

CHICAGO  
FORCE:  
A SEASON  
PREVIEW



PAGE 26

# WINDY CITY TIMES

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

MARCH 18, 2015

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**LESBIAN SINGER-  
SONGWRITER  
ANNE STEELE**

PAGE 26



**CIVIL-RIGHTS ICON  
THE REV. WILLIE T.  
BARROW DIES**

PAGE 6



**PROFILING  
HUMAN-RIGHTS  
ADVOCATE JACKIE  
KAPLAN-PERKINS**

PAGE 12

# A love affair to remember

BY SARAH TOCE

It's 2015 and the U.S. Supreme Court is likely to issue a decision that could alter the course of the marriage equality movement—nationwide. Chicago couple of 13 years, Brian Thompson and Benjamin Rogers, are navigating the patchwork of state marriage laws just like so many other same-sex couples in the country, and they are hoping for swift and immediate action at the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) this June.

Rogers told Windy City Times, "Brian is such a sweet and sincere human being. He is a great friend to all of the people in his life and a constant support to me. My favorite thing about him is his childlike enthusiasm for things that he loves—from Whitney Houston to playing Streetfighter with friends, to baking and eating sweets. His delight is infinitely delightful."

When the tables were turned, Thompson issued an equally brilliant response.

"I always feel very lucky to have met someone so loving. Even in moments when I'm not the most loveable, his first instinct is to make sure I feel love and know that above anything else he will always be there for me," said Thompson. "Additionally, his

**Turn to page 14**



Brian Thompson (left) and Benjamin Rogers. Photo courtesy of Thompson

## SPRING THEATER/DANCE SPECIAL



page 21

Many theater productions (such as La Cage aux Folles, left) and dance companies (including River North Dance Chicago, right) are featured in Windy City Times' spring special. Photo of La Cage from Mark Campbell Photography and The Marriott Theatre; photo of River North by Frank Chaves

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Photo: William Frederking

## Ragamala Dance + Rudresh Mahanthappa Song of the Jasmine Apr 10–12



Photo: Darral Sneed

## International Contemporary Ensemble + Anna Thorvaldsdottir Apr 25



Photo: Rolex/Hugo Glendinning

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# this week in WINDY CITY TIMES

<b>NEWS</b>		<b>ENTERTAINMENT/EVENTS</b>	
Mich. college dispute; column	4	Spring theater special	21
Trans-labor forum	5	Singer-songwriter Anne Steele	26
Rev. Willie T. Barrow dies	6	Chicago Force season preview	26
46th Ward candidate Amy Crawford	10		
Activist Jackie Kaplan-Perkins	12	<b>OUTLINES</b>	
Love affair to remember	14	Classifieds; Dish	27
Viewpoints: Monroe; letter	20	Calendar	28
		Billy Masters	29

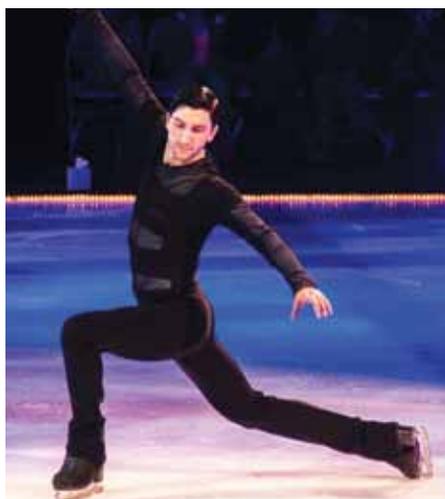
Images on cover (left, from top): Photo of Chicago Force QB Sami Grisafe from the Force; photo of Amy Crawford courtesy of Crawford; photo of The Rev. Willie T. Barrow by Hal Baim; photo of Jackie Kaplan-Perkins by Ed Negron



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**SKATE OF AFFAIRS**  
Olympic figure-skating champ Evan Lysacek (left) will be part of "Stars on ice" this weekend.  
*Photo by Carrie Maxwell*

### STAGE PRESENCE



WCT has even more to offer in our spring preview, including classics and near-classics.  
*Photo of Anne of Green Gables by John Hockberger*

### WED CASE



Evanston's Hotel Orrington hosted its first North Shore Boutique Bridal Fair.  
*Photo by Carrie Maxwell*

**ALL THAT 'JAZZ'**  
Lakeside Pride held "Champagne Showcase: A Night in the Jazz Age."

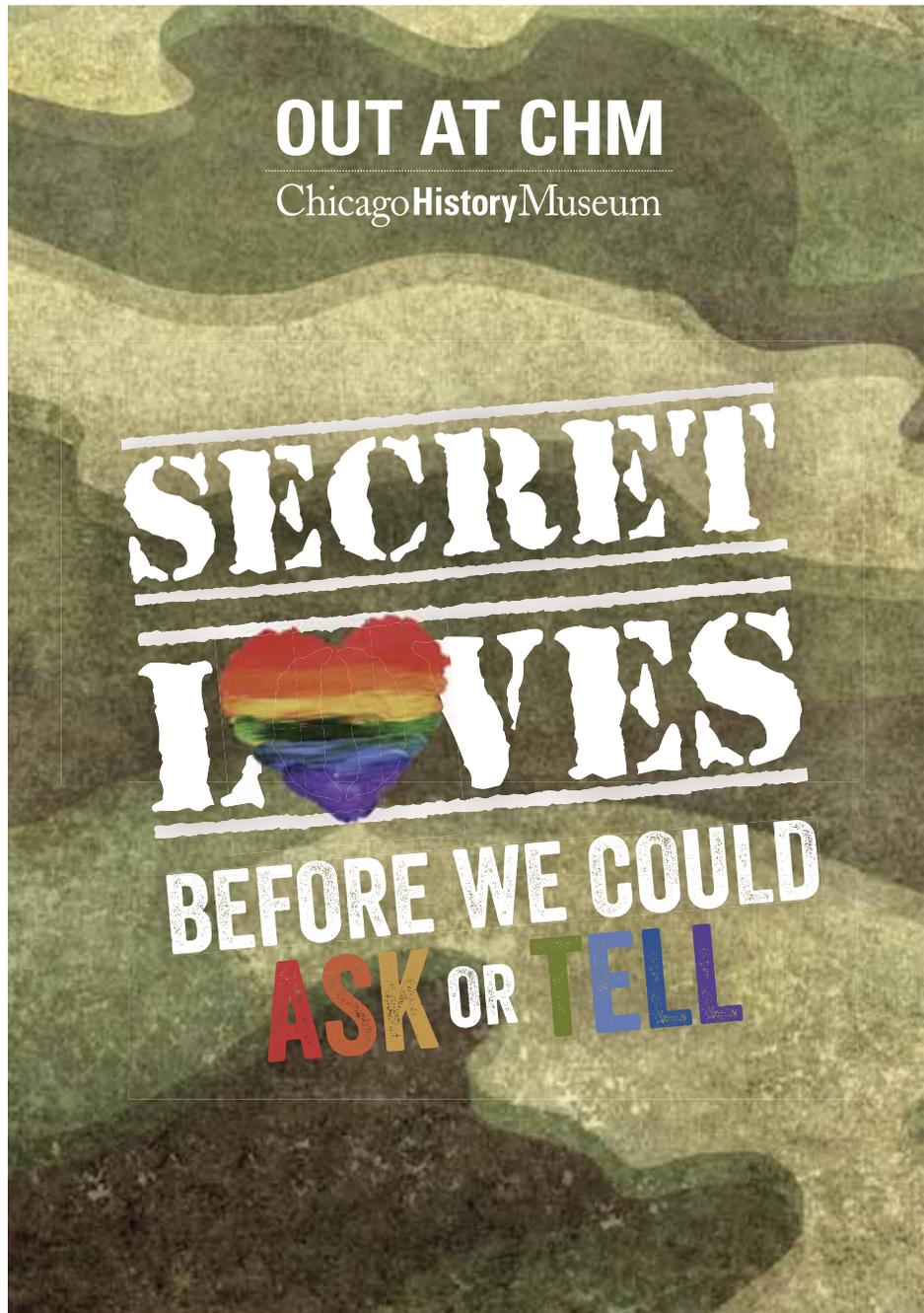
**IN PERFECT HARMONY**  
The girl group Fifth Harmony performed at the Riviera, and WCT's Jerry Nunn had a front-row seat. In addition, Bent Nights reviews shows by Mike Maimone and Brazilian Girls.

**THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT**  
Find out the latest about trans teen jazz Jennings, Josh Groban and Rosie O'Donnell.

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**MARCH 26** 5:30 P.M. RECEPTION  
6:30 P.M. PROGRAM

### SECRET LOVES: BEFORE WE COULD ASK OR TELL

Previous generations of LGBT military personnel risked violence, ridicule and disciplinary action by seeking love in the service. A lively discussion and entertainment will feature former armed services personnel and researchers whose contributions for their country inspires the work to advance fairness and quality for our nation's LGBT service members, veterans and their families.

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# LGBT club at Michigan university in rift with school

BY ROSS FORMAN

A simple charity fundraising bake sale has triggered a major gay-related debate at Andrews University, the flagship university of the Seventh-day Adventist school system and the largest evangelical Christian college or university in Michigan.

Elie Cruz helped start Aull4one four years ago with a faculty sponsor. He was president of the club for three years and passed the torch to a new president this year, as he's graduating in May. Aull4one, an unofficial gay-straight alliance on campus, is a student-run group with a handful of faculty sponsors. Andrews University does not officially sanction the organization, though they know it exists and allow it to continue to exist, Cruz said.

"Our mission is to create a safe and supportive space for all members, LGBTQ and straight alike, in which we foster meaningful discussions and create a welcoming atmosphere where everyone's personal stories, perspectives, and ideas are valued," he said. "Our hope is to apply God's golden rule to 'Love thy neighbor as thyself' to the current conversations on Christianity, sexuality, gender, and identity. Our role is not to convict nor judge, but to show support, respect, and God's care for all. By following Christ's example, we hope to make our communities, our churches, and ourselves a living testimony of His love."

Aull4one meets twice a month and it "creates safe space for dialogue about the intersection of faith and sexuality," Cruz said.

About 80 students, almost all queer, are a part of the group. On average, group meetings have 30 to 40 students attending.

"We turned in a proposal last semester for [a] bake sale, [and the] Deans of Student life asked us to move forward with the proposal," Cruz said. "[Since] we are an unofficial group, we needed someone to sponsor us; this is quite common. Many students have ideas and get groups to sponsor them. Campus Ministries agreed to sponsor us. The fundraiser is benefiting Project Fierce in Chicago."

The purpose of the bake sale was threefold, Cruz said.

First, as an unofficial group, Aull4one has no means of letting LGBT students on campus know it exists. The bake sale "was going to help our [on campus] visibility," Cruz said.

Second, it was to raise awareness on how LGBT youth are disproportionately affected by homelessness, he said. "In the last five years, Andrews University has had dozens of events on homosexuality, all of which were theologically condemning and some that even promoted change therapy," he said. "It wasn't until last year that [the school] allowed LGBT students to share our own narratives through a panel, and the event was completely prompted by students. Our campus doesn't allow for LGBT education which feeds ignorance on LGBT stories."

Lastly, the bake sale was going to raise money for LGBT homeless youth. "We wanted to give back to this particular community [as] most have been shut out from their homes due to religious homophobia."

Cruz said the bake sale was put on the back burner in early March by Steve Yeagley, the assistant vice president for student life/director of co-curricular education in the school's student life department. "He told us he had spoken to the president [of the university] and the Provost about the situation and that the decision comes from them," Cruz said.

In an email from Yeagley to Cruz that Windy City Times obtained, Yeagley wrote that the university has decided not to support the fun-



Elie Cruz. Photo from Cruz

draising proposal made by AULL40ne. Yeagley noted that there is a fundraising policy found in the Student Handbook. "It simply states that funds may be raised for non-profit organizations 'whose mission and practices do not conflict with those of the University'."

"I think the judgment in this case is that there may be a perceived conflict between the mission and practices of Andrews University and those of [Project] Fierce Chicago—certainly not in their efforts to aid homeless youth but in their approach to the LGBT issue, at large."

Yeagley also wrote, "If a way can be found to serve LGBT homeless youth through an organization that more fully reflects the University's mission and the stance of our denomination (which clearly calls for exhibiting compassion toward LGBT persons), let's explore that."

Yeagley's email, naturally, drew the ire of Cruz and his club. So Cruz reached back out to Yeagley for further explanation. Yeagley replied via an email that WCT has viewed. He wrote, "I think the best I can do is to reiterate the administration's assessment that 'there may be a perceived conflict' between the mission and practices of the two organizations, and that they feel confident this is an accurate statement when—as I said below—Fierce Chicago's 'approach to the LGBT issue, at large,' is taken into consideration."

Cruz is angered by the decision, to put it mildly.

"As a bisexual Christian man, I find it appalling that my university cares more about politics than the lives of LGBT people," said Cruz, 24, a senior, majoring in international business and French studies. "We went through all the official channels and were still told no. Even under theological stances that say same-sex relationships are sinful, as is the official stance of my school and church, this should be a no-brainer for everyone who claims to be a Christian to get behind."

Yeagley, contacted directly by Windy City Times for comment, forwarded the request to Stephen Payne, the school's vice president of the division of integrated marketing and communication. Payne quickly replied with the official university statement, via Becky St. Clair, the media communications manager from the division of integrated marketing and communication.

## Eyes on the Prize

BY DIEGO M. SANCHEZ



### Stunned in Selma

On Saturday, March 7, 2015, I methodically adjusted my tie to center its lip as I made my way down U.S. Route 80 from Montgomery to Selma, Alabama, where Majors Creek shares banks with The Alabama River.

I expected to have a range of emotions on this historic occasion commemorating the 50th year since "Bloody Sunday" in 1965, but I could not have anticipated the cornucopia of overflowing reactions that raced through me when I spotted The Edmund Pettus Bridge. I was captivated by the fact that this bridge is the site where brave people of all ages, of many races, mostly African-American, tried to march peacefully, saw what Congressman John Lewis always calls "a sea of blue," knelt to pray, and were beaten by Alabama State Troopers. That bridge and those 600 people were the centerpiece on the table leading Black people to have the right to vote in my lifetime. Fifty years later, we are now fighting to restore the Voting Rights Act.

My tie was the only thing centered about me, and the entire experience seemed surreal. While I felt overwhelmed by the expanse of people, I was more taken aback by the range of emotions people's faces revealed. Some were somber, others excited. It was easy to spot who was "on duty" because of their focused gaze and alert posture. There were families and people of all ages, mostly dressed in what we Southerners call Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes. Certainly this was a special occasion, and my insides felt like a blender with a reversible blade—spinning counterclockwise with somberness and humility for a moment, then clockwise with patriotism and pride the next.

Selma is a mere 350 miles from my hometown of Augusta, Georgia, and back in 1965, sentiments toward people who are "not white" were as real and kindred as their Southern roots. Being back home in the South reminded me of some regional language distinctions that buttress cultural ones. For example, in the South, the three meals are breakfast, dinner and supper, while elsewhere, they are breakfast, lunch and dinner. We Southerners say the word "y'all" as singular for "you," and the plural is "all y'all." We love our tomatoes fried and green, our peanuts boiled, and our tea sweet. Back in 1965—as brave people kept trying to march from Selma to the state capital of Montgomery—our Southern schools were still populated along race lines.

And that brings rise to another language distinction of historical significance. Those days predated school integration. It's called "integration" in the South rather than "desegregation" as it's termed in the North because to do something, you have to discuss the rest of the word, and that wouldn't have felt gracious or proper. Every year, I watch cable programs about Selma, which always include interviews with Congressman John Lewis (Ga.-5) and others as they recall and retell what happened in 1965. But being there this Saturday, while many of the original leaders with whom I had the great privilege of working in the '80s in Atlanta filled me with awe. I have been blessed to share projects and time with Ambassador Andrew Young when he was Atlanta's mayor, and the same is true for many beacons cited by name—John Lewis, Joseph Lowery (absent on Saturday due to illness), Hosea Williams, Ralph Abernathy; we have shared victories together. And then it struck me: we also shared and pushed through similar struggles and pain.

I often joke that my parents raised me as if every day was going to be their last on earth. Nothing ever went unexplained or unexpressed. Both Mom and Dad watched the news if they were not working, and I joined them in silence. We discussed news reports after they aired. For

our family, that meant we talked after Walter Cronkite said, "And that's the way it is."

Being in Selma on Saturday crystallized for me so many past and current intersections in my life. Quoting the late Sen. Edward M. (Ted) Kennedy as he spoke at a tribute for his brother Bobby, "In many ways it seems like only yesterday because the memories are so vivid and so enduring." Growing up as an Army brat, first at Ft. Gulick in the Panama Canal Zone and later at Ft. Gordon in Augusta, Georgia, I remember when we came by ship to New York from Panama en route to Georgia. My dad explained to me the meaning of The Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, reminding me of how he and his Army buddies as soldiers protect us and keep us safe, and how the Army saved Mom from the concentration camp before I was born. But when we moved to Georgia, there was no way to shield how white kids treated me, far from the safety of the jungles of Panama.

There was no rational response to my constant question of, "Why, Dad, why?" "Dad, why can't we go to the swimming pool over there near our house?" "Dad, why can't we eat at THAT restaurant?" I was a kid smack dab in the middle of human disregard because I had dark skin, because of who I was. No, I never got beaten on a bridge, but I'd like to believe that's only because at age eight, I wasn't yet old enough to carry myself 350 miles. By the time the festivities ended on Saturday, and before Sunday's service at Brown Chapel A.M.E. Church, I realized that my early life prepared me for what I'd have to endure later as an openly transsexual Latino immigrant. I also said some prayers of gratitude for the brave 600, those who followed on Turnaround Tuesday and for the thousands more who joined and succeeded on the third attempt, reaching Montgomery from Selma.

It's a precious lesson in powerful planning and persistence, and unfortunately, we need to call up that energy and dedication again right now to gain victories we thought we won long ago. Yes, The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was signed into law by President Lyndon Baines Johnson and reauthorized under two Republican Presidents since. However, on June 25, 2013, The Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) in a 5-4 vote, struck down Section 4 of the VRA, the part that requires some areas of the country to have federal government or federal court clearance to change their voting laws to ensure that those changes not restrict people's right to vote by enacting prohibitive voter ID requirements. The result of removing Section 4 has been some states enacting new laws mirroring practices that would have been shameful in 1965, let alone in 2015. We must demand that Congress fix this now. Ironically, on the next day, June 26, 2013, also in a 5-4 vote, SCOTUS struck down Section 3 of the so-called Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), the part that said a marriage is between one man and one woman. So while we hope and expect for marriage equality certainty to be fully resolved in June (when SCOTUS rules on the cases it will hear arguments about on April 28th), we have no certainty on how or when The Voting Rights Act will be fully restored. That's unacceptable.

Many packed up and went home after the Selma events, including me. But there is work to be done—no matter where we live—to honor the thousands from 50 years ago, as we follow their beacon and promise to step up our hard work ahead to reach full equality and justice for all, including our LGBTQ youth and their families. We work with strength, conviction, and love so that their children's memories can be gentler than some of ours. And indeed, together we shall overcome.

Diego M. Sanchez is PFLAG national policy director. This column also ran here: <http://blog.pflag.org/2015/03/stunned-in-selma-on-saturday.html>.

Turn to page 5

## MICHIGAN from page 4

The statement read, "Andrews University recognizes the special challenges facing LGBT youth and believes that efforts to help them are worthy. Providing care to LGBT homeless youth is compatible with our institutional mission to demonstrate God's love to all people, and reflects our denomination's specific call to exhibit compassion for LGBT persons."

"At the same time, Andrews University has declined a student request to officially endorse a fundraising effort to raise money for an organization that may have a perceived LGBT advocacy role. This decision was made in the context of our student fundraising policy in the Student Handbook, which states that funds may be raised for non-profit organizations 'whose mission and practices do not conflict with those of the University.'"

"So, our objection was not to the worthy goal of serving LGBT homeless youth and their transitional housing needs but to the perceived advocacy stance of the proposed organization. As a result, we can and will support LGBT homeless youth through organizations whose mission and purpose clearly align with the religious mission and purpose of our university and its sponsoring church. We invite our student clubs to find the appropriate organizations and opportunities to do just that."

Payne's email added that "Beyond this statement, Andrews University will have no additional comment at this time."

Cruz said the club chose the Chicago-based charity because the school is only about 90 minutes from Chicago.

Aull4One was hoping to raise "a couple hundred dollars" for Project Fierce through the bake sale.

But now, the group is going viral—and shooting to raise more funds. Cruz said the club is now hoping to raise \$2,000 through an online fundraiser. To support, go to <https://life.indiegogo.com/fundraisers/aull4one-raising-money-for-project-fierce/x/10107893>.

## DePaul forum looks at 19th-century transgender labor

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

"History is an awesome major or class to take for gender and women's studies people or people who are political because we need you to study this history," said Jen Manion, assistant professor of history and director of the LGBTQ resource center at Connecticut College.

This was the primary message that Manion conveyed during the Q&A following the lecture—entitled "To work as a man: Transgender narratives and labor in early 19th-century America"—March 10 at DePaul University.

After words of welcome and an introduction by Tera Agyepong, director of pre-law concentration and assistant professor in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences at DePaul University, Manion told the approximately 60 people in attendance that there were many reasons why women were motivated to pass as male including work, safety, freedom and love as well as the fact that they felt they were men i.e. transgender.

Crime & Punishment in U.S. History, the History of Sexuality, Global Queer Histories and Social Justice Movements are among the many classes that Manion teaches. Manion also co-edited *Taking Back The Academy: History of Activism, History as Activism* and their book *Liberty's Prisoners: Gender and Punishment in Early America*, which will be published in September. [Note: Manion prefers the pronouns "they" and "their."]

Manion was the founding director of the LGBTQ Resource Center, the second center of



Jen Manion. Photo by Carrie Maxwell

its kind in Connecticut. They were also recognized with the 2010 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Service Award and was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship at the American Antiquarian Society in 2012-2013 to research, "Crossing Gender in the Long 19th Century." Manion previously served a three-year term on the Governing Board of the Committee on LGBT History, an affiliate group of the American Historical Association.

Manion noted that until the late 18th century, people believed that men and women were biologically the same with minor differences but that changed with the emergence of a two-sex model of sexual difference.

This provided scientific justification to a political system deeply invested in female inferiority. Biological differences were increasingly used to sidestep the question of men and women's equality and justify women's oppression," said Manion. "It should come as no surprise that people contested restrictions places on their lives, including people designated girls at birth who took on male duties, personas and at times, entire lives. Stories of passing, cross-dressing and other states of in-

betweenness not only allow us a window into the lives of those whose histories are rarely preserved or understood but also shines a spotlight on some of the most obvious anxieties about women's place in society."

Manion explained that by the 1850s, the main reason why women began dressing in male attire was in order to gain entry into jobs that weren't open to women such as working aboard a ship as a cabin boy or deck hand although they had been working on ships for many decades prior to the mid-1800s. Of the women who dressed as men, Manion said that many who went to work on ships escaped detection due to the lack of scrutiny in hiring new recruits, the fact that they scarcely bathed and stayed dressed all the time.

"Those found living and passing as men were not punished, informally or legally and were never vilified," said Manion. "They were scarcely mocked and generally treated to some kind of celebration for their daring and sometimes compassion for their hardship."

Manion noted that although women who dressed as men weren't punished, "upon discovery that one was assigned the female sex at birth a series of events took place that were aimed at completely undoing one's gender, regardless of the desire of the person."

"Historians have all too readily promoted utilitarian explanations rooted in the historic limitations of women's economic and geographic mobility to the exclusion of more complicated gendered and sexual dynamics and so we must err now in the other direction and with our telling honor the possibility that some, perhaps even many of the people I've noted were very happy in their decision to live as men," said Manion.

DePaul University's English Department, the LGBTQ Studies Program, the Women's and Gender Studies Department and the Women's Center sponsored the event.



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# Civil-rights giant Rev. Willie T. Barrow passes away at 90

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Civil-rights activist Rev. Willie T. Barrow—known in some circles as “The High Priestess of Protest” or “The Little Warrior”—died March 10. Barrow, 90, was chairperson emeritus for the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, an organization she helped found.

She passed away at home, according to The Chicago Tribune. No cause of death was given, but Barrow had been receiving treatment for a blood clot.

Barrow had been active in numerous civil-rights causes since the '40s. She was one of the founding members of Operation Breadbasket, which eventually became the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, and was a top aide to Rev. Jesse Jackson Sr. throughout much of his activist work. She served as Jackson's Illinois campaign manager when he ran for president in 1984, and was also active in campaigns for Mayor Harold Washington and President Obama.

In a statement, Jackson called Barrow “my sister beloved who was my co-worker for more than 50 years. She was a woman of unusual courage, character and ability. She was on Dr. King's staff during the days of Operation Breadbasket, continued on my staff at Operation PUSH, was deeply involved in my two presidential campaigns as a delegate and as part of the Electoral College vote from Illinois, supported the National Rainbow Coalition, was active in the Rainbow PUSH Coalition and attended every Saturday morning community meeting that her health would permit. She was a great motivational speaker with the unusual gift of being able to take a scared group of people and inspire them to take militant non-violent action to correct a wrong.”

Barrow organized demonstrators for both the 1963 March on Washington and the 1965 March on Selma. In 2004, she told Windy City Times about drawing inspiration from Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.: “The things that I found fascinating were his humility and vision. He wasn't afraid to share the things that he saw and what he felt. He tried to bring together as many people as possible. That ties in with my theme for the 21st century: ‘We are not so much divided as we are disconnected.’ What struck me most was how he could connect with people—and how important that was.”

She advocated against U.S. involvement in Vietnam, as well as on behalf of women's and children's causes. She also participated as a superdelegate for the Democratic Party eight times.

Although Barrow's diminutive size was often remarked on, her personality was anything but, according to activist Marc Loveless.

“Let me be clear: Reverend Barrow wasn't a gentle personality,” Loveless said. “She made the people around her think harder, work smarter and do more. She also insisted on a faith-based foundation from which to operate. She was a praying woman, and when you asked her to pray, you were calling on everyone in the room and in heaven to pay attention.”

Barrow's commitment to the LGBT community was ignited after she lost her son Keith, a recording artist, to AIDS in the early '80s.

“One night, in 1979, he called me from Paris and said ‘Momma, I don't think I'll be able to go on stage tonight. I really feel sick,’ Barrow recalled to Windy City Times. “I said, ‘Oh, you'll be alright.’ I prayed for him and then he called again a couple of hours later and he said: ‘Momma, I can't perform. I have to go; they have to take me to the hospital.’ That's when he found out that he had [what was later determined to be] HIV.”



The Rev. Willie T. Barrow. Photo by Hal Baim

Activist Sean Strub wrote about Keith on the Sero Project's listserv.

“Anyone who met Keith immediately recognized him as a very gentle soul,” Strub noted. “As an artist, he had great integrity and was becoming more overtly political in his lyrics. When he wrote, ‘Why Love Half the World (When You Can Love The Whole World)’ and recorded it in 1980, he told me he thought it might end his recording career. Perhaps it isn't his best song, but being an out African American recording artist in the late 1970s was courageous, often lonely and came at a tremendous personal sacrifice.”

Keith was remembered with a panel on the National AIDS Quilt in 1988. When the Quilt was displayed in Chicago in 1988, Barrow joined then-Mayor Eugene Sawyer and author Studs Terkel, among others, to read the names of those who had died. The first name she read was that of her son.

A Texas native, Barrow attended Warner-Pacific Theological Seminary in Portland, Oregon, where she met her husband, Clyde, to whom she was married for more than 50 years. They arrived in Chicago in 1945, when Barrow went to work as a youth minister at Langley Avenue Church of God. She most recently served as minister of justice at Vernon Hills Church of God.

Mayor Rahm Emanuel ordered flags at city facilities flown at half-mast in Barrow's honor, Chicago Tribune reported. In a statement, Emanuel said, “Her voice was powerful, and contributed immeasurably to the cause of fairness, justice and opportunity in our community and the nation.”

Emanuel's challenger in the mayoral race, Jesus “Chuy” Garcia, added, “Where there was a fight for justice—large or small—at the international or at the neighborhood level, Willie Barrow was there, and she spoke out fearlessly. She was a source of inspiration and encouragement to our young people.”

Indeed, Barrow said that she enjoyed meeting and working with young people, and was “godmother” to more than 100 people.

“I think I'm just committed to people, period. It's so strange; all of these people say that they want to be my godchildren,” Barrow told Windy City Times. “They're of all races and creeds; they're Jews, Arabs, Asians, Mexicans, and Blacks. It's like a rainbow. ... So many of our young people can't talk to their parents.

When my son went to school, he ran into so many people who said that they couldn't talk to their parents; he would tell them to come home and talk to me because he knew that they could talk to me about anything.”

Among those she helped mentor was President Obama.

“I was proud to count myself among the more than 100 men and women she called her ‘Godchildren,’ and worked hard to live up to her example,” said Obama in a statement. “I still do. Michelle and I are deeply saddened by Reverend Barrow's passing, but we take com-

fort in the knowledge that our world is a far better place because she was a part of it. Our thoughts and prayers are with Reverend Barrow's family, and with all those who loved her as we did.”

Jackson added that Barrow “was an authentic freedom fighter in the lineage of Sojourner Truth, Rosa Parks and Fannie Lou Hamer. In sickness and death her body was frail, but her spirit and good works were never feeble. Our memories of her will never die. Her flame of hope, freedom and justice will forever burn.”



Ald. Deb Mell. Photo by Hal Baim

## Election board votes in Mell's favor

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The Chicago Board of Election Commissioners, on March 12, decided in favor of 33rd Ward Ald. Deb Mell in her bid to keep her post for another term. But Mell's challenger, Tim Meegan, has said that he will continue to press ahead with a lawsuit accusing Mell's organization of unscrupulous election-day tactics, DNAinfo reported.

The decision affirmed tallies released March 10 that said Mell had won 50.21 percent of the vote, with 4,103 out of 8,171 votes cast. Meegan, a Roosevelt High School teacher, had 2,779 votes, or 34.01 percent, while a second challenger, Annisa Wanat, had 1,289 votes, or 15.78 percent.

That means, for the moment, that Mell has received more votes than necessary to prevent a runoff election. But Meegan's lawyer, Richard Means, said that their campaign is pressing ahead with a lawsuit, filed March 3, accusing Mell's campaign of a number of illegal dealings. The allegations include having a polling location used as pick-up location for Mell signs; Dick Mell, the candidate's father, being stationed inside polling places to garner support for his daughter; and improper handling of ballots by Mell's poll-watchers.

Meegan's attorneys have requested an expedited hearing, so the matter can be decided in advance of the April 7 election. The lawsuit asks for a full recount.

In a letter posted to Twitter March 12, Mell said that she was “I am honored and excited to continue to serve as ... alderman,” adding, “I look forward to our ongoing work in the 33rd Ward to provide safer neighborhoods, create a more diverse economy, and improve our schools by building stronger relationships with teachers, parents, children and other stakeholders in the community.”

DNAinfo's story is at <http://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20150312/albany-park/ald-mell-wins-33rd-ward-race-election-board-says>.

## Center's 'Human First' gala March 28

Center on Halsted will host its annual “Human First” gala Saturday, March 28, at Union Station.

The black-tie optional event will feature cocktails and a reception at 5:30 p.m. Award presentations, dinner and dancing will commence at 7:30 p.m.

This year's award recipients include Charles R. Middleton; Ronna S. Stamm & Paul Lehman Family; and Prudence R. Beidler. Being honored with the Community Spirit Award this year is TransLife Center, a program of Chicago House.

Tickets are \$350-\$500 each; visit [community.centeronhalsted.org/Human-First](http://community.centeronhalsted.org/Human-First).

## Barney Frank event at Center on March 25

“Frank: An Evening with Barney Frank” will take place Wed., March 25, 7-9 p.m., at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St.

The Center, The Book Stall and Equality Illinois are hosting the event as the former Congressman will speak about his new memoir, Frank.

Windy City Times was originally a sponsor of the event, and Publisher Tracy Baim was set to do the live Q&A portion with Frank. However, the paper and Baim cancelled when it was learned that a reception was being held just prior to the public program, with Mayor Rahm Emanuel, two weeks ahead of the April 7 runoff election. Emanuel's team had declined a request by WCT to do a forum with mayoral candidate Jesus Garcia on LGBT issues, saying there was no time in the schedule.

“The proximity of the events creates the appearance of an endorsement by WCT of a candidate,” said Baim. “It also creates very bad optics on this race, when the campaign said there was no time for a public debate on LGBT issues.”

The book event is free. Reserve a seat through <https://community.centeronhalsted.org/BarneyFrank>.



Barney Frank.

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Fulyzaq may help manage your diarrhea over time by making your bowel movements less frequent and loose. Fulyzaq works by normalizing the flow of water in your gut. Fulyzaq did not interfere with commonly used HIV medications, and did not affect CD4 count or viral load in a 4-week study.

 **It's time to stop dealing with diarrhea and 'Start the Conversation' about Fulyzaq today.**

#### Indication

FULYZAQ® (crofelemer) is an antidiarrheal indicated for the symptomatic relief of noninfectious diarrhea in adult patients with HIV/AIDS on antiretroviral therapy.

#### Important Safety Information about FULYZAQ

FULYZAQ® (crofelemer) delayed-release tablets should not be used for the treatment of infectious diarrhea. It is important that your healthcare provider considers infectious causes of diarrhea before you start taking FULYZAQ. If infectious causes are not considered, and you begin taking FULYZAQ based on a probable diagnosis of noninfectious diarrhea, there is a risk that you will not receive the appropriate treatments, and your disease may worsen.

- FULYZAQ tablets should be swallowed whole. FULYZAQ tablets should not be crushed or chewed. You may take FULYZAQ with or without food. You should follow the instructions of your healthcare provider.
- If you are pregnant, or planning to become pregnant, talk to your healthcare provider before taking FULYZAQ. The safety and effectiveness of FULYZAQ have not been established in people younger than 18 years of age.
- In clinical studies, the most common adverse reactions associated with FULYZAQ – occurring in at least 3% of patients taking FULYZAQ – were upper respiratory tract infection, bronchitis (inflammation of the lining of the tubes which carry air to and from your lungs), cough, flatulence (intestinal gas passed through your rectum), and increased bilirubin (a waste product of the breakdown of red blood cells).
- You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch/](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch/) or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see following page for brief summary of Prescribing Information for FULYZAQ.

  
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## IMPORTANT PATIENT INFORMATION

The following is a brief summary only. See complete Prescribing Information at [Fulyzaq.com](http://Fulyzaq.com) or request complete Prescribing Information by calling 1-800-508-0024. This information does not take the place of talking with your doctor about your medical condition or your treatment.

### WHAT IS FULYZAQ?

FULYZAQ is a prescription medication used to improve symptoms of noninfectious diarrhea (diarrhea not caused by a bacterial, viral, or parasitic infection) in adult patients with HIV/AIDS who take HIV medication.

### WHO SHOULD NOT TAKE FULYZAQ?

- FULYZAQ should not be taken if you have diarrhea caused by an infection
- Your doctor and you should make sure your diarrhea is not caused by an infection (such as bacteria, virus, or parasite) before you start taking FULYZAQ

### WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF FULYZAQ?

- Upper respiratory tract infection (nasal or sinus infection)
- Bronchitis (inflammation of the lining of the tubes which carry air to and from your lungs)
- Cough
- Flatulence (intestinal gas passed through your rectum)
- Increased bilirubin (a waste product of the breakdown of red blood cells)

For a full list of side effects, please talk to your doctor.

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

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

### SHOULD I TAKE FULYZAQ IF I AM:

#### Pregnant or Planning to Become Pregnant?

- Studies in animals show that FULYZAQ could cause harm to an unborn baby or affect the ability to become pregnant
- There are no studies in pregnant women taking FULYZAQ
- This drug should only be used during pregnancy if clearly needed

#### A Nursing Mother?

- It is not known whether FULYZAQ is passed through human breast milk
- If you are nursing, you should tell your doctor before starting FULYZAQ
- Your doctor will help you to make a decision whether to stop nursing or to stop taking FULYZAQ

### Under 18 or Over 65 Years of Age?

- FULYZAQ has not been studied in children under 18 years of age
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- If you are taking any prescription or over-the-counter (OTC) medications, or herbal supplements or vitamins, tell your doctor before starting FULYZAQ

### WHAT IF I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT FULYZAQ?

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# Anchor study seeks answers to link between HIV, HPV

BY LAUREN E. CHILDERS

Anal dysplasia is on the rise for people living with HIV. Because people with HIV are now living longer, patients are facing a new set of health risks such as heart disease and now anal cancer. A national study has been launched, the Anchor Study, to examine the link between HPV and HIV, coinciding with the upcoming anal cancer awareness day on March 21.

Anal dysplasia refers more specifically to pre-cancerous lesions most commonly caused by HPV before the condition potentially worsens to cancer. HPV causes these pre-cancerous lesions typically treated in the vagina but is now being treated in the anus as well (for both men and women).

Despite HIV-positive people living with higher T-cell counts and immune systems that normally aren't susceptible to opportunistic diseases, they still face a higher risk of becoming infected with HPV. Once infected, the time from HPV to cancer happens more quickly for those with HIV versus the typical infection rate of 30 to 40 years.

Half of HIV-positive men have cell changes in their anus caused by HPV while about one in five HIV-positive women have the same cell changes. Those women with abnormal cervical pap smears may be at a higher risk for anal cancer, independent of whether they have had anal sex (Anchor Study).

Like cervical cancer, anal cancer is often symptom-free.

"No one knew that cervical cancer was pre-



Dr. Gary Bucher. Photo courtesy of Bucher

ventable before the use of Pap smears became widespread in the 1960s and cut the incidence of the disease by 80 percent," said Dr. Joel Palefsky, the study's principal investigator and protocol chair.

It is this link between HIV and HPV that the Anchor Study is examining. The primary goal of this study is to collect data that would influence insurance companies to cover routine anal cancer screenings and preventative treatment. The theory is that anal cancer, like cervical cancer, can be prevented by these routine screenings and removal of pre-cancerous cells.

"Since we're in the era of evidence based medicine, they want to be able to see that by doing something you'll decrease the incidence of cancer by a certain amount," explained Dr. Gary Bucher. "A controlled trial like this should get us that answer."

Bucher heads the Anal Dysplasia Clinic (ADC) Midwest in Chicago and is a leading anal dysplasia and anal cancer-prevention specialist. Bucher is the only certified high-resolution anoscopy (HRA) provider in the Midwest used to evaluate and treat anal pre-cancerous lesions.

The "anchor" in Anchor Study stands for Anal Cancer HSIL Outcomes Research. The study seeks to recruit people with these High Grade Squamous Intraepithelial Lesion (HSIL) and randomly assign them to a group that will receive treatment of the lesions or a monitoring group. Participants will be followed for five years to compare the results of each group, allowing for conclusion of whether screening and treatment of HSIL are effective strategies in preventing anal cancer (Anchor Study).

The ADC is one of 12 sites throughout the U.S. participation in the study.

"We feel comfortable with doing that because if we're going to following everyone every six months or if there's something suspicious more frequently we'll catch things early and be able to treat them," said Bucher.

A secondary analysis being conducted through the Anchor Study involves doctors collecting specimens and looking at biomarkers or other ways that HIV influences the progression to anal cancer. Also, doctors hope to learn to predict which lesions will lead to anal cancer over time.

The Anchor Study's main goal is to determine if these screenings decrease the rate of incidence of anal cancer.

"In the Midwest, we're trying to get the word out because a lot of people aren't screening for this because patients don't want to get a rectal exam and doctors really don't want to do the rectal exam either," Bucher said. "But that's how you will find things."

There is one preventative measure available which is the Gardasil vaccine with a recently approved vaccine out that prevents against nine different strains of HPV.

## Online college fair on March 19

Campus Pride and GLSEN will host the first-ever online college fair specifically focused on helping LGBTQA students find a college or university that is inclusive and supportive.

The fair will take place Thursday, March 19, 8 a.m.-8 p.m. CT. (College representatives will be available 12:30-5 p.m.)

More than 50 colleges, universities and supporters, including Duke University, New Mexico State University, The American University of Paris, University of Iowa and University of Pennsylvania. For a full list of participating universities, visit [www.campuspride.org/collegefair](http://www.campuspride.org/collegefair).

Register at <https://app.brazenconnect.com/events/campus-pride#!eventLanding;eventCode=campus-pride>.

## Adm. Mullen in Chicago March 31

The Palm Center has announced a public forum with Adm. Mike Mullen USN (Ret.) on the role he played in the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." The event will take place Tuesday, March 31, 7-8:45 p.m., at Pritzker Military Museum & Library, 104 S. Michigan Ave.

Admission is \$10; visit <http://www.palm-center.org/>.

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**ELECTIONS 2015:  
46TH WARD**

# Amy Crawford aims to unseat incumbent Cappleman in runoff

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Since the Feb. 24 elections, attorney Amy Crawford has been looking to convince 46th Ward residents that she's a better choice than incumbent Ald. James Cappleman, who's trying to retain his post for a second term.

Cappleman won the most votes, about 46.76 percent, but was unable to secure the 50-percent-plus-one-vote needed to prevent a runoff. Crawford received 37.66 percent of the votes. Another challenger, activist Denice Davis, had 15.59 percent. On March 10, Davis gave Crawford her endorsement in the April 7 runoff.

Crawford now has to convince ward voters that, if they want change, she's the best choice. Windy City Times spoke with Crawford about the runoff and her views on several issues that are pertinent to the ward.

**Windy City Times: Why you think the ward went into a runoff?**

Amy Crawford: I think this ward went into a runoff because people recognize that there is ineffective leadership currently, whether you're concerned about crime or the empty storefronts in the ward, or needing a stronger partner for our schools, or simply lagging behind in constituent services. People recognized that there were other options, and that I represent an effective option. There are people who were upset at how the alderman handled certain issues like Salvation Army and pigeons. I think the vote was certainly a reflection of his continuing polarization of the neighborhood.

**WCT: How would you address that polarization?**

AC: By talking to everybody, listening to everybody, and making sure that everybody is around the table. By not picking on certain groups, or addressing certain agencies as either the good guys or the bad guys. We're all in this together. Sometimes, whether we like it or not. [I would say] "Let's get along, and let's address the common problems of violent crime and the need for more economic development."

**WCT: What are your thoughts on tax-increment financing [TIF], and how it's been applied in the ward and what you might want to change?**

AC: Citywide, I certainly think there needs to be more transparency and accountability around this, so it's a step in the right direction that David Orr started publishing the amount of our taxes that go to TIFs but I think people would like to have more information about what TIF funds are used for. More attention needs to be paid to retiring TIFs once they achieve their objectives. I'm definitely a supporter of TIF reform. Here in the ward, what I'm interested in seeing is not TIF funds used as bigger-picture development projects, the traditional use of TIFs, but [asking] how do we funnel more into small-business improvement funds or other similar projects? TIFs can be used for smaller-scale things. They just historically have not.

**WCT: Ald. Cappleman has spoken of transforming much of this ward into an entertainment district. Would you continue with his work there?**

AC: That's a priority for him rhetorically but not in practice. He's been very focused on what I think are the wrong priorities but he has also been very reactive. When you're a reactive person, and just responding to issues like violence in the neighborhood, you're not going to be able to move the needle on things that require longer-term vision, leadership and planning. I think it's a great idea to build an entertainment



Amy Crawford. Photo courtesy of Crawford

district. [But] I've talked about it in terms of a cultural district. I think that reframes it in a way, a way that makes it less centered on Broadway and Lawrence, where we've got the Aragon, Riviera and Uptown, so that we're more focused on a ward-wide, Uptown-wide, approach that leverages not just the existing venues but also the smaller venues as well as our cultural diversity and architecture.

We have these great youth programs, art and dance programs, which can be part of how we build our cultural district. That's what's really exciting—not just to be able to buy tickets to the Aragon six months in advance for a band you love, but to be able to go out on a Friday night and be able to say, "I want to go to Uptown, there's going to be something cool to do, and it's going to be safe."

The other TIF issue is the Montrose/Clarendon TIF. A lot of folks are very concerned about the lack of progress there. Years have gone into multiple proposals, and yet nothing's happened, because it's currently stalled in the Department of Planning. I think we need an alderman who's going to be able to be a stronger hand at the negotiating table, who's going to be able to work with city agencies to get more done.

**WCT: What does the alderman's approach to reducing crime need to be?**

AC: It's got to be holistic approach, so it's not just about calling for more police, but that's part of it. It's got to everything from getting those additional beat cops, to helping the police engage more effectively with the community to giving our kids alternatives to a path of crime. That means, partnering with our schools to make them better, leveraging the existing programs that we have here so that they can reach more kids and do more things, such as after school programs and weekend programs. Also [it includes] leveraging some of the really promising pilot programs we've seen in other parts of the city, dealing with restorative justice, conflict resolution skills, even part-time job programs for older youth and young adults. It's a big-picture approach, but you've got to have the vision to really want to carry that out. Tragically, somebody else was murdered yesterday, three blocks from here at Agatite and Sheridan. So this violence is continuing. There've been three murders in the past three months. So people are really

frightened, as they're concerned about the approaching warmer weather.

**WCT: Homelessness is a significant issue for the ward. One development that has come about since we last talked is Gov. Rauner's proposed budget cuts, which would significantly impact money that would go towards resources. As an alderman, you wouldn't have direct control of that, but the issue will trickle down to you. How can an alderman best address that?**

AC: The proposed cuts are appalling. At the same time, the fiscal situation that the governor was put in, having a budget that wasn't funded, was not appropriate either. Once again, it's an example of state government kicking the can down the road and now it's blown up in our face. But we can't just allow the most vulnerable people in society to bear the brunt of our failure of government. So I think advocating with our local elected officials to, in the short term, mitigate the brunt of these proposed cuts and, in the long term, restoring fiscal sanity is just what's needed.

**WCT: How would you engage agencies' responses that have tackled those issues in the ward?**

AC: I spoke to this earlier, I think. [Cappleman] has a method of polarizing even the agencies and pitting them against each other in a sense, by labeling some as good and some as bad. Really the more productive question is, how do you leverage the services being provided and make them better? How do we get everyone together on the same page so we can do this more efficiently and more effectively? I think when you totally alienate one partner or another in the community, we're not going to get productive outcomes. We need an alderman who's a convener of these services, as well as to neighbors and the homeless population, to better address this issue in a long-term way.

**WCT: HIV/AIDS-related services were also significantly impacted in the budget proposals. How might you work on that issue as alderman?**

AC: It's symptomatic of a larger assault on public health, in a sense, [along the lines of] the closing of mental health clinics, so I think,

given the unique population of our ward, there are a lot of public health communities here, and everybody across the ward benefits when people are getting the treatment that they need, whether it's mental health or HIV/AIDS. Obviously I am a big fan of Howard Brown Health Center, a big fan of their work, so I'm concerned about how these cuts would impact them. I'd be interested in working with these impacted agencies, to figure out how we can help them continue doing what they're doing.

**WCT: Would you be in favor of moving the Pride Parade, which also goes through the 46th Ward?**

AC: I think it should stay where it is. I say that not just as a political candidate but as a community member and a resident. I think it would largely lose its special identity if it were to move downtown. The whole character of it calls for it to be centered in Boystown. Can the issues around it be better addressed? Sure—there is a need for constant improvement. Re-directing that route so that there was wasn't that bottleneck at Broadway and Halsted was smart. I think that it opens up the parade to a broader group of people. The people at the top of the parade route are different than the ones you see in the middle, or southern end. Sure, there are traffic problems that are a hassle and we need increased police for issues after the parade. I'll definitely be interested in hearing from affected residents.

**WCT: Why are you a better choice for the ward's LGBT community than the current alderman?**

AC: Whether you're part of the LGBT community or not, I think people want safe streets and a more vibrant ward. ... I think I've been a more active champion of LGBT people in this community, whether it's about being an advocate of marriage equality or the trans community in my legal work, whether it's my volunteer work with Howard Brown or my mentoring. To me it's not just about checking a box and being a member, it's about understanding issues that are specific to our community, having a history and engaging with it. But it's also just about effectiveness and getting stuff done.

Visit <http://www.amyfor46.org/>.



Denice Davis.

## Denice Davis endorses Crawford in 46th Ward runoff

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Activist and former aldermanic candidate Denice Davis announced, on March 10, that she is endorsing Amy Crawford in the April 7 runoff election. Davis, who was chief of staff for former Ald. Helen Shiller, was defeated by both Crawford and incumbent Ald. James Cappleman in the Feb. 18 city election.

"I'm endorsing Amy because she will be a strong leader for the 46th Ward and an independent voice on City Council," said Davis in a statement. "While we disagree on some issues, I'm convinced that progressives will be able to work with her on getting an elected school board, reducing crime in our neighborhood, and achieving a balanced approach to economic development. ... Amy will be a much more respectful and open partner in dialogue with all 46th Ward communities. There's a clear choice in this election, and I urge my supporters to vote for Amy Crawford."

Crawford added, "I'm honored by and grateful for Denice's endorsement. Denice

has been a powerful voice for progressive issues throughout her life and in this campaign. She has contributed a great deal to our ward over decades of engagement on behalf of all residents, especially youth and those in need. I would be honored to have the support of those who voted for Denice in the general election."

In the Feb. 24 election, Cappleman won the most votes—about 46.76 percent—but was unable to secure the 50-percent-plus-one-vote needed to prevent a runoff. Crawford received 37.66 percent of the votes, while Davis had 15.59 percent.

## Early voting info for runoffs

Early voting for the April 7 municipal runoff elections will take place Monday, March 23, through Saturday, April 4.

Voters registered in the City of Chicago may use any early voting site in the city, regardless of where they live.

Voters don't need a reason or excuse to use early voting; however, voters do need to present government-issued photo identification.

Ballots cast in early voting are final. After casting ballots in early voting, voters may not return to amend, change or undo a ballot for any reason. It is a felony to vote more than once—or to attempt to vote more than once—in the same election.

All 51 early voting sites will be open Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. To get a list of sites, visit [www.chicagoelections.com/page.php](http://www.chicagoelections.com/page.php).



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# Chicago LGBT-rights advocate now with Human Rights Watch

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

The Human Rights Watch (HRW) has become the unequivocal defender of the oppressed, marginalized and exploited world-wide. Operating with complete impartiality, the organization has called attention to some of the most shameful acts against humanity in recent history from the genocide in Rwanda to the assaults, imprisonment and murder of LGBT populations in countries such as Russia, Jamaica, Nigeria and Uganda. In 1997 it shared the Nobel Peace Prize for its work as a founding member of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL).

The organization's 2015 World Report detailed a myriad of international atrocities, including those that occurred hand in hand with the rise of ISIS and Boko Haram, Egyptian repression, Russian aggression in the Ukraine, the CIA torture of terrorism suspects and even abuses that occurred when cities such as Beijing and Sochi hosted Olympic events.

When the organization began its work 37 years ago monitoring and ensuring human rights in the countries of the Soviet Union in accordance with the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, Jackie Kaplan-Perkins was a child living in Rogers Park—the daughter of a man who had fled Cuba during the 1962 revolution and a mother whose family were survivors of the holocaust.

Her recent appointment as Director, Chicago and the Midwest for the HRW would seem a perfect match for Kaplan-Perkins, not only in terms of her family history but in accordance

with her quarter century long career fashioned in idealism and the betterment of those served by the many non-profits with whom she has worked including the National Center on Poverty Law, AVODAH: The Jewish Service Corps and the Chicago Foundation for Women (CFW).

It was as a student majoring in communications at the University of Wisconsin in Madison that Kaplan-Perkins began to nurture her desire to change the world around her. "Although I wasn't out, I was starting to get politically involved," she told Windy City Times. "I was also discovering women's and feminist issues."

After she graduated, Kaplan-Perkins began her journey in the non-profit sector as a volunteer for the now closed Peace Museum in Chicago—although she admits her motives at the time weren't entirely selfless. "I wasn't necessarily as interested in peace as I was around meeting Bono and Yoko Ono because they were rumored to hang out there a lot," she said. "But instead of meeting them, two profound things happened to me—I started to really understand issues of peace and human rights and I met Marianne Philbin who was about to become the first executive director of the Chicago Foundation for Women."

Philbin offered her a temporary job—at the most six weeks. Kaplan-Perkins ended up staying for six years. "I grew with the organization," she said "While I was there, I came out to myself, my community and family."

She also met some of the city's most impassioned philanthropists as well as community and civic leaders. At one event, she briefly



Jackie Kaplan-Perkins. Photo courtesy of Kaplan-Perkins

met then-state Rep. Jan Schakowsky. "I got a call [from her] because my name had come up as someone who might be a good finance director," she said. "I jumped at it without really knowing what the job would entail or how much I would learn from the experience. When I think about how I became an advocate, during my time with Jan I learned more from her about the LGBT community and supporting it than I did from anyone else. She was so solid and grounded on our issues before many other people were. I remember one of my first calls was to someone who was in the process of transitioning from male to female. But that age-old argument that we had heard was that putting the T in the LGBT community would derail our work for equality."

Kaplan-Perkins expressed her concerns to Schakowsky during a car ride. "It was a long drive. I talked and she yelled about my incredibly faulty reasoning," she said. "That [early on] the women's- and civil-rights movements hadn't included LGBT leaders for the same

reasons. It was a transformative moment for me. I understood that when you speak about equality it's more about one issue. I strongly believe that LGBT equality is more than about marriage equality especially when we look at human rights issues internationally. We have a responsibility as a community to make sure that there's equality for the entire community."

She had been working for Schakowsky for less than a year when small community groups began to approach her asking for help with their various projects. She spent the next 16 years strengthening such organizations in key areas such as fundraising, board development, relationship and network building.

"I have had the unbelievable fortune of just working with the most incredible, diverse wonderful groups of non-profits," she said. "In the [early work] of the LGBT community we tended to find more politically active men than women but I wanted full representation at the table."

It was as a board member of Horizons in 1998 that Kaplan-Perkins met a woman who was the co-chair of the organization's fundraising event. The immediate connection the two burgeoned into a relationship and then a marriage. "Annie and I were married in 2001 by our Rabbi and the following year we started the adoption process for our son," she recalled. "David was adopted in Russia. He was two when we brought him home. We were meant to be a family."

As a volunteer for the advisory board of Public Allies, Kaplan-Perkins met the organization's then-executive director, whose husband was running for state representative. She co-chaired the gay and lesbian committee when he eventually went on to run for Senator. Like Kaplan-Perkins, Michelle and Barack Obama have since taken their careers to a whole new level.

A job vacancy posting at the Human Rights watch said it was looking for someone to "oversee the 85-member Chicago Committee, help

Turn to page 15



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## Coalition to Support the Future of *Our* Youth

On February 18, Governor Rauner announced his intention to craft a state budget that protects our most “vulnerable” youth. To accomplish this goal, however, he seeks to eliminate all funding and services for a uniquely vulnerable population: foster youth ages 18 to 21. These are critical ages in development, and a period when adolescents need our support in preparing for a full and productive adulthood. The undersigned have long advocated for this vulnerable age group. Ending essential supports for this population is morally unconscionable and fiscally irresponsible. It also would violate Illinois’ laws, federal and state court consent decrees, and accepted best practices.

There is increasing consensus that 18-21 year-olds require continuing support. Foster youth, in particular, have experienced traumas that can impact their adolescence. In addition, they face hurdles - notably the absence of a safety net - that makes transition to independence even more challenging.

Foster youth forced into premature “independence” fare worse by every measure and at great cost to their own development. Without adult guidance and support, they are less likely to attain educational and employment goals. The odds then rise that they will require public assistance, face homelessness, have a harder time accessing health care and mental health services when needed, and become involved in our criminal justice system<sup>1</sup>. The problems also come at great expense to the state, because the costs will significantly exceed any short-term savings. Along with these cuts, the Governor’s budget also cuts social services these youth might otherwise turn to, including support for higher education, childcare, homeless supports, community health programs, and community substance abuse treatment programs.

In line with the recognition that foster youth in this age group are an at-risk population, both the federal<sup>2</sup> and state<sup>3</sup> governments have moved to extend, rather than reduce, services, providing college scholarship, transitional and independent living options, mental health counseling, and supports for pregnant and parenting teens. Governor Rauner’s proposal to turn foster youth out onto the streets is contrary to our laws and the consensus of social science researchers, and is financially reckless. We urge legislators and advocates to demand the continuation of services for foster youth up to age 21, and existing supports for qualifying youth pursuing college degrees, to truly prepare them for the independence and adulthood that all our citizens deserve.

Illinois was a leader in extending services to youth up to age 21 who are not yet prepared to live on their own. Instead of cutting these services, we should work to leverage federal dollars, strengthen programs to prepare our youth for success, and protect these vulnerable young adults.

Signed,

### Coalition to Support the Future of *Our* Youth (in formation)

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| • 360 Youth Services, Naperville   | • Community Crisis Center, Elgin                              | • New Moms, Inc.                                 |
| • Access Living of Metropolitan Chicago                                    | • Community Elements, Champagne                               | • The Night Ministry                             |
| • Adler University (including Institute on Public Safety & Social Justice) | • El Rescate/Vida Sida  | • North American Council on Adoptable Children   |
| • AIDS Legal Council of Chicago  | • FCAN (Families’ and Children’s AIDS Network)                | • Office of the Cook County Public Guardian      |
| • Alternatives, Inc.   | • The Family Defense Center                                   | • Passages Alternative Living Programs, Inc.     |
| • American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois                               | • Foster Care Alumni Association of America                   | • Prison and Neighborhood Arts Project           |
| • Aunt Martha’s Youth Service Center                                       | • Foster Care Alumni Association of America, Illinois Chapter | • Primed for Life                                |
| • Be Strong Families   | • The Harbour, Inc.   | • Project Oz, Bloomington                        |
| • Blue Sky Bakery and Café   | • Health and Medicine Policy Research Group                   | • Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law |
| • Center for the Human Rights of Children, Loyola University Chicago       | • Heartland Alliance  | • Strengthening Families Illinois                |
| • Chicago Coalition for the Homeless                                       | • Heartland Human Care Services                               | • Struggling Youth Equals Successful Adults      |
| • Chicago Medical-Legal Partnership for Children                           | • Hoyleton Ministries, Hoyleton                               | • UCAN   |
| • Child Care Association of Illinois                                       | • Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault                   | • Unity Parenting and Counseling                 |
| • Children and Family Justice Center, Northwestern School of Law           | • Illinois Coalition for Community Services, Springfield      | • Universal Family Connections, Inc.             |
| • Children’s Home and Aid  | • Introspect Youth Services                                   | • University of Illinois School of Social Work   |
| • Children’s Home Association of Illinois, Peoria                          | • James B. Moran Center for Youth Advocacy                    | • Voices for Illinois Children                   |
| • Civitas ChildLaw Center, Loyola University Chicago School of Law         | • La Casa Norte   | • Windy City Times                               |
|  | • Lakeside Community Committee                                | • Young Invincibles                              |
|  | • MYSI, Corporation   | • Youth Outreach Services                        |
|  |   | • Youth Service Bureau (Springfield)             |

For more information, contact Anita Weinberg, Civitas ChildLaw Center, Loyola University Chicago School of Law [aweinbe@luc.edu](mailto:aweinbe@luc.edu)

<sup>1</sup> Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth; <http://www.chapinhall.org/research/report/midwest-evaluation-adult-functioning-former-foster-youth>

<sup>2</sup> The federal government significantly expanded its support for this population through the passage of both the Chafee Foster Care Independence program in 1999 and the Fostering Connections Act in 2008

<sup>3</sup> Illinois extended care in 1987. Since then, the majority of states have followed. Most recently, Alaska (2012), California (2012) and Florida (2014) enacted legislative changes extending state responsibility for abused and neglected minors to the age of 21.

## AFFAIR from cover

face lights up whenever I come into the room. And not a day goes by when he doesn't call me handsome. I'm very lucky."

Wait, wait, wait. It can't all be sunshine and roses all the time, right?

"Of course, there are things that annoy and frustrate me," Thompson said. "He loves to talk and especially likes to ask questions. He also likes to try to 'hug it out' when we argue. But Ben wouldn't be Ben without those things. And a lot of the things that frustrate me are really due to faults of my own."

Rogers added, "There are some points [when] Brian is set in his ways and resistant to trying new things. I would love it if he would see some more independent films with me or attend more concerts I'm excited to see. But generally, I think we work because we are so opposite in parts of our personalities. Changing too much would mess up our balance."

**Windy City Times: You are both a part of this historic SCOTUS decision. How do you feel?**

Brian Thompson: I feel very fortunate to see such a historic event unfold. You think back to what our parents and grandparents saw transpire—World Wars, the civil-rights movement, etc. This is our moment...and the significant stories that we will tell the next generation.

Benjamin Rogers: I am very excited for same-sex couples throughout the nation who will hopefully gain this important civil right for the first time, and also for other couples who can feel more secure in getting married with no more fear of appeal or waiting for a judge's decision or threat of a constitutional ban.

We are very lucky in Illinois that marriage equality came through legislative action—so once it finally became legal, Brian and I could get married with a feeling of finality. It really puzzles me why there is such vitriolic opposition from people who wouldn't be affected at all. The right to marry the person you love and the legal protections that right affords will

only add more happiness to the world. And to think that there are couples who are still waiting for that right or are stuck in a limbo, such as my cousin and her partner in Indiana who were going to get married in the brief period it was legal but had to delay to raise the funds to apply for a license and then suddenly they couldn't get married because of an appeal, just makes me so frustrated. My fingers are crossed that this is soon settled once and for all.

**WCT: How did you initially become involved with this issue: marriage equality?**

Brian Thompson: Well, we were sort of born into the issue. But I think I first started consciously fighting for change the summer after my first year in law school when I interned for Gay & Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) in Boston. They had recently argued the marriage case in Massachusetts. It was amazing to see such smart, passionate and dedicated people fighting for justice. It really inspired me not to just sit on the sidelines.

Benjamin Rogers: We got married once it was legal and we live our lives openly, so I suppose we have been involved since August 9, 2014. I really am grateful for all of the individuals and activists who dedicated all of their energy and decades of their lives to bring the marriage equality movement to where it is today. Without their work on the issue, we wouldn't have the privilege to be married now.

**WCT: How did you guys meet? Was it love at first sight?**

Brian Thompson: We first met senior year of college at DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana. We were both applying for the same job to work at DePauw. It was definitely love at first sight for me. I remember seeing him for the first time walking across the academic quad and then basically finding every opportunity to be where he was.

Benjamin Rogers: Brian got the job and I didn't, but that didn't matter though because I got Brian's attention. I was pretty oblivious at the time but he began making efforts to meet up with me in random places like the library

or the bar (both places where I spent lots of time.) Finally, I woke up from my haze and realized how great of a guy he was. I asked him on a date and then for me it was a very quick trip from being curious about him to falling in love and wanting to spend all of my time with him. Not getting that job was the best thing that ever happened to me!

**WCT: Were your families initially accepting of your relationship?**

Brian Thompson: It took my mom some time to figure everything out. My dad died my senior year of college. My grandma [her mother] died soon after that. I also came out to her that year. So she was dealing with a lot at one time. She was always very loving to Ben, but it took her a little while to wrap her head around her son being gay and what that meant for my relationships and my future. It's been even less of an issue with Ben's parents. They have always been loving and supportive. And in the end, our mothers officiated our wedding, and we were surrounded by our family and close friends.

Benjamin Rogers: I am very lucky that my family is very supportive and loving and they have always been accepting of me and my relationships. Brian is such a wonderful man that they probably fell in love with him at the same rate that I did.

**WCT: How has your family dynamic changed since becoming married, if at all?**

Brian Thompson: I use the word husband a lot more, and we no longer have to worry about whether we can get married. But we've been together 13 years before we got married. So our family dynamic has been pretty well established for a while.

Benjamin Rogers: I think we've always worked to have a strong, loving bond and be the best support we can for one another. The only change I can really point to is that others seem more invested in our relationship and acknowledge it more.

**WCT: Generally speaking, how might marriage equality nationwide affect personal finances for Americans?**

Brian Thompson: Marriage equality would affect personal finances immensely for LGBTQ couples. There are 1,138 federal benefits, rights and protections provided through marital sta-

tus. There are so many perils that couples don't even think about that marrying can diminish. It's a pretty big deal.

**WCT: Could you offer any advice to couples across the U.S. trying to make a difference in their communities?**

Brian Thompson: I think the main thing is to live your life out and open. The more people are exposed to actual LGBTQ people, the less likely they will be influenced by negative stereotypes that they see on TV or hear about from the friends, neighbors and churches.

**WCT: As same-sex couples prepare for tax season, is there any advice you could give with current laws in place?**

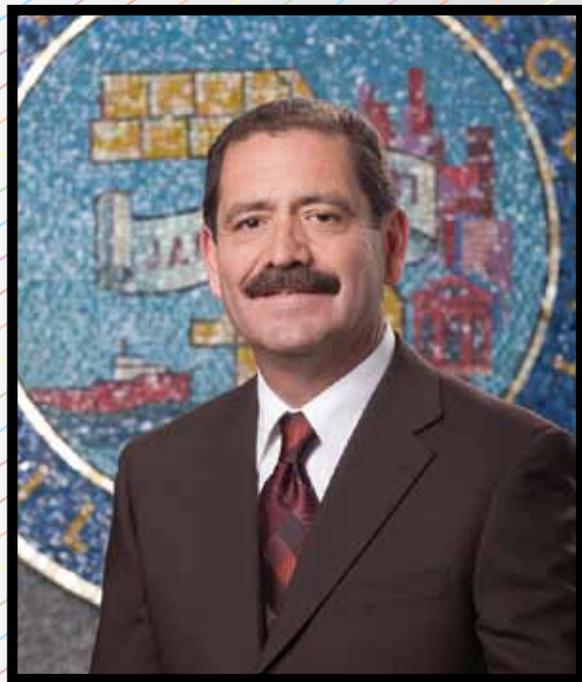
Brian Thompson: Get a good tax advisor. People who know the ins and outs of the tax laws can walk you through all of the complexities and give you guidance on how to think about your life according to your Form 1040. There are still complications that come from this patchwork of marriage laws. So going to someone who has seen different scenarios and can guide you through them is crucial.

**WCT: Pop culture plays a defining role in the way we perceive ourselves as children and into our teens. Who were some of your idols/inspirations growing up?**

Brian Thompson: Like most people I admired celebrities—Whitney Houston, Mariah Carey, Oprah Winfrey, Michael Jackson, Michael Jordan, Michael Johnson [the track star] ... a lot of Michaels. Phenomenally talented people who were the very best of what they do.

Benjamin Rogers: I grew up in a small, rural town and I really didn't have much exposure to counter-culture figures and queer artists, but the ones I knew of really shaped my sensibility. Michael Stipe was probably the most profound—both for his avant-garde style and insistence that "labels are for soup cans" and so folks shouldn't really fixate so much on defining sexuality. Allen Ginsberg was the first queer writer I read who wrote frankly and often explicitly about his love and relationships with other men. I found his poetry both validating and inspirational. And Keith Haring was someone I loved simply for his art, but once I discovered in high school that he was also queer and a dedicated AIDS activist, it made me want to harness my creativity in similar ways.

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## National roundup

COMPILED BY ANDREW DAVIS

In Philadelphia, the organizers of the **50th-anniversary celebration of the LGBT-rights movement** announced that they will present Edie Windsor (plaintiff in the historic Supreme Court marriage-equality decision in 2013) and Judy Shepard (mother of Matthew Shepard, and international activist for LGBT and human rights) with the International Role Model Awards at the Independence Visitor Center, a press release stated. Both will be participating in events throughout the celebration, including the 50th-anniversary ceremony at Independence Hall on July 4. A four-day celebration of panels, parties and other events culminates with a historic ceremony on July 4 in front of Independence Hall, followed by a street festival and parties in Philadelphia's renowned "Gayborhood" on July 5.

Lawrence Reed has been found guilty of the murder of gay Clarksdale, Mississippi, mayoral candidate **Marco McMillian** and sentenced to life in prison without parole, WREG.com reported. Reed confessed to the 2013 murder. He didn't dispute that he killed McMillian, but claimed he acted in self-defense after saying McMillian tried to rape him. McMillian's body was found near the Mississippi River levee in Coahoma County, after being doused with gasoline and set on fire. Authorities say the killing happened in Quitman County.



The late Clarksdale, Mississippi, mayoral candidate Marco McMillian.

The 126-year-old Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) welcomed its first openly gay president March 16, The Huffington Post reported. **Rabbi Denise L. Eger**, CCAR's third woman leader, was inaugurated in an event celebrating the organization's 25 years of commitment to ordination for gay clergy. Eger joins a small group of openly gay leaders who have served as presidents of rabbinical associations, including Rabbi Toba Spitzer, who was president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association (RRA) from 2007 to 2009, and Rabbi Jason Klein, the current RRA president.

**WATCH from page 12**

grow philanthropic support for the organization and promote HRW's domestic and international advocacy initiatives to local audiences."

Already a fan and advocate of the organization's work shortly after Kaplan-Perkins returned from the Dominican Republic (see <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/chicagoans-visit-Dominican-Republic-as-LGBT-rights-advocates-/48046.html>), she met HRW Director of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights Program Graeme Reid.

"Hearing Graeme talk about the depth and breadth of the work that Human Rights Watch did was incredibly moving to me," Kaplan-Perkins said. "I was at their dinner this year and realized that some of the people who I respect most in the world were in the room. Everybody from my rabbi to Jan to some of the women I met at the CFW to members of the LGBT community. I could not have imagined another organization where so many of my communities and so many of the people I respect would overlap."

"This is not an organization that is ever going to stop taking notice of human rights abuses," she added. "The stories that we heard about LGBT people in Russia may have fallen off the news cycle in the US but the HRW is never going to walk away from this. They and organizations like them are on the ground making sure that abuses are documented and that people are heard and that change happens. They are giving a voice to the disenfranchised. What I am excited about is that I am going to get to do that too—raise the profiles of so many human right abuses not only around the world but in my own LGBT community and engage them in those issues. We have an unbelievable committee of volunteers for the Human Rights Watch in Chicago raising awareness not only internationally but here in Illinois."

The strength and leadership of that group of volunteers has led the HRW to select Chi-



**Jackie Kaplan-Perkins (center) along with her son David, wife Ann and dog Floyd. Photo courtesy of Kaplan-Perkins**

cago as the location for its 2015 Human Rights Watch Council Summit which, from June 3-5, will bring together the organization's global leadership "to learn about Human Rights Watch's work and the most compelling human rights issues of the day."

For Kaplan-Perkins, the job is an unparalleled opportunity to engage in the continual

learning process and personal growth that has been the focal point of her life and career. "I'm humbled, I'm honored and I look forward to the challenge," she said.

For more information about the work of the Human Rights Watch, visit <http://www.hrw.org/node/75134>.

**Chamber of commerce names new ED**

After a nearly three-month search, the board of directors of The Chicago Area Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce has hired Gerardo Rodriguez as the organization's new executive director.

During his tenure as a professional business advisor at the Chicago Urban League and Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Rodriguez successfully assisted businesses in obtaining more than \$100 million in contracts awarded, creating more than 150 jobs and retaining 300 positions.

Rodriguez holds degrees in English (creative writing) and philosophy from Southern Illinois University, and recently completed his masters of science degree in Oriental Medicine with a focus in nutrition.

**Trans presidential appointee at institute March 20**

Amanda Simpson, a Defense Department official who is the first transgender woman presidential appointee, will be the featured speaker on the opening day of the LGBT Equality Institute on Friday, March 20.

LGBT community leaders and allies, progressive advocates, civic officials, community groups and interested individuals will gather in Chicago for presentations on March 20-21 at the second annual LGBT Equality Institute, presented by Equality Illinois, in the Hyatt Regency Chicago.

Registration for the March 20-21 event at the Hyatt Regency Chicago, 151 E. Wacker Dr., is available at [www.tinyurl.com/LGBT-institute-2015](http://www.tinyurl.com/LGBT-institute-2015).

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To control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses you must keep taking COMPLERA. Ask your healthcare provider if you have questions about how to reduce the risk of passing HIV-1 to others. Always practice safer sex and use condoms to lower the chance of sexual contact with body fluids. Never reuse or share needles or other items that have body fluids on them.

It is not known if COMPLERA is safe and effective in children under 18 years old.

## IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

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

#### COMPLERA can cause serious side effects:

- **Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis)**, which is a serious medical emergency. Symptoms of lactic acidosis include feeling very weak or tired, unusual (not normal) muscle pain, trouble breathing, stomach pain with nausea or vomiting, feeling cold especially in your arms and legs, feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Serious liver problems.** The liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and fatty (steatosis). Symptoms of liver problems include your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice), dark “tea-colored” urine, light-colored bowel movements (stools), loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, and/or stomach pain.
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or serious liver problems** if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking COMPLERA for a long time. In some cases, these serious conditions have led to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any symptoms of these conditions.
- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** If you also have HBV and stop taking COMPLERA, your hepatitis may suddenly get worse. Do not stop taking COMPLERA without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to monitor your health. COMPLERA is not approved for the treatment of HBV.

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- **Take a medicine that contains:** adefovir (Hepsera), lamivudine (Epivir-HBV), carbamazepine (Carbatrol, Equetro, Tegretol, Tegretol-XR, Teril, Eptol), oxcarbazepine (Trileptal), phenobarbital (Luminal), phenytoin (Dilantin, Dilantin-125, Phenytek), rifampin (Rifater, Rifamate, Rimactane, Rifadin), rifapentine (Priftin), dextansoprazole (Dexilant), esomeprazole (Nexium, Vimovo), lansoprazole (Prevacid), omeprazole (Prilosec, Zegerid), pantoprazole sodium (Protonix), rabeprazole (Aciphex), more than 1 dose of the steroid medicine dexamethasone or dexamethasone sodium phosphate, or the herbal supplement St. John’s wort.
- **Take any other medicines to treat HIV-1 infection**, unless recommended by your healthcare provider.

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

#### Serious side effects of COMPLERA may also include:

- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood tests to check your kidneys before starting treatment with COMPLERA. If you have had kidney problems, or take other medicines that may cause kidney problems, your healthcare provider may also check your kidneys during treatment with COMPLERA.
- **Depression or mood changes.** Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms: feeling sad or hopeless, feeling anxious or restless, have thoughts of hurting yourself (suicide) or have tried to hurt yourself.

- **Changes in liver enzymes:** People who have had hepatitis B or C, or who have had changes in their liver function tests in the past may have an increased risk for liver problems while taking COMPLERA. Some people without prior liver disease may also be at risk. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your liver enzymes before and during treatment with COMPLERA.
- **Bone problems**, including bone pain or bones getting soft or thin, which may lead to fractures. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicines.
- **Changes in your immune system.** Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new symptoms after you start taking COMPLERA.

The most common side effects of COMPLERA include trouble sleeping (insomnia), abnormal dreams, headache, dizziness, diarrhea, nausea, rash, tiredness, and depression. Other common side effects include vomiting, stomach pain or discomfort, skin discoloration (small spots or freckles), and pain. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or do not go away.

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

- **All your health problems.** Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have or had any kidney, mental health, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis virus infection.
- **All the medicines you take**, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. COMPLERA may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how COMPLERA works. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist. Do not start any new medicines while taking COMPLERA without first talking with your healthcare provider.
- **If you take rifabutin (Mycobutin).** Talk to your healthcare provider about the right amount of rilpivirine (Edurant) you should take.
- **If you take antacids.** Take antacids at least 2 hours before or at least 4 hours after you take COMPLERA.
- **If you take stomach acid blockers.** Take acid blockers at least 12 hours before or at least 4 hours after you take COMPLERA. Ask your healthcare provider if your acid blocker is okay to take, as some acid blockers should never be taken with COMPLERA.
- **If you are pregnant** or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if COMPLERA can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking COMPLERA.
- **If you are breastfeeding** (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk. Also, some medicines in COMPLERA can pass into breast milk, and it is not known if this can harm the baby.

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

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



**COMPLERA**<sup>®</sup>  
emtricitabine 200mg/rilpivirine 25mg/  
tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300mg tablets

## Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information

### COMPLERA® (kom-PLUH-rah)

(emtricitabine 200 mg, rilpivirine 25 mg, tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300 mg) tablets

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

### What is COMPLERA?

- **COMPLERA** is a prescription medicine used as a complete HIV-1 treatment in one pill a day. COMPLERA is for adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before and who have no more than 100,000 copies/mL of virus in their blood (this is called 'viral load'). Complera can also replace current HIV-1 medicines for some adults who have an undetectable viral load (less than 50 copies/mL) and whose healthcare provider determines that they meet certain other requirements.
- COMPLERA is a complete regimen and should not be used with other HIV-1 medicines. HIV-1 is the virus that causes AIDS. When used properly, COMPLERA may reduce the amount of HIV-1 virus in your blood and increase the amount of CD4 T-cells, which may help improve your immune system. This may reduce your risk of death or getting infections that can happen when your immune system is weak.
- **COMPLERA does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.** You must stay on continuous HIV-1 therapy to control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses.
- **Ask your healthcare provider about how to prevent passing HIV-1 to others.** Do not share or reuse needles, injection equipment, or personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them. Do not have sex without protection. Always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.

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

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

- **Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis).** Lactic acidosis can happen in some people who take COMPLERA or similar (nucleoside analogs) medicines. Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Lactic acidosis can be hard to identify early, because the symptoms could seem like symptoms of other health problems. **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms which could be signs of lactic acidosis:**
  - feel very weak or tired
  - have unusual (not normal) muscle pain
  - have trouble breathing
  - having stomach pain with nausea or vomiting
  - feel cold, especially in your arms and legs
  - feel dizzy or lightheaded
  - have a fast or irregular heartbeat
- **Severe liver problems.** Severe liver problems can happen in people who take COMPLERA. In some cases, these liver problems can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis). **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms of liver problems:**
  - your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice)
  - dark "tea-colored" urine
  - light-colored bowel movements (stools)
  - loss of appetite for several days or longer
  - nausea
  - stomach pain

- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking COMPLERA for a long time.**
- **Worsening of Hepatitis B infection.** If you have hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection and take COMPLERA, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking COMPLERA. A "flare-up" is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before. COMPLERA is not approved for the treatment of HBV, so you must discuss your HBV with your healthcare provider.
  - Do not run out of COMPLERA. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your COMPLERA is all gone.
  - Do not stop taking COMPLERA without first talking to your healthcare provider.
  - If you stop taking COMPLERA, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly to check your HBV infection. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or unusual symptoms you may have after you stop taking COMPLERA.

### Who should not take COMPLERA?

#### Do not take COMPLERA if you also take any of the following medicines:

- **Medicines used for seizures:** carbamazepine (Carbatrol, Equetro, Tegretol, Tegretol-XR, Teril, Eptol); oxcarbazepine (Trileptal); phenobarbital (Luminal); phenytoin (Dilantin, Dilantin-125, Phenytek)
- **Medicines used for tuberculosis:** rifampin (Rifater, Rifamate, Rimactane, Rifadin); rifapentine (Priftin)
- **Certain medicines used to block stomach acid called proton pump inhibitors (PPIs):** dexlansoprazole (Dexilant); esomeprazole (Nexium, Vimovo); lansoprazole (Prevacid); omeprazole (Prilosec, Zegerid); pantoprazole sodium (Protonix); rabeprazole (Aciphex)
- **Certain steroid medicines:** More than 1 dose of dexamethasone or dexamethasone sodium phosphate
- **Certain herbal supplements:** St. John's wort
- **Certain hepatitis medicines:** adefovir (Hepsera), lamivudine (EpiVir-HBV)

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

- Other medicines that contain tenofovir (ATRIPLA, STRIBILD, TRUVADA, VIREAD)
- Other medicines that contain emtricitabine or lamivudine (ATRIPLA, Combivir, EMTRIVA, EpiVir, Epzicom, STRIBILD, Trizivir, TRUVADA)
- rilpivirine (Eduvant), unless you are taking rifabutin (Mycobutin)

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

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

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

- **See "What is the most important information I should know about COMPLERA?"**
- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before you start and while you are taking COMPLERA. If you have had kidney problems in the past or need to take another medicine that can cause kidney problems, your healthcare provider may need to do blood tests to check your kidneys during your treatment with COMPLERA.
- **Depression or mood changes. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms:**
  - feeling sad or hopeless
  - feeling anxious or restless
  - have thoughts of hurting yourself (suicide) or have tried to hurt yourself
- **Change in liver enzymes.** People with a history of hepatitis B or C virus infection or who have certain liver enzyme changes may have an

increased risk of developing new or worsening liver problems during treatment with COMPLERA. Liver problems can also happen during treatment with COMPLERA in people without a history of liver disease. Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your liver enzymes before and during treatment with COMPLERA.

- **Bone problems** can happen in some people who take COMPLERA. Bone problems include bone pain, softening or thinning (which may lead to fractures). Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicine. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck (“buffalo hump”), breast, and around the main part of your body (trunk). Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The cause and long term health effect of these conditions are not known.
- **Changes in your immune system (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome)** can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider if you start having any new symptoms after starting your HIV-1 medicine.

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

- Trouble sleeping (insomnia), abnormal dreams, headache, dizziness, diarrhea, nausea, rash, tiredness, depression

**Additional common side effects include:**

- Vomiting, stomach pain or discomfort, skin discoloration (small spots or freckles), pain

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

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

**What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking COMPLERA?**

**Tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including:**

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

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

- COMPLERA may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how COMPLERA works.
- If you take certain medicines with COMPLERA, the amount of COMPLERA in your body may be too low and it may not work to help control your HIV-1 infection. The HIV-1 virus in your body may become resistant to COMPLERA or other HIV-1 medicines that are like it.

- Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you take any of the following medicines:
  - Rifabutin (Mycobutin), a medicine to treat some bacterial infections. Talk to your healthcare provider about the right amount of rilpivirine (Edurant) you should take.
  - Antacid medicines that contain aluminum, magnesium hydroxide, or calcium carbonate. Take antacids **at least 2 hours before or at least 4 hours after** you take COMPLERA.
  - Certain medicines to block the acid in your stomach, including cimetidine (Tagamet), famotidine (Pepcid), nizatidine (Axid), or ranitidine hydrochloride (Zantac). Take the acid blocker **at least 12 hours before or at least 4 hours after** you take COMPLERA. Some acid blocking medicines should never be taken with COMPLERA (see “Who should not take COMPLERA?” for a list of these medicines).
  - Medicines that can affect how your kidneys work, including acyclovir (Zovirax), cidofovir (Vistide), ganciclovir (Cytovene IV, Vitrasert), valacyclovir (Valtrex), and valganciclovir (Valcyte).
  - clarithromycin (Biaxin)
  - erythromycin (E-Mycin, Eryc, Ery-Tab, PCE, Pediazole, Ilosone)
  - fluconazole (Diflucan)
  - itraconazole (Sporanox)
  - ketoconazole (Nizoral)
  - methadone (Dolophine)
  - posaconazole (Noxafil)
  - telithromycin (Ketek)
  - voriconazole (Vfend)

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

**How should I take COMPLERA?**

- Stay under the care of your healthcare provider during treatment with COMPLERA.
- Take COMPLERA exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to take it.
- Always take COMPLERA with food. Taking COMPLERA with food is important to help get the right amount of medicine in your body. A protein drink is not a substitute for food. If your healthcare provider decides to stop COMPLERA and you are switched to new medicines to treat HIV-1 that includes rilpivirine tablets, the rilpivirine tablets should be taken only with a meal.

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

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

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## VIEWPOINTS

WINDY CITY  
TIMES

VOL. 30, No. 25, March 18, 2015

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"Windy City Media Group generated enormous interest among their readers in this year's LGBT Consumer Index Survey. Out of approximately 100 print and online media partners who participated in the survey, Windy City was the best performing regional media in the U.S. Only survey partners with a nationwide footprint were able to generate a greater number of responses." —David Marshall, Research Director, Community Marketing, Inc.

Community Marketing, Inc.



REV.  
IRENE  
MONROE

## Discrimination is not religious freedom

A movement is afoot in state legislatures across the country to disenfranchise LGBTQ Americans.

There is a surprising number of bills being introduced in state legislative session that outrightly sanction and enforce LGBTQ discrimination. These bills are called religious freedom restoration acts (RFRA), but don't be fooled. These lawmakers are looking to codify LGBTQ discrimination.

Last week the Georgia Senate, with a vote of 37-15, approved a controversial RFRA (House Bill 1023). The bill doesn't want the state's Christian religious conservatives, fundamentalists and evangelicals to "substantially burden" their personal religious practices and beliefs.

What, you may ask, could possibly be such a burden to Christians in Georgia that a state law is necessitated?

Burden, according to the bill, is defined as "any government action or implementation or application of any law, including, but not limited to, state and local laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, and policies, whether statutory or otherwise, that directly or indirectly constrains, inhibits, curtails, or denies the exercise of religion by any person or that directly or indirectly pressures any person to engage in any action contrary to that person's exercise of religion, including, but not limited to, withholding benefits, assessing criminal, civil or administrative penalties, and exclusion from government programs or access to government facilities."

But let's be clear: The only religious folk lawmakers hope to protect from a "substantially burden" is Christians. Jews, Muslims,

Buddhists, and other non-Christian Georgians don't merit protection. As a matter-of-fact, these demographic groups—along with atheists and LGBTQs—can easily be subject to egregious forms of discrimination, bigotry and hate crimes under the guise of religion.

For example, the Atlanta-based, fast-food chain Chick-fil-A can now, with the state's sanctioning of House Bill 1023, openly and legally discriminate in its hiring practices of Jews, divorcees or LGBTQ people based on their Southern Baptist beliefs.

In June 2012, controversy arose when it was disclosed that the company's founder, S. Truett Cathy, and his family donated millions of dollars to groups across the country opposing same-sex marriage. Cathy—through The WinShape Foundation, the chain's charitable organization—flatly barred same-sex couples from participating in the foundation's marriage retreats.

"Religious freedom restoration acts" like Georgia's are springing up around the country. And the bogus claims look like this in justifying denying services to same-sex couples:

A family-owned bakery in Gresham, Oregon, —Sweet Cakes by Melissa—wanted to "practice [its] Constitutional right to religious freedom;" a florist in Washington state wanted to maintain her "relationship with Jesus;" and a photography company in New Mexico would "gladly serve gays and lesbians" by taking portraits. But photographing same-sex marriages or commitment ceremonies would "require [the company] to create expression conveying messages that conflict with their religious beliefs." Sweet Cakes by Melissa owners closed the family shop and moved the business to their home, making it clear LGBTQ dollars are not wanted.

"They don't have a right to be served in every single store," said Oklahoma state Sen. Joseph Silk, referring to gay people. "People need to have the ability to refuse service if its violates their religious convictions."

While South Dakota's and Arkansas' RFRA failed to advance in their state's legislative sessions, North Carolina's and Alabama's measures did. In marriage-equality states (like North Carolina and Alabama), state judges and employers like justices of the peace can refuse to officiate same-sex nuptials. Also, private businesses can refuse services to same-sex

ditionally, a recent CDC report suggests that 33 percent of African-Americans between the ages of 18 and 65 years old have never been tested for HIV. But as a result of this mishap, nearly 8,000 units of HIV prevention service will not be provided to African-Americans in Illinois this fiscal year because 14 organizations will not receive the funding they were awarded from the AAARAF.

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 them have had to lay off well-trained staff, cut back on HIV prevention services or, worse, close their doors in communities that are already under-resourced.

We are mindful of Illinois' precarious financial position and the elevated competition for scarce resources brought on by Governor Rauner's proposed \$6.6 billion in budget cuts for FY 2016, including a 25 percent cut to HIV prevention and care services, \$1.5 billion in Medicaid cuts, and a reduction in funding for the AAARAF by 66 percent to \$500,000. But Illinois must do right by the 14 organizations that successfully competed in the application process and need to get back to the business

couples, citing religious beliefs.

The argument cited by religious conservatives for discrimination against LGBTQ Americans is not confined geographically. And the last place one expects not to see this type of discrimination rearing its head is liberal Massachusetts—but it has.

Gordon College, a small conservative Christian school on Boston's North Shore, prides itself on upholding the tenets of religious freedom. And in so doing, the college tested its boundaries with the recent Supreme Court case *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc.*

Last year's *Hobby Lobby* case ruling allowed family-owned corporations to cite religious objections to opt out of the nation's Affordable Care Act (ACA). ACA required employers to cover certain contraceptives for women. Gordon's President D. Michael Lindsay—along with 14 influential religious leaders from across the country—asked President Obama for an exemption banning discrimination in hiring on the basis of sexual orientation.

Lindsay and his band of homophobes framed their request to the president by email, c/o Melissa Rogers, executive director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, under the guise of religious freedom.

This was hardly, though, the first time a Massachusetts school has tried to paint discrimination as religious freedom.

As recently as January 2014, the Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders filed a complaint against Fontbonne Academy, a religious college prep school in Milton, Massachusetts, when the school fired Matt Barrett—after offering him employment at the school as food services director—when he stated on a form that his spouse was a male.

"If I'm planning and making meals for students, I'm not sure what my being gay has to do with the job," Barrett said. "I've always done well in my work, and was excited about working at Fontbonne. All I did was fill out the form honestly."

The RFRA's springing up across the country are a backlash to the growing acceptance of same-sex marriage and the growing fear of when the Supreme Court legalizes it nationwide. The measures are perversions of the Constitution and our history of religious freedom.

## LETTERS

## A matter of money

Dear Editor:

Time has never been on the side of those fighting against HIV and AIDS. Despite profound advances that have been made in both prevention and treatment over more than 30 years, more than 50,000 new HIV infections occur in the United States each year.

Community-based organizations fight the HIV epidemic in Illinois on a daily basis. However, as a result of an administrative error made last summer, \$1.5 million that was appropriated to the African-American AIDS Response Act Fund (AAARAF) disappeared. The AAARAF provides resources for fighting HIV in Illinois' most vulnerable communities. This error left those in greatest need of services at even greater peril. We are outraged by this error and call upon the Illinois General Assembly and the governor to make good on their promises and uphold a law that created this fund nearly a decade ago.

According to the latest available information, African-Americans (who represent approximately 14.7 percent of the state's population) account for more than half of the 1,800 HIV cases diagnosed in Illinois each year. Ad-

of preventing HIV and linking people to care.

We, the undersigned organizations, urge our elected state officials to replenish the AAARAF and authorize awards to the 14 organizations that were told they would be funded in FY 2015.

Every 9.5 minutes, someone becomes infected with HIV in the United States, and one in five of them will not know (s)he is passing the infection on to others. The clock is ticking. We must act now.

Signed,  
 Affinity Community Services, AIDS Foundation of Chicago, Black Men's Xchange (BMX) Chicago, Brothers Health Collective, Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus, Chicago Recovery Alliance, Chicago Women's AIDS Project, Coalition for Justice and Respect, Community Health and Education, Inc., Community Wellness Project, East Side Health District, Making A Daily Effort (M.A.D.E.), Men and Women in Prison Ministries, Proactive Community Services, Project VIDA, Sinai Health System, South Suburban HIV/AIDS Regional Clinics, Southside Help Center, Taskforce Prevention and Community Services, Westside HIV/AIDS Regional Planning Council and Writers Planners Trainers Inc.

## GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION

Photo from  
Mana  
Contemporary

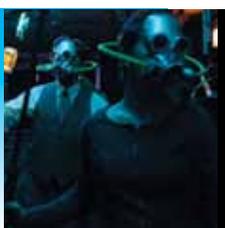
## WINDOWS TO THE WORLD

MANA Contemporary is among the venues hosting intriguing dance productions this spring. Read more below.

## THEATER

'Sea' here.  
Page 22

Photo from 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea  
by TCMG Photography



## DISH

Stretch routine.  
Page 27

Photo of Stretch Bar & Grill's  
shortrib chili nachos by Andrew Davis



## SPORTS

Season preview.  
Page 26

Chicago Force QB Sami Grisafe  
Photo courtesy of Grisafe



## SPRING DANCE PREVIEW

## Chicago Dance Month and much more

BY LAUREN WARNECKE

April is Chicago Dance Month, with several particularly jam-packed weeks of dance leading up to National Dance Week on April 24-May 3. It's the time of year in which we are still high on inspiring performances by our big resident companies such as The Joffrey Ballet and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago—whose spring programs brought audiences quickly to their feet—and from the touring companies like Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Grupo Corpo, who did very much the same. April and May are typically reserved for “the little guys,” with everything except the kitchen sink, dance-wise, at venues all across the city.

—A few lingering engagements at the big houses include **Giordano Dance Chicago (GDC)** March 27-29 at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance (205 E. Randolph St.). Artistic Director Nan Giordano worked with Giordano 2's company director and leading GDC man, Joshua Blake Carter, for the world premiere of “The only way around is through,” a refreshingly personal and tender work inspired by human connections in dealing with chronic illness. Also included on the program are the acclaimed show stoppers “Feelin' Good Sweet” by So You Think You Can Dance's Ray Leeper (2014), and the recently premiered “Shirt Off my Back” by Ray Mercer (2015). Tickets are available through the Harris Theater website at [www.harristheaterchicago.org](http://www.harristheaterchicago.org).

—**The Auditorium Theatre at Roosevelt University** (50 E. Congress Pkwy.) offers its final installments to the “Made in Chicago” series of one-nighters, with River North Dance Chicago on March 28 (including the world pre-

miere of “Beast,” a new work for the company's six women by company member, Elgin native, and Princess Grace Awardee Hannah Britson) and the Chicago Rhythm Fest (presented by the Chicago Human Rhythm Project) on May 13. The Eifman Ballet of St. Petersburg caps off Auditorium's spring season with the U.S. premiere of “Up & Down” May 8-10. Tickets may be purchased at [auditoriumtheatre.org](http://auditoriumtheatre.org).

—**The Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago** (1306 S. Michigan Ave.) finishes its 2014-15 season with the 30th anniversary of Urban Bush Women (UBW) March 19-21 and the B-rooted Festival April 3-4. Favorite works from UBW's archives are presented alongside Artistic Director Jawole Willa Jo Zollar's new “Hep Hep Sweet Sweet,” which pays homage to her upbringing in Kansas City and the migration of African American culture from south to north. Tickets are available by calling the Dance Center box office at 312-369-8330, or online at [colum.edu/dancecenterpresents](http://colum.edu/dancecenterpresents). B-rooted is a free hip-hop dance festival featuring 10-year-old crew Venus Fly and NINJACHURCH.

—**Links Hall** (3111 N. Western) is ramping up for a very full docket this spring, beginning with its 2015 LinkUp Artist Showcase March 27-29. Featuring Christine Shallenberg and The Impossible! Collective, the showcase is the culmination of six-month residencies for each artist. Princess Grace Awardee Nejla Yarkin of NY2 Dance presents “What Dreams May Come” April 3-5. Yarkin's choreography often explores topics related to freedom, oppression and identity in a unique combination of Turkish and contemporary dance forms. “What Dreams May Come” is a multimedia collaboration with video artist Enki in a work inspired



Urban Bush Women. Pic by Rick McCullough

by the intersections and interactions between public and private spaces.

Ananya Dance Theatre (ADT) visits Links April 17-19 in a special presentation titled “Neel: BlutoPIAs of Radical Dreaming.” The evening-length work is the product of over a year of research investigating the dreams of women from indigenous cultures and communities of color. Included in the hefty list of collaborators is Sharon Bridgforth, the woman at the helm of last summer's meaty theatrical jazz installation “River See.”

On April 24-26, the long-running LGBT-friendly performance series Poonie's Cabaret hosts “Post Q,” a multi-disciplinary series aimed at performance-based discussion on the “politics of a post-queer world” and featuring dancer/performance artist Darling Shear, among nine others. Josh Anderson finishes what he started May 8-10 with the brilliantly cheeky “Levels of Acetylcholine,” which first made its in-progress debut at the Chicago Moving Company's summer series titled D49 in 2014. The following weekend, May 15-17, The Space/Movement Project (TSMP) celebrates its 10-year anniversary with two new works, and some old favorites. In a surprising diversion from the company's “all-for-one” collaborative choreographic process, one of the two premieres is from a single choreographer: TSMP

ballet mistress Emily Stein. Tickets for Links Hall performances are often available at the door, or online at [www.linkshall.org](http://www.linkshall.org).

—**Chicago Tap Theater (CTT)** continues its spring tradition for evening-length tap-infused narratives with “Tightwire” March 20-29 at Stage 773 (1225 W. Belmont Ave.). Tickets for a spectacle of live music and dancing inspired by 1930s travelling circuses are available at [stage773.com](http://stage773.com) or by calling 773-327-5252. At the Storefront Theater (66 E. Randolph St.), Peter Carpenter Performance Project presents its 14th installment of Rituals of Abundance for Lean Times, an ongoing series that, in this iteration, brings Carpenter together with The Dance COLEctive for an exciting collaboration May 1 and 2. Tickets are available at 773-604-8452 or online at [brownpapertickets.com/event/1126399](http://brownpapertickets.com/event/1126399).

—Choreographer **Monica Thomas** breaks into dance film with “A Screendance Event” at MANA Contemporary (2233 S. Throop St.) on March 27. Film works by Thomas and Jason Chiu, Jason Elewski and Lizzie Leopold and Brian Mazzaferri will be shown with live music and performances by composers Will Huff and Doug Kaplan, and Maxwell Allison of Good Will Smith. Tickets can be purchased at the door, or online for a discounted rate at <http://montomarts.ticketleap.com/a-screendance-event/>.



First Wives Club: The Musical. Photo by DJ Pierce

## THEATER REVIEW

### First Wives Club: The Musical

**Book:** Linda Bloodworth Thomason;  
**Score:** Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Eddie Holland  
**At:** Oriental Theatre, 24 W. Randolph St.  
**Tickets:** 800-775-2000 or [www.broadwayinchicago.com](http://www.broadwayinchicago.com); \$33-\$100  
**Runs through** March 29

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

The producers behind the Broadway-aimed musical *First Wives Club* are certainly tenacious. After a 2009 San Diego tryout of the show faltered, *First Wives Club* was heavily revamped for its current Chicago run with a new book by Designing Women sitcom writer Linda Bloodworth Thomason (adapted from Rupert Holmes' previous version), plus new direction by Simon Philips (Priscilla, Queen of the Desert).

Alas, these changes haven't quite resulted in making *First Wives Club* a Broadway-ready property. And that's despite a very charismatic cast who do a very skillful job of delivering a hearty quotient of zinging one-liners and visual gags for a production that unashamedly aims to be over-the-top.

But then again, the sources for *First Wives Club* aren't exactly high art. The catty 1996 Paramount film and Olivia Goldsmith's original 1992 novel largely served as rah-rah fantasy empowerment tropes for three middle-aged women done wrong by cheating husbands and reunited following the suicide of their friend, Cynthia Swann (Michelle Duffy).

The musical version sticks a little too closely to the film, and it's problematic because so many plot strands leave many of the supporting characters either as underdeveloped (particularly the ex-husbands played by Seán Murphy Cullen, Gregg Edelman and Mike McGowan) or as crass cartoon types (practically all the mistresses played by Morgan Weed, Alison Woods and Lindsay Alley). One of the show's reconciliatory endings doesn't feel at all motivationally earned, nor does the infamous slap-happy cat fight among the leading ladies.

The new songs by the Motown songwriting team of Holland-Dozier-Holland often don't go deep enough to explore the characters' dilemmas. They also stylistically sound like poor cousins to their pre-existing hits like "Reach Out" or "Forever Came Today" that are featured in the show via flashbacks to the 1960s.

On the plus side, the show's leading ladies are a charismatic comic trio who often rise

above the material they've been given—a testament to the amazing performing skills of Faith Prince as the sarcastic Brenda Cushman, Carmen Cusack as the always-apologizing Annie Walker and Christine Sherrill as the vain pop star/actress Elise Acton. These three co-stars have a great rapport with each other and they inject some well-needed tenderness to the brash proceedings.

But if all you want *First Wives Club* to be is a high-camp fest, there are plenty of satisfying flourishes in store, like the often-outrageous sets and costumes designed by Gabriela Tysesova. Many of the supporting performances are also unabashedly over-exaggerated, particularly that of Patrick Richwood as Brenda's stereotypical gay hairdresser friend, Duane Ferguson.

So though it's far from perfect, *First Wives Club* should satisfy some audiences for its high-camp comedy quotient. Just don't go in expecting too much honesty or depth.

## 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. JA

**The Glass Protege**, Giant Cherry/Glitterati Productions at Theater Wit, through March 29. Tinseltown in 1949 can be tough for innocent gay lovers sworn to uphold its glamor, making for period-replica romance and weepy endings. MSB

**The Royal Society of Antarctica**, Gift Theatre, through April 26. Mat Smart's word premiere play is an engrossing trip to the bottom of the world with fascinating insights to the people who choose to work in perpetual cold. SCM

**The Sweeter Option**, Strawdog Theatre Company, through March 28. A fortune in stolen money leads to murder, betrayal, fights for the border and existential despair in John Henry Roberts' pulp-noir thriller. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

## THEATER REVIEW

### 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea

**Playwright:** adapted by Clint Sheffer and Ann Sonnevile from the novel by Jules Verne

**At:** Strawdog Theatre, 3829 N. Broadway

**Tickets:** 866-811-4111;

[www.strawdog.org](http://www.strawdog.org); \$15

**Runs through:** April 7

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The late Victorian period was the age of science and industry, all sorts of inventions opening new possibilities for the improvement of humanity. With hitherto unimagined concepts becoming manifest almost daily, each fresh innovation sparked a multitude of visions similarly inclined toward a seemingly limitless future. Tempering this optimism, though, were reminders of the human propensity for being, well, human.

Jules Verne is famous for his tales of adventure in faraway lands, whether circling the globe in a breathtaking 80 days (based in fact) or exploring subterranean civilizations (mostly fanciful). This time, his frontiers are the realms beneath the vast oceans. Our story begins in a New England dockside tavern where sailors tell of encounters with a terrible sea monster. Into this rough-and-ready community come three strangers—marine biologist Pierre Aronax, his valet Conseil and whaler/entrepreneur Ned Land—determined to track the elusive leviathan, albeit for different motives. No sooner does their ship put to sea than they are taken

captive aboard their quarry, a self-sustaining vessel capable of underwater propulsion, equipped with prototypes of weapons and diving gear still used today, and commanded by the Prospero-like Captain Nemo. Is their host friend or foe, genius or madman, philanthropist or tyrant? More important, will our pilgrims ever be allowed to return home?

Twenty thousand leagues (measuring distance, not depth) is a long journey to make in Strawdog Theatre's Hagan Hall, a performance space of 20 by 40 feet, including a permanent bar at one end and audience members tucked into the room's corners like so many clumps of seaweed. Clint Sheffer and Ann Sonnevile's adaptation is as fluid as its watery environment. This is because the replication relies chiefly on orchestrated movement by an eight-actor ensemble and a score of site-generated vocal and instrumental incidentals, the latter suggesting, at various points, raucous barroom ballads (sing along if you want), exotic isles harboring hostile natives and, of course, the wonders of the deep.

Every fantasy voyage requires an anchor—or, perhaps, a better analogy is a grappling-hook-to assist modern playgoers in suspension of their disbelief. With a few nods to fourth-wall dissonance ("We'll need a bigger boat," says one character, echoing another popular fish story), Matt Mroch's direction, um, immerses us in our milieu for the efficient, but never overhasty, 70 minutes during which Nemo exceeds the limits of his virtuous intentions by challenging nature itself, thus bringing upon himself the fate of all heroes surrendering to hubris, and leaving us to contemplate the lesson conveyed by the survivors of the thrilling voyage.

## THEATER REVIEW

### The Full Monty

**Playwright:** music and lyrics by David Yazbek, book by Terrence McNally

**At:** Kokandy Productions at

Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave.

**Tickets:** 773-975-8150;

[www.kokandyproductions.com](http://www.kokandyproductions.com); \$38

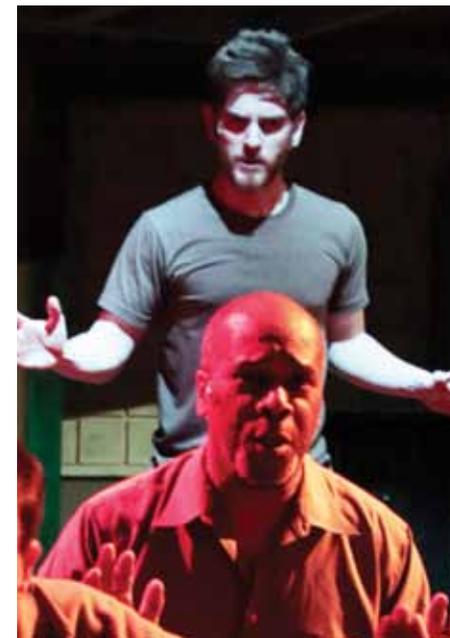
**Runs through:** April 12

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Upstarts triumphing over adversity against seemingly impossible odds are a favorite theme of audiences in the United States, a country founded upon just such audacity. Our applause is even greater when the project involves straying outside conventional gender roles, but what we most approve are the empathy and acceptance engendered by venturing beyond comfort zones.

Our story begins with marital arrangements in the industrial town of Buffalo, New York, in disorder: the unemployed men of the now-closed steel mills do household chores, while the womenfolk, whose retail positions at the local mall are unaffected by the economical upheaval, draw the paychecks and enjoy the privileges that come therewith—specifically, weekly girls-nights-out devoted to ogling male striptease artists. When a divorced father lagging in his child-support payments notes the monetary rewards of baring booty, it inspires a scheme for restoring the solvency—not to mention morale—of himself and his displaced comrades.

This last factor is what distinguishes Kokandy director John D. Glover's approach to Terrence McNally's book for this musical, adapted from the non-musical film. Most productions tend to concentrate on the premise of males—whom even sympathetic peers describe as "too skinny, too fat, too shy, too dumb, too old and too ugly"—desperately clinging to their pre-conceived identities as they reluctantly surrender to harsh necessity. The emphasis this time, however, is on the erosion of prejudices impeding the progress of husbands and fathers who refuse the available jobs out of stubborn van-



The Full Monty. Photo by Joshua Albanese Photography

ity. As the night draws near when the would-be ecdysiasts will have to make good on their promise to deliver their customers the daring "full monty," they are forced to join together in fraternal intimacy revealing more than just their, um, Richard the Thirds. They may report to work as mall security guards the morning following, but they will do so with a pride invulnerable to mere circumstance.

In the meantime, there's still plenty of fun in the prospect of amateur dancers instructed in burlesque bump-and-grind by their former factory supervisor to piano accompaniment supplied by a geriatric vaudevillian arriving with salty show-biz stories ranging from Las Vegas to Atlantic City. On opening night, the vocals on David Yazbek's jazz-based score were a bit hesitant (excepting Colette Todd, Randolph Johnson and George Toles, who belt for the rafters from the first breath and never let up), but by the time act one closes with "Michael Jordan's Ball," our parable is stepping briskly toward its happy ending—in every sense.

Garage Rep's Angry Fags.  
Photo by Anna Sodziak



## THEATER REVIEW

### Garage Rep 2015

Playwright: Steven Simoncic,  
Topher Payne, Taylor Mac  
At: Steppenwolf Garage,  
1624 N. Halsted St.  
Tickets: 312-335-1650;  
[www.steppenwolf.org](http://www.steppenwolf.org);  
\$20 (or all three for \$45)  
Runs through: April 26

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

The annual Garage Rep—in which three young, small and diverse theater troupes are hosted and marketed by Steppenwolf Theatre Company—is one of the most worthwhile artistic endeavors the 'Wolfies have undertaken in recent years. The troupes usually rise to the occasion by staging works of theatrical size and pizzazz which they might not attempt strictly on their own. All three of this year's wildly divergent offerings are well-produced and performed, and are noted here in ascending order of outlandishness.

Cold Basement Dramatics' Heat Wave is the most normal of the shows. It's a dramatization by Steven Simoncic of Eric Klinenberg's muckraking book about the fatal 1995 Chicago heat wave, during which more than 700 people died while government stood unresponsive and mostly unaware. Simoncic's play first was presented in 2008 and seemed more powerful then than now. Heat Wave is partly documentary and partly fictionalization, and it's the fictional wing that's hard to take as morgue officials, mayoral bureaucrats and TV newsmen behave with blatant and simple-minded unprofessionalism. Sure, it will raise your ire just like the parking meter deal and Rahm's arrogance, but it's also without nuance although well-staged by Rinska Carrasco-Prestinary

and a generally-sympathetic and competent cast.

Presented by Pride Films and Plays, Angry Fags is out playwright Topher Payne's cautionary tale about misguided vigilante justice. When a friend is gay-bashed into a coma, housemates/best buds Bennett and Cooper take the law into their own hands, and things escalate. Bennett works for an out lesbian state senator up for re-election, so there's a major political subplot as well. What starts as slightly campy comedy—Payne's comic zingers are laugh-out-loud funny—morphs into tragedy. The radical change in temperament is sustained only by one's perception that the entire play is outlandish, although performed in slice-of-life sitcom style by an attractive cast under director Derek Van Barham.

Take heaping portions of polyandrous gender-fuck and old New Age radical politics (i.e., hippie-type political and sexual movements) and you have The Walk Across America for Mother Earth, written by performance artist Taylor Mac and presented by Red Tape Theatre. Much of the material is sharply funny in this rambling pseudo-1992 peace/protest march gone awry, but much is intentionally offensive (bestiality, a "menstrual rag puppet"). The production (in which actors of any gender can play any role) is colorfully meta-theatrical and almost psychedelic as if the Merry Pranksters had been reborn. Directors Bonnie Metzgar (late of About Face Theatre) and Eric Hoff and their designers have provided vastly creative, energetic and well-executed staging ideas. Still, a little goes a very long way, and even Taylor's wit cannot sustain consistent interest over the two-hour running time. For old protestors such as myself, there's a very dated vibe about it all, even though the play is quite recent.

Garage Rep 2015: Ya pays yer money, ya takes yer choice!

## SPOTLIGHT



The backstage world of a traveling 1930s circus troupe is revealed to be quite a tawdry and sinister affair in Chicago Tap Theatre's new show **TightWire**. The production features a script by Marc Kelly Smith, original music by Kurt Schweitz and choreography by Mark Yonally and the Chicago Tap Theatre ensemble. TightWire plays from Friday, March 20, through Sunday, March 29, at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave. Tickets are \$35, \$27 for seniors and \$22 for students; call 773-327-5252 or visit [www.chicagotaptheatre.com](http://www.chicagotaptheatre.com). Photo by Emma Cullimore

# steppenwolf

*SHE'S A TABLOID SENSATION!*

## Marie Antoinette

BY DAVID ADJMI

DIRECTED BY ROBERT O'HARA

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– Chicago Sun-Times

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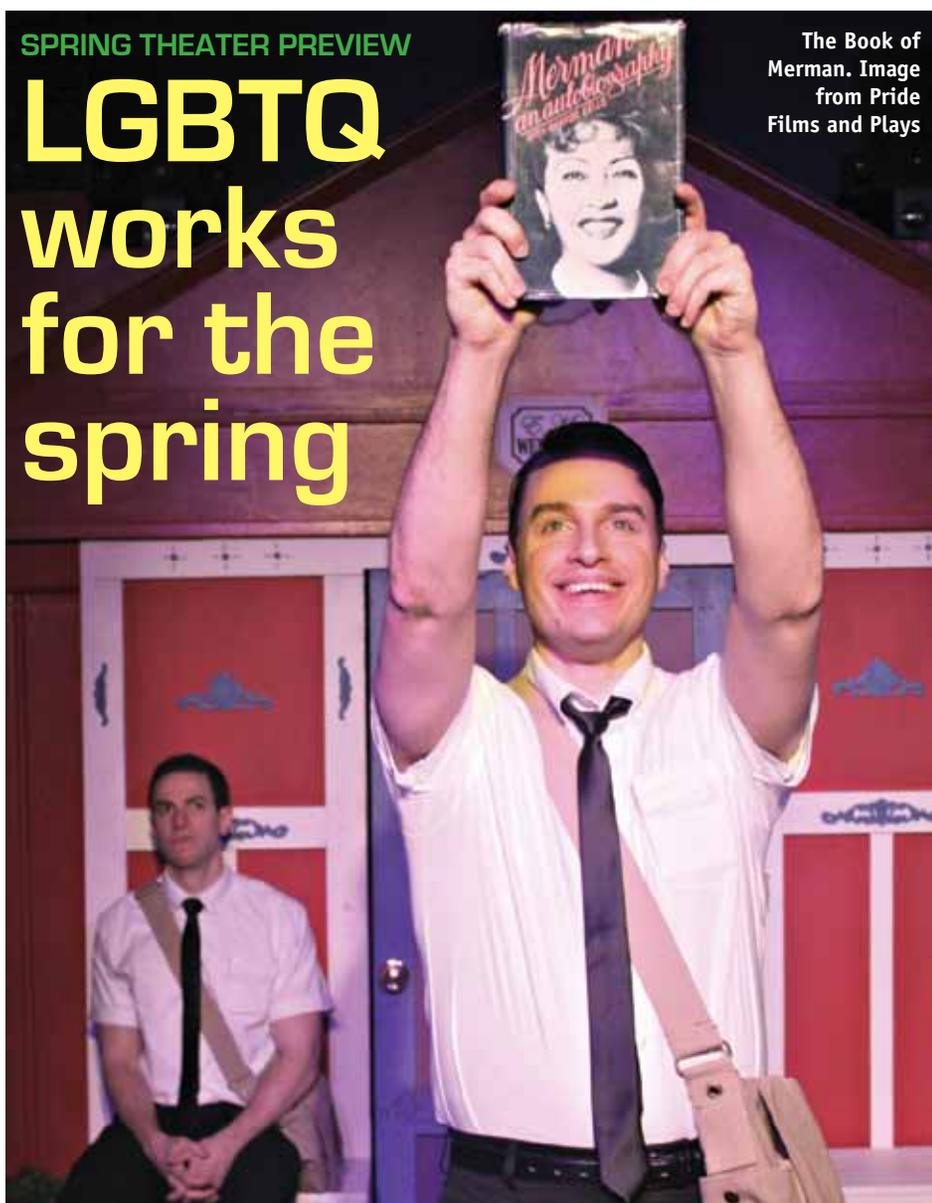
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## SPRING THEATER PREVIEW

LGBTQ  
works  
for the  
springThe Book of  
Merman. Image  
from Pride  
Films and Plays

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

There's comedy and tragedy in store this spring for plays and musicals featuring LGBTQ characters or those created by LGBTQ artists. All locations in Chicago unless otherwise noted.

**Legacies of Hope**, Windy City Gay Chorus and Windy City Treble Quire at St. James Episcopal Cathedral, 65 E. Huron St. Reflect on the consequences of bullying with the Midwest premiere of Tyler's Suite, a work featuring many famous composers' responses to the suicide of gay college student Tyler Clementi. (5 and 8 p.m. March 21; [www.windycitysings.org](http://www.windycitysings.org))

**Anything Goes**, Marriott Theatre, 10 Marriott Dr., Lincolnshire. Set sail for gay composer Cole Porter's hit Broadway musical comedy that is emblematic of the 1930s. Also, listen for the coded gay innuendo in the lyrics of songs like "You're the Top" and "Blow, Gabriel, Blow." (April 8-May 31; [www.marriotttheatre.com](http://www.marriotttheatre.com))

**The Grown-Up**, Shattered Globe Theatre at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave. Jordan Harrison's magical drama explores the difficulty of growing up and what it means to be an adult. Also, there's a scene where a streaker runs through a gay wedding reception. (April 9-May 23; [www.shatteredglobe.org](http://www.shatteredglobe.org))

**Billy Elliot: The Musical**, Drury Lane Theatre, 100 Drury Lane, Oakbrook Terrace. Gay composer Elton John and playwright Lee Hall never exactly reveal the budding sexuality of the titular northern English lad who discovers a love for ballet in their hit musical version of the 2000 film, but he does have a friend named Michael who does have a yen for cross-dressing and sung advice for "Expressing Yourself." (April 10-June 7; [www.drurylane.com](http://www.drurylane.com))

**Lips Together, Teeth Apart**, Eclipse Theatre Company at Athenaeum Theatre, 2936 N. Southport Ave. This company dedicates its entire season to one writer, and this year it's gay playwright Terrence McNally. They open with McNally's acclaimed 1991 drama that focuses on two heterosexual married couples who visit a Fire Island beach house after its owner has died from AIDS. (April 16-May 24; [www.eclipse-theatre.com](http://www.eclipse-theatre.com))

**A Coffin in Egypt**, Chicago Opera Theater at

Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph St. The Chicago premiere of gay composer Ricky Ian Gordon's 2014 opera based upon Horton Foote's 1980 play stars diva Frederica von Stade as a 90-year-old reflecting on her life's lost opportunities. (April 25-May 3; [www.chicagooperatheater.org](http://www.chicagooperatheater.org))

**Melancholy Play: A Chamber Musical**, Piven Theatre, 927 Noyes St., Evanston. Sarah Ruhl's whimsical 2002 play has been adapted into a chamber musical featuring a score by Todd Almond, and it focuses on how one woman's sadness affects the people around her—including a likely lesbian couple where one of them transforms into an almond. (April 30-June 7; [www.piventheatre.org](http://www.piventheatre.org))

**Big Fish**, Theatre at the Center, Munster, Ind. Gay composer Andrew Lipka's 2013 Broadway musical flop is given another chance in a regional staging where a man's larger-than-life stories clash with his logical son's views. (May 10-June 7; [theatreatthecenter.com](http://theatreatthecenter.com))

**Miracle!**, Hell in a Handbag Productions at a Chicago location to be named. The Chicago premiere of a politically incorrect drag spoof of The Miracle Worker is notable since it is written by celebrated sex-advice columnist and It Gets Better co-founder Dan Savage. (Begins May 14; [www.handbagproductions.org](http://www.handbagproductions.org))

**We're Still Here: CGMC Celebrates Stephen Sondheim at 85**, Chicago Gay Men's Chorus at North Shore Center for the Performing Arts, 9501 Skokie Blvd., Skokie; then at Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph Drive; then at North Central College's Wentz Concert Hall, 171 E. Chicago Ave., Naperville. A gay relationship has been woven into this concert revue celebrating the musicals of gay composer Stephen Sondheim. (8 p.m. May 16 in Skokie; 8 p.m. May 23 in Chicago; 3 p.m. May 24 in Naperville; [www.cgmc.org](http://www.cgmc.org))

**Abraham Lincoln was a F\*gg\*t**, About Face Theatre at a Chicago location to be named. The Chicago premiere of this time-travelling comedy by Bixby Elliot (Girl You Know it's True) focuses on Cal who is determined to find a historical gay icon. (runs May and June 2015; [www.aboutfacetheatre.com](http://www.aboutfacetheatre.com))

**Proud to Be... Me! Concert and Dance**,

Artemis Singers at Broadway United Methodist Church, 3338 N. Broadway; then at Beverly Unitarian Church, 10244 S. Longwood Drive. Chicago's lesbian feminist chorus performs its Pride concert in two venues this year. (7 p.m. June 6, then 7 p.m. June 13; [www.artemissingers.org](http://www.artemissingers.org))

## Catch 'em before they're gone

**La Cage aux Folles**, Marriott Theatre, 10 Marriott Dr., Lincolnshire. This is your last chance to catch the revival of the hit 1983 Broadway drag musical by the gay team of playwright Harvey Fierstein and composer Jerry Herman.

(Through March 22; [www.marriotttheatre.com](http://www.marriotttheatre.com))

**Trouble in Tahiti**, Chicago Fringe Opera at Chopin Theatre, 1543 W. Division St. Leonard Bernstein's 1952 one-act opera about suburban marital discord (and poor parenting of a boy who grows up to be gay the 1983 sequel of sorts, A Quiet Place) is paired with an evening of jazz standards. (Through March 22; [www.chicagofringeopera.com](http://www.chicagofringeopera.com))

**First Wives Club**, Oriental Theatre, 24 W. Randolph St. See this high camp adaptation of

Turn to page 27

## SPRING THEATER PREVIEW

## Bring on the premieres!

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

It will be an invigorating spring if we judge by the number and range of the world-premiere plays and musicals offered by Chicago theater companies. Islam and Judeo-Christianity nearly come into contact in the first two plays on our list, while African-American history also figures strongly. The new musicals favor the women, with Jane Austen and 1920s factory girls taking focus. You might as well give up going to theater at all (no, just kidding!) if you can't find something on this list to intrigue you.

**The Mecca Tales**, through April 12—This world premiere by Rohina Malik was developed in conjunction with the Goodman Theatre and focuses on a subculture within a subculture: five American Islamic women of diverse backgrounds who meet while making the pilgrimage to Mecca, the hajj, one of the most important of all holy obligations to a devout Muslim. The play is performed with live music, and directed by Rachel Edwards Harvith. At Chicago Dramatists, 1105 W. Chicago Ave.; [www.chicagodramatists.org/production-the-mecca-tales](http://www.chicagodramatists.org/production-the-mecca-tales)

**The Good Book**, March 19-April 19—Denis O'Hare and Lisa Peterson, the team responsible for An Iliad, attack another Great Book, the Bible. Perhaps "approach another Great Book" is more appropriate, because who knows whether they will attack or defend the Bible? O'Hare and Peterson (who also directs the play) are perceptive and powerful poets in their exploration of classical literature, and they have framed the work as an exploration of faith by an adolescent considering the priesthood. The play's journey veers from ancient Mesopotamia to medieval Ireland to suburban America. For this multicultural odyssey, Court Theatre has engaged some of the finest actors in Chicago: Kareem Bandealy, Emjoy Gavino, Allen Gilmore, Erik

Hellman, Hollis Resnik, Alex Weisman and Jacqueline Williams. Court Theatre, 5535 S. Ellis Ave.; [www.courttheatre.org](http://www.courttheatre.org)

**The Upstairs Concierge**, March 28-April 26—Tremendously gifted stage poet Kristoffer Diaz (The Elaborate Entry of Chad Deity) has a new play commissioned by the Goodman Theatre, in which Ella has a new job as concierge on the club floor of a sleek hotel filled with off-the-wall celebrity guests, at least one of whom is gonna' get naked before this farce is over. Diaz takes on fame-obsessed society in a new millennium in which everyone is supposed to be famous for 15 minutes, according to the late Andy Warhol. I don't know about you, but I'm sure ready for MY close-up! The Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn St.; [www.goodmantheatre.org](http://www.goodmantheatre.org)

**The Birdfeeder Doesn't Know**, March 31-May 16—Vision impairment hasn't prevented Chicago-based author Todd Bauer from establishing a multi-faceted and rich career as playwright, director and teacher. His new world premiere drama concerns an adult son with a disability (no, not Bauer's own) who must deal with the needs and demands of aging parents. An exceptional Chicago artist, Jonathan Wilson, is the director for a theater troupe which does very few new plays. This one must have something special going for it. Raven Theatre, 6157 N. Clark St.; [www.raventheatre.com](http://www.raventheatre.com)

**An Issue of Blood**, April 3-May 3—Victory Gardens Ensemble playwright Marcus Gardley tackles American history with a play set in 1676 Virginia and focusing on an actual historic figure, a wealth land-owning free woman of color, Negro Mary. Does society segregate her as Black, or empower her by virtue of her property rights? The hype for the play also reveals a secret wedding, an interracial love triangle, and a crime of pas-

Turn to page 25



The Mecca Tales. Photo by Liam Fitzgerald

## Rivendell to honor Willa Taylor

Rivendell Theatre Ensemble will hold its 2015 Salon fundraiser—to benefit programming at Rivendell Theatre—on Thursday, March 19, at Level Office, 73 W. Monroe St., at 6 p.m.

Willa Taylor—director of education and community engagement at the Goodman Theatre, U.S. Navy veteran and discussion panelist for Rivendell’s production of *Women at War*—will be honored with the 2015 WREN Award for advocating for women theater artists.

Admission is \$80-\$125 each; call 773-334-7728 or visit RivendellTheatre.org.

## GayCo brings back ‘Fives of March’

GayCo Productions, a local LGBTQ sketch theater company, is celebrating its 19th year with the return of its popular Fives of March fundraiser.

To help fund its 2015 calendar—which includes an improv series during Pride Month and

multiple touring shows and an all-new blockbuster sketch revue this fall at the Playground Theater—GayCo is asking fans and friends alike to “give them five,” as in dollars.

The contribution can be five dollars, \$15, \$105—any amount that ends in five, with an overall goal of \$5,000.

Funds will also go to support GayCo’s 20th-anniversary celebration in 2016. Supporters can access their fundraising page through their website [www.gayco.com](http://www.gayco.com).

## Sculpture exhibition at Willis Tower

“Jeffrey Breslow: Bolder & Boulder,” Willis Tower’s first outdoor/indoor sculpture exhibition, will be exhibited April 23-Oct. 30.

Longtime Chicago sculptor Jeffrey Breslow integrates found granite boulders and shaped steel. His work ranges from exuberant tabletop creations to outdoor sculptures weighing as many as three tons.

Visit <http://jeffreymbreslow.com/>.

## PREMIERES from page 24

sion. Hey, it sounds like something for everyone. Victory Gardens artistic director Chay Yew will stage *An Issue of Blood*. Victory Gardens Biograph Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.; [www.victorygardens.org](http://www.victorygardens.org)

**The Bloodhound Law**, April 17-May 24—Exceptional actor and playwright Kristine Thatcher also tackles a piece of American racial history in this world premiere which completes City Lit’s five-year commemoration of the Civil War (which ended 150 years ago, on April 9, 1865). The play’s title refers to the vicious Fugitive Slave Act which allowed bounty hunters to seize escaped slaves in the North and return them to Southern captivity. Part of the Compromise of 1850, the law was proposed by Illinois Sen. Stephen A. Douglas (ironically, buried in what is now a Chicago African-American neighborhood), famous for his rivalry with Abraham Lincoln. Artistic director Terry McCabe will stage *The Bloodhound Law*. City Lit Theatre, 1020 W. Bryn Mawr Ave.; [www.citylit.org](http://www.citylit.org)

**Sense and Sensibility**, April 18-June 17—A big, lavish world-premiere musical based on the more-popular-than-even Jane Austen romantic novel about those dazzling Dashwood sisters. Artistic director Barbara Gaines guides the production and the development of the new work, with book, music and lyrics by Tony Award-nominated Paul Gordon. It’s not always a good idea for one person to do book, music and lyrics—even Noel Coward wasn’t as good at it as he thought he was—but that’s the

route chosen for this show. At least we know the founding story is strong and a delight. Let’s hope Gordon, Gaines and associates can preserve Austen’s cheeky yet romantic tone. Chicago Shakespeare Theater at Navy Pier; [www.chicagoshakes.com](http://www.chicagoshakes.com)

**Shining Lives: A Musical**, May 8-June 14—An extraordinary creative team is creating a world premiere musical from Melanie Mar-nich’s play (*These Shining Lives*) about young women in 1922 who painted watch dials for the Chicago Radium Dial Company ... and what happened to them. The play is a moving and revealing study in history, justice (eventually) and female empowerment. With book and lyrics by Jessica Thebus (also directing) and music by Andre Pluess and Amanda Dehnert, *Shining Lives: A Musical* may have the capacity to break our hearts and ennoble us at the same time. Northlight Theatre, 9501 Skokie Blvd., Skokie; [www.norhtlight.org](http://www.norhtlight.org)

**Chalk**, May 24-June 28—This rolling world premiere (that means another company helped develop it and will stage its own production within a few months) by Walt McGough is a sci-fi fable about a woman who’s survived the end of the world. Or has she? Or has the world not ended? And are there monsters? And why doesn’t she welcome the return of her daughter? And why does she need that book of spells? Sounds interesting to me. Directed by Megan A. Smith for Sideshow Theatre Company, at Victory Gardens Biograph, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.; [www.sideshowtheatre.org](http://www.sideshowtheatre.org)

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# New-look Force eyes return to championship form

BY ROSS FORMAN

Let's start with the new, and there's plenty of that for the 2015 Chicago Force: a home stadium, quarterback and coaches.

But still, for the women's tackle football team which was the 2013 Woman's Football Alliance (WFA) national champion, the goal is the same: Just win.

"I'm feeling energized and excited about this year's team," said team owner/general manager Linda Bache. "We have a smaller roster this year and half the players are rookies, so we will have a lot of inexperienced players on the field. But I really like their energy, effort and desire. Our challenge is to put them on a steep learning curve and have them game ready for the opener. We have more team speed this year than we've ever had, so I'm expecting us to be explosive, particularly on offense."

The Force offense, as with any football team, is anchored by its quarterback—and Chicago no longer has Sami Grisafe to rely on, as the singing sensation retired from the sport to further her musical career.

"You simply can't replace Sami Grisafe; she's been the heart and soul of this team for years. In addition to her elite quarterback skills, she was also our team leader," Bache said. "Any time you lose a player of that caliber, you try to fill the void with multiple people. There's an opportunity here for the team to forge a new identity, for new leaders to emerge, and for this year's squad to begin their own legacy."

Quarterback Rachel Gore and receiver Jamie Fornal join the Force this season after playing for Seattle last season. Both will be key, as well as running back Cassey Brick, who previously played for two teams in California. "All three are very talented players with speed and experience," Bache said.

Several other key players have either retired, relocated or are unable to play this season for various reasons, including Darcy Leslie, Liz Okey, Jen Dulski, Amber Kimbrough, Mary Choules and Dorian Bridges.

"I expect our offense to be dynamic," Bache said. "We have wide receiver Jeanette Gray returning, and she was the 2014 Conference Offensive Player in the Year. We have running back Brandy Hatcher coming back, and she follows her blocks better than any back we've ever had. And running back Kelsey Casey, who was our Offensive Rookie of the Year last season, also is returning and has worked very hard in the off-season. We're expecting a great season from her."

"We should run the ball very well again this year with All-American offensive linemen Dawn Pederson, Jamie Menzyk, and Tami Engelman on board. Joining them will be All-American Cat Converse, who previously played for us in 2010."

On defense, the Force features Elisha Okrey, Angel Smith, Melissa Nelson, Kim Marks and Martha Dantuma—all returning. "We'll have a lot of new faces on defense because that's where we had the most turnover on our roster," Bache said. "Those changes start with our new defensive coordinator, Mario Coleman. He replaces Adam Lewandowski, who set the bar high in his three years [in the position]. Coach Lew did a phenomenal job and we miss him tremendously. He simply wasn't able to make the commitment this year due to family responsibilities. We're very fortunate that Mario was able to step in; he's very experienced, talented and I love the energy that he brings. Mario, Lew and [John] Konecki all coach together at

Crete Monee High School, so this is a seamless transition."

Konecki (54-9 with the Force) is back for his seventh season as the club's head coach and Bache said there aren't enough superlatives to describe him. "Suffice to say, we have the best coach in the league," Bache said.

Assistant coaches Bill Smith, Carlos Jones and Jim Ramazinski are returning, and Al Maldonado is rejoining after taking most of last season off. "I'm very pleased to have such a cohesive and experienced staff," she said.

The Force features an impressive group of rookies, such as Kelly Moore, Kylie Scurto, Vianny Saucedo and Anke Kutzscher. "All the first-year players have been working extremely hard and we're beginning to see significant improvement," Bache said. "The weather has really worked against us this year, keeping us inside longer than we'd like."

This is the team's 13th season and Chicago boasts a 99-23 overall record—including eight division titles, three conference championships and one national championship.

And this season, all Force home games—starting with the opener against the West Michigan Mayhem on April 11—will be played at Lane Stadium on the campus of Lane Tech High School on Chicago's north side.

"It's great to be back in the city of Chicago again," Bache said. The team had played there in 2006, prior to the stadium renovation. The past three seasons, the Force played at Evanston Township High School.

"I love the vibe and feel of [Lane Stadium]. It's an old school, concrete stadium from the early 1900s that was recently renovated with field turf and lights. It's also an attractive venue for our fans and sponsors."

Chicago's 2015 schedule includes home games against the Indy Crash (May 9), Kansas City Titans (May 16) and a bitter battle against the Boston Renegades (May 30). The game against Boston will be played at Evanston Township High School, starting at 7 p.m. All other home games start at 5 p.m. Chicago's last home regular season game is June 13 against the St. Louis Slam.

The WFA playoffs begin in late June and the national champion will be crowned Saturday, Aug. 8.

"On paper our team looks thin, [with] the smallest roster we've had, so we're lacking depth in certain areas," Bache said. "Unless we can continue to grow the roster we will have a number of players getting reps on both sides of the ball. I'm still bringing on new players and will continue to do so throughout the season. I have some college graduates and international players that will join us mid-season. We are always looking to add players and improve and expand the roster, so if there's anyone out there toying with the idea of playing football, contact us now. Don't wait until next season. I'm adding players daily; it's not too late to join."

"We have a very competitive regular season schedule this year, which will help prepare us for the playoffs."

"We have developed an intense rivalry with the Boston team. We've met in the conference championship each of the past four seasons, with each team winning twice. The playoff format has shifted this year so, if we do face Boston in the post-season, it would likely be a round sooner, in the conference semifinals. It's a shame to have the top teams facing each other that early in the playoffs, but we have no control over that."



Chicago Force's Kim Marks. Photo by Preston Tewell

## MUSIC

# Anne Steele shows listeners 'What's Mine'

BY SARAH TOCE

Anne Steele's new album, *What's Mine*, paints a picture of a seasoned songstress in the throes of overcoming life's little treasures—such as heartbreak, loss and finding the courage to try again.

The award-winning songwriter met her wife of five years, Kelli Carpenter, while performing on a cruise with R Family Vacations in 2010 and it's been smooth sailing ever since. With an immediate four kids involved right from the start (Carpenter's ex-wife was comedian and talk show host Rosie O'Donnell), the lovebirds took things slowly—and their romance blossomed. Three years later, in June 2013, Steele and Carpenter married in New York with all four kids by their side.

Steele, an Indiana native, told *Windy City Times*: "We travel a lot. We have joint custody so when we do not have the kids, we are on the road with either my shows or Kelli's work with R Family Vacations, her travel company for LGBT families and their friends. When we have the kids, we are home and in full time family mode."

**Windy City Times: "What's Mine" is a catchy Pop tune that has a serious, awe-inspiring message. Can you tell us what inspired this track?**

AS: Anne Steele: I had hit a bit of writers block and I sat down to watch *The Linda Perry Project* on VH1. She was helping young writers learn to connect to themselves and become better artists. I remember she said, "Write what you know," so I sat down, in the middle of an episode, and wrote the lyrics to this song. I kept thinking, go back in your mind and remember what it felt like to not fit in, to want something more. The message is truly that—even if you don't know it at the time—it does get better.

**WCT: Your voice is melodic and a throwback in a sense to the strong female anthems from generations past. Who inspired your musicality as a child?**

AS: As a child growing up, I was obsessed with Barbra Streisand and Whitney Houston.



Anne Steele.

I learned everything I know about connecting to a lyric and phrasing from Barbra and Whitney. [They] taught me how to feel the music and the melody. I can remember listening to every note Whitney ever sang and trying so hard to be just like her.

**WCT: Were there times you were ready to throw in the towel?**

AS: There was never a time I wanted to quit. That is just not in my DNA. My plan has certainly shifted and adjusted over time, but it will never dim. I love to sing. It is what I was meant to do. I am just lucky that I have found a way to continue to do that.

**WCT: You say "There will be a time to find what's mine." Have you found it?**

AS: I am so happy to say that I have found what's mine, in every regard. I have finally found my voice as an artist and that is represented on this EP. Personally, I am madly in love with my beautiful wife of almost two years and I couldn't be happier and more

Turn to page 28

## Stretch Bar & Grill

BY ANDREW DAVIS

When the Chicago Cubs play at home, Wrigleyville can be so packed that it's almost not fit for man or beast.

However, it's a boon for businesses, especially restaurants (and, even more so, those equipped with large-screen television screens so people can watch their favorite team battle in those friendly confines). It's when the Cubs have away games or have days off—or, more precariously, during the offseason—that a different reality settles in for those local businesses.



This is when discriminating diners can separate the wheat from the chaff, so to speak. Fortunately for **Stretch Bar & Grill** (3485 N. Clark St.; <http://www.thestretchchicago.com/>), it falls into the first category.

Chef Jim August (Cortland's Garage; Standard) has crafted a menu that justifies Stretch's six-year existence. However, for the uninitiated, be aware that the place is baseball-themed down to its name (which comes from the Cubs' seventh-inning stretch). Salads and sandwiches have names such as The Elwood, The Gabby, The Don and The Grover—but, thankfully, each item has a description of the former Cubs player that serves as the inspiration. (The burgers are named after locales such as Clark Street and Sheffield Avenue.)

My friend and I started with drinks; he had a few Moscow Mules (which were apparently

pretty tasty) while I had a delicious Holy Cow (named, of course, after the late Harry Caray's catch phrase). However, the drinks at Stretch are noticeable for a couple other reasons—particularly because they come in Mason jars and that they come in various sizes (up to a mind-blowing 128 ounces). Presumably, the largest variety is for sharing.

As for the food, it's really impressive. The shortrib chili nachos are, as they say, worth the price of admission alone. However, the \$12 slider trio isn't far behind, with choices of the braised shortrib, chicken tinga (with pepper-jack cheese, applewood-smoked bacon, guacamole, pico de gallo and chipotle mayo) and award-winning Kobe burger.

The Babe (named after the late right fielder Floyd Caves "Babe" Herman) is a tantalizing Sheboygan-style brat simmered in Guinness that is topped with caramelized onions and a whole-grain Guinness mustard—all served on a pretzel bun. Even the mac 'n' cheese fritters seem a step above normal sports-bar fare, as the deep-fried items are stuffed with applewood-smoked bacon.

As with most sports bars, offerings are in relatively short supply for vegetarians (and even fewer for vegans). However, there are a few options, such as a hummus trio, Bavarian pretzels (from Dinkel's Bakery) and guacamole.

However, if you want dessert, you're totally out of luck. August told Savor that he tried sweet items once (including Twinkie truffles) but that "no one eats desserts at a sports bar." I guess I'd be the odd exception.

Despite that shortcoming, I'd recommend spending some time at Stretch—and remember that the incredible food is also available when the Cubs aren't in town.

## SPRING from PAGE 24

the 1996 movie and 1992 novel while you can, because the Chicago critical response might have imperiled its chances to move to Broadway. (Through March 29; [www.broadwayinchicago.com](http://www.broadwayinchicago.com))

**The Book of Merman**, Pride Films and Plays at Apollo Studio, 2540 N. Lincoln Ave. This musical comedy by Jeff Award-winner Leo Schwartz that all-but-steals its style and content from *The Book of Mormon* and classic Broadway shows that starred Ethel Merman has transferred from its sell-out run at Mary's Attic to a new location. (Through April 5; [www.pridefilmsandplays.com](http://www.pridefilmsandplays.com))

**Balm in Gilead**, Griffin Theatre at Den Theatre, 1333 N. Milwaukee Ave. Lanford Wilson's breakthrough 1965 drama centered on a disreputable Manhattan café is back, complete with its junkies, prostitutes and brawling butch lesbians in the background. (Through April 19; [www.griffintheatre.com](http://www.griffintheatre.com))

**The Walk Across America for Mother Earth**, Red Tape Theatre at Steppenwolf Garage, 1624 N. Halsted St. Drag performer and gay playwright Taylor Mac's play explores liberal activism through a mix of drag and commedia dell'arte. (Through April 25; [www.redtapetheatre.org](http://www.redtapetheatre.org))

**Angry Fags**, Pride Films and Plays at Steppenwolf Garage, 1624 N. Halsted St. The Chicago premiere of Topher Payne's violent comedy continues its journey of showing what happens when a hate crime drives a group of gay guys to become vigilantes. (Through April 26; [www.pridefilmsandplays.com](http://www.pridefilmsandplays.com))

*Note:* The author has previously sung with Windy City Gay Chorus and is set to appear in the next Chicago Gay Men's Chorus concert.

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# CALENDAR

Brought to you by the combined efforts of

WINDY CITY TIMES **nights**spots

## Wed., March 18

**LGBTQ Creating Change 2016 Information Meeting** The National LGBTQ Task Force's informational meeting on how to join the conference host committee for Creating Change 2016 in Chicago. 6:30pm Chicago Urban League, 4510 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago <http://thetaskforce.org>

**She's Beautiful When She's Angry** Documentary looks at women's rights movement. Through March 19. Early show 2:30 pm. 7:15pm Music Box Theatre 3733 N Southport Ave. Through March 19. 773-871-6607 Tickets: <http://www.musicbox-theater.com>

**Judy Collins** Award-winning singer-songwriter who in the 1960s evoked idealism with social activism through folk music. \$75. Doors 6pm. 8:00pm City Winery Chicago 1200 W Randolph St Chicago <http://www.citywinery.com>

**Laughs in the Lounge: March Showcase** This month, featuring Jen Ducharme, Aaron Ellsworth, Rachel McCartney, Christopher Moore, and Natalie Nimerala. Hosted by Marla Depew. Plus, the unveiling of the Spring Cocktail menu. 9:00pm - 11:00pm Rogers Park Social 6920 N. Glenwood Ave. Chicago <http://www.rogersparksocial.com>

## Thursday, March 19

**Online college fair** Campus Pride and GLSEN will host. Specifically focused on helping LGBTQ students find a college or university that is inclusive and supportive. College representatives will be available 12:30-5 p.m. 8:00am - 8:00pm Online <http://www.campuspride.org/collegefair>. Tickets: <https://app.brazencconnect.com/events/campus-pride#eventLanding;eventCode=campus-pride>.

**Urban CPE Consortium benefit** Performance By Youth Empowerment Performance Project, hors d'oeuvres from Inspiration Cafe. Silent auction, raffle, entertainment and good company. 6:00pm - 9:00pm St.

Pauls House, 3800 N. California Tickets: <http://www.urbanpe.org>

**Rivendell Theater 2015 Salon Benefit** General tickets \$80, VIP \$125. Day of event \$100. VIP reception 5pm. WREN Award honors Willa Taylor. 6:00pm Level Office, 73 W. Monroe St., Chicago <http://rivendelltheatre.org/salon2015/> Tickets: [https://rivendelltheatre.secure.force.com/ticket#sections\\_a03G000001NHAB-HIAP](https://rivendelltheatre.secure.force.com/ticket#sections_a03G000001NHAB-HIAP)

**Book Discussion: The Lives of Betty Friedan** Betty Friedan's background as a radical labor activist, unearthed by Daniel Horowitz in a 1998 biography titled Betty Friedan and the Making of the Feminine Mystique: The American Left, the Cold War, and the Modern Feminism. 6:00pm - 7:00pm Edgewater Public Library, 1210 W Elmdale Ave, Chicago <http://www.chi-publiclib.org/locations/28/>

**Aurora Sexton returns!** Eye-popping celebrity illusions and beautifully detailed costumes, Sexton's own brand of raunchy humor. Dine with divas like Madonna, Dolly Parton, Cher and Katy Perry all night long while sipping on a martini from Kit Kat's extensive martini list. Table reservations by phone. 7:00pm - 1:00am Kit Kat Lounge & Supper Club 3700 N Halsted Chicago 773-525-1111 <http://www.kit-katchicago.com>

## Friday, March 20

**2nd Annual LGBT Equality Institute** Two-day conference by Equality Illinois with LGBT community and allies, progressive advocates, civic leaders, and community groups. Expert-led presentations, elected official panels, networking, discussion of issues, future of the movement, practical skills, priorities in IL. Early registration \$60. After March 1, \$75. Space limited. Scholarships available: e-mail [pdillon@eqil.org](mailto:pdillon@eqil.org). 8:00am Hyatt Regency Chicago, 151 East Wacker Dr., Chicago Tickets: <http://tinyurl.com/mzhkts>

**Chicago Tattoo Arts Convention** Come get tattooed. Featuring TV stars from INK Master, Best Ink and LA Ink. Show off your ink. 12:00pm Hyatt Regency O'Hare 9300 Bryn Mawr Ave Rosemont, IL 60018 <http://www.villainarts.com>

**Strike Out Bullying Bowl-a-thon** Chicago Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) and adult supporters raise awareness and the funds necessary to do safe schools work throughout Illinois. Register with Alexia Rice-Henry at [alexia@illinoisafeschools.org](mailto:alexia@illinoisafeschools.org) or by phone. 1:00pm - 3:00pm Diversey Rock and Bowl, 2211 W. Diversey, Chicago 312-368-9070 x 319.

**Cornelia Arts Building March Open Studios Event** Jason Messinger, gay artist, and over 40 resident and guest artists 6:00pm - 10:00pm Cornelia Arts Building 1800 W. Cornelia Chicago <http://jason-messingerart.com/home.html>

## Saturday, March 21

**Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance (LGBTQ)** Support meeting to talk about illnesses, symptoms, treatment, doctors, and personal issues such as dating, relationships and work. Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted 11:00am - 12:30pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://dbsa-glbtc-chicago.com>

**Chicago Flower & Garden Show** Through March 22 10:00am - 6:00pm Navy Pier 600 E Grand Ave. Through March 22. Tickets: <http://www.chicagoflower.com>

**GAM-TV Premiere Party: "Tita Cougar: Poitions of Love"** Your favorite crazy auntie educates her online pupils on a wide array of aphrodisiacs. But before her online debut, Chicago-based GAM-TV will have a premiere party to preview some of the episodes with co-hosts played by GAM-TV actors Jill Thiel, Carter Martin and Robert Fore. Cash bar. \$5 donation to AIDS-awareness charity School Street Arts Movement. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Atmosphere Bar 5355 N Clark St. <http://www.gamtusa.com>

**Windy City Gay Chorus and Windy City Treble Quire** Windy City Gay Chorus will perform the Midwest premiere of "Tyler's Suite" in honor of the memory of Tyler Clementi. Windy City Treble Quire will perform music inspired by the stories of other youth whose experience of prejudice also served as a catalyst for social change. \$18. Two shows, first at 5pm. 8:00pm St. James Cathedral 65 E. Huron St. Tickets:



## FLOWER TRIP

### Through March 22

The Chicago Flower & Garden Show is at Navy Pier.

Photo by Andrew Davis

<http://legaciesofhope.brownpapertickets.com/>

**Louder Than A Bomb Indy Finals** Top scoring youth poets sharing experiences of injustice and inequality. 6:00pm - 9:00pm Rubloff Auditorium, Art Institute Of Chicago, 280 S. Columbus Dr. Tickets: <http://www.youngchicagoauthors.org>

## Sunday, March 22

**Sami Grisafe Band** The house band for the live broadcast on OUT Chicago Radio OUT CHICAGO with Linsea Waugh, Elliot Taggart, Logan Pennington. Watch the full Sami Grisafe Band broadcasting live while you chug mimosas and bloody's 11:00am DS Tequila Company 3352 N Halsted St Chicago [http://www.bandsintown.com/event/9509857?artist=Sami+Grisafe&came\\_from=127&fb\\_ref=Default](http://www.bandsintown.com/event/9509857?artist=Sami+Grisafe&came_from=127&fb_ref=Default)

**Out Chicago LIVE** WCPT radio stars Scott Duff and Ellen Miller bring their show live to DS with special guests All-American Boy Steve Grand, Sami Grisafe, comedian Peter Kim, and storyteller Paco Zamora. Live music, games, giveaways and jibber-jabber. 11:00am - 2:00pm DS Tequila Company 3352 N Halsted St.

**7th Annual 'Same Love, Same Rights' LGBT Wedding Expo in Chicago** Dozens of gay-friendly exhibitors will participate:

Photographers, DJs, officiants, wedding planners, venues, jewelers, invitations. Free raffle giveaways, planning tips and trends. Free. RSVP online. 1:00pm - 4:00pm Hard Rock Hotel Chicago 230 N Michigan Ave. 828-645-8750 Tickets: <http://www.SameLoveSameRights.com>

**La Cage aux Folles** Classic musical comedy, set against the glitter of a Saint-Tropez nightclub, a middle-aged gay couple agree to hide their relationship when their son returns home with his fiancée's ultra-conservative parents. 1:30pm The Marriott Theatre 10 Marriott Dr Lincolnshire, IL 60069 <http://www.marriotttheatre.com/show/la-cage-aux-folles>

## Monday, March 23

**Chicago Cubs Fans: Meet Tom Ricketts, chairman** Chicago Cubs Moderator David Kaplan of "Sports Talk Live." Followed by networking. \$66/\$99 5:00pm - 6:30pm Mid-America Club, AON Center, 200 E. Randolph, Chicago 312-263-3500 Tickets: <http://ExecutivesClub.org>

## Tuesday, March 24

**Three Graphic Novelists and an American Literary Scholar** Graphic novelists Nicole Georges, Phoebe Gloeckner and A.K. Summers present their work and talk with graphic narratives expert, Hillary Chute. Followed by book signings. Free. Parking in Lot F and levels 4 and 5 of parking facility. 6:00pm - 8:00pm Northeastern Illinois University Auditorium, 3701 W. Bryn Mawr Ave., <http://www.neiu.edu/visitingwriters>

## Wed., March 25

**Frank: An Evening with Barney Frank** Discussing his book, Frank: A Life in Politics from the Great Society to Same-Sex Marriage. Live interview, Q&A and book-signing. Pre-registration highly recommended. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted St. Tickets: <https://community.centeronhalsted.org/BarneyFrank>

**Remembering Selma: the Unfinished Journey.** Presentation by Adrienne Bailey. 7:30pm Mundelein Center Auditorium, Lakeshore Campus of Loyola University <http://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/wla/pdfs/Baum%20Speaker%20Series%20Poster%20r3.pdf>

## STEELE from page 26

grounded. I think the professional part finally clicked on this level because I am finally so loved and supported.

**WCT: There's a lot of swearing in the track "Worst I Ever Had," which I particularly love, by the way.**

AS: "Worst I Ever Had" was written about my very first girlfriend. We were together for nine years and, unfortunately, the ending was a little rough. It did, however, make for a great angry song! I think everyone can relate to these lyrics. We have all been here. When it should've ended long before, but we dragged it out too long. Eventually everyone is miserable and ready to get out. I am hoping it will be as cathartic for people to sing along with it as it was for me to write it!

**WCT: "Tough" seems to dig into the topic of finding someone "easy" to love. What has been your hardest relationship, and is there advice you could give young women in a similar position?**

AS: I have had several relationships that didn't work out. What I have learned is that if it doesn't feel easy to love someone, it's probably not where I am supposed to be. I mostly know that now because it is so easy to love Kelli. It sounds silly, but sometimes it feels like a dream. I never knew it could feel like this. That is the advice I would give. When it's right, you will just know. I never knew love like this before and I will never know a greater love than this.

**WCT: You sing, "You can't spend your life on the shore" in the track "Without You Tonight." When have you leapt in your life and never regretted it?**

AS: There have been a few leaps in my life. When I moved to New York it was a huge risk for me. I am a small town Indiana girl who always dreamed of big city life, but dreaming it and doing it are two completely different things. Once I got here, I never looked back. It was the best thing I ever did for myself, even when it was hard. And it certainly had its ups and downs. But I don't believe in regret. It only ties us to the past and doesn't let us live in the present and move into whatever future lies ahead.

**WCT: Have you ever regretted anything you may have rushed into, personally?**

AS: Well, when Kelli and I started dating she had four kids. That was a huge leap for me, too. When there are children in the picture the stakes are so much higher because it's not just about the two of you as it's a potential family. This is another time that, once it began, I never doubted it or looked back. I truly love these kids as if they were my own. We are a family and I often struggle to find words that are big enough to represent what we all share. Life is so full different paths and choices...and I am so grateful that this is my path.

**WCT: Coming from a Broadway Cabaret background, was it difficult to transition to a more mainstream album, such as What's Mine?**

AS: This transition was not difficult at all

for me. The truth is, although I have found my home for many years in the Broadway Cabaret scene, my true passion lies in singing Pop. I have always wanted to make a record like this. It's truly a dream come true, and I hope people can connect to it the way I believe they will.

**WCT: I can't help but hear a hint of Gloria Estefan's tone in "Shadow of You." Who are some of your musically driven female inspirations as an artist?**

AS: My current female inspirations are Kelly Clarkson, Pink and Sara Bareilles. I am obsessed with Kelly's voice and range; I crave Pink's tone and heart; and Sara's incredible musicianship and beautiful songwriting ability. They all inspire me in such different ways, but they all play into who I want to be as an artist.

**WCT: The gay anthem "Don't Tell Us How to Love" could not have better timing with the Supreme Court of the United States getting**

## 'Still Alice' writer Glatzer dies

Richard Glatzer, who wrote and directed Still Alice with husband Wash Westmoreland, died March 10 in Los Angeles of complications from ALS, Deadline noted. Glatzer was 63.

Julianne Moore won the Best Actress Oscar last month for her role in the drama, about a linguistics professor who struggles with early-onset Alzheimer's.

Glatzer and Westmoreland also wrote and directed The Last Of Robin Hood (2013) and

ready to rule on marriage equality nationwide this summer. What are your thoughts on the current state of the LGBT civil rights movement?

AS: I never dreamed that we would be where we are today when I was growing up in that small town in Indiana. I never knew I would someday legally marry the love of my life. That is all because of so many years of hard work by countless people fighting the good fight for equality. Even though things are changing, the fight cannot stop. I wanted to release this song in support of the movement and somehow hope to support [and] lift up all those kids still living in those small towns just hoping that it will get better.

**Anne Steele will be in Chicago to perform at Davenport's, 1333 N. Milwaukee Ave., on May 15 and 17. Find out more about Anne Steele by visiting [www.annesteele.com](http://www.annesteele.com).**

2006's Quinceanera, which won the Audience Award and Grand Jury Prize at Sundance that year. Fewer than two weeks before the Academy Awards, Glatzer and Westmoreland sold a pitch to Jeff Robinov's Studio 8.

The original article is at <http://deadline.com/2015/03/richard-glatzer-dead-still-alice-writer-director-1201390930/>.

A Windy City Times interview with Westmoreland about Glatzer and Still Alice is at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/MOVIES-Queer-couple-addresses-Alzheimers-in-Still-Alice/50251.html>.

# BILLY MASTERS



Rodner Figueroa is no longer with Univision after making some controversial comments. Twitter photo

"The only thing I would like is to go out one day, without being recognized, and go to a pizzeria for a pizza!"—Pope Francis told an interviewer the one downside to being pope—as if they don't have Domino's in Rome!

I want to discuss a topic that's been bothering me for quite some time—actors who cap their teeth. Don't get me wrong, I like a nice set of pearly whites ... as long as they're nowhere near my nether regions. My problem is with people who skimp on the procedure. Some actors struggling toward stardom will take the cheap way out and cap only their front teeth. You might expect them to finish the job when they get their big break but, alas, many of them tend to neglect the rest of their chompers. This is painfully obvious in close-ups, or worse, in publicity shots which show bright shiny teeth up front and beige in back. Since two of the biggest offenders are people I am genuinely fond of, I won't name names. But I'll post pics of their less-than-dazzling smiles on BillyMasters.com.

Turning to a story that is hopefully unrelated, doctors in Cape Town have performed the first penis transplant. Questions abound. Who is donating a penis? Is there a box I'll have to check off when I renew my license that says, "Penis Donor?" While researching those questions, we did learn that there is a great need for this procedure in South Africa, where men apparently lose their penises in staggering numbers due to late-life circumcision. In one of the greatest understatements of all time, the leading researcher said, "For a young man of 18 or 19 years, the loss of his penis can be deeply traumatic." Really?! He added, "It's a massive breakthrough. We've proved that it can be done—we can give someone an organ that is just as good as the one that he had." Or,

perhaps better!

The big breakup this week was between Kathy Griffin and E! In a move that surprised nobody, Griffin announced that she is quitting Fashion Police. But who really dumped who? That's the question people should be asking. The one thing everyone can agree on is that it wasn't a good fit from the beginning. There was no chemistry and ratings for the show have been down all season. Allegedly, Kathy and the producers were often at odds, with the funny lady threatening to quit several times before she actually left. But insiders at the network tell me that the brass was getting ready to kick Kathy to the curb (in an alliteration I know she'll enjoy). The latest squabble started when someone pitched a new segment called "Whore Score"—where the hosts would rate dresses based on their whore-o-licious level. Kathy felt that was not only too mean, but stupid. "Name calling and alliteration with no comedic context is simply the lowest hanging fruit." Hey, I resemble that remark!

Meanwhile on Univision, openly gay style reporter Rodner Figueroa made what would be a *faux pas* in any language: "You all know that Michelle Obama looks like she's from the movie 'Planet of the Apes!'" And E! got into a tizzy over Giuliana and Zendaya!! Needless to say, the White House didn't find this amusing. Within hours, Figueroa was fired and issued a statement: "I am embarrassed, I ask forgiveness, because there is no excuse for a professional like me to make comments like this that can be misinterpreted as offensive and racist during such a volatile time in our country." What exactly was misconstrued? It seems clear to me that he said Michelle looked like an ape—unless he meant she looked like Charlton Heston, which is even worse!

Ever since Empire debuted, people have been speculating about the sexuality of Jussie Smollett, who plays the role of gay son Jamal. While he's avoided the topic in interviews, some of his co-stars have been less than circumspect. But Jussie kept quiet, even during an appearance on Ellen. However after the show, he decided to sit down with DeGeneres and clear the air: "There's never been a closet that I've been in. I don't own a closet. I got a dresser, but I don't have a closet." He did add, "My momma knows. My momma likes me a lot. And, yes, I take her to 'The Sound of Music' singalong every single year. So, any questions?" None that I can think of.

She's back—Joan Collins returns to TV in E!'s The Royals. And if you've seen any of the clips from upcoming episodes, you know that she's a queen mum who's a real mother! Even if Col-

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lins is looking forward (E! has already greenlit season two of the show), she's also happy to glance backwards occasionally. Dame Joan will be appearing at the official Star Trek Convention, to be held at the Rio Suites Hotel in Las Vegas on Aug. 6-9. Since she starred in what is arguably the most popular episode of the classic series, this is quite a coup for the organizers, who promise she will not only appear, but do photo ops and sign autographs. Get your tix now at Creationent.com.

This leads perfectly into our "Ask Billy" question. Patrick in Rhode Island writes: "Have they figured out who that nude guy climbing down from a window at Buckingham Palace was? He has a great ass. Maybe it was Prince Harry. Or maybe it was some guy visiting Prince Harry!"

You can hope all you want but, alas, the nude guy wasn't intruding on Harry—or any other member of the royal family. It turns out

to have just been a hoax—cleverly produced by the folks behind E!'s aforementioned series, The Royals. A faux tabloid program shows the entire footage, where actress Alexandra Park (playing the role of Princess Eleanor) is seen throwing her beau out the window. Happily for us, he got started before his clothes did. And what a perky little bottom he has, as you can see on BillyMasters.com.

When we're trying to get to the bottom of a "royal" intruder, it's definitely time to end yet another column. And that just scratches the surface of what you'll find on www.BillyMasters.com, the site that never leaves you hanging. If you've got something you want me to look into, dash off a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com, and I promise to get back to you before Chaz Bono books a flight to South Africa! Until next time, remember one man's filth is another man's bible.

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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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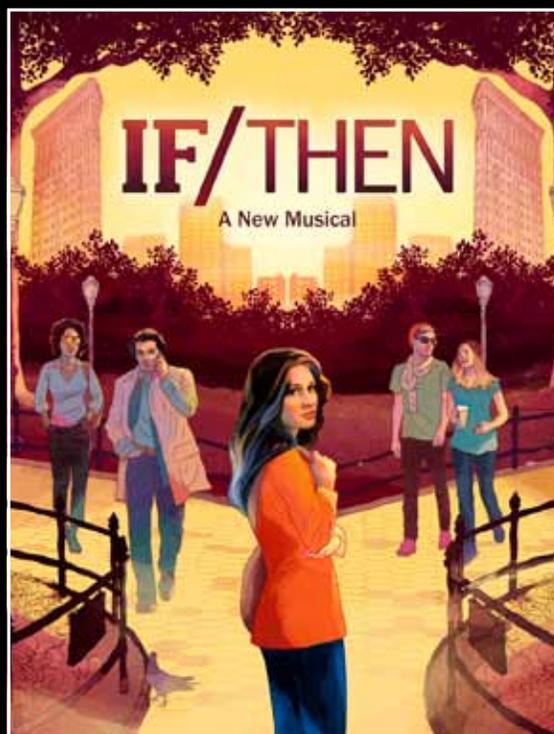
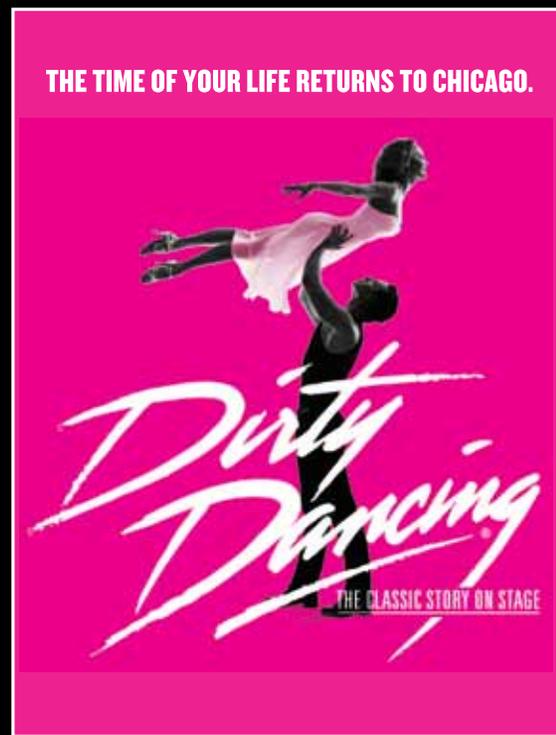
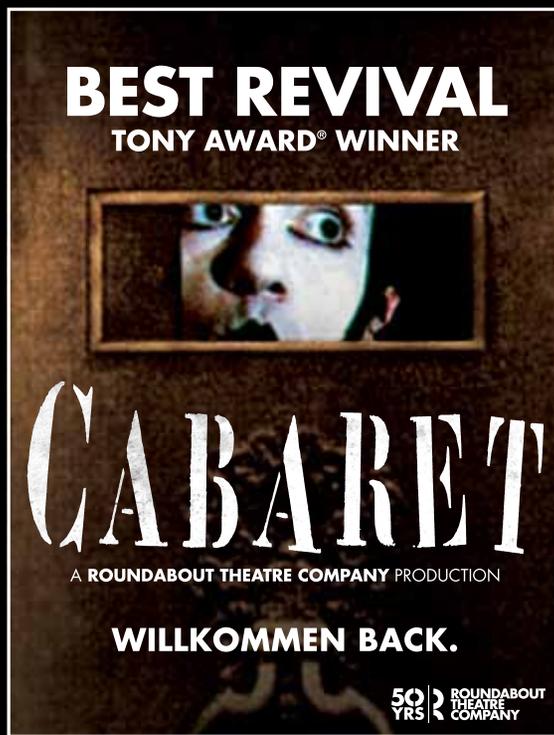
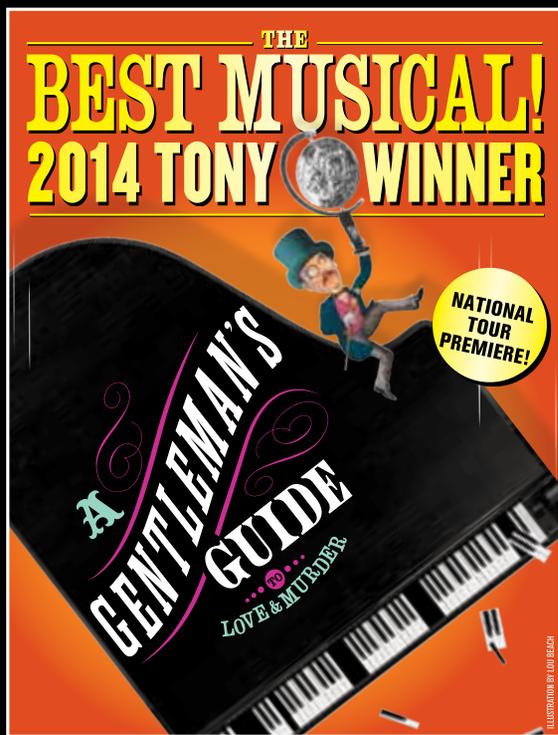
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