amusing period piece. Instead, its obvious message of tolerance and self-respect remains necessary as long as bigots cloaking themselves in religion are appointed to high office by hypocritical governors. That means you, James Meeks and Bruce Rauner.

Despite *La Cage's* social value, it's always made me a tad uncomfortable. Its story and characters obviously have broad appeal, evidenced by the history of *La Cage*: hit French play (1973, really early), hit French/international (1978) film, hit musical comedy (1983, with Broadway revivals in 2004 and 2010) and hit U.S. film (1996, *The Birdcage*). But the principal collaborators and stars in these many incarnations mostly have been straight men. I can't help feeling that *La Cage*—on some level—is a heterosexual “look how liberal we are” statement, and that some hets may think it reflects the reality of all gay men. That just nags at me. Still, *La Cage* the musical was co-authored and originally directed (the late Arthur Laurents) by three men with impeccable gay credentials. When I see it on stage, I put my political qualms aside and take *La Cage* at face value.

This new staging gives full scope to the show's numerous funny and touching moments, helmed by Marriott Theatre mainstays Joe Leonardo (director) and Ryan T. Nelson (music direction), with choreography by Melissa Zaremba (previously a frequent Marriott performer). A few things are different than other productions I've seen, but that's what interpretation is about. For instance, Zaremba eschews the usual tap break in the opening number but puts in a can-can later. Nancy Missimi's costumes follow the usual rule that drag = gaudy and outrageous, but then she puts Albin/Zsa-Zsa in a sophisticated and tasteful black-and-gold beaded gown.

Song-and-dance veteran Gene Weygandt is older and less glamorous than the usual Albin, and is even frumpy at moments (the Georges-Albin age difference is covered, unnecessarily, with a few lines added at the beginning), but his superlative acting chops radiate warmth as he fully inhabits the role.

He ends Act I with a cry of pain rather than the usual anger, a rendition of *I Am What I Am* that is smaller in size than usual but utterly intense. His *Other Half*, David Hess as Georges, is relaxed, charming and rich-voiced. Throughout, the two invest numerous moments with genuine feeling and the camaraderie of a long-standing couple, something easy to do with Jerry Herman's lilting and famously-humorous tunes. The supporting cast and ensemble are strong—literally so, with Les Cagelles and Jacob (Joseph Anthony Byrd) rather well-muscled—and with veteran Anne Gunn, as Mme. Dindon, showing how much you can do with a small role.

CRITICS' PICKS

The Apple Family Plays, Timeline Theatre, through April 19. The affluent, middle-aged Apple siblings discuss each other, life and politics on Election Day 2010 and 2012 in two works playing in repertory. Reality has bruised their liberal idealism and life expectations in Richard Nelson's warm-hearted, witty and political plays, brilliantly acted. JA

Cupid Has a Heart On at Stage 773, and **Bye, Bye, Liver** at the Public House, both open run. These long-running revues of love-in-the-trenches sketch comedy (the former comes with music, and the latter, with drinking games) make for perfect Valentine's Day revels. MSB

Rapture, Blister, Burn, Goodman Theatre, through Feb. 22. Career or family? Two disgruntled women facing mid-life crisis orchestrate a Nancy Friday-style switcheroo to test their feminist mettle in Gina Gionfriddo's slyly satirical comedy. MSB

The Who's Tommy, Paramount Theatre, Aurora, through Feb. 15. The 1969 rock opera album by The Who receives a visually stunning production full of stimulating pop art projections and a truly rocking pit band. SCM

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

THEATER REVIEW

Red

Playwright: John Logan
At: Redtwist Theatre, 1044 W. Bryn Mawr Ave.
Tickets: 773-728-7529;
www.redtwist.org; \$30-\$35
Runs through: March 8

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

“What do you see?” are the first words spoken at the start of the play. It's an important question—Mark Rothko's paintings might not look like much at first, but when exhibited under subdued lighting conditions (as Rothko preferred), after you stare at them for awhile, the hues begin to shimmer and glow. Viewers prone to vertigo may become light-headed and those inclined toward synesthesia may find themselves drawing near its surface as though seeking physical warmth.

Well, that's what expressionist art is supposed to do. This is why museums and galleries so often use flat illumination to diffuse the intensity of iconography reflecting emotions that are rarely gentle, and why Eric Luchen's scenic design for Redtwist Theatre's tiny auditorium ensures that no audience member has a full-frontal view of the canvases on display. These visual precautions, however, are no guarantee against the risk of aural intoxication—not when immersed in the florid language employed by author John Logan to conjure the image of an artist as fierce as his art.

What launches the crisis addressed in the play is the large fee that Rothko has just accepted for a series of canvases to decorate a posh restaurant in the Seagram's building on New York City's Fifth Avenue. Studio assistant Ken's duties encompass not only heavy-lifting chores, but providing an ear for the soliloquies and harangues that characterize his irascible boss' creative process. Topics covered therein include how the former Marcus Rothkowitz and his buddies kicked cubist butt, his reverence for Rembrandt and Caravaggio, his scorn of Warhol and Lichtenstein, and—as he contemplates the future environment of the pictures he calls his “children”—ethical misgivings over his project. You don't have to know the real-life fate of this uncompromising genius to see the darkness encroaching upon the already chiaroscuro landscape.

Wrestling with this Leviathan of a text is no small undertaking for only two actors, but Brian Parry, best known on the storefront circuit for his quietly avuncular roles, proves himself equally skilled at King Lear-style ranting and roaring, while never exceeding the limits of quarters ill-suited to operatic scale. Aaron Kirby's Ken likewise emerges a worthy adversary, conveying profound admiration for his mentor, even when it means uttering the truths from which there is no hiding. It takes 85 intermissionless minutes for Logan's conflict achieve its sadly temporary resolution, making for dialogue so densely packed in its eloquence that as swiftly as you hear it, you want to hear it again. Smart playgoers are warned to book reservations for two performances.

THEATER REVIEW

Dividing the Estate

Playwright: Horton Foote
At: Raven Theatre, 6157 N. Clark St.
Tickets: 773-338-2177;
www.raventheatre.com; \$36
Runs through: March 28

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

It's said that what distinguishes U.S. citizens from their European counterparts are the former's propensity for chronological inflation. The Gordons of Harrison, Texas, accumulated their fortune over a period of barely exceeding a hundred years, but even this relatively short history of prosperity—earned through myriad risks, gambles and lucky breaks—makes for entitlement sufficient to generate filial conflict over its continuance.

The source of the discomfort stems from the three Gordon siblings' reliance upon their expectations—in this case, reduced to a no-longer-productive cotton farm and an ecologically challenged ante-bellum mansion—to sustain their chosen lifestyles. Management of the family business provides an income for Lucille and her son (addressed as “Son” by his kin, in accordance with southern custom), but the 1987 recession has curtailed the spending habits of sister Mary Jo and her spoiled daughters, leading brother-in-law Bob to explore means for evading hefty inheritance taxes. Further muddying the financial waters are the impending marriages of restless Son to a progressive-minded schoolteacher and that of dissolute brother Lewis to a teenage drive-in waitress. Oh, and let's not forget the clan matriarch, herself, who has her own ideas about the disposal of her worldly goods.

This uneasy situation could develop in a number of ways, depending on whether the playwright is Anton Chekhov, Tennessee Williams or Lillian Hellman. Since this is a Horton Foote play, however, its focus is, not murder or “the reek of mendacity”—when one's residence is in danger of foreclosure, worrying about money is less about simple greed than staving off home-



Dividing the Estate. Photo by Dean La Prairie

lessness, but economic necessity. Adults accustomed to receiving a monthly allowance or asking their mother for loans may bridle at the prospect of looking for work (despite the assurance of their less privileged acquaintances that employment, and the independence engendered thereby, is not so terrible a fate), but such are the demands of living in our modern society.

The fashion these days is to jeer the mighty-brought-low, but who among us can claim to be wholly safe in whatever social stratum we occupy? Director Cody Estle and the Raven Theatre ensemble never lose sight of their author's compassion for his flawed characters, resisting the temptation to buffoonery (though JoAnn Montemurro and Ron Wells come perilously close in their final scenes—perhaps a result of the action being placed far downstage). Whatever we may feel toward the Gordons, their immediately recognizable authenticity and humanity render their survival as auspicious as that of their ancestors following another social crisis a century earlier.



White Guy on the Bus. Photo by Michael Brosilow

White Guy on the Bus

Playwright: Bruce Graham
At: Northlight Theatre,
9501 Skokie Blvd., Skokie
Tickets: 847-673-6300 or
www.northlight.org; \$25-\$78
Runs through Feb. 28

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

There's a startling moment in White Guy on the Bus when playwright Bruce Graham essentially pulls the rug out from under the audience. The course of the drama shifts and the mood turns pessimistic as an unflattering mirror of U.S. race relations comes into view.

Now having its world premiere at Northlight Theatre, White Guy on the Bus starts out benignly enough as we're introduced to the wealthy Philadelphia married couple of Ray, a financial "numbers man" (Francis Guinan), and Roz, an inner-city school teacher (Mary Beth Fisher).

Ray and Roz socialize with their grown son, Christopher (Jordan Brown), and his new school teacher wife, Molly (Amanda Drinkall). But the conversations grow testy when topics turn to

race as Roz challenges Molly on her decision to work with more privileged children, while Ray prods Christopher to work for his firm rather than pursuing further education via a planned study of depictions of African-American men in advertising.

Interspersed between these family get-togethers are early scenes of friendly public transit conversations between Ray and a single mother in nursing school named Shatique (Patrese D. McClain). Ray sticks out as the titular and only white guy on the bus, but he and Shatique strike up a friendship as she shares details of her hand-to-mouth existence and her self-improvement goals.

So it's a shock when White Guy on the Bus transforms into a cold and calculated revenge thriller. If Graham's goal was to unsettle audiences by forcing them to question their own inherent views on racism and justice, he certainly succeeds in a blunt way in White Guy on the Bus.

Director BJ Jones has gathered together a superlative cast for White Guy on the Bus, and they're all able to turn their characters' heightened emotions and views on a dime. Guinan as Ray and McClain as Shatique in particular get to show off more explosive and indignant anger that is truly riveting, while the barbed sarcasm of Fisher as Roz is always sharp.

In terms of Jones' staging of White Guy on the Bus, I'm not sure if the visual approach is little more than functional in John Culbert's set that is largely a plush lawn framed by large shifting window frames. Unless the symbolic view is that things in America are run on the playing fields of wealthy people like Ray and Roz, it seems odd that everything takes place on grassy turf.

White Guy on the Bus certainly upsets audiences with its smart, if harsh, views on race relations. It also upends the typical setup of so many popular vigilante revenge film fantasies by showing a more likely outcome by the way the decks of justice are stacked in this country.

SPOTLIGHT



Every show for **The Boystown Pregame** will be different. The new comedy show features a rotating guest from the LGBTQ community and then comedians who transform the guest's topics into sketch and improvised comedy. There's also an activist spot on the bill, so get your social and politically minded friends to participate. The Boystown Pregame plays in an open run at 8 p.m. Saturdays at The Playground Theater, 3209 N. Halsted St. Tickets are \$10. For more information, visit www.theplaygroundtheater.com. Photo courtesy of The Playground Theater

Rene Marie part of Marsalis show

Jazz singer Rene Marie will be part of a Feb. 14 show as famed trumpeter/bandleader Wynton Marsalis and his Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra (JLCO) return to Chicago for three concert programs over Valentine's Day weekend at Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan Ave.

Marie self-released her debut, Renaissance, in 1998. She toured as Ella Fitzgerald in a regional play, and has received awards such as the Best International Jazz Vocal CD (edging

Cassandra Wilson and Joni Mitchell). Marsalis and his band's two-day residency opens with a Symphony Center Presents Jazz series concert on Friday, Feb. 13, at 8 p.m. and continues on Saturday, Feb. 14, with a "Jazz for Young People" matinee concert at 1 p.m., followed by an 8 p.m. concert featuring the full 15-piece JLCO, as well as a selection of jazz standards with special guest vocalist Marie, in her Symphony Center debut. Tickets for the concerts can be purchased by phone at 800-223-7114 or 312-294-3000; online at cso.org; or at the Symphony Center box office, 220 S. Michigan Ave.

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Photo by Michael Brosilow. (l-r) Francis Guinan and Patrese McClain

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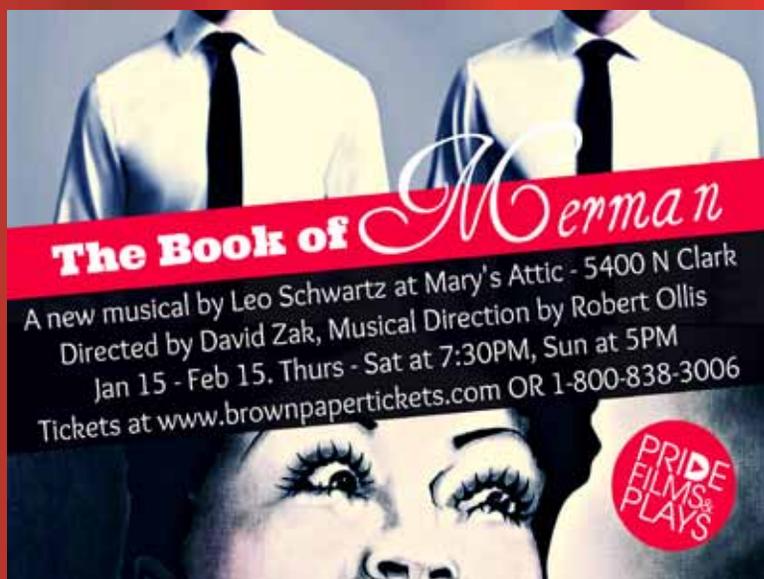
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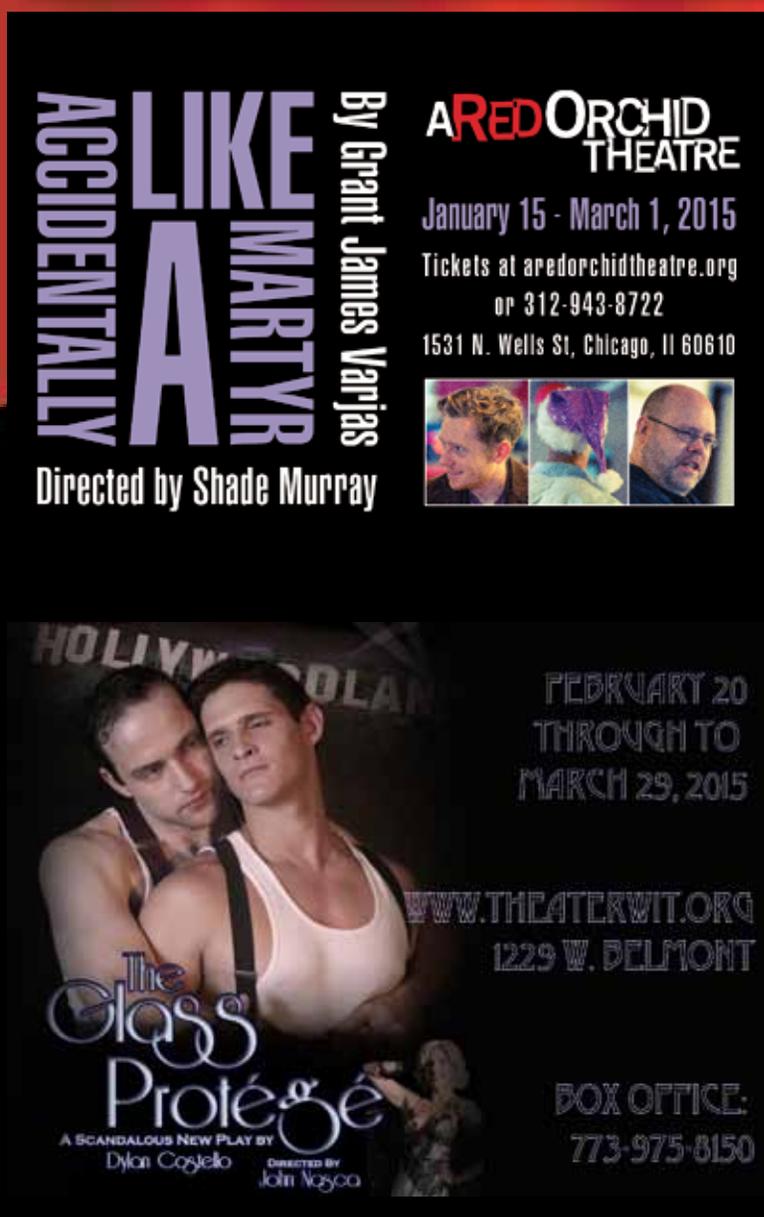
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Sam Smith star of the Grammys

Out singer Sam Smith was the star of the 57th Annual Grammy Awards, held Feb. 8.

The British crooner won four Grammys, including record and song of the year for his anthemic "Stay With Me." The 22-year-old was also named best new artist and his debut album, *In The Lonely Hour*, won best pop vocal album.

However, rock musician Beck deprived Smith of a sweep in the top three Grammy categories by winning album of the year for *Morning Phase*.

Pharrell Williams and Beyonce won three Grammys each.

Additionally, the late Joan Rivers was awarded the Grammy for Best Spoken Word Album for *Diary of a Mad Diva* in a ceremony prior to the awards. Among those she bested were President Jimmy Carter, actor James Franco, filmmaker John Waters, singer Gloria Gaynor and U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren.

The Broadway production of *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical* won for Best Musical Theater Album.

Then, there were the performances. Madonna took to the Grammy stage in a matador-inspired outfit to perform her new single "Living for Love," reflecting her video for the song. Also, Smith and Mary J. Blige sang a duet of his hit "Stay with Me," and Annie Lennox sang with Hozier on mash-up of "I Put a Spell on You" and his "Take Me to Church."

In addition, Tony Bennett and Lady Gaga performed their rendition of the jazz tune "Cheek to Cheek"; Rihanna joined Kanye West and Paul McCartney to perform "FourFiveSeconds" and No Doubt frontwoman Gwen Stefani and Maroon 5 frontman Adam Levine—both judges on NBC's *The Voice*—sang "My Heart is Open."



Sam Smith. Photo by Jerry Nunn

The night ended with Beyonce and gospel singers singing the hymn "Precious Lord, Take My Hand," before artists Common and John Legend performed their Oscar-nominated and Golden Globe-winning "Glory," from the Academy Award-nominated film *Selma*.

The night took on a somber note with a message against domestic abuse delivered by President Obama by video, followed by a survivor's testimony and a Katy Perry performance of the song "By the Grace of God."

Also, during the "in memoriam" segment, openly gay Chicago house-music legend Frankie Knuckles was among those spotlighted.

Rosie exits 'The View,' splits from wife

Rosie O'Donnell is leaving *The View* for the second time—this time after just five months—to focus on her family, *TheWrap* reported.

"I can confirm that Rosie and her wife Michelle [Rounds] split in November," O'Donnell's representative told *TheWrap* in a statement. "Rosie has teens and an infant at home that need her attention."

"This has been a very stressful situation. She is putting her personal health and family first. ABC has been wonderfully understanding and supportive of her personal decision to leave *The View*. [The week of Feb. 9] will be her last."

ABC said it "respected and understood" the comedian and actress' desire to be with her family amid the breakup from her wife.

O'Donnell shares one daughter with Rounds, whom she married in 2012; she also has three kids from her previous marriage to Kelli Carpenter, and a son, Parker, whom she adopted in 1995, *US Weekly* noted.

The original article is at http://www.thewrap.com/rosie-odonnell-exiting-the-view/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=mailchimp.

'Fireball' returns to House of Blues

Revolution Chicago and CircuitMOM Productions, Inc. are presenting the revival of the historic dance party "Fireball" on Saturday, February 14, at the House of Blues Chicago, 329 N. Dearborn St.

Originally, started as "The Hearts Party"—a small HIV/AIDS fundraiser in the early '90s—the event grew into a four-day festival of music, entertainment, giving, educational seminars and parties attended by thousands of people from around the world.

The original series ran through 2005. However, the Hearts Foundation (the sponsoring

organization) issued a press release stating, "After an eight-year run, the Board has made a business decision that the financial return does not support a justifiable reason to continue with the Fireball Festival."

Individual tickets or weekend pass online at www.circuitmom.com.

'Hollywood on State' Oscar event Feb. 22

The Gene Siskel Film Center (GSFC) of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), 164 N. State St., will host "Hollywood on State: A Red Carpet Celebration," for the 87th Academy Awards on Sunday, Feb. 22.

Doors open at 6 p.m. The 87th Academy Awards® HD Telecast begins at 7:30 p.m.

Before settling into the theater, attendees will be treated to a buffet provided by Pure Kitchen Catering along with sweet treats from Jewell Events Catering, Sugar Bliss Cake Boutique and Eli's Cheesecake as well as beverages from Guinness Blonde American Lager, Sterling Vineyards, Stellina di Notte Prosecco and Bow Truss Coffee Roasters.

Tickets (\$100 general admission/\$200 VIP) can be purchased by visiting www.siskelfilm-center.org or by calling 312-846-2072.

'On the Red Carpet' Feb. 22

Center on Halsted will hold its annual "On the Red Carpet" Academy Awards party Sunday, Feb. 22, at the Park West, 322 W. Armitage Ave.

The red carpet is at 6 p.m. The telecast will start at 7:30 p.m., with the silent auction ending and event drawing at 9 p.m. There will also be a predict-the-winner contest; ballots will be \$10 at registration, and the person with the most correct picks will split the winnings with the Center.

In 2014, 425 people attended "On the Red Carpet," raising more than \$70,000 to support the programs and services at Center on Halsted.

Tickets are \$40-\$125; see <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/otr/>.

FEMINIST from cover

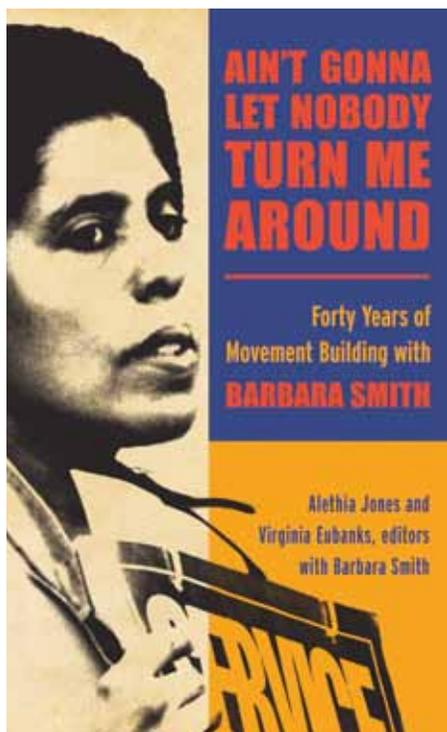
about not profiling people... Even though we talked about how law enforcement should deal with people who they encountered who they thought that might be an immigrant or who might not have legal status as a resident of the United States, it did not have the force of law. But at least it was on paper—it was something that came out of the legislative body of the Common Council.”

In addition to immigration reform, Smith also championed the fight to stop the spread of gun violence and worked to understand and implement change in the criminal justice system.

“One of my particular focuses on the Council were things having to do with violence—specifically gun violence—and also issues concerning the criminal justice system and policing,” Smith said. “My experience working on violence against women stood me in very good stead around the kinds of work that I was doing [regarding] another kind of violence, which was violence connected to—generally to young men of color, but sometimes to young women of color living in our economically challenged communities, the kind of violence that has characterized our urban settings for many years, unfortunately.”

The impetus for Smith’s latest role as author in *Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around* stemmed from a colleague’s suggestion over coffee.

“There was an editor at SUNY Press who contacted me in late 2007: Laren McLaughlin. Laren studied women’s studies and African-American studies in graduate school and was quite familiar with my work, and proposed doing a book together,” Smith said.



That was nearly eight years ago, and the landscape of the world has changed.

“I think that what’s going on nationally in this country is because a number of very flagrant incidents of police killings of young Black men have been in close proximity to each other—including one who’s 12 years old from my hometown of Cleveland, Ohio. Two grand juries in two different parts of the country not indicting either one of the officers in both of those killings, in Ferguson and in Staten Island...they saw that those deaths were justified,” Smith said. “I was just watching the news and they were talking about the findings in a case in Los Angeles, which I had not been even aware of until I watched the news. It’s hard to keep up with them all, but to me what all of these incidents show are the fault lines of living in a country that is still under white supremacy. The system of white supremacy

has never been eradicated in this country. The Civil Rights movement, the Black Power movement, the Black Nationalist movement, all of that still has not—even with changes and laws, even with the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act—white supremacy is intact.”

Smith further explained, “Every so often white supremacy is going to rear its ugly head—and that’s really what we’re dealing with. We’re also dealing with the legacy of enslavement in relationship to people of African heritage. I see the condition of Black people of African heritage, Black people in this country, as far as their economic status; their social status; issues of violence; issues of joblessness and unemployment; our health profile, health disparities; you name it, it’s all a part of that legacy of enslavement.”

Smith submerges herself into the topic of white supremacy in *Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around*.

“I live in a poor Black community in the city of Albany and have for most of the time I’ve lived in Albany,” Smith said. “I’ve lived in Albany for 30 years and I’ve lived in Arbor Hill since 1987. I consider the problems that face this community, the problems that I was charged with trying to address as the elected representative from this community, I see them on a direct-line continuum from the antebellum period right until now.”

“And I know that’s not a perspective that people, particularly people on the Right have, because they think everything got solved. They really think everything got solved with public accommodations, the eradication of official Jim Crow, with desegregation, with affirmative action; they think everything’s taken care of and they think that those of us who are not suffering from those delusions are just complaining and that we have no clue.”

“There’s a huge amount of racial polarization, and that is being manifested during this time; totally different points of view about the police and about the criminal justice system, and about all kinds of things that have to do with people’s objective material conditions and their status in U.S. society. People have yet to grapple with the incredible gulf that is still the result of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc. They have yet to deal with that in a profound way, and as I said this is a particular historical period when they just couldn’t keep the curtains closed on it.”

The generation to fire up the movement in 2015 is the youth, Smith added.

“These movements all over the country, young people are at the helm of them,” Smith said. “And so are women and so are people who identify as queer. It’s really kind of exciting when you get right down to it, to see that kind of leadership, the circumstances and the conditions that people are protesting—including myself—that people are protesting are very, very dire, and who knows how they will be addressed given that root causes like systematic and structural white supremacy are not necessarily what the system wants to address and grapple with.”

“Young people who are keeping this going in Ferguson, in Oakland in California, and Los Angeles, and New York City and Albany, where I live, all over this country; in Florida, the Moral Mondays movement in North Carolina, there’s just a lot that’s going on that is very, very inspiring to me, and that I also see as connected to the work and the legacy of those of us who spoke out as young feminists of color back in the ‘70s and into the early ‘80s.”

Not easily dismayed, Smith is finding inspiration in the current movements of our time by the sheer force of being alive to witness them.

“I always feel politically encouraged even in the worst of moments. And I see a lot of brilliance out there, I see a lot of commitment, I see a lot of courage,” she said.

Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around is available via SUNY Press at <http://www.BarbaraSmithAintGonna.com>.

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KNIGHT AT THE MOVIES

BY
RICHARD
KNIGHT, JR.

A 'Grey' day, Black history and (Oscar) gold

Just in time for Valentine's Day, here comes **Fifty Shades of Grey**, the dirty-movie adaptation of the dirty-book phenomenon from E.L. James (a modern-day Jackie Susann of sorts).

Based on the advance buzz, the most interesting things about the forthcoming cinema sexcapade seem to be all the instances of "no" connected with it. There's no NC-17 rating thanks to no explicit sex scenes (and no fun filming them, either, according to its stars); and no love off-camera (as the press-junket interviews make clear) at all between said stars Dakota Johnson (daughter of Melanie Griffith and Don Johnson) and Irish actor Jamie Dornan, who respectively play the (momentarily) virginal college student and her soon-to-be lover, the fabulously wealthy playboy Christian Grey, whose taste for kinky sex launched the book into the upper stratosphere. S&M playtime aside, the biggest no-no the film (that female director Sam Taylor-Johnson helmed) commits is the lack of full-frontal male nudity from Dornan—a cardinal sin!

This example of visual timidity most definitely is at odds with the raunchy, provocative material but perhaps the two forthcoming sequels already being hyped won't shy away from giving us the full monty. Until then, here are some alternative queer-themed cinematic suggestions (yes—all with full-frontal) to heat up your Valentine's Day—whether you are celebrating alone or with your beloved:

—**Weekend**, my favorite queer movie of 2011, got the deluxe treatment from Criterion with the usual slew of extras that drive cinephiles like myself into a frenzy. Pretty much everything you want to know about the making of out writer-director Andrew Haigh's beautifully observed (and mega sexy) story of two average Joes who go from tricking to falling in love in a matter of days is packed into Criterion's special edition.

—Winner of the queer Palme d'Or, 2013's **Stranger by the Lake**, unabashedly explicit, focuses on a gay cruising spot near a secluded lake. The boyishly handsome Franck falls hard for uber-hunk Michel, with his Tom Selleck handlebar mustache. Surprisingly, after witnessing Michel commit a horrendous crime, his passion only increases. From that point, out director Guiraudie's French thriller only gets darker—and sexier—with each passing tryst.

—"Would you like to see me naked?" the gorgeous blonde Natasha asks the dark-haired Alba with a teasing smile. "I would love to!" comes the horny reply. Less than 10 minutes in and the sexy stuff is on in **Room in Rome**, writer-director Julio Medem's 2010 artistic homage to the one-night stand, lesbian style. As the night—and the bouts of copious love-making—take place, so does the emotional intensity between the two women. It's Weekend, lady style—a seductive tour-de-force.

—My number-one LGBT film of 2006, **Shortbus**, is a sexathon for every persuasion. Gay writer-director John Cameron Mitchell's follow-up to Hedwig and the Angry Inch is passion-



Dakota Johnson and Jamie Dornan in *Fifty Shades of Grey*. Photo from from Universal Pictures and Focus Features

ate, thrilling and gloriously fun about sex. The film's DVD includes an amiable director and cast commentary; a fascinating, in-depth look at the laborious casting process—a complicated one given the fact that the stars of the movie actually engage in sex on camera. It's a one-of-a-kind film that encapsulates the Rocky Horror erotic free-for-all maxim "Don't dream it. Be it."

Oscar, Oscar, Oscar

—Neil Patrick Harris had a bang-up 2014—between standout acting gigs on stage, television and in film, not to mention penning a best-selling memoir. And he's off and running in 2015 with TV's best hosting gig (finally!): this year's 87th annual Academy Award ceremonies (Sunday, Feb. 22, on ABC). Harris is also prominently featured in one of the Oscar-nominated films, David Fincher's creepy murder mystery **Gone Girl** (recently released on home video) in which he gives us a glimpse of full-front Neil (yup) as part of his disturbing supporting role.

—Best Actress Oscar nominee Julianne Moore (for *Still Alice*, her fifth nomination and my predicted winner) stars in the forthcoming **Freeheld**, the heart-wrenching true story (based on the Oscar-winning 2007 documentary short) of police detective Laurel Hester who fought government officials for equal treatment when she was diagnosed with cancer. Out actor Ellen Page (one of the movie's producers) plays Moore's lesbian life partner in the film that Lionsgate just picked up (after a heated bidding war) at the Berlin Film Festival for U.S. distribution later this year.

—Cello-voiced, sultry screen siren **Lizbeth Scott**—known for her pouty demeanor and devastating blonde looks in the late 1940s—died recently at the age of 92. Scott first took moviegoers by storm in a memorable supporting role in 1946's *The Strange Loves of Martha Ivers* but, after several sensational roles, the waning of the popularity of the film-noir genre didn't do her any favors. And a 1954 story in the scandal magazine *Confidential* outing Scott's suspected lesbian sexuality spelled a career death knell in that conservative era.

Scott never publicly commented about her personal life but a spate of books on queer (closeted and otherwise) film stars never fail to include her. It's been a year of tremendous loss for film stars but here's hoping the show's producers see fit to include Scott as part of the annual Oscar ceremony memorial tribute.

Black History Month, queer style

February is Black History Month and there are many feature films and documentaries worth

exploring. Director Ava DuVernay's **Selma** is still in theatres and Spike Lee's latest, **Da Sweet Blood of Jesus**, is having its Chicago theatrical premiere beginning this Friday, Feb. 13, at the Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State St. as part of its monthlong salute.

Based on the cult 1973 horror classic *Ganja & Hess* (about an archeologist who becomes a vampire after being stabbed by his assistant), the film uses the addiction of vampirism as a metaphor for Black assimilation and an indictment of white imperialism. Lee's remake/homage (which was financed in part by a crowd source campaign) looks to be a return to his audacious roots. (It's being described as a "romantic horror comedy.") Stephen Tyrone Williams stars in this new version (which apparently also includes a hot lesbian sex scene).

The Black experience on film has plenty for queer audiences to delve into as well. Just three notable suggestions out of a myriad of titles out there (all made my year end Best list):

—Out writer/director Justin Simien's whip-smart race comedy **Dear White People** is just out on DVD. It focuses on four Black students at a predominantly white (fictional) Ivy League school—Samantha, a brilliant, budding filmmaker and radio talk-show host whose refusal to accept the status quo shakes up the entire school; Coco (*nee* Colandrea), who is busy emulating the popular white girls; (Marque Richardson), the handsome jock and natural-born leader who is also the son of the school's no-nonsense dean (Dennis Haysbert); and Lionel (Tyler James Williams), a geekish loner who finds himself enlisted to cover the controversy by the all-white school newspaper because of his color. It's eventually revealed that Lionel is gay—a subplot that will obviously resonate with *Our People*. Tessa Thompson and a host of other up-and-coming actors are featured.

—Out writer-director Dee Rees' 2011 fictional feature debut **Pariah**—which follows the coming out of Alike (the fantastic Adepero Oduye), a young African-American teenager in urban New York—is like the entrance into a secret society. Sultry, powerful and beautifully shot, the film breaks free from the conventional coming-out story with its confident, gutsy approach. It's an instant lesbian classic. Kim Wayans and Charles Parnell co-star.

—Vibrant and unabashedly sexy, out director Rodney Evans's 2013 **The Happy Sad** is based on a play by Ken Urban, who worked closely with Evans in adapting the work for the screen. The film is a chamber quartet focusing on two couples in Brooklyn—Marcus and Aaron, a Black gay couple, and Stan and Annie, a white straight couple—whose lives intersect when both decide to open their relationships sexu-

ally. The material explores, in very interesting ways, what can happen when both traditional relationship boundaries and gender lines—Marcus and Stan hook up repeatedly and Annie is drawn to her newly out girlfriend—are blurred.

Twenty years later...

Out film journalist, author (Queue Tips: Discovering Your Next Great Movie) and Queer Film Society member Rob Christopher is also the writer and director of the indie feature **Pause of the Clock**. Christopher shot the movie 20 years ago when he was a film student at Columbia College but, for a variety of reasons, never finished it until now.

Christopher (who also plays the leading role in the film) has started a Kickstarter campaign to raise completion funds so he can finally get his movie ready for its close-up. The movie, according to Christopher's description is "a film about friendship, secrets and the power of stories." The prestigious film site IndieWire recently named the project its "Project of the Day." Supporters have until Feb. 26 to donate to the campaign.. <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/814536463/pause-of-the-clock-a-film-20-years-in-the-making>

Upcoming movie calendar

Highlights from films opening in Chicago, Feb. 13 and 20 (or available online or OnDemand):

Fifty Shades of Grey (Feb. 13)—The erotic worldwide bestselling novel comes to the movies (see details above).

Da Sweet Blood of Jesus (Feb. 13)—Spike Lee's latest has its Chicago premiere at the Gene Siskel Film Center (see details above) and is also available on iTunes. <http://www.siskel-filmcenter.org/dasweetbloodofjesus>

Matt Shepard Is a Friend of Mine (Feb. 13)—Michele Josue—a close friend of Shepard, the gay young man who was tortured and murdered in October of 1998 in Laramie, Wyoming—directs this feature-length documentary. Josue revisits the case, traveling to many of the pivotal locations in Shepard's life and includes never before seen photos, rare video footage, and new revelations about Shepard's tragically short life. It plays exclusively at the AMC River East 21. <http://mattshepardisafriendofmine.com/>

Kingsman: The Secret Service (Feb. 13)—Colin Firth—Oscar-nominated as the gay widower in Tom Ford's elegant 2009 *A Single Man* and Best Actor winner for 2010's *The King's Speech*—stars in this James Bondish, superspy action fest about a league of stylish 007 types recruiting a rough and tough (but promising and awfully cute) street kid into its training program just in time to avert a global threat from the typical evil genius. Michael Caine, Samuel L. Jackson, Mark Hamill, Jack Davenport and Mark Strong co-star. Matthew Vaughn directs.

The Princess Bride (Feb. 13 only) and **Valentine's Day Sweetheart Sing-Along with Casablanca** (Feb. 14 only)—It wouldn't be Valentine's Day without at least a few film-related events surrounding the lover's holiday. These include Rob Reiner's beloved 1987 comic fairytale sendup *The Princess Bride* on Friday, Feb. 13 at 9:30 p.m. and a return engagement of *Casablanca*—both at the Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport Ave. The latter is scheduled for a matinee screening on Saturday, Feb. 14 at 1 p.m., complete with romantic pre-show sing-along music from the Music Box organist. <http://www.musicboxtheatre.com/events>

McFarland USA (Feb. 20)—Based on a true story, Kevin Costner stars in this feel-good sports drama from Disney as the coach of a high school track team chasing glory in an impoverished Latino area. Out actor Maria Bello (*Prisoners*, *The Jane Austen Book Club*, *A History of Violence*) plays Costner's wife.

Interested in reading some of my in-depth reviews? The Best of Knight at the Movies: 2004-2014—a compilation book of my film reviews from a queer perspective for Windy City Times is available through www.knight-atthemovies.com.



Magnolia Bakery; Florentine specials

BY ANDREW DAVIS

I had heard from several people that I should check out **Magnolia Bakery** (108 N. State St. at Block 37; <http://www.magnoliabakery.com/>), so I finally decided to check out the three-year-old place that originated in New York City. Color me impressed.

My visit, which was very recent, centered around Magnolia's offerings for Valentine's Day. (Yes—it's this Saturday.) The chocolate-covered strawberry cupcakes are just sinful. However, there are also offerings such as the red velvet whoopie pies, personalized Love Note Cupcakes (vanilla and chocolate cupcakes topped with vanilla buttercream and a special message for the one you love/desire), Mr. & Mrs. Cookies in the shapes of, respectively, mustaches and lips (which can also be done in same-sex pairings) and Lil' Bits of Love (a dozen chocolate and vanilla mini-cupcakes with pink and white vanilla buttercream, decorated with red, pink and white hearts).

I'm not saying there's anything wrong with that traditional heart-shaped box of candy. However, if you want to surprise your sweetie with something different...

Also, as many of you know, the Oscars are Feb. 22—and Magnolia is ready for that event as well. (Actually, Magnolia is ready for practically ANY event.) The Best Picture Cupcakes are one dozen chocolate and vanilla edible image cupcakes highlighting the year's best movies (only available for advance orders). Then, there are the Black Tie Cupcakes (chocolate or vanilla cupcakes with shimmering gold dust atop light and airy whipped vanilla and chocolate icing). They're both perfect for your own Academy Awards celebration. (Here's one unsolicited



Valentine's Day selections at Magnolia.



suggestion: The cupcake for Whiplash should have whipped cream.)

And Magnolia offers a lot more than themed desserts. The mini-cheesecakes are absolutely heavenly, and the new jammie thumbprints won my heart as well. Then there are the cakes, which Magnolia makes for anything from weddings to birthday parties.

My only complaint about Magnolia is that I wish it served sandwiches, soups, etc., as well—but that's only a quibble. I can go somewhere else for those items. (Note: The frosting-to-cake ratio in the cupcakes is about 50/50, for those who may not really be into icing—both of you.)



The Florentine's spinach pizza (left, photo by Andrew Davis) and cinnamon rolls with mascarpone icing.



Florentine specials

The Florentine (151 W. Adams St., at the JW Marriott Hotel; Visit <http://www.e2hospitality.com/florentine-chicago/>) has its own Valentine's Day program happening—and it even makes allowances for those who might be at the hotel the morning after a romantic evening.

Valentine's Day dinner specials include minestra, fagato grasso (seared foie gras, chocolate, amarena cherry, challah), seared duck breast, whole Maine lobster and millefoglie (pistachio

cream, strawberries, passion fruit gelato). The next morning, there will be complimentary homemade cinnamon rolls with mascarpone icing.

Also, The Florentine has an ongoing special: During happy hour, patrons get a free pizza with the purchase of a round of alcohol. The pizzas are varied, with items such as spinach (with goat cheese, peperonata and roasted garlic), Diavola (a punchy item with spicy salami, tomato and fiore di latte) and Brussel sprout (with taleggio, pancetta and saba), among others. It's a great way to kick back after work.

DGA Awards has LGBT host, winners

Lesbian actress Jane Lynch hosted the 67th Directors Guild of America (DGA) Outstanding Directorial Achievement Awards in Los Angeles, according to the DGA website.

Some of the winners were Jill Soloway (Comedy Series, for *Transparent's* "Best New Girl" episode), Lesli Linka Glatter (Dramatic Series, for *Homeland's* "From A to B and Back Again"), Alejandro G. Iñárritu (Feature Film, for *Birdman*) and Lisa Cholodenko (Movies for Televi-

sion and Mini-Series, for HBO's *Olive Kitteridge*).

Transparent is Amazon Studios' series about a man (played by Jeffrey Tambor) who makes the transition into becoming a woman, revealing this fact to his family that includes three adult children. Cholodenko, who is lesbian, has made such films as *The Kids Are All Right*, *High Art* and *Laurel Canyon*.

Presenters included openly gay DGA president Paris Barclay, Barbara Streisand, Pierce Brosnan and Jodie Foster, among others.

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CALENDAR

Brought to you by the combined efforts of

WINDY CITY TIMES **nightspots**

Wed., Feb. 11

In the Still of the Night On the second Wednesday of each month, the lounge will be transformed into a drawing room. This month's focus: The Still Life. Bring in your supplies, grab a cocktail and a cozy spot. It'll be very casual and if you're interested in hanging a piece in the Lounge, wrapped canvases will be available with purchase of a cocktail. Ask Candice at the bar for more details. 7:00pm - 11:00pm Rogers Park Social 6920 N. Glenwood Ave. Chicago <http://www.rogersparksocial.com>

An Evening of Shakespeare: Lonely Hearts and Twisted Love Promethean ensemble members explore the darker side of Shakespeare's romantic tales with elected scenes and sonnets of calculated seduction, twisted yearnings, and rambunctious romance. Wednesday, Feb. 11 and Thursday, Feb. 12 at 7pm and 9pm. \$15. 7:00pm - 10:00pm The Red Lion Lincoln Square, 4749 N Rockwell St., Chicago <http://prometheantheatre.org>

Thursday, Feb. 12

Senior Hot Lunch Center on Halsted is a City of Chicago Golden Diners site, where seniors age 60+ receive a hot lunch on Tuesdays and Thursdays at noon. The suggested donation for lunch is \$1.50. No pre-registration required, but we ask that you sign in for lunch before 11:30 to ensure that you receive a lunch ticket. 12:00pm - 1:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=9271>

Meditation Class Open to participants 40+. No previous meditation experience necessary. Free. Contact Troy Johnson at tjohnson@centeronhalsted.org or by phone 1:00pm - 2:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago 773-472-6469 x491 <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=9277>

Co-Ed Volleyball Every Monday and Thursday in the gym, compete and practice. All welcome. \$7 daily pass or monthly pass \$30. Contact Mia Zucker at mzucker@centeronhalsted.org, or by phone. 6:00pm - 9:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago 773-472-6469 ext. 446 Tickets: <https://community.centeronhalsted.org/Volleyball>

Chitown Squares Styling Class with Arlene Kaspik. Foregoing the mainstream workshop to teach newbies the whoops and hollers that make square dancing fun. Review 7:00-7:30 with Therron and Ken. 7:30pm - 9:30pm Ebenezer Lutheran Church 1650 W Foster Chicago <http://www.chitownsquares.org>

A Kid Like Jake Weekly post-show discussions on gender development in children, contemporary parenting and discovering identity for young people. Through Feb. 8 and again Feb. 12 through March 15th. Thursdays thru Saturdays, 7:30pm. Saturday and Sunday Matinees, 3 pm 7:30pm The Greenhouse Theater Center, 2257 N Lincoln Ave., Chicago <http://www.aboutface theatre.com/productions/a-kid-like-jake/>

Friday, Feb. 13

Rhinoceros Theatre Festival Thirty+ theatre, performance, concert, panel discussions. Thursdays through Mondays through March 1 1:00pm Prop Thtr, 3502 N. Elston, Chicago <http://www.rhinofest.com/>

Issa Rae in conversation with Samantha Irby Reading and signing The Misadventures of Awkward Black Girl by Issa Rae; Meaty by Samantha Irby 7:00pm The Swedish American Museum Center, 5211 N. Clark St. Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

OPALGA February 2015 Potluck Potluck Dinner will be at the home of Jerry Donovan. Please bring a dish to share 7:00pm Contact an organizer for location <https://www.facebook.com/ron.roman.520>

The Rose Tattoo Unique in Tennessee Williams work, a special blend of comedy, emotional depth and lyricism. On Louisiana's Gulf Coast, a passionate overprotective Sicilian widow controls the life of her daughter. Earthy eroticism is unleashed as

an unknown truck driver arrives. Through 8:00pm Theater Wit 1229 W Belmont Ave. Chicago <http://www.theaterwit.org>

Saturday, Feb. 14

Equality Illinois Gala: Love is Love is Love Celebrating triumphs and looking forward. Black tie optional. 6pm cocktails, silent auction. 8pm dinner, program. 10pm dancing till midnight. Individual ticket \$330. 6:00pm Hilton Chicago, 720 S. Michigan Tickets: <http://www.eqil.org/gala>

Barry Manilow "One Last Time" tour. 7:30pm United Center 1901 W Madison Ave Chicago Tickets: <http://tinyurl.com/nax8wm7>

Fireball The return of Chicago's epic Valentine's weekend party with DJs Matthew Harvat and Alyson Calagna. Presented by Circuit Mom and Revolution. Powered by Scruif. Tickets at Cram Fashion, 3331 N. Broadway. Weekend passes available at www.circuitmom.com 10:00pm - 5:00am House of Blues 329 N Dearborn; <http://www.circuitmom.com>

Mardi Gras Ball An evening of music, food and fun. Traditional New Orleans fare from our special menu. DJ Sue Heggeland spinning Zydeco. All-day specials on Hurricanes, Pimms Cups, Pranzster and Abita Tap Takeover. Mask contest and a piece of King Cake. \$20 in advance; \$25 at the door. 8:00pm - 12:00am R Public House, 1506 W. Jarvis Ave. <http://www.rpublichouse.com>

Accidentally, Like a Martyr In a dive-y gay bar on Manhattan's lower east side, the regulars and the restless others do battle, joke, and drink their way through a lonely winter evening. Different generations and backgrounds collide, secrets are revealed, and old wounds are torn anew. 8:00pm A Red Orchard Theatre, 1531 N. Wells St., Chicago 312-943-8722 <http://aredorchidtheatre.org>

Sunday, Feb. 15

OutChicago, LGBT radio Progressive talk with Scott Duff. Streaming live online 11:00am - 1:00pm WCPT 820 am <http://www.chicagosprogressivetaalk.com/pages/pages.php?page=451>



'LOVE' AFFAIR

Saturday, Feb. 14

Equality Illinois' "Love Is Love Is Love" gala will be at the Hilton Chicago.

Photo of Lora Branch and Simone Koehlinger by Tracy Baim

hosts Mitchell Fain, Deb Pearce, Stephen Rader and Colman Domingo 12:00pm Online <http://www.windycityqueercast.com/shows.html>

Continue the love. Male Impersonator/Illusionist/Drag King Show will be produced by Adair Entertainment. VIP 5:45-6:45 pm. \$20 advance by phone, \$25 at the door. 7:00pm Baton Show Lounge 436 N Clark St Chicago 608-213-1200 <http://www.thebatonshowlounge.com>

Tuesday, Feb. 17

All That Glitters: Mardi Gras Body painting and beads, costumed dancers, specialty drink. No cover. Plus, get a taste of The Tease, an event Feb. 28 to support Chicago House. 7:00pm - 2:00am Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St Chicago <http://www.sidetrackchicago.com>

Mardi Gras Karaoke Madness Complimentary beads and masks. Hosted by Chandler. 8:00pm - 12:00am Scot's 1829 W Montrose Ave., Chicago <http://www.chicagoscotscobar.com>

King and Queen of Krewe Royal Windy City Empire's Imperial Crown Princess of Reign 11 brings you this pageant featuring categories such as Presentation (Mardi Gras theme) and talent. Prizes for king and queen. 10:00pm - 1:00am Atmosphere Bar 5355 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.windycityempire.com>

Wed., Feb. 18

UnWanted: Immigrant Detention-Deportation & Mass Incarceration IRRPP screening event discusses how the prison state reinforces injustice related to race, ethnicity and sexual orientation? RSVP to Ryan Vilorio at rvilor1@uic.edu or online 3:00pm, Tickets: <https://www.facebook.com/events/986927347991260/>

Jill Morgenthaler Author, The Courage to Take Command. Leadership lessons drawn from three decades of military service 7:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

Saturday, Feb. 21

Women & Children First Bookstore Grand Reopening Open House Come check out the new store and enjoy light refreshments. Live music by local performers, including Shanta Nurullah, will begin in the mid-afternoon. 10:00am - 7:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

CGHA to skate at Soldier Field after Hockey City Classic

BY ROSS FORMAN

When members of the Chicago Gay Hockey Association (CGHA) took the ice at Soldier Field in Chicago for an intrasquad game during the winter of 2013, the temperature was in the low 20s and the wind was brisk.

"That's part of playing outdoor hockey," said Andrew Sobotka, 29, CGHA's president. "The [2013] game was amazing. There is nothing quite as cool as playing in an empty and illuminated Soldier Field at night."

That game, featuring 40 CGHA players, ultimately went into a shootout. "We had such a close game; it was one for one with goals; it was very evenly matched," said Sobotka, who noted that the chilly conditions "makes it interesting, for sure; when it's snowing, the snow builds up very quickly on the ice, which makes it harder to see the puck and slows the play down a little bit."

The CGHA is returning to Soldier Field Sunday, Feb. 15, for another intra-squad game—with a trophy awarded to the winning captain. Sobotka said there won't be a wager on the game, just bragging rights. The puck drops at 3:30 p.m.

"I'm very excited to be back [skating] at Soldier Field," Sobotka said. "The last time we played there, the level of competition was great."

Sobotka, who works in IT Operations for CSG International, lives in Wrigleyville and has called Chicago home for the past eight years. He is originally from Michigan, and he has skated for the CGHA for five years.

He is a 2007 graduate of Michigan State, so his loyalty for the Hockey City Classic will be green and white.

"We have several players who went to Michigan, Michigan State and Western Michigan, so it should be fun for us to watch these teams battle it out," Sobotka said.

The CGHA fields five teams that play in four different leagues across Chicago. Players range in age from 21 to 50 and the club even features players from Canada and Spain. "We welcome all players, regardless of skill level or orientation," Sobotka said.

"We've grown by leaps and bounds [since] I joined five years ago, [when] we had one team," Sobotka said. "I think we're more diverse [now] than we've ever been; we also have more women than we've had in past years."



Chicago Gay Hockey Association players. Photo from the association

To purchase tickets to the Hockey City Classic through the CGHA, go to: <http://chicagogayhockey.org/hockey-city-classic/>.

'CLLAW XXI' Feb. 13

The Chicago League of Lady Arm Wrestlers' (CLLAW) will present its first-ever mash-up

match, "CLLAW XXI: My Bloody Valentine" on Friday, Feb. 13, at Logan Square Auditorium, 2539 N. Kedzie Ave., at 10:30 p.m.

Presented by Sideshow Theatre Company, the event will feature lady arm wrestlers such as Marie ARMtoinette and Ruth Bader Gunsburg.

Tickets for CLLAW XXI are \$10-\$15; all proceeds will benefit Sideshow Theatre Company and this match's partner charity, 826CHI. Visit www.cllaw.org.

BILLY MASTERS

"Even though some of your friends might be gay, which is great, they are not 'yours.' You do not own them. We are not cattle. We are not purses. And the next time you feel like saying 'my gays,' replace it with 'my Blacks' and see how that turns out."—Andy Cohen gives The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills a piece of his mind. Somewhere, Kathy Griffin is shaking in her stilettos.

Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow, which means we're in for six more weeks of winter. But that wasn't the only way last week was like the movie Groundhog Day. Once again, Rosie O'Donnell is leaving The View. Did I doze off and it's 2007 again? If so, why can't I fit into my old jeans? It's all just a little bit of history repeating.

This time around, Rosie is ostensibly leaving the show for personal reasons. In a statement, O'Donnell's rep revealed that Rosie and wife Michelle Rounds have been separated since November. Due to the imminent divorce, Rosie feels that her place is at home with her children. But is that the real reason? The couple has been separated for over three months and Rosie has worked the entire time. Rumor has it, this is a good way to bow out of another uncomfortable relationship. Despite what you may have heard, Ro's departure has nothing to do with any of The View co-hosts. But it may have something to do with how things have been handled behind the scenes—culminating in how ABC attempted to jettison the other Rosie (Perez). We're told that was last straw for O'Donnell, who pointedly told the brass that they might have to consider replacing BOTH Rosies. According to insiders, O'Donnell's pressure forced the network to keep Perez on the payroll. Now, THAT'S a friend.

Elsewhere at ABC, Diane Sawyer has snagged the first interview with Bruce Jenner regarding his gender "transition." Although the interview won't air until May, other members of the family are speaking out. Jenner's mom made the most revealing of statements: "I just learned about this. Bruce filled me in, and we had a very long, long talk about it. I am more proud of him now than when he stood on that podium and put the gold medal around his neck. He deserves all the respect." Others are curious how this will affect his sex life. One insider adamantly added, "Bruce is not gay. He did not have sex with men while he was with Kris, and he does not have sex with men now. Bruce is not going through this transition to be a lesbian, either." Let's see if Diane goes there!

At the time I write this, Bobbi Kristina's future is still bleak. Reportedly, Cissy is there, trying to get BK to fight by playing Whitney's "I Didn't Know My Own Strength"—which may have the opposite effect. But there's another ailing member of the Houston-Brown family. Famed singer (and psychic) Dionne Warwick was hospitalized after falling in the shower. I hate to say it, but perhaps the whole family needs to avoid bathrooms entirely!

This is not the first time we've had a story about hunky Congressman Aaron Schock. But this time, he's not showing off his enviable physique or wearing a turquoise belt. He's in the midst of an investigation regarding his recently redecorated office—because straight politicians are so often the target of decorating scandals. OK, so the suite bears a striking resemblance to the red room in "Downton Abbey", but that's beside the point. The big no-no is that interior decorator Annie Brahler did the work for free. What's Schock's defense? He rambled on and on about how he's not an "old crusty white guy" and that he loves vibrant colors. He ended his diatribe by saying, "When I go take a personal vacation, I don't sit on the beach. I go do active things. And so, I'm also not going to live in a cave. So when I post an Instagram photo with me with my friends, as Taylor Swift said, 'Haters are gonna hate.'" That



Billy says New England Patriots player Rob Gronkowski has plenty of admirers—male and female.

may be the gayest defense since the trials of Oscar Wilde.

Jack Falahee from How To Get Away With Murder recently did a sexy photo shoot for Out magazine. (We'll post it on our website.) In the accompanying interview, he skirted the subject of his own sexuality, saying, "I don't think answering who I'm sleeping with accomplishes anything other than quenching the thirst of curiosity. And moreover, it seems reductive." Wow—"moreover" and "reductive" in the same sentence? Gay!

Many of the emails we received this week were about the Super Bowl—and specifically about Rob Gronkowski. So our "Ask Billy" question comes from Justin in Colorado: "Where did this Gronk guy come from? He's hot as fuck! I'm sure he's not gay, but tell me you at least have some nude shots of him."

Patriots tight end Rob Gronkowski is certainly hot. He's also open to playing with gays in the abstract: "If he's being a great teammate and he's a guy on the field doing a great job, well then you've got nothing to complain about. He's another teammate and another friend." But let's put this in perspective. This is the same guy who ripped off another guy's shirt while on a dance floor. And during a spirited game of "Fuck-Marry-Kill," he said he'd "eff" Tim Tebow to take his virginity. So who knows. But he's failed my gay litmus test—he's not quite sure who Betty White is! And, after watching him read erotic prose to Jimmy Kimmel, I'm fairly confident that he's taken more than a few blows ... to the head. As to nude photos, Gronk likes to show off his body—usually with strategically placed balls. You can get your fill at BillyMasters.com.

When we're talking about a Patriot's balls and it has nothing to do with DeflateGate, it's time to end yet another column. For those of you in South Florida, I'll be celebrating my birthday this week. On the day itself (Feb. 13), I'll be at The Cabaret South Beach (TheCabaretSouthBeach.com). And on Valentine's Day, I'll be seeing Cheyenne Jackson and Seth Rudetsky at the Parker Playhouse in Fort Lauderdale (ParkerPlayhouse.com). Here's a fun fact: I've never had a boyfriend on both my birthday and Valentine's Day. Well, that's not completely true—I haven't had the SAME boyfriend on those two consecutive days. Perhaps I'll share more details on www.BillyMasters.com—the site that tells everybody's secrets. If you have a question you'd like me to answer, drop a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before someone leaks a video of Aaron Schock singing "Shake It Off" at karaoke! So, until next time, remember one man's filth is another man's bible.

This Tuesday, February 17

all that glitters

Mardi Gras

Body Painting & Beads
Costumed Dancers
Specialty Drinks
No cover

A taste of The Tease

THE TEASE (Feb 28) supports Chicago House. See ChicagoHouse.org for TEASE tickets

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NUNN ON ONE: TELEVISION

Jada Pinkett Smith brings her edge to 'Gotham'

BY JERRY NUNN



Jada Pinkett Smith. Photo courtesy of Fox

Since the '90s, Jada Pinkett Smith has built a strong movie career from *The Nutty Professor* to the *Matrix* and *Madagascar* franchises.

In her spare time she created a production company, sang in a rock band named *Wicked Wisdom* and authored a book. She also grew a megastar family after marrying Will Smith with two now famous children.

She has returned to television after guesting on shows like *A Different World* and *21 Jump Street* with Fox's *Gotham*, a *Batman* prequel, she portrays the gangster Fish Mooney. The series revolves around the origin of *Batman's* enemies centering in the world of *Gotham City*.

Windy City Times talked to the multitasking wonder woman about the series with a group of reporters recently.

Windy City Times: Hi, Jada. First off, talk about the strong character of Fish Mooney.

Jada Pinkett Smith: I love playing Fish Mooney. I think you're going to see a lot more color from Fish in the next episodes to come. I think you're going to see a lot more vulnerability and the human side of her.

I see Fish Mooney as kind of an extreme version of a woman. A woman who wears many faces. A woman who is strong, but yet afraid. I would say that the Fish Mooney character has been really fun and I love how smart and perceptive that she is. She decided to be a criminal instead of a doctor.

I think in the next few episodes, and definitely towards the end, you're going to see a whole different Fish, and a woman that definitely has some heart. You've seen the ruthless, now you're going to see some heart.

WCT: Since I write for a LGBT publication. How has the reaction to the sexuality of Fish Mooney been for you? I know you

had a girl-on-girl kiss.

JPS: It's been great. I think the Fish Mooney character anything pretty much goes as far as she's concerned by any means necessary. It's kind of her motto, but I definitely think that Fish doesn't discriminate when it comes to her sexuality.

WCT: I read you auditioned for a the role with a man on a leash and "liar" written across his forehead.

JPS: I know that's a better story, but it wasn't for an audition. We were actually doing a work session about Fish Mooney and trying to find the character, and that was one of the reasons why I decided to do something as extreme as that because I felt like instead of talking about it, just show it.

I just felt like, from the psychology that I had put together in regard to who I thought Fish was, that's something better to show than to explain verbally. I decided to come in with the guy on the leash to just show this is who this woman is.

WCT: Do you have input over the incredible wardrobe on the show?

JPS: I actually do. Our fantastic costume designer usually just comes to me and says, "What do you think about these fabrics? What do you think about this idea?" I pretty much told Lisa to just do whatever, whatever she feels because she's such a fantastic artist, and so we usually just talk about shape and color.

WCT: The costuming must have helped with the role when you step on set.

JPS: I put on that wig and her gear, because it's so specifically her. It is an immediate transformation. The first day, as soon as I put on that wig and that dress, I just felt like, "Oh, there she is," and every time I do it she just arrives. It's a really beautiful thing to have as an actress. Yes, you just don't have to work hard for it and that I'm grateful for. That wig, and those heels, and the nails really conjure her.

WCT: Favorite scene you have done so far?

JPS: I think one of my favorite scenes would have to be that Maroni scene when I go to Maroni and I hear that Penguin's alive, but I have yet to see him and then he comes from the back, in the kitchen, and I see him for the first time. I think that's probably one of my favorite scenes that I've done so far.

WCT: Many of the characters are from comics but your role isn't. How did you prepare for a role without a reference?

JPS: I think that was one of the reasons why the role was so interesting to me was because it was something that Bruno really wanted a partner in creating this Fish Mooney character, and I love female gangsters. I just love them. I think that they're really interesting characters and interesting people, and there's one, Griselda Blanco, who I had studied, and I also love the character from *Sunset Boulevard*. I did kind of a mish-mosh of those two because Bruno had some suggestions, and it's coming together, and I was like wow, I would really love to do a mixture of these two women, because the one thing I love about the super villains, and *Gotham*, is that they're always so colorful. I really wanted her to be grounded, but also have quite a flair.

WCT: What have you added to the character of Fish that was not originally scripted?

JPS: I would say just a lot of her mannerisms, and some of those little added attitude phrases that Fish has. Thank goodness I have a lot of room on set just because Bruno and the writers know that we're still trying to find the voice of this character, so I have a lot of room to improv at times when it comes to Fish. That's been fun as well. Just adding those little flavors that I think make Fish Mooney Fish.

WCT: People love to hate her so is it challenging to keep her likable?

JPS: I think that this world of *Gotham* sometimes in finding where you need to be emotionally, or how grounded you need to be in a scene or how far you can actually go with the color of the Fish Mooney sometimes tend to be a bit challenging. That's always a see-saw. It's always trying to find that balance. I would say that aspect is the most challenging of just keeping that flair, but at the same time, trying to keep her grounded and real. That can be really challenging.

WCT: Describe Fish's relationship with Penguin.

JPS: I would say that I think she saw Penguin as one of her adopted orphans. Somebody that she kind of took off the street and helped them become something. I think that she felt deeply betrayed by Penguin. It will be interesting to see where their relationship goes from here. Right now, they're not getting along too well. It will be interesting to see where it goes from here with the two of them.

WCT: Is there a character you want to play in the future?

JPS: I think there's a character coming up in *Magic Mike* that I'm really happy about, that is totally different from anything that I've done thus far. Once again, this woman is strong in a much different way also, and I think that from the response that we've been getting in regards to the character that I play in *Magic Mike*, I'm really happy in how that turned out and she'll probably end up being one of my favorites as well.

WCT: Come visit us in Chicago. You could make a guest appearance on *Empire*, which films here.

JPS: [Laughs] Well, thank you.

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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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