

TRANS 100
AT MAYNE
STAGE



PAGE 26

WINDY CITY TIMES

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

APRIL 1, 2015
VOL 30, NO. 27

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HUMAN FIRST
GALA PHOTOS
PAGE 24

WINDY CITY
TIMES
ELECTION
COVERAGE
PAGES 10, 12



BOYSTOWN
FIXTURE CARL
SHARP DIES
PAGE 30



WILLA TAYLOR
HONORED
PAGE 19

Indiana backlash



Protesters at the anti-RFRA rally in Indianapolis March 28. Photo by Ed Negron

Indiana religious-freedom law widely condemned

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Many activists, politicians and business leaders continued to issue condemnations of a so-called "religious freedom" bill that passed in the Indiana General Assembly and which Gov. Mike Pence hastily signed into law on March 26.

Critics say that the legislation, SB 101, or the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), ultimately gives small businesses, closely-held corporations or individuals free license to discriminate against anyone who comes up against a person's stated religious principles. The law also prevents certain lawsuits from being filed against employers by their employees.

Pence posted a picture of himself at the signing on Twitter, flanked by both the bill's advocates and religious personnel. He said that the bill ensures "that religious liberty is fully protected under Indiana law" and that the state was supporting "freedom of religion for every Hoosier of every faith."

But Jane Henegar, executive director of ACLU of Indiana, in a statement, called the bill a sop to religious elements within Indiana still reeling over same-sex marriage becoming legal in the state.

"The timing of this legislation is important to understanding its intent: The bill was introduced as a backlash reaction to achieving marriage equality for same-sex couples in Indiana," noted Henegar. "We are deeply disappointed that the governor and state lawmakers have been tone-deaf to the cries of legions of Hoosiers—including businesses, convention leaders, faith communities, and more than 10,000 people who signed petitions against the bill—who say they don't want this harmful legislation to impair the reputation of our state and harm our ability to attract the best and brightest to Indiana."

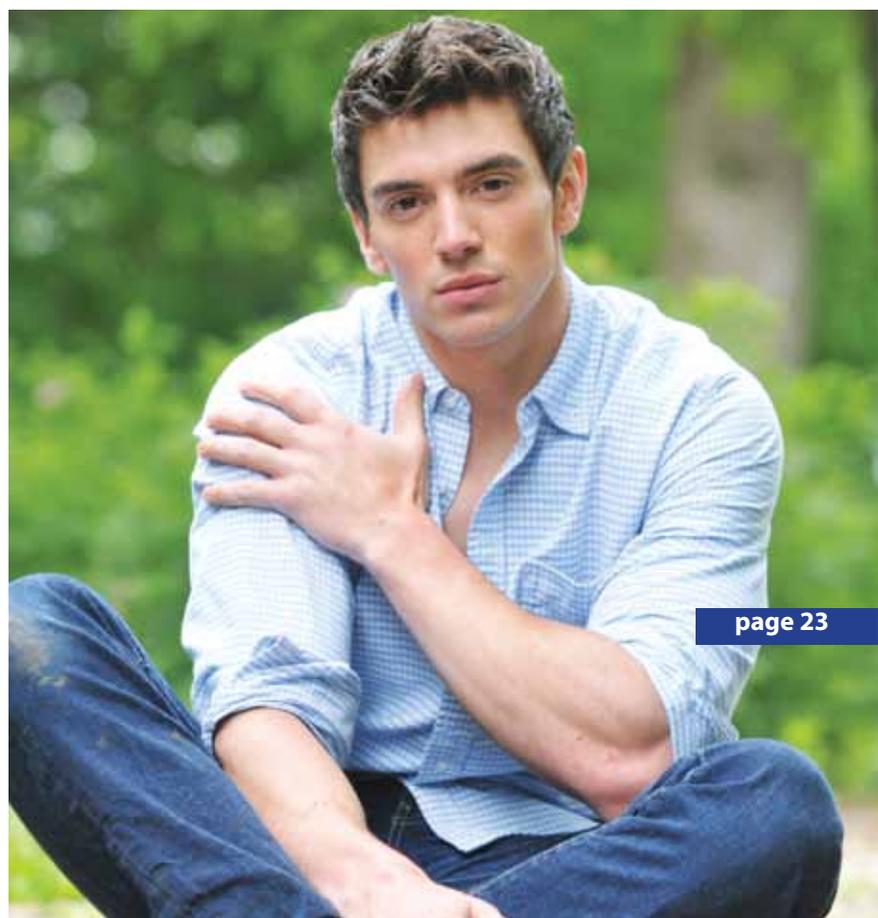
On March 27, a similar bill cleared the Arkansas state Senate and was headed to the House, where

Turn to page 6

HITTING HIGH NOTES



page 25



page 23

Windy City Times profiles two very different singers this week—one an established legend (Joan Armatrading, left) and one who's recently exploded onto the music scene (Steve Grand, right). Publicity photo of Armatrading; photo of Grand by Joem C. Bayawa

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this week in WINDY CITY TIMES

NEWS		ENTERTAINMENT/EVENTS	
Panels on aging; column	4	Scottish Play Scott	15
Indiana law, backlash	6	Film on pre-Stonewall lesbians	20
HBHC annual meeting; Alden named	7	Steve Grand interview	23
Poverty panel	8	Human First gala pics	24
Barney Frank at Center on Halsted	9	Joan Armatrading talks with WCT	25
Ald. James Cappleman interview	10	Trans 100 roundup	26
Equality Illinois Institute	11		
RUNOFF ELECTION: Charts	12	OUTLINES	
Viewpoints: Cannon; letter	12	Classifieds; Dish (Pinstripes)	27
		Calendar	28
		Sports fixture Carl Sharp dies	30

Images on cover (left, from top): Photo from Trans 100 by Kat Fitzgerald; photo of Ald. James Cappleman by Matt Simonette; photo from Human First gala by Kat Fitzgerald; Facebook photo of Carl Sharp; photo of Willa Taylor by Tracy Baim

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NOVEL IDEA
Northwestern University professor Danny Cohen (left) has authored a YA Holocaust novel, Train.
Photo from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum



FERN NOTICE
The Chicago Flower & Garden Show had everything from intriguing blooms to celebratory cakes.
Photo by Andrew Davis



'GIRL' TALK
The new series New Girls on the Block follows a group of transgender women in Kansas City, Missouri.
Photo courtesy of Discovery Life Channel

WARD OF WORDS
WCT talks with 2nd Ward candidates Alyx Pattison and Brian Hopkins.

DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL
At Out at CHM, openly gay veterans spoke about love and secrets in the military.

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Maryanne Ryan and Robert Linscott. Photo by Matt Simonette

LGBT aging panels address topics of retirement, centers

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The federal government's recognition of same-sex marriages regarding Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security benefits has done little to alleviate the confusion many Americans have about those benefits, according to experts who spoke, on March 24, at the 2015 American Society on Aging's Conference at the Hyatt Regency.

The programs have many "different parts, and different parts use different rules," said Karen Loewy, who heads up Lambda Legal's work for older LGBT adults and older adults with HIV/AIDS. She emphasized that the programs' administrators were striving to be culturally competent, but were dealing with complex regulations that were conceived decades before same-sex marriage was an issue.

At the core of many problems were the programs' eligibility requirements based either on laws of a "place of celebration"—where a couple is married—or their "place of domicile," where they reside. Medicare Part A, for example, relies on the place of domicile, while Medicare Part B relies on place of celebration.

As such, many older LGBT Americans leave a lot of money on the table, said Ellen Morgenstern, director of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare Foundation. Her organization, in 2014, launched the "Know Your Rights Initiative," which holds town hall meetings so that older LGBT adults can be apprised of their rights and benefits under government benefit programs. The program is in the pilot stages in California right now, but will be expanded to other states.

"Social Security is the most byzantine program in terms of benefits, but is the most wonderful program in terms of keeping people out of poverty," she said, adding that anyone thinking they may be eligible to collect benefits should apply, even if they think their chances are slim. Should they be ruled ineligible, and that ruling is successfully appealed, payments will be backdated.

Casey Schwartz of the Medicare Rights Center emphasized that comprehensive financial planning is necessary for LGBT persons at all income levels. In fact, she said that most of the retirement-planning mistakes she has seen were made by well-off, financially savvy individuals.

"It's not people of limited means who make most of the mistakes," she said. "It's people who assume that, because they've figured out lots of complicated things in their lives, they'll be able to easily figure out [retirement planning]."

Another session at the conference addressed the needs of older LGBT adults for a gathering place, especially in communities without a sizeable LGBT population. Community senior centers fit the bill, but getting LGBT residents there can be a challenge, said presenters Robert Linscott, assistant director of the LGBT Aging Project at the Boston-based Fenway Institute, and Maryanne Ryan, outreach coordinator for the Orleans (Massachusetts) Council on Aging.

LGBTs often experience the same hardships when aging that their straight counterparts do, Linscott said, but often to a higher extent. Those include loneliness and social isolation, lack of caregiving resources, disconnection from elder services and family estrangement. Community engagement can turn many of those problems around, but it takes a significant commitment from a community center, requiring buy-in from all levels of its organization.

"All it takes is one negative comment or one bad look" for someone not to come back, Linscott said.

Community centers also need to seek out significant engagement with straight clients from the center, and plan sessions that balance education and social activities, he added. Ryan described how she organized such a group in Orleans, which is located on Cape Cod.

"Even if [your town] is more rural, there is a need out there," Ryan noted.

Creating Change 2016 in Chicago

The National LGBTQ Task Force has announced that the 28th National Conference on LGBT Equality: Creating Change ("Creating Change") will take place Jan. 20-24, 2016, at the Hilton Chicago.

Close to 5,000 LGBTQ community leaders and activists from across the country are expected to attend the conference.

Visit www.creatingchange.org.

Open To Thinking

BY NICK PATRICCA



On Religion

In 1799 the German theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher published a groundbreaking work, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*. In these speeches, Schleiermacher contested the arrogance of those philosophers of the Enlightenment who dismissed "religion" as either an irrational superstition or a purely subjective event in the private realm of the personal.

Schleiermacher challenged these "enlightened" thinkers to investigate and understand religion as they would any other phenomenon of human experience and thereby open up religion and religious experience to public discourse.

In constructing his argument for the public character of religion, Schleiermacher made a fruitful connection between religion and art: the Enlightenment argument for the banishment of religion also requires the banishment of art from public investigation and discourse. *De gustibus non est disputandum* (on matters of taste there is no basis for dispute).

But, as Schleiermacher understood, if we cannot construct meaningful ways to interpret religious experience and expressions, and if we cannot construct meaningful ways to interpret artistic experiences and expressions, then it is hard to imagine how we can speak meaningfully of values or moral codes or moral experiences—a conclusion that, sadly, some thinkers in our post-modern world have already made.

Let us look, therefore, at religion as Schleiermacher suggests, as a primal way of engaging the "miracle" of our existence—as is art.

We know the artist through her work. We examine the painting, the cathedral, the sculpture, the poem, the play, the

interpreting the meaning of the religion in question.

Schleiermacher was at pains to show that we can study religion, that religion has a place in the academy and in the public civil arena. I want to advance Schleiermacher's agenda: I want us to evaluate and judge religions.

There is a story in Buddhist scriptures that is constructed to show the human condition and the response of authentic religion to this condition. A man is wounded by an arrow. The wound is serious, probably fatal. A physician comes to the aid of the wounded man. But, before he is willing to be treated by the healer, the wounded man insists that he know whether the physician is a Jain or a Hindu, a Brahmin or an outcaste. This same story can be told with the physician demanding to know whether the wounded man is a Jain or a Hindu, a Brahmin or an outcaste.

In good Buddhist fashion, allow me to twist this story around again and look at it from the point of view of God: God refuses to hear the cry for help from a person because he is a Shia or a Sunni or a Jew or a Christian or a Yazidi or an atheist or Black or white or homosexual or ...

All patently absurd responses to the human condition. Yet, we allow religions and religious leaders to impose such absurdities upon us.

True religion treats the person whose suffering is most urgently in need of attention. True religion does not ask after gender, sexual orientations, castes, class, wealth, political affiliations, or any other marker of human identity.

The Buddhist test for the authenticity of a religion has a parallel development

"Schleiermacher was at pains to show that we can study religion, that religion has a place in the academy and in the public civil arena. I want to advance Schleiermacher's agenda: I want us to evaluate and judge religions."

in Western thinking in the thought of William James. In his *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1901/02), he suggests that we employ a "pragmatic test of the truth" of a religious experience. Simply put: if the person preaches love but everywhere sows hate, if the person preaches that life is sacred

but everywhere injures and kills, then that person is a hypocrite.

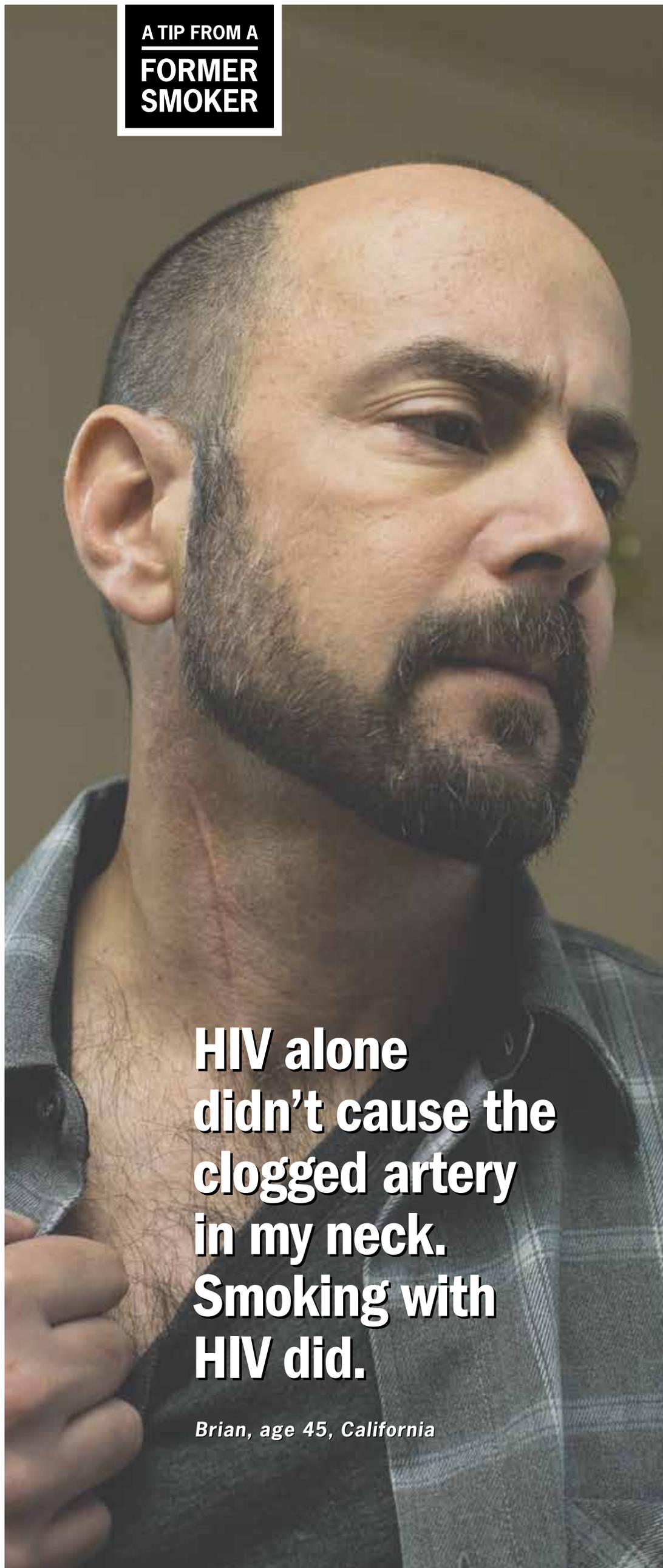
The Didache, a late-first-century Christian text, suggested some criteria for distinguishing a false prophet from a true prophet. The false prophet asks for money, lords it over others, does not work for his daily bread, and stays too long in your home—starting to stink after three days like fish going sour.

It's time for us to develop our own pragmatic tests to judge and to protect the true value of religion in our civilization.

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Nick Patricca is professor emeritus at Loyola University Chicago, president of Chicago Network and playwright emeritus at Victory Gardens Theater.

A TIP FROM A
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**HIV alone
didn't cause the
clogged artery
in my neck.
Smoking with
HIV did.**

Brian, age 45, California

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BACKLASH from cover

some amendments need to be cleared. Gov. Asa Hutchinson has said he will sign it. The new bill comes just a month after another anti-gay bill, this one prohibiting anti-LGBT discrimination protections, became law in that state.

Meanwhile, the mayors of both Seattle and San Francisco issued statements saying that they would prohibit inessential travel to Indiana on their taxpayers' dime.

"We stand united as San Franciscans to condemn Indiana's new discriminatory law, and will work together to protect the civil rights of all Americans including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals," said San Francisco Mayor Edwin M. Lee in a statement. "San Francisco taxpayers will not subsidize legally-sanctioned discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people by the State of Indiana."

Windy City Times asked both Chicago mayoral candidates whether they would consider issuing such a directive.

Jesus "Chuy" Garcia issued a strong condemnation of SB 101, but stopped short of calling for a boycott: "I believe in the freedom of worship. However, religion should never be used as a justification for discrimination of any group of people. That's why I've spent my life fighting for the inclusion and respect of all people, and why I've fought on the front lines for equality and fairness for all. We have had these fights integrating our schools and public spaces. We have had these fights for equal pay and protections for women in the work place. And we



Indiana Gov. Mike Pence.

will keep having these fights to make sure that every member of our community is treated with respect, dignity, and the absolute equal protection of the law. The Indiana law is a sad and painful reminder that we must continue this struggle toward justice."

Incumbent Mayor Rahm Emanuel's office forwarded a letter from Emanuel, dated March 27, which he had sent to about a dozen Indiana firms. He asked them to consider the possibility of moving their businesses to Chicago.

"Since my administration took office, Chicago has added more than 73,000 jobs and led the major cities in reducing unemployment," Emanuel wrote. "The City of Chicago has many strengths, including world-class universities, a diverse business sector, and easy access to air, rail and water transportation. But our greatest strength is the quality of our workforce and the fact that Chicago is a welcoming place to people of all races, faiths and countries of origin."

"Today you cannot succeed in the global economy if you discriminate against your residents by treating them like second-class citizens. As Governor Pence changes state law to take Indiana backwards, I urge you to look next door to an economy that is moving forward into the 21st century with the diversity, business climate and infrastructure your company will need to succeed."

Among the first businesses to question SB 101 was Seattle, Washington-based GenCon, which organizes a large-scale gaming convention in Indianapolis each year. Its owner, Adrian Swartout, said in a letter to Pence, "Legisla-



Speaker at the anti-RFRA rally in Indianapolis. Photo by Ed Negron

tion that could allow for refusal of service or discrimination against our attendees will have a direct negative impact on the state's economy, and will factor into our decision-making on hosting the convention in the state of Indiana in future years."

Swartout pointed out that people of all sexual orientations and gender identifications take part in Gen Con, and that the event results in about \$50 million being spent in Indianapolis annually. Nevertheless, the convention is locked into place through 2020, so Gen Con will not be able to carry through with a change of venue for a number of years.

The National College Athletic Association (NCAA), which is preparing its Final Four tournament on April 4 and 6, released a statement March 26 voicing its apprehension about SB 101 as well.

"The NCAA national office and our members are deeply committed to providing an inclusive environment for all our events," said NCAA President Mark Emmert. "We are especially concerned about how this legislation could affect our student-athletes and employees. We will work diligently to assure student-athletes competing in, and visitors attending, next week's Men's Final Four in Indianapolis are not impacted negatively by this bill. Moving forward, we intend to closely examine the implications of this bill and how it might affect future events as well as our workforce."

Indiana Mayor Gregory Ballard, a Republican, also opposed SB 101. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) threatened to relocate its 2017 conference from Indiana as well.

Indiana-based employers Cummins, Salesforce and Eskenazi Health also opposed the measure, according to Thinkprogress.com.

But the first action with measurable economic impact came March 28, when Indianapolis-based Angie's List announced that it was scrapping a \$40 million expansion on the city's east side that touted 1,000 new jobs.

"We are putting the 'Ford Building Project' on hold until we fully understand the implications of the freedom restoration act on our employees, both current and future," said Angie's List CEO Bill Oesterle in a statement, which added that the company would begin exploring options for alternative locations soon.

Pence suggested he would push through legislation that would "clarify the intent" of SB 101 the week of March 30, but an appearance on ABC's This Week March 29 suggested that whatever that entailed would do little to assuage the concerns of activists. He emphasized that the law would not change and maintained that it was no different than laws passed in Illinois and several other states.

Jennifer Pizer, national director of Lambda Legal's Law and Policy Project, wrote in a statement that there is little comparison between Indiana and Illinois laws, since Illinois

has robust anti-discrimination protections.

"This matters because those seeking to discriminate in Indiana may claim that the lack of a statewide law barring sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination means that there is no compelling state interest in enforcing local ordinances providing such protections," Pizer said.

Equality Illinois CEO Bernard Cherkasov expanded on the distinction: "Indiana's law will take effect in a legal environment that provides no protections from discrimination against LGBT Hoosiers or visitors. Neither are there LGBT protections under Arkansas law. ... In Illinois, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and LGBT-inclusive provisions of the Human Rights Act have co-existed since 2005 and function to protect a person's religious freedom while ensuring equal treatment of LGBT Illinoisans."



Blake Brockington.

N.C. trans activist, 18, commits suicide

In Charlotte, North Carolina, friends and community members mourned the passing of a local transgender youth activist Blake Brockington, who committed suicide, QNotes reported. Brockington, 18, was a 2014 graduate of East Mecklenburg High School.

Last year, he was nominated and later crowned homecoming king as an openly transgender student after winning a fundraising competition and drawing in thousands of dollars for a charity the school chose. Brockington, who came out as transgender in his sophomore year of high school, was active

Protesters decry religious-freedom law in Indianapolis

BY ED NEGRON

Hundreds of Hoosiers gathered at Monument Circle in downtown Indianapolis, Indiana, on March 28 to protest the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), saying it would promote discrimination against individuals based on sexual orientation, and then marched to the Indiana Statehouse while chanting "No hate in our state" and "Who's state? Our state!"

LGBTQ protesters and allies were joined by religious groups and public officials, including City-County Councilman Zach Adamson and Democratic state Rep. Ed Delaney, among others. Delaney, who voted against the bill in the House, said RFRA would put Indiana on the road to discrimination. "I offered two amendments to the bill that would have recognized our state's compelling interest in banning discrimination and protected local ordinances that banned discrimination, both of those were defeated," he said.

Most speakers had the same message for the crowd: that RFRA will open the door to discrimination against the LGBT community. They also urged people to register to vote, saying the only way to stop similar laws is to elect new members to the Indiana General Assembly. Groups went throughout the crowd encouraging people to register to vote.

Once the rally was over, the crowd marched peacefully back to Movement Circle and continued protesting with a much smaller rally.

Editor's note: Indiana Gov. Mike Pence signed the bill into law March 26, unleashing a global wave of criticism. He has now said he would support legislation to "clarify the intent" of the law.

in the school band, where he served as drum major for two years.

Windy City Times ran a profile of Brockington in February 2014; see <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Transgender-Homecoming-King-fulfills-dream/46227.html>.

The original article is at <http://goqnotes.com/34689/young-transgender-activist-blake-brockington-mourned/>.

Puerto Rico no longer defending marriage ban

The Puerto Rican government announced March 20 that it will no longer defend the U.S. commonwealth's same-sex marriage ban, The Washington Blade noted.

"Because of sexual orientation, Puerto Rico has denied rights that others enjoy," said Justice Minister Cesar Miranda during a press conference in San Juan. "This is not correct."

The announcement coincided with a brief Gov. Alejandro Garcia Padilla's administration will file with the 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Boston, which is hearing a lawsuit against the island's same-sex marriage ban.

"In declining to further defend the Commonwealth's discriminatory marriage ban, Puerto Rico's government finally recognizes that denying marriage to LGBT people is harmful and cannot be justified," said Omar Gonzalez-Pagan, staff attorney for Lambda Legal, in a statement.

Marriage is legal in 37 U.S. states and the District of Columbia.

The original article is at <http://www.washingtonblade.com/2015/03/20/puerto-rican-government-to-no-longer-defend-marriage-ban/>.

New BYC location among HBHC's new announcements

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A future, permanent home to Broadway Youth Center (BYC) was just one of the announcements issued by Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC) at its 2015 annual meeting, held March 23 at the its flagship Brown Elephant Location, 3020 N. Lincoln Ave. The event celebrated the agency's 40th anniversary.

HBHC is launching a "planning process" so that BYC will ultimately move into the second floor of its main facility at 4025 N. Sheridan Rd., according to President and CEO David Munar. No timeline or budget has been established yet for the move, and community meetings about the matter will not begin until the fall. Laura McAlpine of McAlpine Consulting for Growth, will lead the planning process.

BYC is currently based in the basement of Wellington Avenue United Church of Christ, 615 W. Wellington Ave. In late 2013, the facility had zoning problems, but those were ultimately resolved and BYC recently renewed an agreement to occupy the space for another year. Nevertheless, it was time for BYC to lay down more permanent roots, according to Munar.

"[BYC] is an oasis from the harsh realities that youth face daily on the street," he said, adding that the new location would offer more privacy, autonomy and space, as well as facilities for laundry, storage and showers. "There's no better way to commemorate our 40th anniversary."

Additional announcements at the meeting included a new sliding scale for fees for clients who utilize HBHC's STI/HIV walk-in clinic testing; an on-site legal clinic; a "makeover" for the Andersonville Brown Elephant resale store; and research work done in conjunction with Lurie Children's Hospital. A fundraiser Halloween party will also take place in October.

Munar said that HBHC is slowly regaining its financial footing after some years of financial and organizational turmoil. It refinanced its mortgage and addressed debts with Northwestern University and the federal government, and is about one-third of the way toward its goal—which is standard for most nonprofits—of having cash reserves on hand to cover 90 days.

"We're on a solid path [toward] future growth," said Munar. HBHC serves about 27,000 patients annually. That also now includes close to 2,000 trans clients.

But Board Chair Duke Alden cautioned that HBHC could have "risks ahead," given drastic spending cuts proposed by Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner in February. At stake would be about \$1.1 million for HBHC, he said.

"That means that 1,500 patients would be adversely affected. There would be delays, or complete loss of medical care for them, or loss of their housing or other support services," Alden noted. "The bottom line is it will add to the spending the state has to put out, not subtract from it."

Urging audience members to reach out to their legislators, Alden said, "If we come to that fight united, we have a much better [likelihood] of success."

Aurelio Fabrizio was honored at the event for his contribution of \$5,000 for exam room equipment, which was in gratitude to his physician, Chief Clinical Officer Magda Houlberg. Robert Blackie was also honored for his volunteer work.



From left: Duke Alden, David Munar, Aurelio Fabrizio and Magda Houlberg at Howard Brown Health Center's annual meeting. Photo by Tracy Baim

Duke Alden named to Human Rights Commission

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Gov. Bruce Rauner, on March 27, announced that Duke Alden had been named a commis-

sioner of the Illinois Human Rights Commission. Alden, who is in charge of Information Governance for Aon, is also Chairman of the Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC).

Alden's "experience in business and involvement with a number of non-profit organizations make him well-suited for the position," said the announcement.

Besides his work on the HBHC board, Alden

serves on the board of directors for the Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana and has worked with Vital Bridges, which assists persons impacted by AIDS/HIV, and for CARPLS, which provides legal assistance to the poor.

Other new appointments to the commission included Rose Mary Bombela-Tobias and Hamilton Chang. Previous members Robert Cantone and Nabi Fakroddin were also reappointed by Rauner.

The commission adjudicates discrimination complaints in the areas of employment, real-estate transactions, financial credit, public accommodations and education in Illinois.



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From left: Rev. Stan Sloan, Dr. M.V. Lee Badgett, Urvashi Vaid, Bianca Wilson and Laura Durso. Photo by Tracy Baim

LGBTQ poverty collaborative hosts Chicago meeting

BY TRACY BAIM

The LGBTQ Poverty Collaborative, a new national network of individuals and organizations fighting economic disparities, hosted a forum for Chicago-area foundations March 26 at the offices of Clark Hill PLC.

The Rev. Stan Sloan, CEO of Chicago House and Social Service Agency, has been working on this national poverty visibility effort for the past couple of years. This collaborative will have a wide-ranging approach to the issue, including research, policy, visibility and advocating for more funding in this area.

Special presenters at the meeting were long-time community leader Urvashi Vaid of The Vaid Group; Dr. M.V. Lee Badgett, founder and director of the Center for Public Policy and Administration; Laura Durso, director of the LGBT Research and Communications Project for the Center for American Progress; and former Chicagoan Bianca D.M. Wilson, senior scholar of public policy at the Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. Badgett was also representing the Williams Institute at the meeting.

The collaborative participated in the Equality Caucus briefing of the 114th Congress March 4 in Washington, D.C. "The Economics of Equality" was hosted by incoming vice-chair of the Equality Caucus Rep. Mike Quigley from Illinois. Sloan, Badgett, Durso and Vaid were on that panel.

More than a dozen foundations and corporations were represented at the Chicago meeting March 26. Jim McDonough of Alphawood Foundation and Ray Koenig of Clark Hill welcomed attendees. McDonough said his foundation will be committing \$100,000 to the launch of the efforts.

The group learned details about poverty rates of LGBTQ singles and couples, showing the higher rates of poverty experienced by this population. While transgender people and lesbians in general were more likely to experience poverty, there are indicators that certain demographics of gay men are also slightly more likely to be in poverty than their heterosexual peers.

In 2012, the poverty rate for differently sexed married couples was 5.8 percent; for same-sex male couples 3.3 percent, but for same-sex female couples it was 7.9 percent.

For single heterosexual men it was 13.4 percent, single GBT men 20.1 percent, single heterosexual women 19.1 percent and lesbian single women 21.5 percent.

Badgett also noted that LGBTQs have higher rates of food instability, and they are over-represented in homeless populations. Studies estimate that from 28-40 percent of the homeless are LGBTQ. For LGBTQ youth in foster care, they also experience more instability in their housing than their heterosexual peers.

Wilson said studies of LGBTQ youth in foster care show they make up 13.4 percent of the foster care population, even though they are just 7.2 percent of the general population. Meanwhile, transgender individuals are 2.25 percent of the population and 5.6 percent of youth in foster care.

Wilson noted that race and parenthood status also relate directly to the numbers of LGBTQs in poverty. She said transgender individuals experience high unemployment and poverty rates.

Durso said three primary failures of law lead to some of these high poverty figures. One is the lack of protection from discrimination, another is refusal to recognize LGBT families, and the third is the failure to adequately protect students.

Durso emphasized how local and national policies can be changed to assist LGBTQs. Examples would be the expansion of Medicaid coverage for the uninsured and expansion of the coverage definitions for both the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families programs.

Report: LGBTQ women most at risk for poverty

According to a new report released by a coalition of research and advocacy organizations, LGBTQ women are among the most at risk of poverty in the United States.

"Paying an Unfair Price: The Financial Penalty for LGBT Women in America," a companion to the recently released report "Paying an Unfair Price: The Financial Penalty for Being LGBT in America," was co-authored by the Movement Advancement Project (MAP) and the Center

for American Progress (CAP). It was written in partnership with approximately two dozen organizations, including A Better Balance, Center for Popular Democracy, Family Values @ Work, National Center for Transgender Equality, National LGBTQ Task Force and UltraViolet.

Among the major findings are that:

—There are an estimated 5.1 million LGBT adult women in the United States including approximately 350,000 transgender women. Two-thirds of LGB women identify as bisexual.

—LGBT women of color, older LGBT women and LGBT women raising children are particularly vulnerable. For example, older women (ages 65 and above) in same-sex couples have nearly twice the poverty rate of older married opposite-sex couples.

The report also spotlights how LGBT women face unique challenges in three major areas that dramatically increase economic insecurity and poverty rates: jobs, health and family recognition.

"Paying an Unfair Price: The Financial Penalty for LGBT Women in America" is available online at www.lgbtmap.org/unfair-price-lgbt-women.

Victory Fund names new president/CEO

The board of directors of the Victory Fund and Institute announced that Aisha C. Moodie-Mills will become the organization's next president and CEO in April.

Moodie-Mills comes to Victory from the Center for American Progress (CAP), where, as a senior fellow, she launched the FIRE initiative, a program that explores the intersections of race, class and sexuality.

Over the past decade she has served as political advisor, private-sector liaison and fundraiser for more than 40 members of Congress, including six senators and the Congressional Black Caucus. Prior to her work at CAP, she was president of Synergy Strategy Group, a boutique fundraising and political consulting firm where she raised millions of dollars for candidates and advocacy organizations.

The Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund works to elect LGBT leaders to public office.



Aisha C. Moodie-Mills. Photo from the Victory Fund

Former Chicagoan Stan Dale Boyer dies

BY LARRY SCANTLAND

As I begin to write this, it is hard to keep the tears from streaming down my face. First, because I never got to say good bye, and second, because I never even knew he was sick. Stan Dale Boyer died March 22 of colon cancer. He was 53.

Stan played sports for the North End in CMSA, Chicago's largest LGBT sports league. He was never a lifer, someone who lived for sports as much as lived for his friends. Most of his friends played sports, so Stan played.

I first met Stan in 1985 on a warm Tuesday night at Belmont Harbor playing pick-up softball. We hit it off and for my entire life he was one of my best friends. In 2011, we reconnected via Facebook and kept in communication over the Internet. He had two great loves in his early retirement. One was his beloved German Shepard Caleb James Boyer, which I will be adopting, and the other was reading.

He averaged a book every three days and so I found great joy in sending him all kinds of books that I read and thought he would like. But during all our communications of the past few years, never once did I know he was sick.



Stan Dale Boyer.

Stan is survived by his good friends Timothy and Maria Ranjo Atwood, and his Goddaughter Aurhea. Timothy is on Facebook and he will be organizing a special service for Stan in April in Los Angeles, where he most recently lived.

It is always sad to see someone go, but as we have learned we have to move on. So as you take in your day over the next few weeks, take a moment to reflect on your special memory of a great man, a great friend, and someone so special it will be hard to replace him—Stan Boyer.

Barney Frank promotes book at Center on Halsted

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

As part of a promotion for his book *Frank: A Life in Politics from the Great Society to Same-Sex Marriage*, former U.S. Congressman Barney Frank was at the Center on Halsted March 25 for a candid discussion about his life, days on Capitol Hill and opinions on LGBTQ issues, including and beyond marriage equality.

Prior to the sold-out evening, Frank engaged in a mixer with Mayor Rahm Emanuel that was closed to the press and seemingly activists like co-founder of the Gay Liberation Network Andy Thayer. In an email to *Windy City Times*, Thayer stated that despite having RSVP'd for a ticket well in advance of the mixer, he was denied access. An unsigned form rejection email received by Thayer from organizers stated that the event "received considerable interest from the community, and is oversubscribed as a result."

"The whole way it was handled is indicative of the lack of transparency we have seen from the mayor," Thayer told *Windy City Times*. "For those of us who remember Frank's career in politics as one who carried water for anti-gay policies of the Clinton administration, it shows contempt for grassroots activists in the LGBT community."

During the mixer, audience member Mary Dean was ejected. Organizers were heard calling for Center on Halsted security to remove her from the event during which Frank supported Emanuel's candidacy.

"When Rahm started speaking, I talked about his closure of 51 schools in mostly poor neighborhoods and opening 60 new charter schools and the closure of mental health facilities," Dean told *Windy City Times*. "Other people in the crowd started yelling at me and at least two or three people came over to me to block and stop me. Security forcibly ejected me from the building by pushing me out as Chicago police officers came running into the room. I was disappointed in the Center for inviting Rahm Emanuel there, considering the fact that so many people are suffering in the city. It told me that both the Center and Emanuel just don't support poor people."

Windy City Times pulled out as a sponsor of Frank's appearance after Emanuel's staff declined both an interview and a debate on LGBTQ issues with opponent Jesus "Chuy" Garcia.

During the more accessible portion of Frank's visit, he sat alone on the Hoover-Leppen Theater stage, nursing a cold and looking back on some of the highlights of his political career as a closeted and then out gay politician in Massachusetts and Washington, D.C.

"I knew I was gay but I held back," he told the audience. "Activities were limited, I would not ever make emotional connections and my

career was advancing. Rather than being a compensation for the absence of a personal life, a good career exacerbated it. Going home alone made it worse."

Frank recalled that by the onset of the 1980s he was ready to retire from politics but it was Pope John Paul II who instead was instrumental in helping to advance him to becoming his district's state representative.

"The congressman from the district next to mine was a Jesuit priest, Father Robert Drinan," Frank said. "American Conservative Catholics got to the new pope and said 'this guy's killing us. He's not a good Catholic.' The pope accommodated that by announcing that no priest should be in politics. I ran in his place. Father Drinan did say subsequently that he was very eager to say [to the pope] 'You know, that business where you got me out of Congress, did that work out?'"

Frank joked that he initially broke gay stereotypes by being a badly dressed cigar smoker. He also challenged the audience on another misconception. "Of all the groups in the U.S. House of Representatives of any size the one that has been the most supportive of LGBT rights has been the Congressional Black Caucus," he said. "They've been more than the gay members. Not the openly gay members. [They] were the best. I believe there is something about the experience of having been treated unfairly because of some personal characteristic that makes you more sympathetic when it's done to other people."

When Frank decided to come out, he was warned by sympathetic colleagues like House Speaker Thomas 'Tip' O'Neill that it could mean the end of his career. "He was sad for me," Frank said. "He told a journalist 'I'm afraid our friend Barney is all through in politics. He's going to come out of the room.' Many of the most liberal members of congress said to me 'please don't do it' not because they had the slightest prejudice but because they said 'if you come

out people will tend to limit your influence.' I wanted to be able to say 'I'm gay but it's not a big deal.'"

"Even today and to my dismay, there are people who know [they] are gay who vote to prohibit gay activity and they get away with it," Frank added. "That's hypocrisy. There is still a disparity between the social acceptability of being gay and the respectability of being a member of Congress. But the order has reversed. Folks are more accepting of you being gay than of being a Congressman. My marrying my husband as the first member of Congress to have a same-sex marriage was much more popular than my helping pass the Financial Reform Bill."

Ironically, Frank stated that those who are most eager to see the Supreme Court rule for same-sex marriage in June are "most Republicans."

"They have a voter base that insist they oppose same-sex marriage," Frank said. "They understand that is very bad for them electorally. They want the Supreme Court to decide the issue so they are no longer put between primary voters who want them to oppose us and general election voters who want to be for us."

During an audience Q&A, Frank noted that the right-wing movement of the Republican Party has caused dysfunction in Congress.

"Do not say 'a plague on both your houses' because this is caused by one party and not the other," Frank urged. "American politics began to deteriorate when Newt Gingrich—a man of consuming ambition, great tactical skill and I think no particular values—said 'we have to demonize the Democrats and say that they are evil, immoral, treasonous and corrupt.' The culmination of that is in the Tea Party. The Republican Party today is in the grip of people who do not understand that government has a positive role in our society. [They've] now gone off the rails and become a very right-wing party. They refuse to cooperate."

Frank asserted that the retaliatory religious-freedom legislation currently springing up across the country must be fought.

"This is a serious issue," he said. "Segregation was for a long time justified on religious grounds. Marching and demonstrating was important for LGBT people at first because we had to tell people that we were here. But they know that now. We don't have to do that anymore. It is a very ineffective way to follow through. When the left gets mad, they march. When the right gets mad, they vote."

Frank concluded the event by signing copies of his book.

Rauner meets with LGBT advocates

BY MATT SIMONETTE

In a discussion that they called a "first step," LGBT advocates met with Gov. Bruce Rauner, on March 20 and agreed on a three-part plan to help alleviate unequal treatment among Illinoisans.

The plan calls for a directive calling for careful enforcement of anti-discrimination and anti-bullying regulations by state government agencies; a nine-month study of discrimination against minority groups, including the LGBT community; and the appointment of an LGBT liaison between the Rauner administration and the community.

The meeting took place in the governor's office in the James R. Thompson Center. Those taking part in the discussion included Bernard Cherkasov, CEO of Equality Illinois; Owen Daniel-McCarter of Transformative Justice Project of Illinois; Christopher Clark, counsel and young adults, teens and program strategist of Lambda Legal; Kenny Ocasio, board vice-president for ALMA Chicago; and activist Mary Morten.

"Today was the just the beginning of our work, and there is a lot for us to do," Cherkasov told *Windy City Times*.

The anti-discrimination enforcement would ensure that state agencies rigorously carry out their responsibilities to enforce regulations that protect Illinoisans. "There are some agency heads, such as Rev. Meeks, who was confirmed yesterday, who are less LGBT-friendly than others," Cherkasov noted. "This would make sure that they are all on board."

Budget issues did not arise during the meeting, so Cherkasov was unable to say whether the directive indicates that administration officials are amenable to restoring anti-bullying line items to the state budget that were zeroed out.

The liaison has already been designated but Cherkasov was not yet able to say who it was.

He emphasized that the meeting was only a preliminary one. "We did not paper over our past disagreements. Our community has been subject to discrimination, so there's a lot that needs to be carved out. [Rauner] said in the State of the State speech that he is working to lift individuals up. This is an important first step."

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**ELECTIONS 2015:
46TH WARD**

James Cappleman aims to retain aldermanic seat

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Since the February elections, Ald. James Cappleman has been locked in a heated runoff with openly lesbian attorney Amy Crawford, who's looking to unseat him from his spot representing the 46th Ward on the Chicago City Council. Crawford has maintained that she'll be more responsive to constituents' concerns about development and public safety. She also received the endorsement of activist Denice Davis, who placed third in the Feb. 24 election.

But Cappleman, a social worker, says that the ward is moving in the right direction, especially with a renovation of the Wilson 'L'-stop and plans for an extensive entertainment district on Lawrence Avenue. Windy City Times spoke with Cappleman about public safety, economic development, and homelessness, among other issues, as the April 7 runoff election drew near.

Windy City Times: Were you surprised to have the runoff?

James Cappleman: Keep in mind, the ward boundaries had just been redrawn, so there were a lot of people who I would not have had the chance to speak with. It was also, with two other people in the race, record low turnout, so it's not extremely surprising. I've said before [that] I think it's very healthy for an elected official to be in a race. It gives us more opportunities to connect with people you wouldn't ordinarily connect with. It also gives me greater opportunities to get the message out.

WCT: What is that message?

JC: When I came into office in 2011, I made some commitments and I delivered on those. One, we wanted to focus on economic development. Part of that was the Wilson 'L'—that was many failed promises of bringing in \$25 million to rehab and my conversations with many different officials were able to secure just up over \$200 million to get that done. ... When I started, the number of empty storefronts was just deplorable. We're averaging one new business coming into the ward per month. We're seeing an unprecedented amount of economic development in the area.

Also [on] public safety: Prior to my election, no one was working well together. What I did was I created some targeted task forces to deal with some very specific issues. We did it with some broad-reaching plans and some specific targeted plans. So, for instance, for the first time, we're having the police work with really well with the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, and the businesses, social [service agencies], schools and the residents, to address the issues that surface. An example was at Sheridan and Lawrence, where there were a lot of empty storefronts and a lot of drug-dealing in that area. We worked with all those different groups, and educated the businesses about calling 911. We educated businesses about clearing out their windows, so they could see in. ... It also sends a message to any drug dealer that when they come out in front of that store, they can be seen.

WCT: What about the calls for additional police from politicians and residents?

JC: Every alderman wants more police. I don't know any alderman that doesn't want more police. I think the controversy is how people are saying it is going to occur. A thousand new officers means over \$100 million each year that needs to be spent. I know that Amy Crawford has asked that the five aldermen in the 19th district lobby for more police officers. That's not based in reality. Certainly the aldermen on



Ald. James Cappleman. Photo by Matt Simonette

the South and West sides—they're experiencing an unprecedented amount of crime. They would not want police transferred from their police districts to the North Side. That's not the process.

Let's talk about the process that works. We are [nevertheless] advocating for more police officers and we're on track to getting more in the 19th District. But while we are doing that we are also looking at the overriding long-range plan and short-term solutions to make it happen. We identified hot-spots in the area, which I won't say, but people who live in this area know what those hot spots are, and we identify problem buildings in those hot-spots, and chronic offenders in those buildings.

I go to those areas, especially from April to early-December. I walk them every day. I still walk them [in winter] but in April, it's every evening, and the residents in those hot-spots have my cell-phone number and I've encouraged them to text me when they see criminal activity. I've educated them about calling 911. Then they'll text me and I text the commander and I'll go out there. On many occasions, I talked to some people who are actively involved with the gangs. I did that last week.

WCT: Gov. Rauner's budget has proposed a number of service cuts across the board. Though you don't have direct control over the budgeting process, the alderman has to answer for service cuts quite often. How would you handle those, especially as they impact the most vulnerable?

JC: Let's go back to 2011 when I first became alderman. We knew that money would be drying up; we knew the pension crisis was before us. That meant that we had to work more efficiently and more effectively. When I first was elected, we had a shelter that had some individuals who had been there for close to two decades. One man had been there for three years. He had an income of \$1,300 a month he'd blow on crack. We had another shelter that was only for women, in a church basement. The women had to leave every morning at 7 a.m. with all their belongings. Then they'd be going back each evening at 7 p.m. One of the first things I did was ask DCFS to create more outcome measures for a lot of the shelters. We've now done that. Two years ago, we adopted the outcome measure that at least 30 percent of shelter residents should be housed within 120 days. That's what's causing us to be more effective.

We're also looking at the way we do home-

less outreach. The city of Chicago did a plan back in 2003, but in 2011 it was clear many people were still falling through the cracks. The plan talked of social service agencies working in silos and not communicating with each other, and past consumers of these resources said that when you had 10, 11 or 12 different social services programs, all providing services, it actually hindered them getting into permanent housing. A better approach would be an approach based on case management, where the individual or a family would be interacting with a team, made up of a case manager or nurse practitioner, and out of that relationship, that person has more willingness to address those issues that got them homeless in the first place.

I'm pushing more for outcome measures. It's not enough to give out food, although that's a very important piece. You want to do enough so that you help people transition from living on the streets to transitional housing to permanent housing. So I've pushed more for outcome measures and there's been strong resistance from the city. ... The good news is the city is also transitioning to a new model where each person in need will be assigned a case manager, so that's going to force coordination and collaboration.

WCT: Speak about some of your ideas around the entertainment district on Lawrence [Avenue]. In the interview with us, Crawford said it was a priority for you "rhetorically," but not in action. How would you answer that?

JC: She would say that because she didn't go to any of our community meetings, where we discussed the streetscaping—for instance, last August. She had not yet announced she was running, so she was not yet going to public meetings. We had a series of public meetings. We discussed putting a plaza in front of the Riviera. We're putting an outdoor stage with a power source so that we can have music. We're spending \$6 million dollars to do streetscaping from Gunnison and Broadway to Wilson. So that project is underway. ... We have First Ascent coming in. We have Uptown Arcade going in where the Annoyance Theater was.

We had the Uptown Underground that just opened in February. We now have 42 Grams, one of the best restaurants in the city—two Michelin stars in its first year of operation. And I'm working with Uptown United to put an indoor farmer's market in the Gerber Building. Right now it's unusable, with over \$10 million worth of damage. And we have a development proposal we're very excited about on Wilson and Broadway. So things are moving.

WCT: What is the current situation with Clarendon Park?

JC: I am currently working with the Department of Planning, and the developer, and the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We're looking at a proposal—they've changed it—and on top of that I worked on the Affordable Requirements Ordinance Task Force to encourage the building of more affordable housing in the city of Chicago. With that change, and some other recent developments, we hope to be hearing something fairly soon about that TIF soon. But I will say this: It will not go forward if it will not pay for the rehab of the Clarendon Park Fieldhouse.

WCT: Are you in favor of the Pride parade being moved?

JC: We just had a meeting, with many of the players—Ald. Tunney and I and the city and police. My requirement is that, whatever we do, we're going to have to do it a little different from last time. We had too much public drinking and we had too many adolescents who were passed out last time.

There are three aspects to the Pride parade that need their own individual plans—the parade, before and after the parade, and Montrose Beach. And we have not come up with a sufficient plan that addresses all three issues in a way that protects our residents. My first preference is to have it remain where it is, but to work with our police to address where people come in, perhaps do some check-in centers to stop the beer from coming in. It sends the message that we're "watching" you. I think that would be a more proactive way of ensuring that it's safe. It is growing to huge proportions. That speaks well of how far we've come. But I'd rather have it here.

WCT: When you say "check-in," would that be comparable to when you enter Market Days?

JC: Like when you're going to Market Days. Something where police or security is able to monitor [for example] that an ice cooler going in there.

WCT: What about Montrose Beach?

JC: I told the police that we have to come up with a specific plan just for the Rocks festival. There's a group that's in the talking stages. They have heard from me that we have to have a very good plan in place for security for that area. We cannot have it unsafe. It affects not only the people in the park but the community—they don't appreciate it as well. I'm all for it, but we're going to make sure that we're going to have a better safety net.

Visit <http://citizensforcappleman.com>.

For more political coverage, consult the charts on page 12 and WCT's website, www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.

State senator: Meeks votes came from 'loyalty'

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A sense of institutional loyalty, between current and former members of the Illinois state Senate, motivated members to confirm Gov. Bruce Rauner's nomination of former state Sen. Rev. James Meeks to head the State Board of Education March 19, said the one senator who voted "nay."

The nomination had drawn the ire of advocates in the LGBT community who objected to Meeks' opposition to marriage equality, anti-discrimination ordinances and other LGBT-rights initiatives, as well as disparaging remarks he has reportedly made about the Asian, Latino and Jewish communities, among other reasons.

But those objections seemed to have little sway over the state's Democratic-controlled Senate, which voted to ratify the nomination 45-1-1. State Sen. Heather Steans, D-Chicago, voted "present" while state Sen. William Delgado, D-Chicago, was the single "nay."

Both Steans and Delgado spoke out against the nomination on the Senate floor.

Delgado told Windy City Times, "It was my understanding that others were voting out of a sense of loyalty to a colleague. I voted my conscience."

He said he was motivated by several factors, among them Meeks' 2010 remarks suggesting that persons such as Latinos and Asians were not "true" minorities, which Meeks later recanted. Meeks' various anti-LGBT remarks were also a factor—Delgado's late son was bisexual.

Delgado praised Steans for not casting her vote for Meeks, either. "A 'present' is a 'soft no.' She was willing to put her name in the 'no' column."

Illinois Safe Schools Alliance Executive Director Anthony Papini said he was bothered hearing so many of the senators praising Meeks during the hearing.

"They're not the ones who will have to sit in classrooms under his watch," Papini said, adding he was also disappointed that the vote moved from the Executive Appointment Committee to the Senate floor so quickly, leaving little time for advocates and constituents to reach out to Senate members.

Equality Illinois Institute ponders next LGBTQ battles

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

The low-key tone of the 2015 LGBT Equality Illinois Institute held on March 20 and 21 at the Hyatt Regency in Chicago differed quite significantly from last year's event, which was more heavily attended and reveled in a sense of community accomplishment with the legalization of same-sex marriage in Illinois.

This year's sessions seemed to be centered upon the question of "Now what?," to which there were few definitive answers.

During the March 20 presentation "Addressing LGBT Equality at the State Level" speakers state Sen. Heather Steans, AIDS Foundation of Chicago Vice-President of Policy Ramon Gardenhire and Equality Illinois Public Policy Director Mike Ziri pondered the quandary of a lackadaisical feeling around LGBT issues in Springfield coupled with a budget submitted from Gov. Bruce Rauner that is devastating to organizations supporting issues such as LGBT youth homelessness and HIV.

"Generally speaking, regarding LGBT issues I think a lot of folks do feel like that [passing marriage equality] means we're done," Steans said. "I would suggest though the Rev. [James] Meeks appointment demonstrates highly that's not the case. We had 45 senators vote in support of Rev. Meeks as the head of the [state] board of education. It's disconcerting when you think about all the issues we have in keeping kids safe in all the schools throughout the state."

Steans indicated that the vote for the Meeks appointment was reflective more of loyalty for a former colleague.

"There's an air of uncertainty in Springfield regarding the new governor," she added. "I think it is clear he is not staking out a social agenda on the other hand it may not be on the top his agenda to protect and push advancements."

Regarding Rauner's budget which has zeroed out homeless youth funding and slashed Medicaid and HIV funding, Steans urged the audience to go to the mat on defining "who we are as a state."

Gardenhire echoed Steans comments. "The governor has imposed a 25-percent cut to HIV



Amanda Sampson. Photo by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

funding which includes everything treatment to prevention to care and this is at a time when we are seeing an uptake in HIV infections in the state of Illinois," he said. "This is the worst time to be cutting resources."

Ziri noted that progress in the Illinois State Capitol can be found in the ban on conversion therapy that state Rep. Kelly Cassidy sponsored. "We've got that through committee," he said. "Now we need to work on getting it through the General Assembly."

He also recognized an amendment to the Disposition of Remains Act to include gender identity protection which unanimously passed committee.

"I do think there's a sort of lethargy [in Springfield]," Steans said. "I think a lot of my colleagues both in the House and the Senate have a sense that 'the big battle's done. We can take a break now.'"

Equality Illinois will be holding an Advocacy Day on April 15, during which participants will be bused down to Springfield to lobby

lawmakers on issues such as strengthening hate-crimes legislation and saving the funding eradicated from the state budget.

Lethargy was not a sentiment shared by the evening's keynote speaker, U.S. Army Office of Energy Initiatives Executive Director Amanda Simpson, whose energetic and eloquently passionate speech managed to bring the mostly muted audience to their feet.

Although she received a great deal of media attention as the first openly transgender female to receive a presidential appointment, Simpson noted that she would much rather be recognized for her accomplishments as a scientist, engineer, test pilot and program manager.

"My gender history is as immaterial to an introduction as someone's religion, ethnicity, political affiliation, marital status or sexual orientation," she said. "Let there be no doubt, I was not offered the position in the administration because I'm transgender. I didn't set out to be an icon of the transgender community. I didn't set out to be anything more than who I am."

"The pursuit of authenticity frees us to be everything that we were meant to be," she added. "I believe that much of disconnectedness we sometimes feel grows out of a need for authenticity. We want genuine trustworthy interactions and equality where we live and work. We experience fulfillment when our relationships with others are honest, grounded in the truth of who we are or who we love."

During the March 21 panel "The New Agenda for LGBT Youth," Cassidy, co-founders of the Tyler Clementi Foundation Jane and James Clementi, and Project Fierce Chicago founder Cassandra Avenatti focused on issues such as anti-bullying work, suicide prevention and homelessness.

"It never ceases to amaze me how naked the hatred is among those on the other side," Cassidy said, referring to her committee debate on the conversion-therapy bill. "Really they all but said 'no we really do want to hurt gay people.' Let's not underestimate how much our fight isn't over. We don't get to take our wedding cake and go home."

A clear example of the consequences of calling the fight for equality over was to be found in the mother and brother of Tyler Clementi who took his own life in 2010 after the merciless cyber-bullying he experienced in college. He was 18-years-old. "We're here to say that [cyber bullying] is not acceptable behavior," Jane Clementi said. "We want to make sure that there are no future Tylers. That no one else is ever taught or ever hears a sermon that makes them feel less than or broken or separated from God for any reason especially not for how God created them."

"There are a lot of kids out there who feel that their families or communities will never change," James Clementi asserted.

"When we think about how we engage in our work or who we support politically, we can't come from a one issue place," Avenatti noted. "It's important to remember the folks who are still on the margins—folks who are trans and gender non-conforming, queer youth of color. Our issues connect in every possible way and we have to pay attention to those moments."

For more information about Equality Illinois, visit <http://www.equalityillinois.us>.

Gilead awards \$100,000 to AFC

Gilead Sciences recently awarded the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) \$100,000, becoming the first member of AFC's Corporate Partnership Program. Through the Corporate Partnership Program, AFC is engaging companies across the United States to make major contributions to HIV/AIDS programs and services in Chicago and beyond.

Corporate partners, such as Gilead, make unrestricted contributions that help AFC reach thousands of people living with or vulnerable to HIV. Each year, within Chicago alone, there are an estimated 1,100 new cases of HIV, which disproportionately impact communities of color, youth populations, gay men and other men who have sex with men.

Andrew Sullivan at Elmhurst April 2

Journalist, blogger and author Andrew Sullivan will present "The Conservative Case for Gay Marriage" on Thursday, April 2, at Elmhurst College.

Sullivan's talk will begin at 7 p.m. at the Frick Center, 190 Prospect Ave.

Through his blog The Dish—which began in 2000 and ended in February—Sullivan chronicled major political and cultural moments, reaching 1.3 million subscribers.

Sullivan was The New Republic's youngest editor-in-chief. After working for TIME and The New York Times Magazine, he served as a senior editor for The Atlantic.

Admission is \$10 for the general public and free for Elmhurst College students, faculty, staff and alumni; visit www.elmhurst.edu/tix.

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Election 2015 - Runoffs

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

The questions were about a wide range of issues, LGBT, HIV/AIDS, minimum wage, crime, youth experiencing homelessness, and more. Some questions did not have a yes/or no or "correct" answer, but involved more nuance and detailed narrative answers. Therefore, this cycle we are rating candidates on an A-F scale, not by numbers. Readers will note not very many were below a "C" because those candidates likely did not even bother to respond to a survey from an LGBT newspaper.

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

Windy City Times does not endorse in any elections, but we hope our survey educates readers who are making tough choices for citywide and aldermanic races Tuesday, April 7. Unfortunately, no local LGBT political organizations are significantly engaged in this election cycle, despite the important decisions ahead for LGBT Chicagoans and our allies. However, there are endorsements from organizations this publication deems to be relevant.

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

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

IVI - Independent Voters of Illinois Independent Precinct Organization

CAI - Citizen Action Illinois

GIA - Grassroots Illinois Action

SEIU - Service Employees International Union

CTU - Chicago Teachers' Union

PP - Planned Parenthood Illinois Action

EIP - Equality IL PAC

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

CHICAGO MAYOR

Rahm Emanuel (incumbent)
Jesus "Chuy" Garcia

CHICAGO CITY COUNCIL

ALDERMAN - 2nd WARD

Brian Hopkins
Alyx S. Pattison

ALDERMAN - 7th WARD

Gregory L. Mitchell
Natashia L. Holmes (incumbent)

ALDERMAN - 10th WARD

John A. Pope (incumbent)
Susan Sadlowski-Garza

ALDERMAN - 11th WARD

John K. Kozlar
Patrick Daley Thompson

ALDERMAN - 15th WARD

Raymond A. Lopez
Rafael Yañez

ALDERMAN - 16th WARD

Toni L. Foulkes (incumbent)
Stephanie Coleman

	WCT	IVI	CAI	GIA	SEIU	CTU	PP	EIP
ALDERMAN - 2nd WARD	A-						Y	Y
ALDERMAN - 7th WARD	A+	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
ALDERMAN - 10th WARD	A						Y	
ALDERMAN - 11th WARD	A-		Y		Y		Y	
ALDERMAN - 15th WARD	B						Y	
ALDERMAN - 16th WARD							Y	
ALDERMAN - 10th WARD		Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	
ALDERMAN - 11th WARD					Y			
ALDERMAN - 15th WARD	A	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y
ALDERMAN - 16th WARD			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

ALDERMAN - 18th WARD

Lona Lane (incumbent)
Derrick G. Curtis

ALDERMAN - 19th WARD

Matthew J. O'Shea (incumbent)
Anne Schaible

ALDERMAN - 20th WARD

Willie B. Cochran (incumbent)
Kevin Bailey

ALDERMAN - 21st WARD

Marvin McNeil
Howard B. Brookins, Jr. (incumbent)

ALDERMAN - 24th WARD

Vetress Boyce
Michael Scott, Jr.

ALDERMAN - 29th WARD

Deborah L. Graham (incumbent)
Chris Taliaferro

ALDERMAN - 31st WARD

Milagros "Milly" Santiago
Regner "Ray" Suarez (incumbent)

ALDERMAN - 36th WARD

Omar Aquino
Gilbert Villegas

ALDERMAN - 37th WARD

Emma M. Mitts (incumbent)
Tara Stamps

ALDERMAN - 41st WARD

Mary O'Connor (incumbent)
Anthony V. Napolitano

ALDERMAN - 43rd WARD

Caroline Vickrey
Michelle Smith (incumbent)

ALDERMAN - 45th WARD

John Garrido
John S. Arena (incumbent)

ALDERMAN - 46th WARD

James Cappleman (incumbent)
Amy Crawford

	WCT	IVI	CAI	GIA	SEIU	CTU	PP	EIP
ALDERMAN - 18th WARD								
ALDERMAN - 19th WARD								
ALDERMAN - 20th WARD	C	Y	Y		Y		Y	
ALDERMAN - 21st WARD	B				Y		Y	
ALDERMAN - 24th WARD							Y	
ALDERMAN - 29th WARD		Y					Y	
ALDERMAN - 31st WARD								
ALDERMAN - 36th WARD	A-						Y	
ALDERMAN - 37th WARD			Y	Y		Y	Y	
ALDERMAN - 41st WARD								
ALDERMAN - 43rd WARD	B	Y					Y	
ALDERMAN - 45th WARD	A+		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
ALDERMAN - 46th WARD	A		Y				Y	Y
ALDERMAN - 46th WARD	A+	Y		Y				

Early voting info for runoffs

Early voting for the April 7 municipal runoff elections will take place 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.

See how all the candidates responded to our 2015 election survey

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

Senators, advocates decry budget cuts

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A standing-room-only crowd filled the hearing chambers at the Bilandic Building, 160 N. La-Salle St., as the Illinois Senate Appropriations Human Services Committee met to discuss Gov. Bruce Rauner's proposed budget cuts.

Acting Human Services Secretary Gregory Bassi testified about the importance of the cuts, and faced grilling from some committee members, while service providers and their clients urged the committee to keep funding in place. The cuts, as proposed by Rauner, would

slash just over \$4 billion from the state budget. About \$500 million would be cut from the human-services budget, affecting areas such as housing, childcare and mental health services, among others.

Bassi acknowledged that "difficult decisions were made" surrounding the budget, but argued that those decisions were necessary, given the precarious state of Illinois' finances. But some senators felt that the state had already trimmed all the fat it could.

State Sen. Donne Trotter, D-Chicago, implied that Rauner's administration was making a

straw man argument in focusing its public discourse around the budget. He reminded Bassi that most programs were facing finance problems already, and these new cuts would only exacerbate difficulties clients had in accessing them.

"Let's not get distracted by the budget. We have to deal with reality. What are [Rauner's] plans for making lives better?" Trotter asked.

Committee Chair Heather Steans, D-Chicago, noted that more than 60,000 people would be affected by cuts to supportive housing. "That's a mid-size town—are these people going to evaporate? The mission doesn't change ... Where are they going to end up? They're going to end up on the streets, in jails, and in emergency rooms."

But state Sen. Matt Murphy, R-Palatine, reminded the gathering that the state's problems

were largely the result of mismanagement by previous administrations.

Before the hearing, Mark Ishuag, CEO of Thresholds, called the cuts "devastating to community health—not just to Thresholds, but all of our partners."

He added that most of the cuts would likely not even save money in both the short and long runs: "[Persons in need] will get services when they need them—they'll get services from police, emergency rooms, hospitals and nursing homes. All of those are more expensive than the programs they want to cut."

It's a lesson the state learned the hard way in both 2009 and 2011, when the state lopped off \$100 million from human services spending, Ishuag noted.

in the
LIFE
Anthony DiFiore
TEXT BY ROSS FORMAN



Photo by Randy John

Anthony DiFiore and his partner used to throw house parties, which gave birth to Neverland mega parties after a Boystown bar manager came to one of their small house parties and suggested they try it in a nightclub.

The first few Neverland parties were theme-less costume parties, "and then suddenly we started to get really ambitious when we realized we could grow the brand into something that

could get national attention," said DiFiore, who admitted that he never envisioned getting into event production.

"I'm a big theater-head, and I go to a lot of concerts, so I have an eye for what kind of production will excite people. It also helps that my partner is a really creative costume designer. What I love about event production is, it doesn't feel like work. I've never been so excited about anything in my life, and I think that the excitement of our whole creative team permeates through the experience of each party."

DiFiore and crew are approaching their third year planning events, particularly large gay dance parties. In 2014, they branched out into private and corporate events.

DiFiore said the most memorable event he's ever planned was the most recent Purity Ball at Nikki Chicago (the former Crobar). "A lot of people doubted that we could pull off throwing a big event on a random Friday

of a random weekend in December," he said. "But we packed Nikki, lots of people came out in costume, and we got some of our best reviews ever. What I love about Neverland is that each party is themed, and our creative team lives the theme for the months leading up to the event. It becomes an obsession. We do photo-shoots to express the theme; we make costumes, build production, etc."

DiFiore said his career goals are reaching Ric Sena or Jeffrey Sanker status. "Our team is very creative and hard-working. We've only been doing this for two years. Wait until year five," he said.

Their Ratchet Ball was probably the most fun event in terms of people's reaction, he said. "People either loved it or hated it. On one hand we had genderqueer groups berating us for throwing an event that they thought was 'culturally insensitive,' [yet] on the other hand we had promoters around the country who were inspired by us and created their own Ratchet Ball.

"Getting to define what was ratchet, [such as] a boxed wine headpiece, or making the dancers where grills on their teeth, was the best part. Of all the themes we've ever done, our team is most excited to bring Ratchet Ball back someday."

DiFiore said his crew is planning three big dance parties around Chicago's Pride weekend.



Photo by Jennifer Catherine Photography

Age

30

Neighborhood

Originally from Philadelphia, has lived in Chicago for four years; resides in Lake View

Hobbies

"Traveling, skiing, the gym, and going to other big gay dance parties around the world, so I can learn from the best."

Relationship status

Partnered

Job title

Owner and creative director of Neverland Events, LLC

Best part of the job

"Making people happy."

Worst part of the job

"Managing the occasional diva."

College

Has a bachelor's degree in economics from St. Joseph's University.

Favorite TV show

Breaking Bad and Game of Thrones

What's "in" for 2015 event

"Putting effort and creativity into a party. Hard work stands out."



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VIEWPOINTS

WINDY CITY
TIMES

VOL. 30, No. 27, April 1, 2015

*The combined forces of Windy City Times,
founded Sept. 1985, and Outlines newspaper,
founded May 1987.*

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CIRCULATION DIRECTOR Jean Albright
 DISTRIBUTION: Ashina, Allan, Dan, John, Renee,
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 WEB HOSTING: LoveYourWebsite.com (lead
 programmer: Martie Marro)

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WINDY CITY MEDIA GROUP,
 5315 N. Clark St. #192, Chicago, Illinois 60640
 U.S.A.
 (MAILING ADDRESS ONLY)

Windy City Times Deadline every Wednesday.
 Nightspots Deadline Wednesday prior to street date.
 OUT! Resource Guide ONLINE
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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.

LORI
CANNONPaying tribute to
Andrew Patner

What follows is the speech given by Lori Cannon at the memorial for Chicago writer Andrew Patner March 18 at Orchestra Hall:

Good evening, everyone. My name is Lori Cannon. I am deeply honored and humbled to speak with you in this magnificent space about my friend, Andrew Patner, and his early, unsung legacy of contributions to Chicago's LGBT community.

I first met Andrew in 1987 at a volunteer orientation for Chicago House—one of the first social service agencies gay men would come create in the earliest days of the AIDS pandemic. Andrew was there to soothe his grief over the passing of his dear friend, David Edmunds, for whom he had been a devoted caregiver. He told me that caring for David had been a comfort and a healing experience for him—"that it was one thing to have to die, it was another to be left to die—alone." That was why he became a volunteer: so people would not have to die alone. Grief and remembrance would become the glue that held us together.

Shortly after we started at Chicago House, Andrew reached out to the group organizing the Chicago contingent to the National March on Washington for Gay and Lesbian Rights, offering to conduct a board retreat to help prepare them for the hard work ahead.

As a result of his caring approach, that group went on to become an award-winning team whose success at the March brought an infusion of LGBT activism back from Washington that was unprecedented ... ideas that are still shaping this community 28 years later. That was Andrew's way. He wasn't a flashy guy. You often couldn't point to any one thing he had done—because he didn't work that way. He liked to stay in the background of almost everything, helping people—often people he barely knew—to make connections that would make things happen.

After the march, Andrew stepped up to help organize the now-legendary display of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt at the old Navy Pier. It was one of the first Quilt displays to take place outside of Washington, and it transformed every person who participated—especially Studs Terkel, whom Andrew had persuaded to read the names of those who had passed. From that moment forward Studs became a champion for people with AIDS.

And when the Rev. Willie Barrow came to present her son's quilt panel, it was Andrew who recognized her silent struggle. As a Christian minister, Barrow was challenged to reconcile having a gay son—whose AIDS diagnosis had forced him out of the closet—with her faith. Shell-shocked, she could not bring herself to turn over her son's quilt panel to be incorporated into the display—because it was the final act of saying goodbye. It was Andrew who sat quietly with her for hours and hours, gently rubbing her back, listening to her, comforting her, and finally convincing her that it was time to let go. That single act of kindness transformed Willie Barrow into an ally of the LGBT community, which she was until the day she passed.

At the next Chicago quilt display in 1990, Andrew was instrumental in arranging for opera superstar Jessie Norman to attend the opening ceremony where she not only read aloud the name of her dear friend, controversial



Andrew Patner. Photo by Israel Wright

art photographer Robert Mapplethorpe, but stunned those gathered by singing "Amazing Grace" *a capella*—an unplanned, impromptu performance that shattered everyone with its tragic beauty. No one who was there will ever forget that moment of spiritual transcendence. She wouldn't have been there at all if it hadn't been for Andrew Patner.

On the occasion of his 30th birthday, it was Andrew who arranged for then-unknown playwright Scott McPherson to meet AIDS activist and political cartoonist—and my best friend—Daniel Sotomayor. It was love at first sight—launching those two men into a relationship that would come to define the rest of their lives. Scott went on to achieve great fame as the playwright behind the award-winning drama *Marvin's Room*. Danny, thanks to Andrew and his friend Mark Schoofs at *Windy City Times*, got a job as the first openly gay, syndicated political cartoonist in the country—something that wouldn't have happened if Andrew hadn't set the wheels in motion.

Andrew accompanied myself and Scott and Danny to the premiere of *Marvin's Room* at the Playwright's Horizons in New York. Andrew so believed in Scott he wanted to be there to help me take care of them so they could share that final moment of triumph together—just months before they both died.

Whether it was by quietly supporting my own agency—the Meals-on-Wheels program for people with AIDS called Open Hand—or the AIDS activist group ACT UP/Chicago—or the AIDS-advocacy group Stop AIDS—or political organizations for people fighting for social justice—Andrew was there, quietly, behind the scenes, making critical connections for people that had a transformative effect—all while continuing his amazing career advocating for the celebration of the fine arts.

The last project Andrew and I had begun working on together was the sponsorship drive to add a bronze memorial marker honoring Leonard Bernstein on Chicago's Legacy Walk—the half-mile outdoor museum walk on Halsted commemorating LGBT contributions to world history and culture. This effort brought together Andrew's two passions: making the world better for LGBT youth—and the fine arts. Andrew knew that too few young LGBT people had been exposed to Bernstein's music—and even fewer knew that Bernstein was "one of them." We are deeply saddened to know that Andrew will now never be part of the Bernstein tribute ... because nobody was more excited about it than he was, and certainly nobody was a better fit to lead that effort.

Andrew Patner and I, both caught up in our

day-to-day challenges, floated like two leaves caught in the same breeze, buffeted through the history of time known as the "AIDS Crisis." Coming together—then bouncing apart for a while—then coming together again—this would define our friendship for almost 30 years. Foolishly I thought it would go on like that forever. But little do any of us know when that gentle breeze will suddenly cease to blow. Goodbye, Andrew. There will never be another mensch like you.

Letters:

Trick and no treat

Dear Editor:

The magic show *The Illusionists* was in town recently. One of the performers was Jeff Hobson, known as "The Trickster." In the magic community, Hobson is a controversial figure. His persona on stage is a flamboyant gay man. (You can catch him on YouTube.)

He may ask a man in the audience, "Are you happy? Are you gay?" He may flirt with a man he asks on stage. Hobson is heterosexual, and his persona is a gay stereotype.

He was on stage in a black sequined shirt. He said "I know what you're thinking. I'm not, but I was, and I might be again [while winking at a man in the audience]. You know, they say one in 10 people are, so if you don't know any gays, you're the one!"

Magicians have told him that this persona is really offensive. His response has been that he is making money, so he isn't worried.

I am part-time magician. This persona really upsets me because I saw gay men act like this as a child. In my teens, I thought I wasn't gay, since I didn't act like that. I looked for other reasons behind my feelings. I'm afraid other people may see this persona, and think this is how most gays act. If someone is struggling while coming out, this magic act will do more harm than good.

Wes Fowler
Chicago

GOINGS-ON



WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



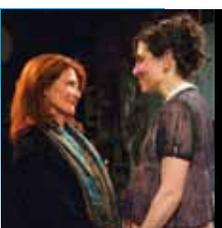
JOAN OF ART

Windy City Times talks with iconic singer Joan Armatrading, who's coming to Chicago later this month. Read page 25.

THEATER

Stroke of 'Genius.'
Page 16

Photo from *Genius*
by Michael Brasilow



DISH

Having a bowl.
Page 27

Photo of bowling balls at Pinstripes
by Andrew Davis



PEOPLE

Remembering Carl.
Page 30

Facebook photo of
Carl Sharp (on right)



SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Feeling all 'Grown-Up'

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Most mid-life crises hit people when they're 40, but for Brooklyn-based gay playwright Jordan Harrison it was turning age 35 two years ago that sent him into spirals of self-examination over his life and chosen career. It also inspired the creation of his play *The Grown-Up*, which has its second-ever production this month courtesy of Shattered Globe Theatre at Theater Wit following its 2014 debut at the Humana Festival in Louisville, Kentucky.

"For some reason that was the age when I realized that I was going to die," said Harrison, reflecting back on what 35 meant to him during a recent telephone interview. "I had a mortgage, I was getting married in three months—I was more grown up than I ever expected."

Harrison was also taking part in an artistic "silent retreat" in 2013 where he and several other playwrights were forced to write without communicating with one another or without any access to research books or the Internet. Naturally, Harrison said those conditions forced him to turn inward to create a more personal piece that "cannibalized my own experience more than I normally do."

The *Grown-Up* centers on a 10-year-old boy named Kai who is given a magical doorknob by his grandfather that allows him to time-travel. But instead of allowing Kai to visit eras like the Jurassic period or revolutionary France, the doorknob takes him to unexpected future events in his own life ranging from a disastrous Hollywood pitch meeting in his 20s to a

gay-wedding reception in his 30s featuring a streaking caterer.

Director Krissy Vanderwarker saw *The Grown-Up* at the Humana Festival and was immediately taken with it. She approached Shattered Globe Theatre artistic director Sandy Shinner about producing the play, and they fast-tracked *The Grown-Up* to its 2014-15 season.

"We thought it was a great fit for their ensemble," Vanderwarker said. "I love Jordan's work and it speaks to me particularly because it demands to be done in the theater—it's magical realism, so it often has opportunities for imagery and engagement beyond they typical fare of Chicago realism."

Although same-sex marriage figures into the plot of *The Grown-Up*, the play doesn't dwell on it like many an "issue play"—a factor that Vanderwarker really liked. As for Harrison, he put the gay wedding reception in as a way to predict what might happen at his own nuptials.

"It was somewhat an accurate prediction of my own wedding with far less dysfunction than the one in the play," Harrison said with a laugh. "That feeling to trying to sort of take a mental photograph of what's going on in this vortex of activity and trying to experience the moment. Everyone tells you that your wedding day goes by in the blink of a moment and it certainly does do that."

Coming of age as a teenager in eastern Washington state in the 1990s, Harrison said he had no foresight that he would be able to happily come out and marry in the future. In fact, he says it would have startled his 10-year-old self if he knew what was in store for his own life



The *Grown-Up* author Jordan Harrison. Photo from *Shattered Globe Theatre*

as a playwright, which is in part why Harrison penned *The Grown-Up*.

Locally, Harrison has had his previous plays like *Kid-Simple* at American Theater Company and *Maple and Vine* at the now-departed Next Theatre in Evanston. Writers Theatre in Glencoe will also produce his forthcoming play *Marjorie Prime* later this year.

But nowadays, Harrison acknowledges that his biggest audience experiencing his work comes from his association as a writer for the Netflix women's prison series *Orange Is the New Black*, which he joined for its third season. It's a job he loves, especially since he was such a big fan before he was hired.

"All I've ever known is this funny world where everything is released all at once," Harrison said, adding that his fellow writers often checked online chatrooms to see how audienc-

es reacted to season two of *Orange Is the New Black* while they were writing the third series. "That pleasure of seeing people consume what you worked on in 13-and-a-half-hours—I got to see the other writers experience that in the writers' room."

"It's a new thing for me to be juggling a theater writer's life and a TV writer's life right now," Harrison said, adding that he's also in talks about adapting his play *Maple and Vine* for television, too. "But I will always be a theater writer, first and foremost."

Shattered Globe Theatre's Chicago premiere of Jordan Harrison's *The Grown-Up* plays April 9-May 23 at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave. Call 773-975-8150 or visit www.theaterwit.org or www.shatteredglobe.org.



Balm in Gilead. Photo by Michael Brosilow

THEATER REVIEW

Balm in Gilead

Playwright: Lanford Wilson

At: Griffin Theatre at The Den, 1333 N. Milwaukee Ave.

Tickets: www.griffintheatre.com; \$35

Runs through: April 19

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Missouri-bred Lanford Wilson (1937-2011) lived in Chicago for five years, taking writing classes and living near Clark and Division streets, then a hangout for sex workers, junkies and gays. In 1962 he bought a one-way bus ticket to New York, skipped out on two months' rent and left Chicago with \$12 and the clap, as he told me himself. In New York, he found Broadway and 72nd Street, similar to his Chicago 'hood but only worse. All this—Chicago and his early NYC circumstances—is faithfully reflected in Wilson's first full-length play, *Balm in Gilead* (1965), taking its title from Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven* and the Bible.

The play is rarely performed because it requires a cast large enough to occupy a small nation. Many roles are small, yet doubling is nearly impossible. The play is a montage of scuzzy urban life, set in a busy all-night diner, which stops only momentarily to focus on two or three central characters. When they are gone—even dead—life surges on as if they'd never existed. There's very little story but, oh, the teaming lowlife humanity of it: longing, flirtation, sex, love, despair, failure, exploitation, ego, retribution and the music of a thousand voices, or so it seems. There are fragments of hope, too, naïve though they are. Ballsy for its time, *Balm in Gilead* has narrators who describe the 'hood sex trade in specific detail.

The play doesn't require interpretation so much as an orchestrator and traffic cop for its nearly non-stop motion and sound (famously overlapping dialogue, a Wilson signature). In that regard, this production is splendidly put together by director Jonathan Barry working with a big, bountiful company. Each player, even those with few words, finds precise individual qualities for the play's 28 characters, ably assisted by costume designer Mieka Van der Ploeg. Dan Stratton's slice-of-life diner set cleverly incorporates the real windows of the Den's second floor, allowing Chicago rooftops to provide urban ambience.

The controlled chaos eventually gels into

a small story about Joe (Japhet Balaban), a small-time drug pusher, and Darlene (Ashleigh Lathrop) the naïve kid newly arrived from Chicago with \$12. Using words as music (Wilson was heir to Tennessee Williams as king of poetic realism), Wilson gives Darlene the big, fat aria in Act II as she recounts her near-marriage back in Chicago. This scene is effective not just because of Lathrop but because of the casebook study in listening provided by Cyd Blakewell, as the prostitute with whom Darlene shares her story. A scene like this takes two to tango.

Steppenwolf Theatre Company leapt to national fame with a 1981 production of *Balm in Gilead*, which left indelible impressions on those who saw it. This one will, too.

CRITICS' PICKS

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

The Full Monty, Kokandy Productions at Theater Wit, through April 12. Kokandy ups the sensitive male-bonding levels for this inspirational tale of bare-booty blue-collars getting their groove back. MSB

Hamlet's House, The Public House Theatre, April 11-May 31. Surprise! It's a children's show about the adventures of a big fluffy dog named Hamlet and his human friend, brought to you by the company that gave us *Bye, Bye, Liver* and other raucous adult comedy revues. 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

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

THEATER REVIEW

Genius

Playwright: Kate Walbert

At: Profiles Theatre Alley

Stage: 4147 N. Broadway

Tickets: 773-549-1815;

www.profilestheatre.org; \$35-\$40

Runs through: May 3

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

When somebody offers to give you a large sum of money, the prudent response is either, "I'll believe it when I see it," or (more diplomatically), "That's very kind of you." Characters in plays, however, are presumed to proceed with sights riveted unwaveringly on the carrot at the end of the stick, never questioning the motives underlying such a transaction.

We first meet Sara Portman, a once cutting-edge feminist author whose books are now labeled "old favorites" at the local bibliothèque, and her husband, Joel, a museum curator currently under disciplinary suspension after emailing a picture of his—um, Anthony Weiner to an underage intern. Ah, but Sara has just been appointed one of the sworn-to-anonymity judges charged with nominating a candidate for a prestigious MacArthur fellowship (sometimes vulgarly called a "genius grant"). She promptly flouts the rules of her office by hinting to independent filmmakers Peter and Charlotte that she is considering recommending them for the sumptuous bequest. There's a catch,

though—since the award can only go to a single individual, the potential recipients (who are also married to each other) must advise their King Lear-inspired benefactor regarding the more deserving.

Kate Walbert starts her story near the end of an evening's visit, the dramatic action subsequently flashing backward and forward in time. This mosaic narration strives to keep us off-balance as the expository revelations pile up, but playgoers refusing to be distracted by—yawn!—marital-power issues may observe that both Peter and Charlotte's replies to Sara's query, while reflecting the greed and betrayal she expects, nevertheless ascertains that their business will benefit, no matter which spouse brings home the philanthropic bacon.

Of course, this same scenario can be viewed (perhaps even by the playwright herself) as simply another threadbare case study in troubled-marriages-among-the-privileged-classes, but where's the fun in that? Director Darrell W. Cox has instructed Liz Zweifler, Stephanie Chavara, Cale Haupt and Robert Breuler to play their cards close to the vest, even when shifting Michelle Lilly's ultracompact origami-like scenery, allowing audiences to parse the dynamic as guided by their own experience.

Anyway, this isn't even a play yet. At this stage of its development, it's more a first scene for a play, introducing its personnel and telling us what's eating them. What Walbert now has them *do* will ultimately determine where her finished play's empathies lie.

THEATER REVIEW

Outside Mullinger

Playwright: John Patrick Shanley

At: Northlight Theatre at the North

Shore Center for the Performing Arts,

9501 N. Skokie Rd. In Skokie

Tickets: 847-673-6300;

www.northlight.org; \$25-\$78

Runs through: April 19

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Some stories have been retold so many times that they should come with assembly instructions, like IKEA furniture. Before his venture into issue-driven dramas, John Patrick Shanley's reputation rested on romantic comedies recycling the classic dynamic of discordant lovers—usually from urban blue-collar con-claves—bickering until love goes and fuckin' conquers all. Charged with writing a play about his auld-sod kin, what could be more natural for this Bronx-born-and-raised playwright than to revert to formula?

Our setting is a pair of farms in rural Ireland, owned for centuries by two clans, the Reillys and the Muldoons. Anthony Reilly toils with dogged resignation under the supervision of his irascible Da, only to hear himself belittled for his want of gumption. Next-door neighbor Rosemary Muldoon's ownership of the land representing the boundary between the properties has been a point of contention between their fathers for decades. A marriage would solve this dispute (Hint! Hint!), if Rosemary can bring herself to forgive Anthony for an insult inflicted during their infancy.

The playbill designates our time frame as 2008-2013, but you'll find no laptops or satellite phones in evidence. Televised Olympics and advanced medical technology are offstage conveniences, discussed but never seen. Anthony and Rosemary never avail themselves of a day off to visit nearby Dublin for a latté and movie, possibly because neither appears to employ hired personnel to assist with their labors. The overall impression is that of tillers tied to the land as inexorably as their ancestors, making us aware from the start that their mutual encouragement toward seeking wider horizons is futile, that inertia plays a greater part than hormones in forging an amicable merger, and that their protests are merely a pretext for



Outside Mullinger. Photo by Michael Brosilow

postponing economic imperative. Once the elders are dispatched after supplying necessary exposition, the lovers circle each other for two-thirds of the 90-minute playing time while the stakes, volume and verbal velocity escalate until the inevitable lip lock.

Director BJ Jones has assembled a quartet of North Shore favorites—Kate Fry, Mark Montgomery, Annabel Armour and William J. Norris—to play ethnic archetypes modeled on Brian Friel and Sean O'Casey, surrounded by Kevin Depinet's rustic scenery. Audiences asking nothing more of an evening than it not task them with stressful controversy or jarring revelations (and who don't listen too closely to the lyrics in Andrew Hansen's likewise nostalgia-infused incidental score) will leave satisfied. Why else do you think old tales continue to be resurrected?



End Days. Photo by Justin Barbin

THEATER REVIEW

End Days

Playwright: Deborah Zoe Lauffer
At: Windy City Playhouse,
 3014 W. Irving Park Rd.
Tickets: 773-891-8985 or
www.windycityplayhouse.com; \$25-\$45
Runs through April 26

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

The folks behind the new Windy City Playhouse are certainly on a mission to impress. Despite its unprepossessing location where you'd expect to find a laundromat rather than a subscription-based professional theater, the Windy City Playhouse instantly amazes with its swanky décor reminiscent of a trendy nightclub.

Windy City Playhouse artistic director Amy Rubenstein also aims high with the level of talent she has attracted for the opening production: a revival of Deborah Zoe Lauffer's quirky comedy *End Days* which was previously seen in 2009 at Evanston's now-departed Next Theatre.

Goodman Theatre artistic associate Henry Godinez directs *End Days*, and his five-member ensemble features three professional Equity actors. Scenic designer Brian Sidney Bembridge also goes to town with his *End Days* set design which prominently features a symbolic art installation piece suggesting a freeze frame of an explosion of suburban stuff hovering over the stage.

Now if only Lauffer's play itself didn't strain so hard to be so sitcom-quirky. Some may find elements of *End Days* to be very cloying, especially how Lauffer explains away why the love-struck teenager Nelson Steinberg (an ev-

er-optimistic Stephen Cefalu Jr.) always wears an Elvis Presley-sequined jump suit, or how the 9/11 terrorist attacks of 2001 are used as an easy motivational crutch to illuminate the often-comical dysfunction of the Stein family.

The Stein father, Arthur (a believably lethargic Keith Kupferer), sleeps all day and has almost no motivation to grocery shop (or bathe). Newly Christian evangelical mother Sylvia (an often strident Tina Gushchenko) dedicates all her time to proselytizing and doing good works which she does in tow with an apparition of Jesus Christ (a comically low-key Steven Strafford). Meanwhile, goth-rebel daughter Rachel (an amusingly petulant Sari Sanchez) herself is visited by apparitions of physicist Stephen Hawking (Strafford again, this time with mechanical mobility scooter and electronic vocal inflections).

Despite its bouts of cute cloyingness, *End Days* does tackle some weighty issues—particularly how people find wildly different ways to cope or adapt after a traumatic, life-threatening event. And it's also nice to see how a catalyst like Nelson can bring the Steins back together as a family unit.

Godinez and his ensemble do very good comical work and get to the root of their characters, though I wonder if the laughs might have been bigger with a different seating configuration. The comfy swivel lounge chairs make it too easy to turn your focus away from the onstage actors to your nearby drinks and appetizers.

So even if some audiences may have qualms about the location and configuration of the new Windy City Playhouse, at least the work onstage for *End Days* augers very well for its future. It's definitely a welcome addition to Chicago's theater scene.

SPOTLIGHT



Commedia Beaugard posed a challenge for a six playwrights to create short one-act plays inspired by sculptures, paintings and other pieces of "folk" or "outsider" art. See how the results panned out and vote for your favorites in **MASTER WORKS: The Intuit Plays**, which features pieces by Kevin Alves, Jackie Davies, Brenda E. Kelly, Christopher Kidder-Mostrom, Laura Nessler and Caity-Shea Violette. **MASTER WORKS: The Intuit Plays** plays through Saturday, April 11, at Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art, 756 N. Milwaukee Ave.. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays. Tickets are \$15; visit tinyurl.com/intuit-tix. Photo of the piece "Untitled (Several figures/shades of grey)," the inspiration for *Shadow Boy*, from Commedia Beaugard

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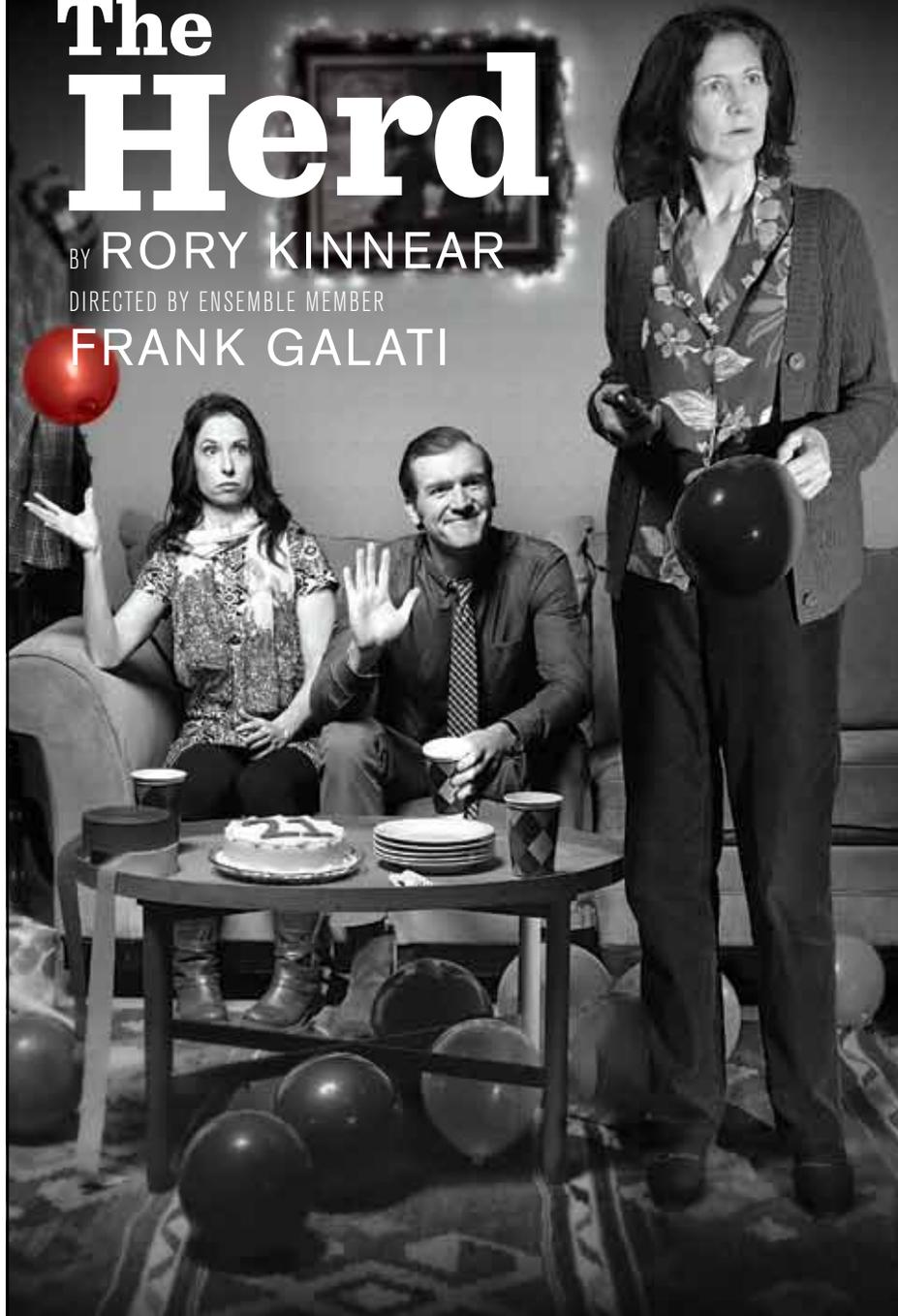
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NUNN ON ONE: THEATER

Libby Lane explains Ethel Merman

BY JERRY NUNN

Actress and singer Libby Lane now tackles a new role and this time she's channeling an icon. Playing the part of Ethel Merman in the new show *Book of Merman* has Lane teaming up with two missionaries searching for entertainment.

Libby Lane is an artistic associate with Pride Films & Plays. Some of her past works have included *The View Upstairs*, *Assassins*, and *Rosemary Clooney's Baby*.

After the performance once night the talented thespian and open lesbian met for a quick chat.

Windy City Times: Hi, Libby Lane. Is that your real name?

Libby Lane: It's Elizabeth, but I have been Libby since kindergarten. I went to Millikin and my first day of acting class when we were all nervous my acting teacher noticed my name and called me a star. That was a really poignant moment for me.

WCT: There is a bishop with the same name.

LL: I know. I started getting all of these friend requests from around the globe the day that he became famous.

WCT: The name *Book of Merman* can be a little tricky.

LL: We have had a few people show up here thinking they had tickets for *Book of Mormon*. They were pleasantly surprised of course. There is a little crossing of wires now that they are back in Chicago. If someone is not theater-savvy, they may think these book of Mormon tickets are really cheap!

WCT: Have you seen *Book of Mormon*?

LL: Oh, yeah. I was totally in love with it. I wish we could do a Mormon versus Merman thing. The cast could attend one night and we could battle it out!

WCT: What is your theater background?

LL: I went to Millikin for my undergrad, then I went straight to Western Illinois University to get my masters degree there. I was in seven years of training straight through. They both have fabulous programs.

WCT: When did you come out of the closet?

LL: I came out to myself in grad school. Once I fully realized that within myself I looked back on my life and saw how obvious it was. I grew up in a small conservative farming town. I guess that wasn't on my radar. I have a couple of friends that were from there and they knew they were gay right away but they said their life was hell.

I came out shortly to my parents after I came out to myself. I didn't wait a long time to be honest about my life.

WCT: So was it a huge deal for you?

LL: I was really lucky to be in the theater. I have never been a position career wise where I had to hide a part of who I was. It was a difficult period of adjustment for my family for about five years. Now they have come around and are completely my biggest fans. It is a non issue, which is amazing.

WCT: I noticed you worked with [Hell in a Handbag's] David Cerda.

LL: Of course. Once a Handbagger, always a Hell in a Handbagger. I have done several shows with him and they have all been fabulous.

WCT: That must have helped you with Merman.

LL: It has some camp, doesn't it? I think that is what I thrive on.

WCT: Did you watch a lot of Ethel Merman videos?

LL: I did. I did a lot of research. I found out I would be playing this role last summer. It gave me an extra boost to start really digging in to who



Libby Lane.

Ethel Merman was. There were a lot of parallels with my life and her—the foul mouth, brassy, loud. Interesting. David Zak, the director, and I have had a lot of interesting conversations about “Is she or isn't she?” We let the audience choose their own adventure, so at the end of the show some people will still wonder. Is it really Ethel Merman or some loony lady?

I haven't had a chance to talk to audiences after the show to get their perspective. I would be interested in people's opinions.

WCT: The show could have been set in the '80s.

LL: It is set in a mystical place and time. It is not established.

WCT: You could have easily just played her as a caricature.

LL: Right off the bat, we knew we didn't want to do that. That is exactly what I didn't want to do. Unless you are doing drag I feel that it can pull the audience out of the realness of the piece. There is a lot of quiet special moments in the show. If I were just a caricature then I think that would turn people off.

I wanted to find more realness, not buffoonery. I wanted to keep a little of me also and not be larger than life. We had discussions about not doing 90 minutes of Ethel Merman's voice.

WCT: That could be tough on your voice, also.

LL: Leo Schwartz has written the music beautifully for my range. It has been awesome. I have done over 35 shows and been vocally fine. It is right in my sweet spot.

WCT: Having the audience participate with singing seems like a fun idea.

LL: It has been hit or miss, more hit though. I have a backup plan in case the audience is terrified. I see people put their head down sometimes. I never want to make people feel uncomfortable or put people on the spot. We had three amazing people tonight like you saw.

WCT: Is everything coming up roses for you?

LL: Yes, we are talking about this run being open ended. I don't think any of us understood how special this production would become. It is such a hit and the little engine, or show, that could. Our end is scheduled through April 5 but we will see what is beyond that. Everything is coming up Merman!

Is she the real Merman or an imposter? Come up with your own answer at the Apollo Theater, 2540 N. Lincoln Ave., now running through April 5. Visit pridefilmsandplays.com or call 773-935-6100 for ticket information.

Chicago artist Bautista increases presence

BY ROSS FORMAN

Julius DC Bautista has been doodling as long as he can remember, and it always caught the eyes of his grade-school instructors. As a freshman at the University of Illinois at Chicago, a professor inspired him to select a major in fine arts.

Then when he returned from the military, Bautista finally paid attention to his creativity.

“My artistic process isn't very linear,” he said. “I collect found images and I accrue a large number of sketches, and this part of the process is extremely impulsive. It isn't until I'm struck with an idea or a vision that I return to these collected images and sketches, which I then begin to search through for components that suit the idea in mind.

“I tend to create multiple variations of the same idea, so I can toy around with different color palettes or patterns. I don't complete the majority of my paintings. They end up sitting around for months before I either feel inspired to complete them, or paint over them altogether. In many ways, the process I've developed pushes me to fluctuate between impulsive, driven action, and careful, calculated methodology.”

Bautista, 27, grew up in suburban Glendale Heights and has lived in Chicago for about six years, now calling Bucktown home. He is a self-employed visual artist who is openly gay (and partnered).

He took his first painting class as a college sophomore, and a few years later, Bautista rented out his first studio to paint on a regular basis. “I've grown rapidly in confidence as a painter in the past year, but I'm also always constantly feeling the pressure and need to improve,” he said.

Bautista first started showing regularly about two years ago, often through group exhibitions at small galleries, cafes and pop-up spaces. “It was an exciting time, but it didn't feel entirely productive,” he said. “I began limiting my exposure the following year, so I could focus on the development of my technique. I think the progress must be evident, because I am now slated for my first solo exhibitions, and the thought of it is as exciting as it is nerve-wrecking.”

Bautista said his favorite piece is titled “Melodrama I: Militia Man.” He said. “I had no idea it would turn out the way it did, but I believe I tapped into a lot of anxiety and excitement I had from back when I served in the military. I've studied this piece on numerous occasions since I created it [last] summer, and to this day, it continues to inspire the evolution of my style.”

His most popular piece is titled “Escapist I,” according to his website.



Julius Bautista. Photo from Bautista

“My art is a reflection of my experiences with Borderline Personality Disorder,” Bautista said. “Because of what I inject into the paintings, and how I do so, they're really [are] less portraits of actual people than they are amalgamated representations of remnants of ideas scattered throughout the web.

“[The artwork] reflects my inability to address politics or take a definitive stance on anything requiring calculated decision. They're far more speculative, referencing spirituality, philosophy, and psychology, because they're really more about the relationship of emotions than they are about context.”

Bautista said he rarely is fully content with his art. “I almost always grow dissatisfied with my work, desiring to move on, but I also come back to my works with a sort of nostalgia,” he said.

Bautista has upcoming solo shows in Edgewater and Wicker Park, along with monthly group shows at Bridgeport.

“Eventually, I'd like to aim for museum representation,” Bautista said. “Showing internationally would be a dream come true, and being able to fund and finance a small team of interns and students would be rewarding as well. At the same time, I do question the plausibility of such a thing ... Borderlines aren't particularly great with people, and we can barely handle working with ourselves. Sometimes, I'm more than content with the idea of a small but stable local presence, and I wouldn't be lying if I admitted to even relishing the idea of being a starving artist. But that is more an ironic fantasy than a practical career goal, so it probably doesn't count.”



Julius Bautista work “The Sent-Down Girl.” Image from Bautista



Willa Taylor (with Tara Mallen, in back)
Photo by Tracy Baim

Rivendell Theatre honors Willa Taylor, marks 20 years

Rivendell Theatre Ensemble's sold-out 2015 Salon fundraiser at Level Office marked the group's 20th anniversary of advancing women's lives "through the power of theater."

Rivendell cultivates the talents of women artists—writers, actors, directors, designers and technicians—"by seeking out innovative plays that explore unique female experiences and producing them in intimate, salon environments."

The event also honored Chicago's Willa Tay-

lor for her role in helping advance the culture overall. Taylor, director of education and community engagement at the Goodman Theatre, has also played a strong role in advancing LGBT issues.

Rivendell is the only Equity theater dedicated to producing artistically challenging and original plays created by and about women. They moved into their own theater space in 2010 in Edgewater.

Tara Mallen, founder and artistic director

of Rivendell, spoke about the company's first production, *Wrens*, which was about women moving into the workforce during World War II, only to be shuffled back home when the troops returned. Appropriately, their most recent season featured the world premiere of *Women at War*, focused on the experiences of women who have fought in recent wars for the United States.

Taylor, a U.S. Navy veteran, helped consult on the project, which was part of the reason she received the company's WREN Award.

Megan Carney, the writer of *Women at War*, presented Taylor with the award. Members of the cast also were on hand to showcase their work, as was one of the women whose stories was represented in *Women at War*, Moesha Thomas, founder and CEO of One Savvy Veteran.

Salon 2015 co-chairs were Sharon Furiya, Elvia Moreno and Don Wiener.

See <http://rivendelltheatre.org>.

Chicago Dancemakers hires first ED

The Chicago Dancemakers Forum (CDF) has announced the appointment of Ginger Farley as its first executive director.

A Chicago-based dance artist and advocate for more than 35 years, Farley has previously served as CDF's project director and as a member of its consortium, composed of representatives from the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, the Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago, Links Hall, the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and the University of Illinois at Chicago, plus independent alumni of its Lab Artist granting program serving in rotation.

Currently its single largest program, CDF's Lab Artist grant has since 2003 supported ascending choreographers in Chicago with \$15,000 cash awards annually—plus a full year of men-

torship, artistic and professional development support—toward new work in dance. Visit chicagodancemakers.org for more information.

Hell in a Handbag marks 13th season

Celebrating its 13th year, Hell in a Handbag Productions has announced its 2015-16 season.

The four productions are *Miracle!*, a parody of *The Miracle Worker* as reimagined by Dan Savage (May 14-July 12); *Bette, Live at the Continental Baths*, with Caitlin Jackson paying tribute to the Divine Miss M's legendary cabaret act (July 17-Aug. 21); *Scream, Queen, Scream!* (Sept. 25-Oct. 31); and *Christmas Dearest*, the Handbag version of *A Christmas Carol* with David Cerda as Joan Crawford and Ed Jones as Carol Ann Crachit, Joan's trusted maid and confidante (Nov. 28-Jan. 2, 2016).

All four Hell in a Handbag productions will be presented at the newly remodeled Mary's Attic, 5400 N. Clark St. Tickets for *Miracle!* are currently on sale at www.handbagproductions.org.

'Wonka Ball: Warhol' April 10

About Face Theatre's annual gala *Wonka Ball*—which has the theme "Warhol" this year—will take place Friday, April 10, Moonlight Studios, 1446 W. Kinzie St.

Guests are invited to step into Warhol's infamous factory for one night only. The soiree will start at 8 p.m., with the VIP cocktail reception at 7 p.m. Attendees are invited to experience live, Warhol-inspired art-making by Matthew Lew, JoJo Baby and Edgewater Workbench; short experimental films by Warhol and contemporary Chicago filmmakers; a punch-out prize wall; a photo booth; and more.

Tickets are \$150-\$200 each; visit www.AboutFaceTheatre.com or call 773-784-8565.

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LONG LIVE PASSION

Filmmaker Michelle Citron looks at pre-Stonewall lesbians

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Imagine inheriting a house and finding a treasure trove of more than 2,000 photos depicting lesbian life in Chicago during the pre-Stonewall era. That's just what happened to case worker Patrick Gourley.

Gourley first met Norma Roos (Aug. 1919-Dec. 1, 1999) and Virginia Kaitchuck (Nov. 1919-Oct. 18, 2001) a little more than 20 years ago. They met because Gourley would forget to close the garage door of his three flat apartment just behind Roos and Kaitchuck's house and Roos would chastise him when he got home.

Over time, Gourley became their friend and caretaker. He would drive Roos to the grocery store since Kaitchuck didn't leave the house and when Roos wasn't able to leave the house Gourley ran all of their errands for them. Gourley didn't meet Kaitchuck at first and the couple wouldn't let him in their house for a long time but that changed as they got to know him. When Gourley came back from a vacation in San Francisco he discovered that Roos and Kaitchuck had been hospitalized and were staying in the same room. Roos never made it out of the hospital and Kaitchuck ended up having her leg amputated but was able to come home before she died.

"I'd done a lot of work in front of the house and the guy I was dating asked if I was getting any sweat equity with all the work I was doing and I said no," said Gourley. "I was encouraged by a lawyer friend to approach Virginia about what would happen to the house since she didn't have any heirs. I asked her how she would feel about bequeathing the house to me and she agreed to give me the house when she died.

"Even though Norma and Virginia had paid off the mortgage it still cost me about \$25,000 to get the house in shape. Also, it looked like Norma and Virginia didn't get rid of anything except everyday garbage so the house was hip deep with their stuff. It took me about six or seven months to wade through everything that they owned since they'd lived in the house for decades. Of all the people to inherit their house it was providential that I did because when I found these photos I knew they were important so I saved them."

During a chance meeting between Gourley and filmmaker Michelle Citron at Gerber/Hart Library and Archives (Gourley was a volunteer at the library) in the early 2000s, the seeds were sown for two documentaries: *Leftovers*, a 22-minute film narrated by Citron that tells the story of Roos and Kaitchuck in the last years of their lives juxtaposed against the photos of when they were younger and *Lives Visible*, which tells the story of Chicago's pre-Stonewall working-class lesbian community. Citron, who also taught at Northwestern University for 28 years and Columbia College for eight years, was at the library doing research for her short film *Mixed Greens* and asked Gourley if he knew of any women that she could interview who'd been in Chicago during the pre-Stonewall era. Gourley invited Citron over to his house to look at the photos he found of Roos, Kaitchuck and their lesbian friends.

"These photos are an amazing collection. There is no collection like this that we know of that features what life was like for lesbians in the pre-Stonewall era. Norma took these snapshots with her brownie camera over a 40-year time span," said Citron. "I just felt that the first film was so much about them that a second film was needed to give them a context as well as showcasing Chicago's pre-Stonewall working class lesbian community. I spent a

year scanning about 80 percent of the photos and during that time Patrick found more photos that I was able to use for my films."

"What was really amazing to me is the photos show Norma and Virginia and the other lesbian couples showing physical affection for each other that cannot be mistaken for anything other than two women in love with each other," said Citron. "They displayed physical affection in public places like the beaches, parks, on front stoops and the bars."

"Although they remained closeted their whole lives they were able to live full lives and not hide who they were," said Gourley.

Both Gourley and Citron noted that Kaitchuck was a bit of a mystery since there wasn't much information about her and she never shared much about her life to Gourley before she died. There was more information about Roos because she was an athlete and very involved in high school. She was voted best athletic girl of her graduating class and was featured in newspaper articles. Roos was a National Bowling Champion and played baseball during WWII with the National Girls Baseball League. She was on the Parichy Bloomers and the Tungsten Sparks teams and they played on Parichy Field where the Eisenhower Expressway Harlem Road exit now sits.

Citron said that *Leftovers* is currently traveling the film-festival circuit and when it's done it will be added to the Queer Feast website so people have access to it. As for *Lives Visible*, Citron said it's a work in progress and in order to finish the film she needs to raise \$1,500. *Lives Visible* has already received one grant through the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events called the DCASE Artist Grant.

"I'm at the point now where I'm editing the film but in order to complete it I need what are called finishing costs and that is where the second grant from the 3arts Foundation crowd funding comes in. They match a third of what I raise," said Citron. "If I don't raise at least \$5,000 they won't give me the money."

Leftovers is a part of a larger project that Citron has been working on for a decade called Queer Feast and she has made four films each representing a different course in a meal—As American As Apple Pie, Cocktails and Appetizers, Mixed Greens and *Leftovers*.

As for where Citron got the name *Lives Visible*, she noted that it comes from Gertrude Stein's famous book called *Three Lives*. "It's about making these lives visible that have been invisible," said Citron. "That's what these photos are doing. Bringing these women to life again."

"This stuff is so approachable because it's not a history course. It's about these two women living their lives," said Gourley. "It's filling up in a juicy way a part of our history that is unknown to most young people."

"I want people to understand history. I taught a cinema class last year and when I asked my students about Stonewall not even half of them raised their hands. I think it's really important that we understand where we came from," said Citron. "It's honoring our ancestors on some level. I want people to know Norma and Virginia. They were invisible at some level and it's really important historically for them to become visible. I don't want their stories to die just because they aren't here to tell them. Young LGBT people need to know what went on before they were born."

See www.queerfeast.com and www.lives-visible.com for more information. To contribute to *Lives Visible*, visit www.3arts.org/projects/lives-visible.



Film subjects Norma Roos and Virginia Kaitchuck. Photo courtesy of Patrick Gourley



Kerry Washington at the GLAAD Media Awards. Photo by Jason Merritt/Getty Images for GLAAD

GLAAD honors Kerry Washington, 'Transparent'

Actress Kerry Washington, director Roland Emmerich and TV hits like *How to Get Away with Murder* were honored in Beverly Hills on March 21, as GLAAD held its annual Los Angeles Media Awards ceremony at the Beverly Hilton Hotel, according to *TheWrap*.

Washington accepted the Vanguard Award from presenter Ellen DeGeneres, a prize handed to a significant ally of the LGBT community. She joins a group of former winners like Jennifer Aniston, Elizabeth Taylor, Aaron Spelling and Drew Barrymore.

Emmerich received the Stephen F. Kolzak Award from Channing Tatum, highlighting those working to eliminate homophobia within the entertainment industry.

Among some of the other honorees were the shows *How to Get Away with Murder*, *Transparent*, *Days of Our Lives* and *Drop Dead Diva*; websites *Advocate.com* and *Au-*

tostraddle.com; and the HBO movie *The Normal Heart*.

The GLAAD Media Awards in New York will take place at the Waldorf Astoria New York on Saturday, May 9.

The original article is at http://www.thewrap.com/glaad-media-awards-2015-winners-kerry-washington-how-to-get-away-with-murder-honored-complete-list/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=mailchimp.

Billie Holiday birthday event April 6-7

"Ladies Sing the Blues: A Billie Holiday Centennial Birthday Celebration" will take place at Davenport's Piano Bar, 1383 N. Milwaukee Ave., on April 6-7, at 7:30 p.m.

Music from Holiday's Columbia, Commodore, Verve and Decca catalogue will be sung by Chicago jazz, blues and cabaret artists, including Amy Armstrong, Kimberly Gordon, Sophie Grimm, Lynne Jordan, Frieda Lee, Liz Mandeville, Tecora Rogers and Jeannie Tanner.

Tickets are \$32 prepaid, and \$37 at the door; there's also a two-drink minimum. Visit <http://reservations.davenportspiano-bar.com/>.

'Music for Matthew' May 3 at Southport

"Music for Matthew," a benefit for the Matthew Shepard Foundation, will take place Sunday, May 3, at 6-10 p.m. at Southport & Irving, 4000 N. Southport Ave.

Jazz singer Elaine Dame will host the event. Dame gigs regularly at The Rainbow Room in New York City and has performed at the University of Chicago and the Chicago Cultural Center. She is slated to perform at the 2015 Chicago Jazz Festival.

The restaurant has offered to donate 10 percent of the proceeds to the foundation, and there is a \$5 suggested donation. See <http://southportandirving.com/events-2/>.



Members of the Gay Men's Book Group at its March get-together. Photo from Jeff Fayerman

Book group thrives at Center at Halsted, looks to expand

BY ROSS FORMAN

The Gay Men's Book Group dates back about 20 years, to the Gerber/Hart Library & Archives.

But for almost three years, the peer-group has called the Center on Halsted its now—with two-hour meetings held on the fourth Tuesday of every month, starting at 7 pm.

"We're a group of guys who enjoy coming together for stimulating discussions once a month, revolving around a book that, we as a group, have chosen to take on," said Jeff Fayerman, who serves as the group's facilitator. He has been attending the group's meeting since August 2009, and often attends with his partner (Dave York, 77).

There is no formal signup to attend, though attendees must be male-identified. Meetings average around 15 attendees, predominantly 40 and older, though the group's members range in age from their 20s to their 70s.

"The diversity of the books [chosen to be discussed] gets me reading books that, on my own, I might not have chosen [to read,]" said Fayerman, 64, who is originally from New Jersey and has lived in Chicago since 2006. He is retired and lives in Lincoln Park.

All books are gay-themed books or ones that will appeal to gay men, Fayerman said.

"There are no rules for the discussion; there are no right or wrong opinions. We just request that everyone respects the diversity of the group because we come from a variety of personal and professional backgrounds, which really lend themselves to good discussions," Fayerman said.

The March book was Reflections in a Golden Eye by Carson McCullers, while April was The Glass Menagerie and Vieux Carre from Tennessee Williams.

Past books discussed by the group include The Hunger for Money (by Richard Rodriguez), Howl and Other Stories (Allen Ginsberg), Me (Ricky Martin), Tab Hunter Confidential: The Making of a Movie Star (Tab Hunter) and The Picture of Dorian Gray (Oscar Wilde), among others.

The group even tackled the 643-page At Swim, Two Boys (Jamie O'Neill).

"Our most important criteria for choosing a book is, will it lead to good, stimulating conversation—and not all books will, even if they are good books," Fayerman said. "At times, we've read books that not many people like;

some [members] even said [the book] was bad. But the reality is, you can still have really good discussions about a book that is not good. I don't think we've ever had a situation where everyone thought a book was bad."

The group is open to repeating books from the past, but seldom does it go that route, Fayerman said.

For more information about the Gay Men's Book Group, contact the Center of Halsted.

Cinema Q V Film Series through May

The free film series Cinema Q returns (and celebrates five years) with four film screenings Thursdays throughout May at 6:30 p.m. at the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington St.

The movies slated to be shown are the documentary I Am Divine (May 7); Violette (May 14), about the personal life and work of bisexual French feminist writer Violette Leduc; Beautiful Boxer (May 21), the true story of trans female kickboxer Parinya Charoenphol; and the 1971 film Death in Venice (May 28).

The Queer Film Society (QFS) is presenting in partnership with the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, and in association with Chicago Filmmakers (the presenting organization of Reeling: The Chicago LGBT International Film Festival) and The Legacy Project.

This series contains mature subject matter; viewer discretion is advised. Email qfsociety1@yahoo.com or visit www.ChicagoCulturalCenter.org for more information.



Dan Savage. Photo by John Fenoglio

Triangle Awards to be given April 23

The 27th annual Triangle Awards—honoring the best LGBT fiction, nonfiction, and poetry published in 2014—will be presented April 23 at the Auditorium of the New School in New York City.

Rigoberto Gonzalez is the 2015 recipient of the Publishing Triangle's Bill Whitehead Award for Lifetime Achievement, named in honor of the legendary editor of the 1970s and 1980s. Other honors that will be given out are the Randy Shilts Award for Gay Nonfiction, the Judy Grahn Award for Lesbian Nonfiction, the Audre Lorde Award for Lesbian Poetry, the Thom Gunn Award for Gay Poetry, the Edmund White Award for Debut Fiction and the Ferro-Grumley Award for LGBT Fiction.

The Publishing Triangle, the association of lesbians and gay men in publishing, began honoring a gay or lesbian writer for his or her body of work a few months after the organization was founded in 1989, and has now partnered with the Ferro-Grumley Literary Awards to present awards each spring.

Dan Savage's adult-film festival April 17-18

Hump!—Dan Savage's "dirty movie festival"—will return to Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport Ave., on April 17-18, at 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. each night.

A press release reads, "HUMP! Festival is billed an amateur porn festival. But it's really much more than that. ... At HUMP!, straight people watch gay porn, vanilla people watch kinky porn, gay people watch lesbian porn."

Tickets are at HumpTour.com.

'Big Package Auction' April 18

The Chicago Gay Men's Chorus (CGMC) will hold its annual "Big Package Auction" on Saturday, April 18, at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St.

The VIP reception will be 4-5 p.m., with the live auction 5-8 p.m.

Famed performer Lady Bunny will host the live auction.

Tickets are \$50-\$100, with early-bird discounts on the general-admission passes if purchased by April 13. See <http://www.cgmc.org/event/2015/big-package-auction-2015>.

CULTURE CLUB



MUSIC

Spandau Ballet's frontman talks comeback, Market Days

BY JERRY NUNN

The British band Spandau Ballet crossed over the pond to have a number one hit in 1983 with "True."

Across the way in the UK the group dominated with eight top ten albums. The lineup for this tour includes all five original members Tony Hadley, Gary Kemp, Steve Norman, John Keeble and Martin Kemp.

Spandau Ballet was part of a movement titled New Romantic that included groups like Duran Duran and Boy George, combining flamboyant fashion and new wave music together with mainstream success.

The band split up in 1990 then reunited in 2009, reforming in 2014 for a documentary about '80s culture called *Soul Boys of the Western World*.

We rang the friendly frontman Tony Hadley overseas to talk about the upcoming House of Blues date on a huge tour.

Windy City Times: Hi, Tony. Where in the world are you currently?

Tony Hadley: We live in Buckinghamshire, which is kind of near Oxford in the country, north of London.

I am just in rehearsals at the moment and I am ready to come over to the States.

WCT: Is everyone in the band from that area?

TH: No, we are all from Central London originally. We all moved out years ago. I like being out in the country. It is good fun.

WCT: I interviewed you years ago and we hung out at Market Days a bit. How did you feel that show went?

TH: It was brilliant. That is what we look forward to when you are in a band or are an artist is playing live. I don't ever come off stage and think, "I didn't like that."

The only thing that is frustrating sometimes is if the sound is not right. Very rarely does that ever happen.

We always have the audience to feed off of and end up having a great show. I'm interested to see what it will be like on this tour. I haven't been to the United States in a long time. It will be great to see what the reaction is.

WCT: You have been in this band 30 years?

TH: Longer, actually. We were formed in 1980 so it has been 35 years but we broke up for 20! We have only really been together for 15 years.

As you know in the film *Soul Boys of the Western World* we had a pretty bad fall out with the court case and everything. We are all together again. Everyone is looking good and sounding good. Musically I think we sound better than we have ever sounded. We have been rehearsing but we just want to play a show. I

think we are at that point now.

WCT: How is it hitting the notes of songs like "True?"

TH: Fine from my point of view. The thing is I sing all the time. I have my own band, The Tony Hadley Band. I tour all over the world. This [Last] year, me and my band [went] to Chile, Philippines and Hong Kong. We did an orchestral tour in Northern Europe.

Over the years, I have always kept singing so in terms of my voice I am very lucky that I am blessed that I can still hit all of the notes and not drop any of the keys. We have been rehearsing for five hours today so it is a lot of strain and big singing.

WCT: Do you put different spins on past songs?

TH: Yeah, you change the solos but keep pretty much the same arrangement and incorporate new stuff. Take "True" for example our big song, if you change it too much that people don't recognize it then there would be an uproar.

I saw David Bowie once that changed songs so drastically that they were hardly recognizable. People didn't like it. If people have a song that they connect with they like you to keep true to the original melodically and musically. I think that is important.

WCT: With making *The Story: The Very Best of Spandau Ballet*, was it tricky composing the new songs and trying to sound like the older music?

TH: We had been working on the *Soul Boys* movie so our records had been going into the film. Because of the film that kick started Warner to want an album of greatest hits with previously unreleased stuff. They wanted a few new songs and we wound up writing half a dozen. We just picked the three that were on the album. We literally had a couple of weeks to record them. We went straight into rehearsal and recorded them. We didn't have a lot of time but it went really well. Certainly, "Steal" and "This Is the Love" sound very much like the old music but "Soul Boy" sounds a little bit different.

WCT: What did you think of Edward Norton playing Izzy LaFontaine, a fictional bass player for Spandau Ballet, on the hit television show *Modern Family*?

TH: The great thing about *Modern Family* is that they knew our previous bassist was Richard Miller. They really did archive the band. I always think it is flattering when people sample your music or put your song on television. I love that kind of thing. Some artists have a problem with being sampled but I don't have that problem at all. If people have a bit of fun with your music then I am happy with that.

WCT: I just saw Edward Norton in *Birdman* last night.

TH: I need to see that. Michael Keaton is supposed to be brilliant. With two young children we don't get out much, but I have heard it is good.

WCT: Are you bringing the kids on tour?

TH: No, not at all. It is a lot of back-to-back shows and a lot of traveling. I have five children and three have grown up. It is not a very nice life on the road. It is hotels, tour buses and airplanes. It is pretty tiring, even when you are a grown-up.

WCT: Do you have a favorite place that you

have toured?

TH: Everywhere is a special place. If we are talking about America we haven't toured there enough. I would like to see more of it. My wife and I went to New York last Christmas and it was fantastic.

I have to say Italy is a great country. The Italians are pretty crazy and the food is amazing.

WCT: Fans are excited about you coming back to Chicago.

TH: We are, too. I have an auntie who lives just outside of Chicago about two hours away. She is my dad's sister and will be coming to the show.

WCT: The House of Blues is just an iconic place to play.

TH: It will be brilliant and great fun. I'm just really looking forward to it. We will be doing all of the hits with "True," "Gold," "Through the Barricades," "Communication" and "Lifeline." We have not had as many hits in the States as Europe but we certainly have diehard fans. We will be playing all of the stuff that they know.

WCT: You must have gained a lot of gay fans from playing Market Days.

TH: Okay, cool—that was great. We are looking forward to seeing them when we play. We are hoping for a general release of the film *Soul Boys of the Western World* in the United States. It really documents where we came from as a band and what Britain was like in the '60s, '70s and '80s to present-day. Even if you are not a fan of Bowie or Roxy Music it is a pretty cool film.

WCT: You just missed the David Bowie exhibit in Chicago.

TH: Oh, yeah. He is a massive influence on my generation. What a clever man he is.

Spandau Ballet: *Soul Boys of the Western World Tour* takes on House of Blues, 329 N. Dearborn St., on Saturday, April 25, at 9 p.m. (This has been changed from Jan. 30.) Look for tickets at www.hob.com and www.spandauballet.com.

CAKE Expo returning to Center in June

BY LAUREN E. CHILDERS

The fourth annual Chicago Alternative Comics Expo (CAKE) is taking place June 6-7, and with more programming and workshops for attendees.

"It really stands out as one of the top independent comic shows in the country," said Chad Sell, Chicago comic artist.

Some of the programming will include "A Conversation with the Hernandez Brothers," "Comic Books and Speculative Fiction," "Comics in Cyberspace" and "The Real Truth," in which cartoonists will explain the nuances of creative nonfiction as well as some of the ethics and challenges that come with writing about real people.

CAKE will also include workshops including, but not limited to: live drawing and inking demonstrations, printing techniques with Anya Davidson, experiment to see if cartoonists in different parts of the country have different styles, and formatting your comics for web and other mediums.

Chad Sell, who has been at each expo from the beginning, will be at CAKE 2015 showcasing his latest autobiographical comic, *Vreeland*. Sell is entirely self-published and known for his collection that caricatures queens from RuPaul's *Drag Race*.

"I'm really interested in the play of gender and sexuality in my work—there's a strong queer element in my autobiographical work—I try to create questions of queer identity in pretty much all of my work," said Sell.

He sells much of his work online and at mix of mainstream comic shows and alterna-

VREELAND



tive ones like CAKE. Sell finds self-publishing, "gratifying but not necessarily profitable... To succeed in self-publishing, you really have to have self-discipline and you have to have a certain amount of entrepreneurial gusto."

"I would guess that the majority of the exhibitors [at CAKE] self-publish their work."

CAKE is a gathering of comic artists, aspiring artists and fans. Sell expressed his excitement to meet other comic artists and fans for an "otherwise very solitary craft."

This year's CAKE event will be held at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., 11 a.m.-6 p.m., with free admission. The exhibitors list can be viewed at <http://www.cakechicago.com/4194/cake-2015-exhibitors-announced/>.

MUSIC

Steve Grand: 'All American Boy' talks new CD, Gaga



Steve Grand.

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Two years ago, out singer Steve Grand burst onto the music scene, making national news thanks to the video for a song for the song "All American Boy." (The clip shows a gay man, whom Grand portrays, falling for another man who turns out to be straight.)

Grand then parlayed his visibility into monetary success with an enormously successful Kickstarter campaign that raised \$326,000—the third highest funded music project on the site, according to his website.

Now he's released his first full-length CD, *All American Boy*, which contains tracks such as "Whiskey Crime," "Stay," "Time" and, of course, the title tune. Grand (a former Windy City Times 30 Under 30 honoree) recently talked with WCT about the new album as well as reviews and Lady Gaga.

Windy City Times: I was doing a little research on you and one of the things I came across was an op-ed entitled "Steve Grand Is the Role Model That Gay Youth Need." [Grand chuckles.] What do you think when you hear something like that?

Steve Grand: I close my laptop and don't read something like that. [Both laugh.] It's very flattering by the person and publication that ran that; it's very nice of them to think of me that way. But whenever you're called something like that, I've noticed an inverse relationship between the comments you get and a headline like that; it's, like, begging for people to rip you to shreds.

I feel like these expectations are put upon me. It's not something I asked for, but I try to be the best person I can be. I have a lot of good qualities that young people can look up to, but I'm also a human being and I have faults. I just try to live my life honestly, openly and in a positive way. I don't try to put other people down; I just stay focused on what I do and make work that I think my fans will like.

I think, in our day and age, social media has opened these channels for people to be negative without repercussions. I think a lot of people experience things in everyday life so that it's not polite to air grievances. As an artist—and moreso, as an entertainer—I need to engage with people out there and, sometimes, it's sometimes difficult to be positive.

WCT: I also read that you're a fan of Lady Gaga, so you undoubtedly saw her performance at the Oscars. Did you know she could sing like that?

SG: Oh—it was stunning and, yes, I knew she

could sing like that. I had [definitely] studied her. I've watched all of her videos—back when she was 19 or 20 and playing at a contest at NYU. She's always had the pipes.

I actually trained with her vocal instructor when I was in New York once. He's worked with Bono, and he's the best of the best. But [Gaga] works really hard, and perfects the gift she already has. She just gets better all the time—and you can just tell that she loves music so much; she gives off all this energy.

WCT: Yeah—she's a lot more than the attention-getting outfits she has worn.

SG: And it's so funny because people just assume that if you're using those tactics, you're using them because your natural talent isn't there—and that's not the case with her. I would say that, out of the big pop stars out there today, there are very few who can hold their own with Tony Bennett and sing like that at the Oscars. She can sing anything: jazz, rock, pop.

When she was getting backlash, she said, "If no cameras were here, I could sit down at this piano and make people weep." She said that on 60 Minutes with Anderson Cooper in 2011. She knows she has it—and she's right.

WCT: As you know, country singers Ty Herndon and Billy Gilman recently came out. Have you had a chance to talk with either one of them?

SG: I tweeted Ty Herndon and congratulated him; I actually congratulated both of them. But we haven't had direct communication. I so happy for both of them. To be out in country music is a tough thing. I'd love to talk with [them] sometime.

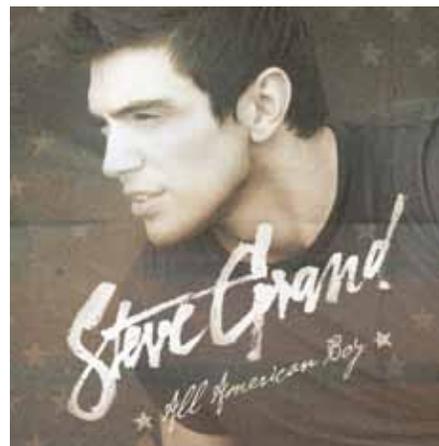
WCT: Now let's talk about All American Boy. Is there an overriding theme to your CD?

SG: There are a couple. The songs were written between the time I was 19 and 24, and you go through things that are specific to that age. It was a unique, awkward transition between [youth] and adulthood, and I feel the lines between them are blurred.

As millennials, we entered the workplace when there weren't a lot of jobs. Our parents told us that we could do anything we wanted but when it was time to go out into the workplace, we were hit with the hard truth, which was that it's a cold, competitive world out there. I feel like a lot of us were left disenfranchised and moved back home. I feel that we didn't start adulthood as early as [previous] generations.

There's that "transitional angst," as I call

it, on songs like "Run." It was one of the last songs I wrote for this record. I was on a porch at this place in Los Angeles. I had a really bad phone call with someone I was close to, and I got really upset. I went and got some [alcohol] and wrote that song in 15 minutes.



Also, all the songs are about relationships—but not necessarily relationships with people. There are romantic relationships and friendships, but there are also relationships with things that are not good for us, like in the song "Whiskey Crime." It's been the most polarizing track so far. Some people see it as a vacuous

party anthem that glorifies alcohol—which it is, on the surface. But alcohol is a very sensitive thing, and I think people in families that have abused alcohol see the song quite differently. It hits close to home in a way that's uncomfortable. Then, others read something darker into it—and it's darker by intention. It's interesting to see the different reactions.

There are songs about relationships with community, like "We Are the Night." There are songs about relationships with time, or with nostalgia, like in my song "Time." It's a relationship album.

WCT: Do you ever read album reviews?

SG: There haven't been too many yet. It's been a long process, and people have been listening. I have seen some, and they've been really positive so far. People will say that one track is a misfire, but reactions have been really different; [for example,] there's no one consensus on what's the standout track.

I don't think people know what do with me, in my personal life or in my professional life; there are people who call me a country artist and calling me "the first"—I never said any of that. Even the genre I'm in is being debated. I guess that would be the cards the universe has dealt me.

WCT: How difficult is it to balance your personal and professional lives?

SG: [Pauses] There's such an overlap, as I put myself into my work. I put myself into my interviews, my music, my music videos, on social media. I'm a person, and part of my personhood is also part of my product, which people evaluate and scrutinize like a product. So that makes things really difficult to see where I begin and end as a product. I'm still working on making that separation [between personal and professional lives].

It's important to stay grounded; the second you become unhinged, you're up for grabs.

WCT: You've meet a lot of famous people. Is there anyone who has left you absolutely starstruck?

SG: Oh, that's a good question. I briefly met Mariah Carey, but my thought is that they're all people, and they've experienced things that I've experienced, although in a much bigger way. I think there are people I'd love to have conversations with Lady Gaga—but I don't know if I'd be starstruck at this point.

There are people who have that "X" factor, like Kim Kardashian. People are, like, "Why are we talking about her?" But the process is more democratic than it's ever been. If someone is constantly being talked about, you can't hold that person down. Society finds her interesting; you wouldn't have all these tabloids and blogs about her if she didn't get these clicks.

But going back [to your question], I just see everyone as people.

The new CD All American Boy is on iTunes, Amazon and www.SteveGrand.net. Videos for various singles—including "Time," "All American Boy" and "Stay"—can be viewed on YouTube.

Trans film showing at Siskel on April 6

The 2014 trans-themed film *Kumu Hina* will be part of the 20th Annual Asian American Showcase at the Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State St.

Kumu Hina is about native Hawaiian teacher and cultural activist Hina, a transgender woman planning on marrying a younger man. According to the center's website, the film shows "Hina's charismatic leadership as role model and communicator of Hawaiian language and heritage as she embodies the ancient tribal tradition of the mahu, a revered two-spirit person who combines male and female energies."

The film will show Monday, April 6, at 8:15 p.m., and the 20th Annual Asian American Showcase will run April 3-16. (A couple of the other movies in the showcase are 9-Man, a look at a little-known sport that the Chi-

nese claim as their own; and *Made in Japan*, which profiles Tomi Fujiyama, Japan's first female country-western singer.) Purchase tickets at <http://www.siskelfilmcenter.org>.

McCartney, Sam Smith slated for Lollapalooza

Legendary musician Paul McCartney and out crooner Sam Smith are just two of the acts slated to perform at Chicago's Lollapalooza.

More than 125 acts are scheduled to play on eight stages, including Alabama Shakes, Florence + the Machine, TV on the Radio, Kid Cudi, Metallica, Marina and the Diamonds, George Ezra, FKA Twigs and A\$AP Rocky.

The event will return for its 11th year at Grant Park on July 31-Aug. 2. Visit <http://www.lollapalooza.com/tickets/>.

Center on Halsted hosts Human First gala



Modesto 'Tico' Valle.



Left: Human First honoree Prudence R. Beidler speaks to the audience, as fellow honorees, including Charles Middleton, Ronna Stamm and Paul Lehman, look on. Right: Emcee Natalie Martinez. Photos by Kat Fitzgerald, www.mysticimagesphotography.com. See more online at www.windycitymediagroup.com

BY MATT SIMONETTE

“Kinfolk” was the theme of Center on Halsted’s 2015 Human First gala, held March 28 in the Great Hall at Union Station. Mayor Rahm Emanuel was among the speakers calling attention to the Center’s work and honoring community members contributing to its impact.

CEO Modesto “Tico” Valle said the Center’s work fit in with the LGBT community’s historical role of “caring for our own,” initially with issues such as HIV/AIDS and marriage equality, but the scope of that work had to be expanded to include trans persons and LGBT youth, since economic equity was as important as equality.

“We must continue to care for our trans family—now is the time to care for our own,” said Valle. “Now is the time to care for our youth.”

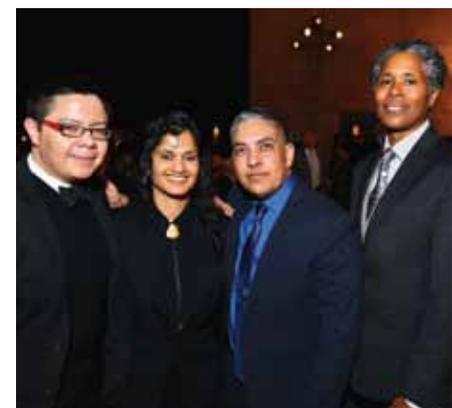
He noted that the Center had been approved to develop youth housing and wraparound services, adding that, in conjunction with its partners, it would be working on a “comprehensive model to ensure that LGBTQ youth will have the resources they need to live their dreams.”

Emanuel took the occasion to discuss homelessness, thanking the community for its work on the issue of homeless youth, and pledged to completely eliminate homelessness amongst veterans in the city: “No veteran will have to have Lower Wacker Drive as their home any longer.”

He furthermore praised Chicago as a place where “we have the values that allow you to be different.”

Honorees at the event included TransLife Center at Chicago House, which received the Center’s Community Spirit Award, while Prudence R. Beidler, Charles R. Middleton and the Ronna Stamm and Paul Lehman family were all recipients of the Human First Awards.

Center officials estimated that 600-700 guests attended the gala.



Joan Armatrading on touring, inspiration

BY SARAH TOCE

Out British singer-songwriter Joan Armatrading and her partner, Maggie Butler, may have not-so-secretly had their union legalized as a civil partnership May 2, 2011 in Shetland, United Kingdom, but their "Love and Affection" appears to have taken a back seat as of late. Armatrading is in the middle of a year-long tour spanning the globe. How is the gender-neutral storytelling lesbian favorite doing these days?

"I'm doing very well; incredibly well, actually. The tour's been going since—I did some things in April in South Africa, but the tour proper started in September and has been going since then," the multiple Grammy Award-nominee said, adding that it was great to be home for Christmas. "I literally got home on the 21st, just in time to have Christmas and then started again after the Christmas holidays. I was quite happy to have a little break, actually, because it's been non-stop."

The tour has Armatrading zigzagging throughout Europe, America and South Africa for the greater part of 2015.

"It's a long tour, which is kind of unusual for me, and that's why I've termed it as my last major world tour. A [normal] tour for me would be six months. World tours tend to be much longer than six months; a year, 18 months, 15 months, 13 months, they can be very long. And they tend to be continuous—I don't generally have big breaks between the tours," Armatrading said. "I don't do a month and then have a month off. I generally just start and then stop at the end."

Embarking on a rigorous tour schedule is a bit taxing for "The Weakness in Me" music legend.

"I'm 64 now; I'm 64, I had my 64th birthday in Canberra, Australia, which was fantastic, because I walked onto the stage and the audience just sang 'Happy Birthday' to me as soon as I walked onto the stage. It was wonderful, it was so fantastic. And I actually got sung happy birthday to three times on my birthday the next day. It was wonderful, so nice," Armatrading recalled.

Not that Armatrading is done touring forever. Quite the contrary, she sees many month-long mini-tours in her future.

"I don't want to be doing such long, unbroken touring, because that's generally how it is, it's long and there's no real break. I only want to do like a month at a time, maybe," she said. "I don't want to do long tours."

Fitting a "normal" existence into a schedule like Armatrading's takes a bit of extra care and caution.

"There comes a point—as I said I'm 64 now, by the time the tour ends I'll be 65. I don't really want to be away from home for big lengths of time at that age, really. I don't want to stop, but I don't want to be out that long; that's it, really. And of course I would never stop writing. I'll be writing until the day I die," she said.

A regular routine for Armatrading consists primarily of music production, release and promotion.

"I'll make a record, I'll produce a new song, put it on the CD, it goes out, I'll spend maybe a year—depending on what's happening—doing that or less. And then once that new music is out, I'll tour with that new music. That's kind of been the cycle of the last 42 years," Armatrading said.

Juggling a partner, family and friends is a big part of the puzzle.

"You make it work, you just make it work and your friends and family have to understand that this is what's happening. That's how it works and everybody just kind of goes with it, really," she said.



Joan Armatrading.

When she isn't in the spotlight, Armatrading prefers to relax—"like everyone else."

"I like watching the television, I love comedy—I watch a lot of comedy—I like to go for walks," she said, adding something we all already know: "I spend a lot of time writing."

What keeps Armatrading inspired on the long and winding road?

"I'm alive. That's really all you need to do, all you need to be is alive to be inspired. As long as you wake up in the morning and your eyes open and you put your legs out of the bed and you get dressed and you walk out into the street. That's really all you need. Everything else that you meet will inspire you, from the most trivial to the most dramatic," she said. "You might have something that happens in front of you that is so spectacular and so out of this world and so unexpected and say, 'My goodness, will I ever see this again? and you wouldn't get a song out of that if you paid a million pounds; you wouldn't. But you could see a leaf falling from a tree and there you go, you're inspired. You have no idea what will inspire you; there is no kind of, 'Let me check into this hotel at 2 and I'm going to be inspired when I check in.' It doesn't really work like that."

In April 2014, Armatrading visited South Africa to help celebrate that country's 20th anniversary of democracy.

"They had a series of concerts there. All the artists were South African artists and they invited me as the only non-South African artist to be a part of that series of concerts. Quite flattering, really, big compliment. And it was great. It was a very emotional series of concerts, it was fantastic. ... I am about to go back to South Africa in July to do some more

concerts," she said.

From South Africa to Chicago, Armatrading's heart is in every tour stop.

"I'm looking forward to just about everything, really. I have to admit—America is my favorite place to play. I love playing for the audiences in America. I will absolutely enjoy playing for the audiences in Chicago. It's just a great city, really," she said.

And lest one thinks the weather will halt Armatrading's zest, vim and vigor for the Windy City, they'd be mistaken.

"It's very interesting. ... I've been to Chicago in all types of different weathers: incredible snow, amazing snow, incredible wind and incredible sunshine and incredible rain; I've been there in all the different weathers that God's given us, and it's always wonderful to be there," she said. "People can expect to hear lots of songs that they're very familiar with, some they hadn't heard for a long time, and maybe some that they hadn't heard me sing on stage before."

Armatrading fondly remembered playing Chicago during her 1973-'74 tour—unplugged. It's something she hopes to do again during her visit in April 2015.

"The very first time I came to America, I played just guitar and piano. That's the only time. Every other country that I've visited, and even when I started in the UK, it was always with a band," she said. "Not many people have seen me play solo around the world, and not many people in the U.S. have seen me play solo since '73-'74. So that's quite different for people to see me on stage on my own. And I have to say, people seem to like it."

Unfortunately for fans, Armatrading's two Chicago tour dates in April are already sold out. [Editor's note: She is slated to return to City Winery on Oct. 7-8.] For fans who are able to attend and already have their tickets in hand, she offers this message: "Come along for the gig, have a great time. I certainly will."

Keep up with Joan Armatrading and via her website, joanarmatrading.com.



William Doan. Photo by Ed Mogul

Artist Doan visits local leather museum

William Doan, a fine-arts photographer from Ft. Dodge, Iowa, visited the Leather Archives and Museum (LA&M) in Chicago on March 22.

Doan's work is in the collection of the Art Institute of Chicago and other museums. He presented Rick Storer, executive director of the LA&M, with three of his photographs for their collection.

Art Smith hosts pro-family benefit

There was a little more than the usual delicious Southern fare happening at the restaurant Table fifty-two on March 22.

In response to the statements about same-sex families that fashion designers Dolce & Gabbana made, Chef Art Smith held a fundraiser. Smith donated and matched all restaurant sales from brunch that day to support the pro-LGBT organization the Family Equality Council. Smith told Windy City Times that a \$5,000 check would go to the group.

As for the message behind the March 22 event, Smith held up his phone, which showed a photo of Smith, husband Jesus Salgueiro and the four children they hope to adopt. "This is to summarize it," he said.

Smith added, "We made a commitment to support kids. We are going to constantly have people who say things that constantly upset us. But instead of acting in a negative way, why not react in a positive way? ... Children come in our lives in all different ways. Children are loved, families are loved. Let's not define 'family'—let's just love family."

When asked about the argument that Dolce & Gabbana are entitled to free speech, Smith responded, "Yes, freedom of speech—not freedom to hate."

For more on the Family Equality Council, visit www.FamilyEquality.org.



Attendees at the Dance of the Western Suburbs. Photo by Tracy Baim

DOWS hosts women's dance

Dance of the Western Suburbs (DOWS), a project that started many years ago as a project of Women of the Western Suburbs, was held March 21 in Kildeer, Illinois, in the northwest suburbs.

More than 560 tickets were sold to the event, which is now an annual dance for all women. More photos online at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com



Left: Director Lana Wachowski Right: Tiq Milan. Photos by Kat Fitzgerald, www.mysticimages-photography.com. See more online at www.windycitymediagroup.com

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

The annual Trans 100 event recognized individuals from across the country March 29 at The Mayne Stage in Chicago. The standing-room-only audience was comprised of allies and an empowered transgender, gender non-conforming and genderqueer community.

The evening's co-hosts were community ambassador and trans evangelist Precious Davis and advocate Myles Brady. They were still soaring from both their recent engagement and a visit to a White House Briefing for Black LGBT Emerging Leaders.

"This evening, we will connect, we will laugh, we might cry—but we will build community," Davis said.

It was a community in front of which accomplished journalist and GLAAD Senior Media Strategist of National News Tiq Milan was unafraid to show vulnerability as he recounted the love and support he received from his late mother Mary.

"I went to my mother in hospice and, by this time, she was barely speaking," Milan said. "My sister was there and my sister referred to me as 'she.' My mother on her deathbed whispered 'he.' That was one of the last words my mother ever spoke."

Milan had to break away from his speech in order to regain his composure. He was encouraged to continue by almost every member of the audience.

"I put my head on [my mother's] shoulder and my hand in hers and when I woke up, my champion was dead," he said. "I promised my mother that I was going to cement her legacy as I built mine. I would not be the man that I am if it wasn't for my mother. I am the embodiment of her kindness and her brilliance and her will and her determination. My mother taught me what unconditional love is—she taught me that [it's] persistent and consistent, that it's accountable and expects accountability."

"Having a national platform is a start but let's hold off on giving out gold stars," Milan urged after noting that even his own achievements had not saved the lives of people like Blake Brockington, Leelah Alcorn, Papi Edwards, Lamia Beard, Ty Underwood, Taja De Jesus and Yazmin Vash Payne. "Acceptance is much more



Rocco Katastrophe Kayiatos.

than visibility. Acceptance is safety, leadership development and giving space for self-determination. Acceptance is the reexamination of the systems and structures that have killed us, disenfranchised us, marginalized us and told us that we didn't matter for so long. We have to be each other's champions the way my mother was my champion. We have to be more concerned about building maps for the future instead of monuments to ourselves."

He brought the audience to their feet.

Performers at the event were Tona Brown on violin, musician Laura Jane Grace and poet Rocco Katastrophe Kayiatos.

"All of the work that we do has meaning," Davis said. "We need to get rid of the shade in the trans community, celebrate each other because each and every one of us has a place at the table."

Award-winning director, writer and producer Lana Wachowski invited the audience to take a singular place in front of her heart, humor and humility. She admitted that she doesn't usually take part in speaking engagements but she wanted the opportunity to speak directly to her community. "There were things I wanted to say that I would never say to a broader non-trans audience," she stated.



Laura Jane Grace.



Before that, Wachowski took a moment to discuss the reactions her hair receives during her world-wide travels. "I'm used to people staring, taking pictures, pointing but it was wild to be followed by circles of people wanting to touch it, wanting me to hold their babies, taking pictures of me like I was an exotic safari animal or a Kardashian."

Wachowski added that she was suspicious of everything connected to the word "normal."

"It is to my thinking a politically correct euphemism for obedience and conformity," she said. "Our species is unique for our capacity to be born into a set of environmental, biological or social circumstances and limitations and through the often astonishing power of our imaginations we are able to transcend them."

"The fact is that it can be fucking hard to be trans in this world," Wachowski noted. "This world is a violent place for people like us. Every day it attacks, rejects, demeans, humiliates, scorns and all too often murders us for no other reason that we are different. LGBTQ youth require extreme measures of protection because the violence being done to them is itself extreme. In Leelah [Alcorn's] case the word 'suicide' for me is inadequate and inappropriate. For me her act was symbolic that had more in common with the monk burning themselves in protest."

"I would guess almost everyone in the world has at some point dreamed of becoming an artist, an astronaut, a pop star, footballer, doctor, fill in the blank," she asserted. "I would also guess that most people in the world know what it's like to have that dream crushed or beaten

out of them. The difference between us in this room and those other dreamers—first, our dream to be seen and accepted as trans people can often cost us our lives and, second, none of us in here has ever given up on that dream."

List readers Cherno Biko, T.J. Jourian, Mia Tu Mutch, André Pérez, Claire Swinford, Vanessa Victoria and Joan Williams read the list of 2015 Trans 100 honorees throughout the evening. As with their 200 predecessors from 2013 and 2014, the names came from across the United States and covered a vast spectrum of age, race, professions and advocacy.

They included filmmaker Sam Feder, social worker Avi Bowie, radio host Katrina Goodlett, activist Monica James-Lauren, advocate and activist Samantha Jo-Dato, educator Mickey Ray Mahoney, HIV Program Coordinator Kristen Parker-Lowell, Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition Chair Maxwell Ng, advocate Reyna Ortiz, model and Gender Proud founder Geena Rocero, attorney and mentor Jayden HC Sampson, athlete and activist Ms. Dr. Joseph L. Simonis, activist and educator Crispin Torres, youth advocates Bonn Wade and Myles Brady, activist Monica James, and artists Mashuq Mushtaq Deen and Rashida Davison.

For a complete list, visit <http://thetrans100.com>.

NOTE: Windy City Times reporter Gretchen Rachel Hammond, who wrote this story, was also announced as among the Trans 100 for 2015.



(L-R) Gretchen Rachel Hammond, Dr. Robyn Walsh, Gail Goldsmith and Angelica Ross.



Tona Brown.



Myles Brady and Precious Davis.



WEEKLY DINING GUIDE IN
WINDY CITY
TIMES

SAVOR

Pinstripes brunch; Compass Bar

BY ANDREW DAVIS

The last time I went to the space that **Pinstripes Chicago** (435 E. Illinois St.; <http://pinstripes.com/chicago/>) currently occupies, it was called the River East Arts Center and I saw a Boris Powell fashion show.



Brunch at Pinstripes Chicago.

However, time goes on, properties are sold and sites are transformed. Now, there's a large restaurant (that can hold up to 600 people, thanks to meeting rooms) that serves buffets, bowling and bocce. I'm not kidding: Each Pinstripes (and there are several sprinkled throughout the suburbs; Minneapolis; Overland Park, Kansas; and Washington, D.C.) comes complete with bowling and bocce lanes—perfect for everything from office to family outings.

The restaurants serve lunch and dinner with standard menus from which people can order food. (Items include salads, sandwiches and chef specialties like Italian "jambalaya" risotto. Also, there's a gluten-free menu with a nice variety of items.) However, my friend and I went during Sunday brunch—during which life becomes a buffet.

I tend to avoid buffets for two reasons: the cost isn't usually worth it for the amount of food I consume, and the fact that too many items are usually out in the open (germ alert!). Pinstripes' buffet is \$24 for adults—not a bad deal, considering the diversity of options pre-

sented. However, regarding my second concern, only some of the items were under sneeze guards; some of the fare out in the open included everything from shrimp cocktails to the famed dessert table with a chocolate fountain. Another concern was that the omelet station only provided one meat option (ham).

However, despite these missteps, the food at Pinstripes is pretty good, with the round mini-waffles and sausage links being standouts. In addition, the outside views of the Chicago River (which was still green from being dyed the day before) and Streeterville are pretty nice—and there are bocce lanes out there as well.

Much like the fact that it straddles Lincoln Park and Lake View, **Compass Bar** (433 W. Diversey Pkwy.; <http://www.compassbarchicago.com/>) blurs the line between upscale restaurant and casual sports bar.

Of course, I remember the days when sports-bar cuisine consisted of pretzels and peanuts—so it's nice to see that the year-old Compass has stepped up the game with such appealing fare. My dining companion and I tried a couple shared-plate items: calamari (very well done) as well as the chicken-and-smoked sausage gumbo (which has a sufficient kick).

The highlight for both was actually the Bleu cheese burger, complete with caramelized onion, Gorgonzola Bleu cheese, confit garlic aioli,



Calamari at Compass Bar. Photo by Andrew Davis

arugula, tomato and pickle—all on a pretzel roll. The burger was almost remarkably juicy and tasty, and was better than burgers I've had at a lot of other places. However, Compass also serves pizzas—and we picked the pork-shoulder version. Although I wished for more of the pork, the pizza was not too far behind the burger in terms of quality.

And as if all that wasn't enough, we attempted to eat dessert: a wood-fired chocolate-chip cookie with ice cream, whipped cream and chocolate. Although it was comforting as an old friend, it was impossible to consume the entire item—but it's definitely recommended.

Speaking of comfort, the decor (warm woods, etc.) was definitely inviting—even if the music (Elton John, Hall and Oates) was not what I expected at a sports bar.

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CALENDAR

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WINDY CITY TIMES **nights**spots

Bandit Brown, and special guest Mrs. Yuka Layme. 11:30pm - 12:30am Uptown Underground, 4707 N. Broadway <http://www.uptownunderground.com>

Saturday, April 4

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>

Bolder Than Out Conference Empowering LGBTQ People of Color. Workshops and speakers on topics and issues from civic engagement to relationship development and celebration of arts and culture. \$20 8:30am Chicago Department of Health,= Through April 5. <https://www.facebook.com/events/411906672311477/> Tickets: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/1375117>

GLAAD Hatter brunch Celebration of national and local leaders advancing LGBT equality. Brunch and cocktails. Prizes for best hat. Tickets \$150 two; \$85 one 11:00am - 2:00pm Pasteur, 5525 N. Broadway, Tickets: <http://glaad.nation-builder.com/glaadhatter>

Or Chadash Passover Seder Chicken or vegetarian meal. Members and their guests \$60; non-members \$70, children \$30. Parking at East Bank Club is \$4. Reservations by Tuesday March 31. 5:30pm - 9:30pm East Bank Club, 500 N Kingsbury St., Chicago Tickets: https://mail.google.com/_/scs/mail-static/_/js/k=gmail.main.en.S2FCQSkFkpI.O/m=m_i,t,it/a=m=PiMa4P5v_UGMNTdLH6n799_vLik2cnj9H2ECSHYK4P9m_w_g94A--iED/rt=h/d=1/t=zcms/rs=AHGwQ9CSmdTAdge7qJf6S2S94nqULgSBEQ

Queer Arts Spring Showcase - CAKE Chicago Ripley Caine hosting and soloing. With Lydia Landor, Dean of Women, Andy Karol, The Pleasure Centers. Park at Field School lot 9:00pm The Red Line Tap 7006 N Glenwood Chicago Tickets: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com>

Sunday, April 5

Easter Sunday at Scot's Brunch begins at the omelet bar at noon. Get your Easter Bonnet ready for the contest at 3 pm, first prize \$50. Stick around to watch the Cubs home opener at 7:05. 11:00am - 10:00pm



HAT TRICK

Saturday, April 4

The GLAAD Hatter Brunch will take place at Pasteur. Photo by Jason Carson Wilson

Scot's 1829 W Montrose Ave Chicago <http://www.chicagoscotbar.com>

Tea in A-ville: Let the Joy Rise! The Sunday of Easter, join Michael, Vince, Brad and Daniel as they host this tea with DJ Moose on decks working out the best of the best of vocal house and diva disco 'til your arms hurt from so much raising of the joy. Encouraged attire: pastels and lovely spring tones. 4:00pm - 8:00pm Mary's Attic 5400 N. Clark St. <http://www.hamburgermarys.com/chicago>

Monday, April 6

Billie Holiday's centennial Chicago music man Daryl Nitz and other jazz, blues and cabaret stars present a 90-minute career-spanning concert. Through April 7. \$32 advance, \$37 at door 7:30pm Davenport's Piano Bar and Cabaret 1383 N Milwaukee Ave Chicago 773-278-1830 Tickets: <http://davenportspiano.com>

Kumu Hina screening An all-embracing regard for fluid gender roles is only one aspect of this profile of native Hawaiian teacher and cultural activist Kumu Hina, a transgender woman embarking on marriage with a younger man. 8:15pm Gene Siskel Film Center 164 N State Chicago <http://www.faaaim.org>

Tuesday, April 7

OUTspoken! LGBTQ Stories Start your spring with a feel-good evening of storytelling. First-hand stories from James Anthony Chapman, Stephanie Douglass, Jackie Kaplan-Perkins, Jonathan Pizer and Mike Simmons. No cover. Doors to MainBar open at 6 pm. Stories from 7 pm. 6:00pm - 9:00pm Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St Chicago <http://www.sidetrackchicago.com>

Wed., April 8

Fabitat: Neon Necropolis Celebrate DJ Voxbox's birthday with his special DJ set. Drag performances from incredible house queens Curlene Ribbon, Joan Waters, and special guest Jojo Baby and your host Lucy Stoolie. 9:00pm - 2:00am Double Door's Door No. 3 1551 N Damen Ave., Chicago

Thursday, April 9

Screening A Mind in Quicksand - Life with Huntington's Sneak preview screening in advance of May broadcast release date on public television stations. Donations to the Illinois Chapter of the Huntington's Disease Society of America. 6:00pm Film Row Cinema of Columbia College Chicago 1104 S Wabash 8th Floor; <https://www.facebook.com/events/1605114829707195/>

Born Perfect rally Rally to build community support for the bill to ban conversion therapy in Illinois. Experts from many fields and perspectives, survivors, performances and opportunities for attendees to take action. #BornPerfect is a nation-wide campaign to ban conversion therapy. 6:00pm - 9:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <https://community.centeronhalsted.org/BornPerfect?srctid=1&erid=1719396&trid=2397ce12-7ad9-498c-bcf7-2604e6e29a64>

The Andersonville Honors Andersonville Development Corporation and Neo-Futurists present a one-of-a-kind Andersonville-themed Too Much Light Makes The Baby Go Blind, the ever-evolving 30 Plays in 60 Minutes. Food and drink from Andersonville businesses. \$50. 6:30pm The Neo-Futurarium 5153 N Ashland Chicago Tickets: <http://www.andersonville.org/honors>

Wed., April 1

Closeted/Out in the Quadrangles: A History of LGBTQ Life at the University of Chicago opening gala Opening party and oral histories project unveiling. Exhibit to run March 30 - June 15, 2015 6:00pm - 8:00pm Regenstein Library, The Special Collections Research Center, 1100 E. 57th St., Chicago <http://gendersexuality.uchicago.edu/projects/closeted/>

Limelight: An Evening with Adam LeBlanc Singer-songwriter Adam LeBlanc brings his solo act to the Hoover-Leppen Theatre. As the lead singer for the extremely popular '80s cover band 16 Candles, Adam has become one of Chicago's most entertaining and talented performers. Be a part of this special concert and get a chance to hear his stories, listen to his original music, and celebrate the arts. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

VIVID 2015: CCPA Annual Showcase Emanuele Andrizzi will conduct Roosevelt University's Chicago College of Performing Arts (CCPA) Symphony Orchestra. Free. Tickets required. Tickets can be reserved at the Auditorium Theatre Box Office or online. 7:30pm - 10:00pm Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University 50 E Congress Pkwy Chicago <http://www.auditoriumtheatre.org/shows/ccpa-annual-showcase/> Tickets: http://www.ticketmaster.com/event/07004D90DA6866D9?camefrom=CFC_AUD_SHOWPG&brand=auditorium

Thursday, April 2

Guitarist Wayne Krantz Performing songs from his 10 solo albums. Doors 5pm. 7:00pm City Winery Chicago 1200 W Randolph St Chicago Tickets: <http://www.citywinery.com/chicago/tickets.html>

The 7 Deadly Sins / The 7 Seven Heavenly Virtues An art exhibition and silent charity auction featuring the collaborative works of neighborhood artists. Working in conjunction with local design agency Rex-

mondo, the exhibit will highlight fourteen artists' unique visions of the historical vices and virtues across several different artistic mediums. The exhibition opens with this kick-off party, featuring cocktails, music, video and an opportunity to meet and greet the artists. Proceeds from the sales of each auctioned work will benefit a specific charity chosen by each artist. 7:00pm - 10:00pm The Sofo Tap 4923 N Clark Chicago <http://www.thesofotap.com>

New Girls on the Block Follows a group of highly inspirational and entertaining women from Kansas City, Mo. - all friends, some couples - who are transgender. 9:00pm Discovery Life Channel

Friday, April 3

Black Gay Genius: Answering Joseph Beam's Call Book reading, signing, discussion and reception. The official kickoff of the Bolder Than Out Conference. Doors 6pm. Reception 7:30pm. 6:30pm Gallery Home, 4211 S. Champlain, Chicago

Marie Antoinette Before Britney Spears and Justin Bieber, there was the young queen of France, a confection created by a society that values extravagance and artifice. 7:30pm Steppenwolf 1650 N Halsted Chicago Tickets: <http://www.steppenwolf.org>

Totally Requested Live w/ DJ Moose Your requests to DJ Marc 'Moose' Moder of \$1 or more per song go 100% to to benefit the folks at CRU: Chicago Rowing Union, founded in 2005 by 12 rowers as a team for Chicago's Gay Games. Chicago Rowing Union (CRU) is proud to be the Midwest's one and only LGBT rowing organization—one of a few such clubs in the world. 9:00pm - 12:00am Mary's Attic 5400 N Clark Chicago <http://www.hamburgermarys.com/chicago>

Muffy and Vallery Sing: The Oldest Profession The girls are back to sing career girl ditties for you one more time. With Muffy Fishbasket, Vallery Dolls, Fancy

BOOK REVIEW

Dying to Play

by Mark Zubro

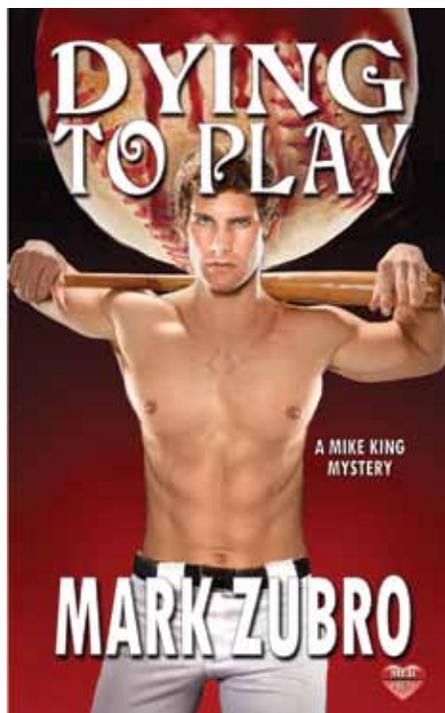
\$13.49; MLR Press; 229 pages
BY LAUREN E. CHILDERS

Dying to Play is the first book in a new series by Mark Zubro that features a big-league private investigator based out of Chicago. When players on a minor-league baseball team start to receive personal threats, Mike King is initially hired to investigate these threats and then the subsequent death of a baseball player. Halfway through the investigation a single event happens in which King's Navy SEALs training comes handy—turning the story utterly upside-down.

Throughout the investigation, King is confronted by a gay player and two gay reporters who all express their attractions. King is left to ascertain who he can be intimate with while maintaining integrity in the investigation. Teammate Donny Campbell (the only player aware of King's primary motive as undercover baseball player) is the most tenacious flirt.

Zubro effectively sets the tone for a crime thriller romance, allowing King to settle down into a routine with the reader, meeting everyone in the town through the eyes of the investigator. As the investigator is pinged from one person to another, any level of security is destroyed in a single moment—the author creates an immediate climax that doesn't let up the rest of the novel.

The introduction purposefully doesn't prepare you for the action that ensues, leaving



the element of surprise intact throughout.

Zubro currently resides in Mokena, Illinois. Dying to play was recently noted on Amazon as number one on the "Kindle hot new releases gay and lesbian mystery" list and now number one on "Kindle gay and lesbian mystery" list. Zubro's novel lives up to this award; Dying to Play is more than a worthwhile read with element of crime thriller and a subplot of romance.

Purchase at www.amazon.com.

Book on musician Ndegeocello out now

Musicians and authors Andre Akinyele and Jon O'Bergh have released Elliptical: The Music of Meshell Ndegeocello—the first book ever written regarding the Multi-Grammy Nominated singer-songwriter and recording artist.

A limited autographed print Edition—by the authors—is now available at Amazon.com (<http://amzn.to/19J97yD>).

From her first album, Plantation Lullabies, to her current CD, Comet, Come To Me, Akinyele

and O'Bergh try to capture the essence of Ndegeocello's music from a fan's point of view.

Elliptical will be available in print for \$19.99 and eBook for \$15.99 in stores and at major online book retailers, including Barnes & Noble, Amazon and Powell's Books.

Authors Sullivan, Conner at Gallery 400 on April 11

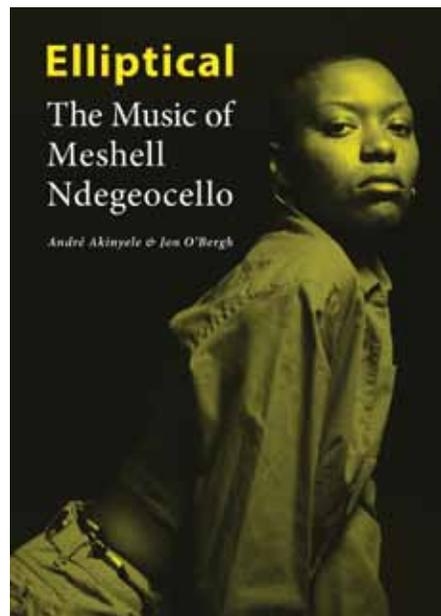
On Saturday, April 11, Quare Square Collective, Inc. will present a reading by Mecca Jami-lah Sullivan from her debut short story collection Blue Talk and Love (2015). The event will also feature M. Shelly Conner reading an excerpt from her novel, everyman.

The event will take place at Gallery 400, 400 S. Peoria St., 3-5 p.m.

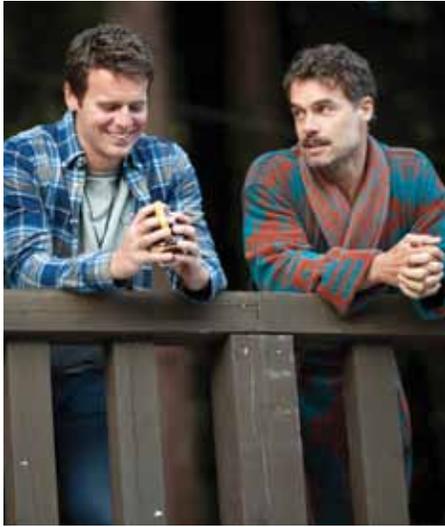
Sullivan is assistant professor of women, gender and sexuality studies at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. In addition, she holds a Ph.D. in English literature from the University of Pennsylvania.

Conner is a visiting instructor of English at Loyola University Chicago. She holds a Ph.D. in English from the University of Illinois at Chicago, with a concentration in gender and women's Studies.

For more information on Quare Square Collective programming and membership, visit quare2collective.org.



BILLY MASTERS



HBO's Looking is ending. Photo by John P. Johnson/HBO

"I also know that every person faces adversity in life. Abraham Lincoln held this seat in Congress in one term. But few faced as many defeats in his personal, business and public life as he did."—Aaron Schock says farewell to Congress by comparing himself to a president who lived with (and shared a bed with) a close male friend for four years. Lincoln appointed that man attorney general, which may have been the 19th-century equivalent of "personal photographer."

"Jimmy's dead." My friend's words echoed in my ears as I remembered Jimmy and his brother, who tormented me for the better part of a year—somewhere between puberty and getting my driver's license. I was never in any real physical danger—I was simply too fast for them. Yes, I earned my high school letter jacket due to bullying, and am proud of it. But, dead? I paused and then asked, "Is it wrong that I want to break out into a tarantella?" Before I grabbed my tambourine, I had the foresight to ask, "Which one was Jimmy? The one with the lazy eye or the really fat one?" "The lazy eye. The fat one died two years ago—of a drug overdose or suicide, I can't remember." Two deaths for the price of one tarantella. I certainly didn't wish either of them dead. I hadn't thought of them in decades. But I honestly can't deny that news of their demise didn't bring a fleeting smile to my face.

Well, it was inevitable. HBO has officially canceled Looking, a show that had so much potential ... on paper. Alas, once it hit the air, it was mired with problems, not the least of which was painfully slow and rudderless pacing. Retooling attempts during the second season had mixed results—while some of the problems were rectified, one had no idea what to expect week to week. Characters changed overnight, plot lines were begun and dropped, relationships went unexplained. Ultimately, ratings (or lack thereof) sealed its fate. The network said, "HBO will present the final chapter of their journey as a special." What form that will take is uncertain, but by the time they get around to it, I suspect very few people will notice ... or care.

Just because Looking was cancelled doesn't mean we've seen the last of it. This week, NBC announced that it has renewed Coach—a show which ran from 1989-1997 on ABC! Why is it back? I have no idea. I didn't know anyone who watched the Craig T. Nelson sitcom when it was on the air 18 years ago. And now it's back for 13 episodes, like an Easter miracle. Resurrecting long-dead series appears to be a new trend. FOX announced that it will bring back The X-Files for a six-episode run. And as we all know, Heroes is coming back for 13 episodes.

In this column, we often talk about the best show you're not watching—which, of course, is Baby Daddy. The strangest show that no

one (other than me) is watching is Reign—an odd hybrid of Downton Abbey meets Gossip Girl. The worst show that you are all probably watching is One Big Happy. Sure, Ellen DeGeneres created it, and it aspires to be Will & Grace with a baby—kinda like that season of "W&G" where they tried to have a baby, but the producers realized what a mistake that would be and, instead, simply hired Harry Connick Jr. I can't say that anyone on One Big Happy is particularly noteworthy, but I'm always thrilled whenever I get to see Nick Zano, who was a jewel of comedic talent (and a hunky boy) on the eminently watchable What I Like About You. Now he's older, he's buffer and he's trying too hard to be quirky. Just be yourself, Nick. You're no longer with Hillary Duff—or was it Haylie Duff? Whatever—you've dumped the Duff (or perhaps both Duffs), so move on ... nothing to see here. Oh, but there IS something to see here. Because, being a fan of Mr. Zano, I have some risqué photos which really should be shared ... and shared they will be. On BillyMasters.com.

Everyone is talking about Indiana's religious-freedom bill, but a story that's gotten less traction comes out of Florida. It's a bill that would require transgender people to use public restrooms that match their biological sex. Whether this is pre- or post-surgical biological sex is somewhat ambiguous. Also questionable is if this bill applies to a parent bringing a child of the opposite sex into a bathroom. The bill has already passed two House committees, but still has the hurdles of hearings before the Senate and the Judiciary Committee. In the meantime, people ain't just sitting around with their legs crossed. Many young people are appalled by this proposal, including Michael Hughes, who started a campaign #WeJustNeedToPee. Because when you've gotta go, you've gotta go.

Mark-Paul Gosselaar is a cocky boy—but not a "Cocky Boy," as in the gay porn company. He's teamed with buddy Ben Ceccarelli for CrossFit's "#pairpower competition." Calling themselves "Team Cocky," the duo posed upside down ... and naked! Alas, the photo they released was censored, but that means that somewhere in the world there's a nude photo of M-P defying gravity. Until then, we'll show you what we've got at BillyMasters.com.

Could it be that a certain multimedia man is running into a few problems with his latest gig? For a change, it's not his stiffness that's a problem. This time, it's all about his hair. Well, not so much "his" hair as the hair he purchased—perhaps from a lactating Himalayan yak! It may look OK in live gigs where he's known to shellac it within an inch of its life, but this is HD, baby. He was given an edict—get better plugs or the plug would be pulled. It doesn't matter how many cult members he has on his side, he's definitely taking this threat seriously since he can't afford to get drummed right out of Hollywood. After his last disastrous attempt at a homecoming, he learned that sometimes you can't come crawling back—even with heavily discounted tickets!

When our blind item ties in so effortlessly to another story, it's definitely time to end yet another column. Let's end on a happy note and congratulate Nate Berkus and Jeremiah Brent on the birth of their daughter, Poppy Brent-Berkus. I wonder how they decided whose name would go first. It sure ain't alphabetical. Perhaps it's top to bottom. Ah, just another subject we'll tackle on www.BillyMasters.com, the site that usually isn't appropriate for kiddies. If you've got a question for me, send it along to Billy@BillyMasters.com, and I promise to get back to you before Shelley Fabares gets the call she's waited 18 years for. Until next time, remember one man's filth is another man's bible.

JUMP START YOUR WEEK!

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Beckie Menzie and Tom Michael.

Menzie and Michael at Davenport's throughout April

Famed local performance team Beckie Menzie and Tom Michael will perform at Davenport's, 1383 N. Milwaukee Ave., on Saturdays throughout April at 8 p.m.

The duo is known for musical twists on jazz favorites, standards, contemporary pop, Broadway show tunes and film gems.

There is a \$20 cover charge with a two-drink minimum. Advance reservations are suggested; call 773-278-1830 or visit DavenportPianoBar.com.

For further information, visit www.BeckieMenzie.com and www.TomMichael.net.

NOW seeking artists for April 23 event

The Chicago chapter of the National Organization for Women is seeking artists to perform at the fifth annual pro-choice speak-out, Give Your Choice A Voice, on Thursday, April 23, at the Heartland Cafe, 7000 N. Glenwood Ave., 7-10 p.m.

Give Your Choice A Voice is a night of storytelling, music, comedy and dialogue about reproductive justice, choice and agency. Activists and audience members are invited to tell their stories about issues such as abortion, contraception, gender identity and reproductive justice.

Interested performers should contact Chicago NOW by email at chicagonow.org@gmail.com or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NOW.Chi.

Boystown regular Carl Sharp passes away

BY ROSS FORMAN

Carl Sharp—a Boystown regular and gay softball fixture—passed away March 27 in Chicago, surrounded by friends. He was 70.

Sharp often was seen playing pool at Roscoe's, with his sassy, quick-witted sense of humor that crossed all generations. He was long associated with the Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA) open division softball league—as a player, coach, manager, scorekeeper and umpire. Sharp also was one of the five CMSA Hall of Fame committee members, along with chair Marcia Hill, Dick Uyvari, Doug Malm and Peter Meyer.

Sharp began treatment for cancer in late March and suffered a heart attack March 25. A steady stream of visitors came to see Sharp at St. Joseph's Hospital in his final days, including Frank Kisner, who spent countless hours over the past few weeks alongside Sharp, as well as Jack Neilsen (commissioner of the CMSA open division softball league) and Mark Sakalaras (CMSA board member), among others.

Another passion of Sharp's was bridge, and he was a volunteer for the Mississippi-based American Contract Bridge League. "Few volunteers have logged as many hours as Carl Sharp, whose specialty is the partnership desk at Chicago-area tournaments," it says on the ACBL website. "He started helping out in 1971 and has been going strong since then. ... He has worked in many areas but he is known as Mr. Tournament Partnership Chairman."

Sharp was a member of the ACBL National Goodwill Committee.

Born in Chicago, Sharp grew up in Hyde Park. Sharp and his older sister, Alice, were believed to be the first two African-American students to attend University of Chicago Laboratory Schools, and after graduating from the high school, he attended the University of Chicago for his undergraduate degree. He also earned two master's degrees from the University of Chicago.

At age 12, Sharp converted to Judaism after a neighbor, who was a rabbi, took him to services. He had a bar mitzvah at age 13 and identified as Jewish his whole life.

Sharp, who was gay, worked for about 30 years for AT&T and was "responsible for the logistics on the installation of phone systems," said longtime friend and bridge partner Stacy Jacobs, of Hinsdale. He retired in the mid to late 1990s. Many CMSA members long remember Sharp lugging around one of the first cell phones to games—a clunky, oversized phone by today's standards, which he "carried everywhere in his man-purse," Kisner said, laughing.

CMSA friends of Sharp also recalled his neon-colored shorts and/or socks that he wore to games, along with baseball hats that shouted "WHATEVER" across the front. Kisner, the umpire-in-chief for the CMSA open division soft-

ball league, confirmed that for one weekend this season, all umpires will wear red compression shorts and red knee-high socks in tribute to Sharp, as that was his outfit while umpiring in 2014. Sharp also was a manager/scorekeeper for a C1 division team in 2014.

Hill said that Sharp "stepped up and served the board of the CMSA Hall of Fame for eight years and long donated his time to help and serve CMSA." She added that he had "tremendous stories that he shared and it's so unfortunate that he passed away too soon."

Sharp attended the annual Gay Softball World Series dating back to the 1990s.

"Carl never admitted that he cared or loved anyone, but everyone deep down knew that he always did. He would do anything for anyone," Kisner said.

Sharp had a passion for plain M&Ms and almost always had some with him in his shirt pocket. He enjoyed Grand Marnier as well as sweet tea. He was an avid reader, particularly of sci-fi books—"and never went anywhere without a book," Jacobs said. He even often had books with him at softball games, and he'd read there, too.

One of the first stories Sakalaras recalled about Sharp came from the 2013 Gay Softball World Series, held in Washington, D.C. It centered on Sharp's late-night munching of M&Ms, followed by his comical "kiss the ring" reply.

Sharp was a worldly traveler as a youth, as he visited Japan and Europe, among other places.

Sharp participated in the Selma riots of the 1960s in the South that led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act.

"Carl was a true friend who gave tirelessly to the groups, organizations and friends who he cared about," Jacobs said. "It was a real blessing to see everyone there for him at the end."

Love and support for Sharp flooded social media, from across the country.

"He was a Boystown and CMSA softball icon. He had a very good heart, but never wanted anyone to see it. He will truly be missed," Chuck Jacobson, a former Chicago resident and CMSA softball player who now lives in San Diego, wrote on Facebook.

Reeve Hauff-Lazur, a Chicagoan who visited Sharp in the hospital before his passing, wrote on Facebook that Sharp was "loved by many—more than he'd led himself to believe."

"I'm sure you are eating your M & Ms and chasing boys with glasses while telling them 'that's mighty white of you.' I love you and thank you for being a part of my life. Rest in peace my dear friend."

Jeff Kreiling, a former Chicagoan who now lives in Florida, posted that Sharp "was one of the true characters [who] you meet and they scare you to death, but you grow to love for all of their charm and courage along the way."

David Thomas of Chicago said, "We lost an



Carl Sharp. Facebook photo

icon of Boystown. A good man [who] had a passion for living life to its fullest in so many various arenas of life. A genuine and true friend to so many!"

Sharp is survived by a cousin.

The first event to honor Sharp has been scheduled. "An Evening For Carl Sharp" will be Saturday, April 11, at Roscoe's Tavern, 3356 N. Halsted St., from 5-7 p.m. "I wanted to give a

friendly send off to Carl at what I would call his favorite bar," said event organizer Reeve Hauff-Lazur. "We can just get together and share stories about him and his matching socks."

There will be a celebration shot of Grand Marnier, and much more. A video tribute is being planned, and anyone with photos of Sharp is asked to email them to roscoes@roscoes.com (and include Carl Sharp in the subject).

Women's soccer league announces season

The National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) announced the complete schedule for the 2015 regular season.

The Chicago Red Stars has highlights such as a May 9 doubleheader with the Chicago Fire at Toyota Park and a four-game homestand to open the campaign.

All but one fixture at Village of Lisle-Benedictine University Sports Complex take place before or after the Women's World Cup, meaning all international stars will be available for the vast majority of home matches. This includes all visits by three of the top teams: Seattle Reign FC, Portland Thorns FC and FC Kansas City.

The Red Stars will soon be announcing theme nights for the 2015 campaign. While all individual game tickets are on sale, fans are already able to purchase season tickets as

well as tickets to the April 18 home opener against Seattle Reign FC by calling 773-698-6001 or visiting www.chicagoredstars.com.

Chicago Quarter Marathon on April 4

The Chicago Quarter Marathon returns to the city's southside lakefront for its second year on Saturday, April 4.

In its debut in 2014, the 6.55-mile run—the only event of its kind in Chicagoland—attracted nearly 1,500 participants.

The start time is for this year's run 9:15 a.m. (a quarter past the hour), and the start location is outside Soldier Field, 1410 S. Museum Campus Dr. The course route is south along the lakefront.

Chicago Quarter Marathon registration (now, and on-site) is \$60.25. Cost for the kids' Easter egg hunt dash is \$7. Register/learn more at www.ChicagoQuarter.com.

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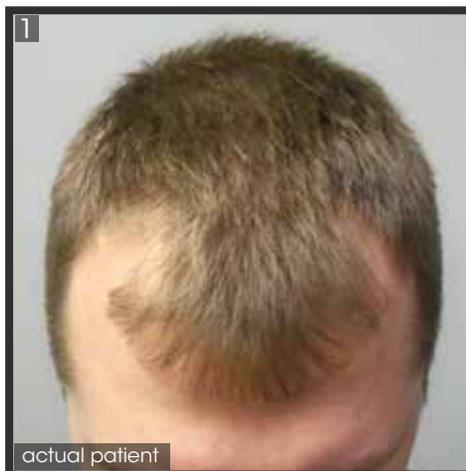


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