

Ty Herndon.



DYNAMIC DUO

Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin discuss their show, 'Grace & Frankie'

Photo by Melissa Moseley/Netflix

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COUNTRY PRIDE: Pride officials announce grand marshal, other parade details

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Officials from PRIDEChicago, which coordinates the annual Pride Parade, announced June 1 that country-music performer Ty Herndon would be the grand marshal of the 2015 Chicago Pride Parade, as well as details about the parade's heightened security.

Herndon came out last November in an Entertainment Tonight interview, proclaiming himself "an out, proud and happy gay man." His career includes 17 Billboard hits and three number-one singles, among them "What Mattered Most," "Living in a Moment" and "It Must Be Love." He received a Grammy nomination in 2010 for his album Journey On.

Herndon has been a supporter of the LGBTQ youth-focused Trevor Project since 2002. He has appeared at benefits and

fundraisers for LGBT youth, including co-hosting a major fundraising event in Nashville this June entitled The Concert for Love and Acceptance, which GLAAD is presenting with major corporate sponsors.

Last December, Herndon spoke with Windy City Times about his decision to come out of the closet.

"I can only speak from my heart and what it's been like for me," Herndon said. "When I walked out on the stage [before coming out], the only thing that made me authentic was the music. The minute I opened my mouth to speak, the camaraderie with the audience was all made up. There was nothing truthful about it, and it held me down for so long—it was such a true oppression for me."

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DISCO NIGHTS

Knight at the Movies looks at '54: Director's Cut.'

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GLORIA ESTEFAN

Bringing 'On Your Feet' to Chicago with husband Emilio.

Photo by Bruce Gilkas

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PROTEST

Trans and queer immigrants demand release of LGBTQ detainees.

Photo by Jassiel Perez/United We Dream

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CITY OF ANGELS
WCT gives readers a tour of Los Angeles (left).
Photo by Kelsy Chauvin

A VIEW TO A KRILL



Out actor Sean Allan Krill talks about being in a local production of Sense and Sensibility.
Publicity photo

LEGAL AID



Law student Kara Ingelhart has received a fellowship to work on LGBTQ youth issues.
Photo by Andrew Davis

ULTIMATE RECYCLING

Windy City Times talked with Katrina Spade about the controversial subject of human composting.

BERRY GOOD

Genealogy Roadshow's Kenyatta D. Berry talks her own roots and LGBT issues.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about James Franco, Andrew Rannells and Lee Daniels.

plus **DAILY BREAKING NEWS**

nightspots

Memorial Day weekend wrap-up

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Rauner, legislators take budget fight into summer

BY MATT SIMONETTE

For the moment, it does not look like legislators will be getting much of a break this summer.

State legislators left town May 31 at the close of their spring session, but leaders in both houses warned them they'd have to be back soon, likely within days.

Democrats approved a \$36-billion budget for the state, which exceeds the state's projected revenues by \$3 billion. Gov. Bruce Rauner, meanwhile, is sticking to his "turnaround agenda," which he wants the General Assembly (GA) to attend to before he entertains new revenue proposals. The legislature did not send a budget to Rauner, who said he would not sign.

On May 29, as legislators headed into their long weekend, state Rep. Greg Harris expressed frustration at the loggerhead that had come between legislators and Rauner, especially those legislators concerned about excessive cuts that came from Rauner's budget proposal this past February.

"Anyone being honest knows that we have to raise additional sources of revenue," he said, adding, "There is a dialogue going on between the four [legislative] leaders and the governor. Whether that results in anything substantial immediately, we'll see."

Nothing substantial did emerge for now. In a May 31 press conference, state Sen. President John Cullerton said, "When I emerged from that meeting I restated my commitment to work with the governor on compromises that will move this state forward. ... But there was something that I left out of my comments—and that is my disappointment in the direction that this state is about to take under Gov. Rauner's leadership. The governor made it clear that in the next few days, he will launch a multimillion-dollar negative ad campaign designed to demonize those who are standing up for the middle class."

Rauner has reportedly dipped into his campaign funds to film a series of commercials blasting his opponents, to be broadcast over the summer. At a May 31 press conference, the State Journal-Register reported, the governor refused to discuss the matter and addressed the moribund negotiations.

"We do not have a balanced budget," said Rauner. "We have an attempt to force major tax hikes on the people of Illinois, and we have absolutely no significant reforms and no sincere effort that we can tell yet to achieve significant reforms."

Rauner had previously suggested he was scaling his turnaround agenda back, and was only focusing on two components, worker's compensation reform and a property tax freeze. But on May 31 he indicated that three other components would still have to be addressed: term limits, tort reform and redistricting.

In an interview with WSIU-TV, House Speaker Michael Madigan said that Rauner's changes would ultimately be too extreme for middle-class Illinoisans. Rauner, in his May 31 press conference, said Madigan makes his money off "big, expensive government."

Among the legislation pertinent to the LGBT community still waiting for Rauner's signature as the session closed were bills amending the state's hate crimes ordinance to both redefine the term "sexual orientation" to more easily include gender identity and include incidents of property damage; prohibiting anti-gay conver-



Gov. Bruce Rauner.

Photo from official website

sion therapy on minors; and requiring funeral directors to honor a person's last instructions pertaining to their gender identity.

Also still in question are the numerous cuts that adversely affected HIV/AIDS funding, mental health services and homelessness services, among others. Rauner's February budget cut about \$15.8 million for services towards persons with HIV/AIDS, cervical cancer and breast cancer, for example, as well as \$3.1 million for homeless youth shelters. Harris, who chairs the House Appropriations—Human Services Committee, introduced legislation May 28 to undo those cuts, as well as others.

"The Democrats have been in favor of those things, and the Republicans have not," said Harris, who, also on May 28, questioned why a high-level Rauner official, Secretary of Education Beth Purvis, was being paid out of the Department of Human Services (DHS) budget rather than out of the governor's office. On May 30, the Chicago Sun-Times reported that a second Rauner staffer, policy advisor Jennifer Hammer, was also being paid from the DHS budget.

Chicago's TransTech has D.C. office at HRC

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) announced that TransTech Social Enterprises (TTSE) will maintain an office at HRC national headquarters, according to a press release.

The development gives the Chicago-based company a place in the nation's capital to advance its work in providing education, job-skills training and workplace connections to transgender people.

Angelica Ross founded TransTech as a combination training academy and creative agency offering services including graphic design, web development and social media management. She will maintain a part-time office at HRC.

For more on TransTech, visit <http://trans-techsocial.org/>.

Open To Thinking

BY NICK PATRICCA



Marco Rubio: American Dream Candidate?

Florida Sen. Marco Rubio bills himself as the 'American Dream' candidate for president. Playing on the immigrant status of his parents who emigrated to the U.S. from Fulgencio Batista's Cuba in 1956, Rubio casts himself as the candidate who best understands the meaning of the American Dream and who is best able to restore America as the land of opportunity for everyone.

Young (43), articulate, passionate, Latino, the senator presents himself as a fresh breeze in a Republican presidential field of 20 declared and undeclared candidates headed by Jeb Bush, Rubio's one-time mentor.

"My parents came to the United States in 1956. The country they found was truly a land of opportunity, where hardworking people with grade school educations could afford a home, a car, and college for their kids. A country where maids and bartenders could raise doctors, lawyers, small-business owners, and maybe even a U.S. senator. That was the American Dream. ... Yet today, I look around and see the American Dream on life support." (Overview to his book *American Dreams: Restoring Economic Opportunity for Everyone*, January 2015.)

In developing this pitch of himself as the American Dream candidate, Rubio links this theme to guns:

"Sen. Rubio's assertion that the institution of marriage as the union of one man and one woman exists prior to all government and all laws is an astonishing claim for which he presents no historical, legal, anthropological, or philosophical argument or evidence."

"I've always believed that the Second Amendment is about much more than the right to bear arms. At its core, the Second Amendment is about the American Dream. ... That's one reason I, myself, have a concealed weapons permit. I have an A rating from the NRA, and recently, I introduced legislation to restore Second Amendment rights in the District of Columbia." (marcorubio.com/issues)

It should also be noted here that Rubio voted against a bill brokered by senators Joe Manchin (D-West Virginia) and Pat Toomey (R-Pennsylvania) requiring background checks for guns purchased online and at gun shows. Sen. Rubio also voted against banning high-capacity magazine clips of more than 10 bullets. (ontheissues.org/)

Given the high incidence of gun violence against civilians and police in D.C. and other U.S. cities, and given Rubio's position that gun control laws don't work because criminals always find ways to get guns, CBS's *Face the Nation* host Bob Schieffer countered: "Criminals don't follow the laws on burglary and on murder and on auto theft. And I think most people would say those laws are fairly

effective." ([huffingtonpost.com/politics Zach Carter blog 04/14/2013](http://huffingtonpost.com/politics/zach-carter-blog/04/14/2013))

In reviewing Sen. Rubio's *American Dreams* book and his position statements on the Marco Rubio for President website (marcorubio.com), I did not see creative approaches on the most serious problems facing our nation.

In the past, the senator opposed simplistic tax solutions such as the sequestration tax cuts that reduced spending across all federal agencies. This past April, however, Rubio signed the Grover Norquist Taxpayer Protection Pledge which "is a written commitment to the American people to 'oppose and veto any and all efforts to increase taxes.'" ([Americans for Tax Reform website April 28, 2015](http://AmericansforTaxReform.com).) This pledge combined with his support of a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution demands that the senator present to us an economic policy that demonstrates how he can achieve his goals without raising taxes. It is hard to see this pledge as anything other than an election gimmick.

On civil rights for sexual minorities, Sen. Rubio comments:

"You have to have a ridiculous reading of the U.S. constitution to reach the conclusion that people have a right to marry someone of the same sex. ... They [advocates of same-sex marriage] want to stigmatize ... anyone

who disagrees with them as haters. ... I believe, as do a significant percentage of Americans, that the institution of marriage, an institution that existed before government, that existed before laws, that institution should remain in our laws recog-

nized as the union of one man and one woman." (CBN interview marcorubio.com)

Sen. Rubio's assertion that the institution of marriage as the union of one man and one woman exists prior to all government and all laws is an astonishing claim for which he presents no historical, legal, anthropological, or philosophical argument or evidence. One wonders how he would explain Old Testament practices of one man married to many wives or contemporary Islamic practices or polygamy anywhere, not to mention other forms of sexual-social relations.

Finally, prior to his current run for the Republican nomination for president, Sen. Rubio worked on comprehensive immigration reform legislation. Now he has withdrawn his support from such legislation and his website avoids all discussion of immigration except for these four words: "modernize our immigration laws."

It seems that the Marco Rubio American Dream is not for everyone.

© nicholas.patricca@gmail.com

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



@windycitytimes1

Dennis Hastert faces federal indictment

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Former Republican U.S. House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert, who held that position from 1999 through 2007, and represented Illinois' 14th Congressional District for 20 years, is facing a federal indictment for trying to evade federal bank reporting requirements, and lying to investigators about the purpose of those bank transactions.

Hastert will appear in a Chicago court June 4 to face federal charges related to his alleged effort to hide millions of dollars in payments he was making to cover up past misconduct.

Quoting sources familiar with the situation, the New York Times reported, on May 29, that Hastert was allegedly paying a man not to report that he had sexually abused him several decades ago. The abuse claims were not substantiated by the FBI, but reportedly stem from Hastert's time as a teacher and wrestling coach in Yorkville, Illinois, from 1965 to 1981.

Hastert had agreed to pay the man \$3.5 million, and was strategically withdrawing funds from a series of bank accounts in the hopes of avoiding bank reporting requirements, according to prosecutors; he had so far paid about \$1.7 million. Hastert also allegedly lied to the FBI about the purpose of the transactions.

Judge Thomas M. Durkin of Northern District Court has been assigned to Hastert's case. The former speaker has since resigned from the lobbyist firm for whom he had been working. Wheaton College has also removed his name

from the J. Dennis Hastert Center for Economics, Government, and Public Policy.

Hastert's colleagues, constituents and friends initially expressed surprise at the charges Hastert faced. "He was the coach," said U.S. Rep. Peter King, R-N.Y., in the New York Times. "He was a solid guy, he never raised his voice. This has really come out of nowhere."

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel told the Chicago Sun-Times, "We served together in Congress and, while we had our differences about both policy and politics, he served his public, his constituents and he served the state of Illinois. And he did it with distinction. I am saddened by this news. Nobody wants to see a person's career in public service have this as their capstone."

But, though many who know him have congenial recollections about Hastert, he left behind a voting record that was often at odds with the LGBT and progressive communities.

Hastert was a relatively low-profile Congressman when he became House Speaker, after the office became associated with scandal in the late '90s, first with the marital indiscretions of then-House Speaker Newt Gingrich, and then, U.S. Rep. Bob Livingston, R-La., who was pegged as Gingrich's replacement until word of his infidelities broke as well. Hastert then stepped in.

But many commentators at the time said Hastert's new position did not portend good things for the LGBT community.

"While Livingston was hardly anyone's idea of a pro-gay politician, he may seem moderate in retrospect," said the Advocate in 1999, just as Hastert took on the House Speaker's office. "At least [Livingston] has signed a nondiscrimination pledge regarding hiring practices in his office. Hastert, a hitherto obscure six-term Republican from Illinois, has not even taken that rudimentary step. Hastert has consistently received a 0% rating on gay issues from the Human Rights Campaign ... and earned an only slightly less dismal 16-percent rating in 1998 from AIDS Action, an advocacy group also based in Washington, D.C. An evangelical Christian, Hastert's main claim to fame is that he is a close ally of House majority whip Tom Delay, one of the most conservative rep-

resentatives in Congress and the driving force behind the impeachment of President Clinton."

The Associated Press noted in 1998 that Hastert's ratings by organizations on the other end of the political spectrum were consistently above average. The National Right to Life Committee, Christian Coalition, Chamber of Commerce and National Rifle Association all gave Hastert 100-percent ratings.

Hastert was a co-sponsor of the Defense of Marriage Act in 1996, and voted both in favor of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and against the Employment Non-Discrimination Act.

It was associations with a sex scandal that ultimately resulted in his leaving office as well. Hastert's mishandling of the situation surrounding U.S. Rep. Mark Foley, R-Fla., having sent sexually explicit messages to House pages was considered to be a significant factor in the Republicans losing the House to the Democrats in the 2006 midterm elections.

The Huffington Post noted May 29 that it was rules from the Patriot Act—which Hastert helped push through in 2001—that led to his eventual indictment. The Patriot Act allows banks to consult with one another to report and analyze suspicions about a client if that client's transaction patterns seem unusual.

Man held without bond in fatal robbery

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A 22-year-old man is being held without bond for the fatal shooting of another man in Lake View on May 30.

Kristopher K. Pitts, of the 1100 block of North Central Park Avenue, faces one count each of first-degree murder and armed robbery, according to the Chicago Sun-Times. He allegedly shot and killed Kevin O. O'Malley, of suburban Palos Park, reportedly over the robbery of a mobile phone.

Pitts allegedly fled the scene and was apprehended a short time later. Chicago Police officers found O'Malley's body in an alley beneath CTA Brown Line tracks near Sheffield Avenue.

Ald. Tom Tunney (44th Ward) said, on a May 30 Facebook post, that he would be calling for a heightened police presence in the area. He posted, "This senseless act of violence cannot be ignored. I am pushing for increased police resources to our community, including from area and citywide units, to ensure that our residents and visitors are safe walking on our streets at all hours of the day."

Chicago Sun-Times' story is at <http://bit.ly/1ELJ4hg>.

Survey on Black lesbian history

Longtime Chicago lesbian activist and historian Melvyna Gaynor is seeking survey respondents for her new history project.

She would like people to answer the questions below to help us compile data essential to producing a video documentary on the Black LGBT community in Chicago from 1970 until today.

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Participant at ICE demonstration.
Photo by Jassiel Perez/
United We Dream



Trans, queer immigrants demand ICE release LGBTQ detainees

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

About two dozen transgender and queer immigrants rallied in front of Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) headquarters in Washington, D.C., on May 27 to demand the release of LGBTQ immigrants from ICE detention centers.

The demonstration was part of Operation Break the Cage—a multi-organizational effort to raise awareness of the horrendous psychological and physical abuses suffered by immigrant transgender women currently detained in ICE facilities many of whom are faceless, ignored and completely isolated without the personal or legal resources to find help.

Calling itself the largest immigrant youth-led organization in the nation (comprising 100,000 immigrant youth and allies from 26 states), United We Dream's operation—in partnership with the Washington, D.C.-based LGBT-advocacy organization Casa Ruby and the Trans Women of Color Collective (TWOCC)—intends to “expose ICE's human-rights violations against the undocumented LGBTQ community.”

Carlos Padilla is the national coordinator for the Queer Undocumented Immigrant Project of United We Dream. “The purpose [of the rally] was to demonstrate the human-rights violations and the torture currently taking place against our community,” he told Windy City Times. “We wanted to make sure that ICE leadership knows exactly what is happening in their facilities, that we are watching it and expecting it to change.”

The 2013 Center for American Progress (CAP) report on LGBT immigrants in U.S. detention entitled Dignity Denied detailed “incidents of sexual assault, denial of adequate medical care, long-term solitary confinement, discrimination and abuse, and ineffective complaints and appeals processes. Other complaints have documented LGBT detainees being called names such as “faggot” by guards and being told to “walk like a man, not a gay man” and “act male.” Furthermore, detainees are frequently housed with detainees of a gender with which they do not identify. This means that female transgender detainees are detained with men.”

Windy City Times own series of reports published in January 2015 on LGBTQ immigration and those held in ICE facilities included the story of America, an LGBTQ woman who was assaulted by a fellow detainee while in ICE custody. “I started screaming and I called the guard,” America said during an interview with her. “The guard showed up and he saw that I

was tied to the bed and he started laughing and saying ‘you guys are old enough. You can fix your own problems.’ He turned around and walked away.”

According to Padilla, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson recently requested recommendations from advocacy organizations to address vulnerable populations in ICE detention such as LGBTQ individuals. “He's been asking for a better way of housing, treating and processing these populations,” Padilla said.

On May 8, United We Dream—alongside Immigration Equality, Lambda Legal, the National Center for Lesbian Rights, the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Immigrant Justice Center—issued those recommendations.

At the top of the list was a simple request: Let them go.

“The most humane and the least expensive way to keep LGBT immigrants safe from mistreatment in custody is to release them on parole,” the document stated.

PASSAGES

Ronald Zierer

Ron Zierer died on March 28 from a sudden cardiac event. He was 81.

Ron was a longtime resident of the Austin/Irving neighborhood on Chicago's northwest side. He was also active in the gay community since the early 1960s, regaling friends with stories, good and bad, of pre-Stonewall gay life in Chicago. Ron would usually be found on his trusty bicycle during his visits to gay watering spots. He was an early member of the Lincoln Park Lagoons.

Zierer was noted for his love and vast knowledge of classical music, actively supporting the Civic Orchestra of Chicago [the CSO's training orchestra for young musicians] and WFMT classic radio. Ron rarely missed a Civic Orchestra performance, and was usually found in the terrace seats of Orchestra Hall. He would have been enormously successful at a classical music version of Name that Tune.

While he worked at simple jobs during his lifetime, he was able to quietly build a small fortune that, per his direction, is being given to charities supporting the homeless, the hungry, and the elderly. Support is also being provided to classical music organizations.

Ron was born in Chicago on Oct. 10, 1933, the son of Robert and Margaret [Cottini] Zierer. Growing up in and about his parents' bakery led to his lifetime practice of always bringing baked goods to gatherings of friends. His parents and a younger brother, John Zierer, preceded him in death.

A memorial service and gathering in Ron's honor will be held on Saturday, June 6, at 1 p.m. at the United In Faith Lutheran Church, 6525 W. Irving Park Rd. Burial of his ashes in the family plot at All Saints Cemetery in Des Plaines will immediately follow the service. For further information, call 773-275-1460.



Ronald Zierer.
Photo by Jassiel Perez/United We Dream

Anti-conversion therapy bill sent to governor

BY MATT SIMONETTE

HB 217, the Youth Mental Health Protection Act, passed the State Senate 34-19 on May 29 as the Illinois General Assembly hurried through the final days of the spring session.

The bill protects youth from so-called “conversion therapy,” which purports to turn help an LGBT patient straight. The practice has been denounced by numerous medical and psychological associations, and the legislation says that service providers who practice conversion therapy on a minor will be referred to their professional organizations for disci-

“There is no way adequate way of protecting or communities in detention centers,” Padilla explained. “Even after ICE have tried to reform their systems, too many of our people have died in detention centers waiting for them to get it right. We can no longer wait. We want to break the cage because our communities and our lives are at risk with every single delay.”

The recommendations stated that “ICE has the authority to release even arriving aliens for “urgent humanitarian reasons” or where it determines that release would create a “significant public benefit.” The high probability that a person will be physically or sexually abused in detention creates an urgent humanitarian need. At the same time, releasing LGBT detainees creates a significant public benefit, limiting detention costs generally, and the legal, medical, and human costs associated with sexual abuse.”

Speakers at the rally included TWOCC National Director Lourdes Ashley Hunter and Marichuy Leal Gamino, a transgender woman who was allegedly raped while spending over a year in an ICE detention facility in Arizona. The website #Not1More noted that Gamino was told by a guard to “deal with it.”

The incident occurred fewer than two months after ICE Deputy Assistant Director Andrew Lorenzen-Strait told Windy City Times, “We have made considerable efforts to ensure that—at any time during the ICE process of encountering, detaining or removing an individual who identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender—[they receive] the utmost attention.”

Padilla said that ICE had no response either to the issues raised at the May 27 rally or the recommendations issued to Johnson. “We expect them to give parole to LGBTQ immigrants until the court case comes up,” Padilla said. “Secretary Johnson has been attempting to work with the LGBTQ community through negotiations. But we're saying no more negotiations can take place because ICE is heading towards more prisons and detention centers.”

Turn to page 7

pline. It furthermore says that providers who willfully market their services by indicating that homosexuality is a mental illness could be subject to consumer fraud charges.

HB 217 was sponsored in the Senate by state Sen. Daniel Biss and in the House by state Rep. Kelly Cassidy. Gov. Bruce Rauner has not yet indicated whether he would sign the bill, but Cassidy told Windy City Times the week of May 18 that Rauner had spoken with Curtis Galloway, of downstate Benton, who had been subjected to conversion therapy. Galloway testified before both House and Senate committees about his experience.

Shortly after his House committee testimony in April, according to Quad City Times, Galloway said of the experience, “Some people just aren't as lucky. There are people committing suicide. I consider myself a survivor, but for those who are the victims, the ones that don't make it, the ones that commit suicide, the ones that are kicked out of their homes because they can't change their sexuality, I want to reach out to them.”

AFC gala raises \$400K

The AIDS Foundation of Chicago's (AFC's) May 16 gala at the Hilton Chicago raised approximately \$400,000 for ongoing prevention, care and advocacy services.

Actress Amy Landecker, of the Golden Globe award-winning series Transparent, emceed the event.

Among other development, two longtime board members were honored for their contributions to AFC: Ernie Rodriguez of Gilead was presented with the Lori Kaufman Volunteer Award, and Thomas Kehoe of Kehoe Designs received the Community Impact Award.

To learn more, visit www.aidschicago.org.

PARADE from cover

"...It matters if you come out, no matter what you're doing in this world. It's important for people to see the truth in a person. I'm so sorry it's taken me so long to do that. I feel sad about that, but I'm going to put that aside and celebrate now. I'm going to work with young kids and older people who need help being authentic so they can live perfectly happy lives."

Parade officials also said that the Pride Parade would remain in Lake View and Uptown this year, but with heightened security to curtail excessive and/or illegal alcohol consumption as well as unruly behavior.

"In addition to the large number of police officers who staff the event, [parade coordinators] are providing a security team of 90 off-duty police officers to supplement the police presence," said officials in a June 1 statement. "Penalties for open containers of alcohol include, but are not limited to \$1000 [or more] tickets being issued and/or the immediate disposal of open containers of alcohol beverages into trash receptacles."

The 2014 Pride Parade was marred by reports of disturbances from spectators both during and after the parade, though city and police officials said actual arrests were minimal, as well as concerns that local resources were being overwhelmed. Residents started dueling online petitions—one asking that the parade be moved, another asking that it stay on the North Side. In April, Alds. Tom Tunney and James Cappleman said that the outcome of the 2015 parade would be closely watched by city officials and, if no improvement came to safety concerns, the parade might be moved the following year.

Information on Pride events can be found at www.ChicagoPrideCalendar.org.



IMMIGRANTS from page 6

Dignity Denied noted a congressional mandate requiring "ICE to hold 34,000 immigrants who may be subject to removal for violations of administrative immigration law in more than 250 detention facilities nationwide, including county and private jails."

"Detention centers cost taxpayers over 2 billion dollars per year," Padilla said. "It's not in the public's best interest but it does benefit the for-profit detention system. People in our LGBTQ immigrant community are dying under barbaric conditions. They are being pushed into suicide. Victoria Arellano [a transgender woman] died of AIDS in 2007 in a detention center after she was denied her medication. Detention Centers are not the answer. There are other proven, more humane, more cost effective tactics."

Padilla stated that the May 27 rally is just the beginning of a "summer of discontent. We have negotiated with and tried to make sense of ICE. We've spoken with President Obama and he continues to believe that detention centers are the answer. Conversations are getting us nowhere. It's time for us to challenge their power with the power in our community. We will continue to come back to [ICE] headquarters with bigger, louder and stronger crowds every time."

For more information on United We Dream, visit <http://unitedwedream.org>. For more information on the Trans Women of Color Collective, visit <http://www.twocc.us>. For more information on Casa Ruby, visit <http://www.casaruby.org>.



CITY OF CHICAGO

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The **Chicago Commission on Human Relations (CCHR)** is charged with enforcing the Chicago Human Rights Ordinance and the Chicago Fair Housing Ordinance. The Commission investigates complaints to determine whether discrimination may have occurred, and uses its enforcement powers to punish acts of discrimination. Under the City's Hate Crimes Law, the agency aids hate crime victims. **CCHR** also employs proactive programs of education, intervention, and constituency building to discourage bigotry and bring people from different groups together.

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Please RSVP no later than Friday, June 12 at tpan.com, or call (773) 989-9400.



SUPPORTED BY AN UNRESTRICTED EDUCATIONAL GRANT FROM BRISTOL-MYERS SQUIBB.

'Gender-bender' scholar talks activism, her arrest and race

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Dr. Jennifer Lisa Vest—philosopher, scholar, former professor, poet and activist performer—was a guest lecturer this past April at Illinois State University (ISU) and Southern Illinois University (SIU), where she gave a speech entitled, "Peculiar Requests for Peculiar Bodies: Black Lives Matter, [Trans] Gendered Violence, Disability, and Women in the Post-racial, Post-sexist Present."

A self-described mixed-blood person, Vest is Black, Native American Seminole and white. Raised in Chicago's Old Town neighborhood, Vest moved to North Chicago when her father got custody of her and her sister after their parent's divorce. Following a stint at Chicago Public Schools (CPS) during elementary school, Vest got a scholarship, along with her sister, to attend high school at North Shore Country Day School in Winnetka, Illinois. This was a far cry from Vest's experience at CPS since she was one of only a few people of color at North Shore.

Vest got her bachelor's degree in Physics from Hampshire College; master's degree in history from Howard University; and Ph.D. in ethnic studies and philosophy from the University of California at Berkeley. She was awarded a two-year postdoctoral fellowship at UCLA at the Center for the Study of Women. For 10 years (2002-2012), Vest taught cross-cultural philosophy and women's studies at two universities—Seattle University for two years and University of Central Florida for eight years. Since leaving academia, Vest has been performing and speaking at venues across the country and continuing to publish her work in various academic journals and other publications. She currently resides in Los Angeles.

"I'm gay and genderqueer," said Vest. "I have a non-normative gender presentation and call myself a gender-bender. I dress in an androgynous way. It's just a part of who I am."

"I combine poetry and theory to address issues of social justice. I primarily look at the intersections of race, gender, sexuality and disability. I do these philopoetic performances where I combine spoken word storytelling and theory/analysis. Philopoetic work is something I created as a genre. It's similar to some of the earlier work of Gloria Anzaldua where she combined poetry with theory."

Vest's recent talk at ISU and SIU touched on a number of social justice issues including transgender people, genderqueer people, race and feminism. While the ISU talk was open to the public the SIU talk was given to the philosophy department.

"I was invited by two Black philosophy grad students at SIU who are in an all-white department to come speak," said Vest. "Their philosophy department is made up of 10 white men and one white woman from England. They've been dealing with some problems regarding race and the two students were familiar with my other work and that's why they invited me."

ISU philosophy professor Dr. Allison Bailey saw Vest give a keynote address at a conference in Arizona and asked her to speak at the school.

"There were about 200 attendees at the ISU talk," said Vest. "I talked about my own experiences being genderqueer but I also talked about the rates of police violence against transgender people. Part of the performance was a testimony because I told a lot of stories about all the Black people who were being killed but I also focused on the Black women whose stories aren't being told and why their stories are different. Why Black women are specifically brutalized during arrests and detentions including being sexually brutalized."

"I talked about the fact that LGBTQ Black people have a lot more encounters and abuse by the police. I also noted the way Black people are seen as fear inspiring instead of fearful or afraid. I talked about how we have to see these things in through the lens of intersectionality between groups."

"I put trans in brackets so I could talk about transgender people and also genderqueer people," Vest added. "I'm a poet so I like to use my own language and make up words and I decided to name the talk '[Trans] Gendered' for that reason. I also wanted to address the fact that people say we live in a post-racial, post-feminist world when that's not the case."

Vest noted that during her talk she touched on the fact that the #BlackLivesMatter movement was started by three Black women, two of whom are LGBTQ, and the fact that it's not just cisgender heterosexual Black males that are being targeted by the police but also cisgender heterosexual Black women and Black LGBTQ people as well.

"What I'm trying to do with my work is to get people to know enough about what is going on and outraged enough so they will do something about it," said Vest. "To get people to analyze why certain people are being treated this way and why is it being justified because what's problematic about all these cases of Black and brown people being abused by the police is that there is always narrative of justification about these murders by the police, justice system and/or media. We need to fig-



Jennifer Lisa Vest.
Photo by Storme Webber

ure out why it's so easy for white cops to kill people of color. Why are people able to watch these images and still remain complacent?"

Vest explained that following the talk and Q&A session at ISU she had a number of people come up to her and tell her how grateful they were that she was telling these stories.

"Almost every Black student that I talked to at ISU afterwards told me they had been harassed by the campus police at the college. They didn't feel comfortable talking about it publicly and they told me how glad they were that I was talking about it," said Vest.

The talk that she gave at ISU and SIU wasn't the only time Vest has addressed these kinds of issues. Five years ago, Vest was stopped by the University of Central Florida's campus police when she was a professor at the college and she wrote about the experience in "What Doesn't Kill You: Existential Luck, Postracial Racism, and The Subtle and Not So Subtle Ways the Academy Keeps Women of Color Out."

"The article talks about an idea I developed that I call existential luck where I talk about the experiences of people with certain kinds of bodies. The victims of what would appear like random violence and micro-aggressive assaults on people," said Vest. "My appearance has resulted in my being at the repeated hands of some discrimination and my gender was a constant source of conflict for people in many aspects of my daily life. People thought it was problematic that I looked the way I did and

that's one of the things I talked about when I was stopped by the police. They didn't know if I was a man or a woman when they stopped me. There was some bad behavior where they were rough with me. They had a woman cop come and feel me up."

Due to her experience with the campus police, Vest explained that she had students come to her who were genderqueer or were in the process of making their transition in their appearance and identity. She ended up mentoring some of them.

"I became more politicized as a result of my own experiences and have included that in my scholarship work and performances," said Vest.

When not writing or performing, Vest works as an archivist for Sovereign Wisdom Consulting Services, for which she helps tribes and organizations with intellectually sovereign archive projects. Most recently, she worked with the Mashpee tribe in Massachusetts to create a plan for its archives. She has also worked with African-American organizations and is a medical intuitive and healer.

As for the future, Vest said she hopes to give more activist performances on campuses. She is also planning on publishing the talk she gave at ISU and SIU, and is looking at publishing a book that compiles all of her philopoetic lectures/performance.

See www.jenniferlisavest.com for more information.

'Step Up. Get Tested' campaign expands

The scope of the 2015 "Step Up. Get Tested." (SUGT) campaign for June has been enhanced by a new partnership with Harmony Health Plan of Illinois, a subsidiary of Well-Care Health Plans, Inc.

The SUGT campaign, developed by the Chicagoland HIV Testing Collaborative (CHTC), will now include both HIV and hepatitis C testing as well as linkage to care services as part of the campaign's initiatives throughout

the month in areas across Chicagoland as a result of this partnership.

Step Up. Get Tested. is a unified effort supported by the Chicagoland HIV Testing Collaborative, a group of 25 community and public health organizations that has joined forces to promote HIV testing in the city's most at-risk communities since 2012.

The partnership will run June 5-30, and will kick off June 5 with free HIV testing near several CTA "L" stations, including Roosevelt, Howard and 87th. Visit <http://stepupget-tested.com>.

Katie Couric,
Co-Founder EIP's
National Colorectal
Cancer Research Alliance

Really?

Did you know that of cancers affecting both men and women, colorectal cancer is the second leading cancer killer? But this is one cancer you can prevent. Get screened!

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National Colorectal Cancer Research Alliance
National Colorectal Cancer Research Alliance

WCT30

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To mark the 30th year of Windy City Times, we are partnering with some amazing businesses to raise \$30,000 to help us cover the editorial costs of producing Windy City Times as a free weekly newspaper each week, and free online daily.

These are just some of the businesses, people and nonprofits providing perks to help us meet our goal at

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To add perks from your company, email editor@windycitymediagroup.com

New Town Alano Club survives to aid LGBTs in recovery

BY ROSS FORMAN

Gloria W. first walked into the New Town Alano Club about 25 years ago. She went to meetings, got a sponsor and started school. She eventually chaired meetings, graduated with a second college degree and started her career.

Gloria now works at a major health institution on the South Side of Chicago, "and I am so very grateful—miracles happen every day at the New Town Alano Club, and I am one of them," she said.

The New Town Alano Club (NTAC) is the nation's first Alano club with a specific LGBTQ outreach. It is a not-for-profit corporation that provides meeting space for more than 50 12-step recovery meetings, such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Al-Anon, Co-Dependents Anonymous (CODA), Crystal Meth Anonymous (CMA), Sexual Compulsives Anonymous (SCA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and more.

NTAC provides such services as educational opportunities regarding the disease of addiction, sober living and sexual health; meeting referrals, recovery literature and information about local drug-and-alcohol recovery services. There also are volunteer opportunities and more.

The New Town Alano Club is anonymous at the press level, and it just uses first name and last initial for all.

"Those who founded NTAC did so because of the lack of a safe place to share their true

elves," Gloria said. "In 1980 it was dangerous to be 'out.' We had many members and quickly grew out of our first two locations. Then the AIDS crisis hit. We lost members almost weekly. Many of us became active with Act Up, TPAN, BEHIV, etc. Service work is a cornerstone of any 12-step program. However, our numbers could no longer support our former location, [so alderman] Tom Tunney agreed to rent to us at our current location, 909 W. Belmont Ave. That was 18 years ago this upcoming June.

"New Town Alano Club is very active in trying to meet the needs of our community," Gloria said. "We are still active in HIV prevention and provide HIV testing, in conjunction with the Center on Halsted. In the past we have provided free education services on meditation, mental health, health insurance changes, etc."

The club's paying members are a small fraction of those who utilize the club, she said. Members may pay \$10 a month or \$100 a year. "We get anonymous contributions and those who attend meetings are encouraged to put \$2 in the meeting basket. However, no one is turned away who has a desire to recover."

The majority of the meetings at NTAC are Alcoholics Anonymous. The fastest growing is Crystal Meth Anonymous. It recently added another Underearnings Anonymous, Dual Diagnosis Anonymous (for those recovering from mental illness as well as addiction) and Sexual Compulsive Anonymous with a focus on porn addiction.

"We have roughly 20,000 encounters a year, based on the number of people attending each individual meeting," Gloria said. "Some people may attend several meetings a day and others once a month, or even less, so it is impossible to know exactly how many individuals come through our door. I am sure that over the years there have been thousands. At least 50 percent of those who come to NTAC are from the LGBT community. And we have a meeting specifically for transgendered people and their supporters."

Gloria said people from all walks of life, from all professions walk into NTAC. "I myself am a licensed medical professional, and we have people coming from the four corners of the earth to see the first Alano Club in the USA with an LGBT outreach. I am honored and humbled to be president," she said.

NTAC works with the Chicago Round Up, another 501(c)(3), which organizes a yearly event of multiple speaker meetings, a play, dinner and dance. "We provide volunteers and attend fundraising events. We also support, and are supported by, the Rec Room, which is another Alano Club with an LGBTQ outreach," she said.

The New Town Alano Club has participated in the annual Chicago Pride Parade over the years "to let people know we exist and are happily, joyfully, sober and gay," she said. "We let our presence and demeanor be the magnet for newcomers. We never tell people what to do, but are available when people seek help."

Gloria said Tunney "has been very supportive."

"When the recession hit [seven or eight years ago], it hit us very hard," she said. "We were often behind in our rent. We owe a lot to Tom. It isn't easy for any not-for-profit to survive [over the past] eight years. Our primary mission is to be available to those in recovery, especially the newcomer. Those in early recovery seldom have employment."

In its efforts to be financially stable, NTAC has downsized the number of rooms it rents and it solely operates with volunteers. "We have added meetings despite the reduction of our physical footprint," she said.

NTAC is part of Amazon Smiles; thus, a por-



New Town Alano Club room.

Photo from organization

tion of each purchase gets earmarked for NTAC, if the buyer identifies NTAC as the organization they wish to support.

"Our short-term goals are to satisfy the needs of the recovering community, provide a safe space for all, provide meetings that are as relevant as they are varied, strengthen the bonds we share with our fellow organizations and become financially sound. To that end we

are exploring grant opportunities," Gloria said.

The NTAC's long-term goal is "to be fiscally secure," she said. "There are many changes happening in Boystown and I would like to see NTAC be able to weather any financial storm. After all, another generation is looking for their miracle to happen to them."

For more information, contact the New Town Alano Club by email at info@newtown-

Homelessness training at Access on June 4

Lambda Legal is hosting a training for housing professionals, community organizations, members of the LGBT community, and LGBT allies and advocates on the fourth floor of Access Living, 115 W. Chicago Ave., on Thursday, June 4, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

These trainings are a statewide educational outreach effort to address LGBT homelessness and housing discrimination through federal policy. This is a partnership with Lambda Legal, The Illinois Department of Human Rights, The National Center for Lesbian Rights and The Illinois Safe Schools Alliance.

Lambda Legal Community Educator Crispin Torres and Staff Attorney Kyle Palazzo will be presenting on behalf of Lambda Legal throughout this training series.

For more information, email ctorres@lambdalegal.org; to RSVP, visit http://www.lambdalegal.org/events/150604_educ-housing-federal-policy.

Bilingual evening of workshops June 9

"Tools for the Casual Activist"—a bilingual evening of workshops that the Trans Oral History Project is co-hosting as part of this year's United Latino Pride—will take place Wed., June 9, 6-9 p.m., at Youth Services Project, 3942 W. North Ave.

In "Learning to be a Rainbow Ambassador 101," for example, attendees will discuss how to approach ignorance from co-workers, strangers or family with education as well as practice real-life scenarios.

Refreshments will be provided. Email andrealanperez@gmail.com for more info.



Creating Change Host Committee Co-chairs Mary Morten, Joshua Oaks, Precious Davis and Kenny Martin-Ocasio.

Photo by Carrie Maxwell

Creating Change holds host committee meeting

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Creating Change 2016's host committee gathered for its monthly meeting at the Conrad Sulzer Regional Library May 27 to discuss the National LGBTQ Task Force's 28th conference that will take place Jan. 20-24, 2016, at the Hilton Chicago.

Precious Davis, Kenny Martin-Ocasio, Mary Morten and Joshua Oaks have been named the committee co-chairs. They manage and facilitate the monthly host committee meetings, are charged with overseeing the local subcommittees and also report back to the Task Force on the progress that the committees have made.

Among other things, Davis led what was called a name movement icebreaker activity. Oaks called on attendees to come up with group norms for future host committee and subcommittee meetings. They included to not talk over each other, to assume best intentions and to have fun.

Morten led the subcommittee reports, with each host committee co-chair sharing what's

been done so far and what future plans are.

Creating Change will be doing outreach at a number of festivals and events this summer, including Andersonville Midsommarfest, Chicago Pridefest, Dyke March Chicago, the Chicago Pride Parade, Northalsted Market Days, AIDS Run/Walk and others to be announced.

Host committee meetings take place the last Wednesday of every month. The next meeting is June 24, 6-8 p.m., at the Conrad Sulzer Regional Library.

For those interested in attending next month's meeting, RSVP to creatingchange@thetaskforce.org.

Host committee co-chairs can be reached at mortenc16@gmail.com, misspreciousdavis1@gmail.com, kmocasio@yahoo.com and JOaks@AIDSChicago.org.

See www.facebook.com/CC16HostCommittee and www.creatingchange.org for more information.

Note: Carrie Maxwell is also a committee member for Creating Change 2016.



in the LIFE

Martin Luna

TEXT BY ROSS FORMAN
PHOTOS BY NEVERLAND

- **Age**
28
- **Neighborhood**
Lake View
- **Background**
Originally from Campeche, Mexico. Moved to Chicago at age 16.
- **Hobbies**
Traveling, reading fashion magazines, seeing fashion shows, working out
- **Job title**
Co-owner and costume designer for Neverland Events
- **Orientation**
Gay and in a relationship
- **Favorite drink**
Sidecar martini
- **Fashion "in"**
"Buying at thrift stores"
- **Fashion "out"**
"I'm not so much into shirts with prints anymore."
- **Little-known fact**
"I'm about to enter college; I just got accepted into Columbia College for fashion design."

Martin Luna used to be a go-go dancer at various bars on Halsted Street in Boystown, and he often made his own costumes to help spice up the parties where he performed.

He's still designing costumes, just now on a much bigger stage—such as for the Pride weekend festivities associated with Neverland Events. For instance, there is a pool party on Saturday, June 27, from noon to 7 p.m. at Deuce's and The Diamond Club. On Sunday, June 28, there is the Neverland "Bougie Ball" at Metro; and the Sunday night Pride closing party at The MID. (Tickets for all events, or weekend passes, are available at www.showclix.com/event/neverlandpride). A portion of the Pride weekend proceeds will be donated to the AIDS Foundation of Chicago.

"My work is a dream come true," Luna said. "[We] started Neverland three years ago, and never knew it would grow to become my career. I get to design these crazy, elaborate costumes every day that come to life in our photo shoots and on stage at our parties.

"I want to keep growing Neverland and get more gay tourists to come to our city to check out our parties. I also want to create bigger, better parties in Chicago."

Luna said the best part of his job is simply seeing the faces of people in the crowd when they see the dancers and performers come on stage wearing costumes he's created.

The worst part is, the pressure the week of an event, though Luna said he thrives under pressure.

"Neverland is about fantasy and sex; that's the rule for our costume design," Luna said. "Everything has to be about fantasy, but needs to be sexual at the same time. That's why our models are never fully covered up, and you don't see them in wigs or anything that would take away from the sex appeal.

"Even when designer Kyle Krueger turned Carlos Tejero and Richard Matthews into Yoshi and Donkey Kong for our party [that was titled] 'The Arcade,' they were wearing jockstraps and



were mostly nude. I love how Victoria's Secret does their fashion show. They create these elaborate wings, but the women are still in lingerie. That's our inspiration at Neverland."

The first costume Luna ever created was a harness for IML several years ago. Someone at that IML actually bought it from him on the spot.

"We did a photoshoot for our 'Arcade'-themed party at an actual arcade in the suburbs," Luna said. "We started shooting before it was open to the public, but were running [late]. When the arcade opened, all these kids came in, and our models were still running around in underwear and costumes. It was a funny scene."

LGBTRIVIA



This gay man co-founded and serves as publisher of Rolling Stone magazine and runs other magazines, including Us Weekly.

Answer on page 27

ANAL CANCER IS ON THE RISE

FOR THOSE OF US **WITH HIV**

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the ANCHOR study.org

viewpoints



**St. Sukie
DE LA CROIX**

SENIOR MOMENTS

God-fearing pedophiles and creepy gays

Years ago, if someone asked me, "Who are the enemies of LGBTs?," I would have answered "Arrogant heterosexuals." If you ask me the same question now, "Who are the enemy of LGBTs?" I would answer "God-fearing pedophiles and creepy gays."

I've been following the epic saga of Josh Duggar unfolding in the news. People who set themselves on pedestals are easily toppled, especially when the chosen plinth is the Bible, an ancient book of contradictions and impractical morals written by fanatics. I do understand that everyone has a favorite book—mine is Alice's Adventures in Wonderland—but you can't force everyone else to like your favorite book. It doesn't work like that.

This is where Josh Duggar screwed up. While waving his Bible, Duggar denigrated gays while molesting his sisters and their friends. For those who may have missed it, Duggar is one of the home-schooled offspring of devout Christians Jim Bob and Michelle Duggar, who star in

the reality TV series 19 Kids and Counting. Josh has admitted he molested several young girls. [Editor's note: The molestations took place during Josh's teen years.] As the story unraveled, it became more sordid and vulgar by the day.

Right-wing politicians, his parents and other apologists, suggested Duggar's behavior was nothing more than a "youthful indiscretion." Shoplifting a candy bar is a youthful indiscretion; molesting five children is not. It's a crime and a red flag. The fact that Josh Duggar has his own children now—and is allowed to keep them—amazes me. They should be taken away and given to a loving same-sex couple. He's obviously not a suitable parent. Jim Bob and Michelle parents are not suitable parents, either.

Whatever individual religionists think their religion is, whether it be Christianity or Islam, it is also a refuge for pedophiles. In Nigeria, 219 girls are missing after being kidnapped by members of Islamic extremist organization Boko Haram and distributed as child brides. As we all now know, the Roman Catholic Church is nothing more than a viperous nest of child rapists, with hundreds of priests being arrested for sex crimes. How much proof do you need?

When I see a preacher or politician speak out against equality for LGBTs, I just assume that person's a pedophile deflecting attention away from his own sexual proclivities. John Boehner, Bobby Jindal, Rick Santorum, Ted Cruz etc. All of them, I just assume they molest children ... either that or they're God-fearing creepy gays.

The GOP and religions are full of God-fearing creepy gays. When an LGBT individual comes out of the closet, a fairy gets its wings, a rainbow appears, a new hair salon opens in Palm

Springs and hummingbirds dance a jig in the garden. However, when an LGBT hides in the closet and campaigns against gay equality, then that person is a God-fearing creepy gay.

God-fearing creepy gays are buckets of slime who empty themselves into the evangelical cesspool and swim around with the bigoted scum. If you rip the face off a God-fearing creepy gay, underneath you will find a scaly reptile built from wires, spark plugs, hubcaps and old toilet seats from sports stadiums. If you see a God-fearing creepy gay in your neighborhood, I suggest you trip it up, spray it with RID and slap some sense into it.

The list of God-fearing creepy gays being dragged out of the closet grows daily: Just a few include ousted pastor Tom Brock (blamed a tornado in Minneapolis on gay clergy), Tennessee pastor Boyd Holder (allegedly stole \$60,000 from his church for porn), Pastor Ted Haggard (meth-head and anti gay preacher), George Reckers (founder of Family Research Council), California state Sen. Roy Ashburn (arrested drunk after leaving a gay bar), Florida state Rep. Bob Allen (offered cop oral sex), Larry Craig (arrested in airport bathroom). The list of God-fearing creepy gays goes on and on.

So I would like to apologize here to heterosexuals. I always thought you were the problem, standing in the way of gay equality. However, I now know it's not you at all. The enemy of LGBTs are God-fearing pedophiles and creepy gays.

FYI: If any God-fearing pedophiles or creepy gays are reading this, there are millions of us out here in the real world, and we're coming after you. That's a threat and a promise.



**Lee
LYNCH**

THE AMAZON TRAIL

Aging tomboy

My body is telling me to slow down, even while my mind says go, go, go.

When was the last time I climbed a tree, a favorite younger pastime? Now I simply admire them and the birds that flit from Shore Pine to Western Hemlock to Ornamental Cherry. It's funny how I thought I missed certain activities and now I'm grateful I don't have to do them any more.

I loved to run—to sprint. To run away when being bullied and just to run when I was confused or depressed or anxious. Can't do that with fake knees. Instead, this Saturday I'm walking my first whopping 5K run to benefit our local chapter of N.O.W. I even get a bib! Rather than pout because I can't join the actual runners, I'm grateful to walk nearly pain free again. I'm also grateful to N.O.W. for its emphatic inclusiveness and to our little PFLAG group. We may not have a gay pride parade in this little town, but with their support, I no longer need to run anywhere. I'm already at the edge of the continent and I'm not about turn tail.

PFLAG does join the July Fourth La Di Dah Parade a few towns away and has one of the largest presences in it. The first time I attended this event I stood next to a pot belly pig on a leash and then we watched the parade together. That's the kind of town it is.

Usually I march in our neighborhood parade. I may not be as agile as I was, but I never

got to be in a parade when I was more able. Our event includes people on patriotically festooned walkers, mobility scooters, aging pets in strollers, and this year—a batch of senior tricycles!

I do miss my bike. Once upon a time I practically lived on it. I ride an exercycle indoors, but have qualms about my balance, and am content—almost—with fond memories of my English racers. Part of me wants to join the outlaw tricycle gang on the Fourth. Part of me is still too proud to make the shift from bike to trike.

Heck, with not one, but two rotator cuff tears I can't even hit a pink Spalden ball off a handball court wall. Or serve a tennis ball. Or spike a volleyball.

I can still dress like a tomboy. A butch tomboy anyway. My sweetheart was a femme tomboy. They grow up to be sporty femmes. It makes life easier when you marry a tomboy of any persuasion because she's not afraid to tackle a garden project and can catch anything you toss her across the room. My sporty femme was the catcher on her softball team. With my weight limit of 20 pounds, she also handles the heavy lifting. It's kind of discouraging, as I still have tomboy energy and worry that she'll overdo.

Although even the energy is flagging. Travel wipes me out for a couple of months. The spirit is willing, but the flesh pays for it afterward.

Falling used to be kind of fun, knowing how, having an elastic body that could leap right up again. Now it's a nightmare. Some of the old people in our 'hood have to call 911 for help to get back up. Knee surgery was a good decision as I've managed to stay upright since that fall in Provincetown five or six years ago, before the sidewalks on Commercial Street were leveled out. A younger tomboy would have hopped, skipped and jumped right along, whistling through her front teeth, showing off her

nimbleness. Pride goeth before a fall. Literally.

Thank goodness I've still got tomboy spirit. My sweetheart likes my tomboy walk. She may sometimes steady me climbing down rocks to the beach, but I'm still climbing. My mother didn't stop clamboring across beach rocks until her late 80s. But then, she didn't hurt herself as a tomboy of any sort. She never worked in the grocery business, breaking her back and loving every minute of scaling dumpsters to make more room by insanely jumping up and down, flattening the load with her feet. Housework and pushing a baby carriage were her backbreakers. Meh, any good tomboy would say to that.

Life changes us. Suddenly I have a pale green thumb. We have a begonia that's taking over our house although I've given away starts right and left. I even know what a "start" is. The aloe plant has propagated itself so often we're trying to pawn the aloe-ettes off on any sucker who will take them. I can't bear to kill a plant.

My physical therapist has not set any limits on light gardening. Instead of sprinting I've been digging. Instead of biking I've been chasing away slugs. Instead of climbing trees I've been planting them.

And instead of running grocery stores and doing vocational counseling I'm writing—better, I hope, or at least not rushing through this, my real work.

I don't row or fish or swim; I don't skate or walk to mountain peaks; I haven't gotten under my car to do a bit of tinkering for decades or rearranged my office furniture much (only when my sweetheart's not looking).

So my question is: I'll be 70 this year. Can I still be a tomboy?

Lee Lynch is the author of more than 13 books. Her latest, *An American Queer*, is available for pre-order. You can reach Lynch at LeeLynch@ontopmag.com.

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WINDY CITY TIMES

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There is now a director's cut of the 1998 film release 54.

Photo courtesy of Lionsgate

SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Courting controversy

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Gay playwright Bixby Elliot is a bit nervous regarding About Face Theatre's Chicago premiere of his play Abraham Lincoln was a F*gg*t. Not only is the title's derogatory gay term provoking, the play itself is being produced in this proudly proclaimed "Land of Lincoln."

"I think I am a little trepidations because people really love Lincoln. But I love that people want to talk about it and that they have strong opinions about Lincoln or the word 'faggot,'" Elliot said. "When people actually see the play, it will seem less controversial than the title suggests."

Previously seen in Chicago in 2014 in an About Face workshop reading following its 2013 world premiere in Louisville, Kentucky, Abraham Lincoln was a F*gg*t focuses on a 17-year-old boy named Cal who is desperately looking for guidance as he comes to terms with his burgeoning sexuality. Given an assignment to write about the iconic 16th President of the United States, Cal seizes upon recent research suggesting Lincoln that had intense friendships with men. Cal's essay wins a national prize, putting him in a position with fraught family conflicts, bullying at school and the fear of revealing too much of one's self too soon.

Elliot came up with the idea for the play during the 2008 election year and when his partner started collecting some very rudimentary mid-20th century children's books that were part of the "Step Up" series about famous people.

"One was about Abraham Lincoln and it was so reductive," Elliot said. "I was thinking why don't we teach our children the nuances of people and especially our heroes because there's been a lot of academic research on Lincoln's sexuality and also his mental illness of depression... Why do our heroes have to be so unblemished? Why do they have to be held to such a high standard and why aren't they allowed to be human beings or real people?"

Since the title of the show could cause controversy, About Face Theatre is also producing a few post-show moderated panels including one on the The "F" Word featuring Windy City Times publisher Tracy Baim and playwright Philip Dawkins respectively on June 7 and 14. There's also one on Lincoln's historical legacy on June 21 and on LGBTQ civil rights on June 28.

"The play really is about role models and mentors," Elliot said. "I'm excited that this is bringing up conversation and feelings for people."

About Face Theatre's Chicago premiere of Bixby Elliot's Abraham Lincoln was a F*gg*t

plays June 5-July 5 at the Greenhouse Theater Center, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave. Preview performances are \$20 (\$10 students and seniors) and \$35 (\$20 students and seniors) for the regular run. Call 773-404-7336 or visit www.aboutface theatre.org.

Remains returns

Most people will have seen the work of gay Canadian playwright Brad Fraser from his time as a writer for the Showtime series Queer As Folk. But it is his controversial play Love and Human Remains that really put him on the map in the theater world—shocking for its frank language, violence and sexual explicitness at its 1989 world premiere in Calgary and later in 1991 for its American debut in Chicago.

It was originally titled Unidentified Human Remains and the Nature of True Love, but Fraser has allowed theaters to use the alternate title which was first shortened for the 1993 film adaptation. After an absence of 20 years in the Chicago area, Love and Human Remains is back courtesy of Cor Theatre in what will likely be an uncomfortably intimate production at Rivendell Theatre.

"I wanted a play with a gay protagonist who wasn't dealing with AIDS or coming out," Fraser said, wanting to go against several theatrical norms of the time in creating his fragmentary and raw play. "It was for me about creating a character who was gay and wasn't a spokesperson, wasn't a victim or being victimized but was just another guy in a play like anyone else."

And though several critics at the time of its debut saw the play's inclusion of a serial killer as a metaphor for the AIDS crisis, Fraser said he didn't intentionally include that plot point in the play for that reason.

"Serial killers weren't the hoary old chestnut of theatrical storytelling that they have become," Fraser said. "For me, it never is play about who is the serial killer. For me it was what would you do if you found out your friend was a serial killer. And metaphorically that opens up a lot of territory and I think people are free to interpret it in whatever way they want."

Though Fraser has had very productive theatrical career in the U.K., most notably with the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester, he thinks that American theater companies tend to bypass his work because it is too envelope-pushing. Nonetheless, Fraser is glad Love and Human Remains continues to be produced worldwide and that it is returning again to Chicago.

"When people read Remains, they think that this could be happening now," said Fraser,



Above: Abraham Lincoln Was a F*gg*t. Below: Love and Human Remains

Above photo by Michael Brosilow; image below by Matthew Hollis

noting that some of his other work like Poor Superman that touched upon the AIDS crisis can come off like a period piece. "Maybe it's the universality of the themes in Remains of dealing with our sexuality, betrayal by friends and the search for love that is very universal for people in their 20s and 30s, so that's why

I think that they're drawn back to the script."

Cor Theatre's Love and Human Remains plays June 4-July 11 at Rivendell Theatre, 5779 N. Ridge Ave. Tickets are \$25 and \$10 for students. For mature audiences only. Call 866-811-4111 or visit www.cortheatre.org.



THEATER REVIEW

Les Liaisons Dangereuses

Playwright: adapted by Christopher Hampton from the novel by Pierre Choderlos de Laclos
 At: AstonRep Theatre Company at the Raven Complex, 6157 N. Clark St.
 Tickets: 773-828-9129;
 www.astonrep.com; \$20
 Runs through: June 21

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Pierre Choderlos de Laclos' 1782 novel is nowadays associated with a high-calorie costume romp featuring a pair of rich, sexy, incorrigible villains: the preening Marquise de Merteuil, whose pique at being dumped by her boyfriend leads her to transform his convent-raised fiancée into a wanton slut, abetted by the priapal Vicompte de Valmont, currently preoccupied with luring a young matron renowned for her fidelity into adultery.

Since both corrupters eventually come to regret their inhumanity, a case can be made for Laclos preaching a moral lesson, but Christopher Hampton's 1985 adaptation finds more delight in the characteristically British penchant for watching unredeemed sociopaths



Les Liaisons Dangereuses.
 Photo by Emily Schwartz

bully their easily gulled acquaintances.

Veteran troupers capable of oozing charm even as they wallow in power-porn license can temporarily suspend our repugnance for petty idlers of misanthropic mien, but Aston Rep director Charlie Marie McGrath favors a more socially conscious interpretation. This involves transporting our decadent milieu from ancient regime France to Czarist Russia, with court

circles now congregated in St. Petersburg instead of Paris, playboys plying their mistresses with vodka instead of champagne, duels fought with sabers instead of rapiers and Tatar motifs embellishing the vintage gowns of the wealthy patrician ladies. Anachronisms dating from Laclos' time (like blood-letting as standard medical procedure) are shrugged off, while McGrath's playbill note—identifying our play's

THEATER REVIEW

Crime Scene: The Next Chapter

Playwright: Anthony Moseley (also director) and Adam Seidel
 At: Collaboraction at Flat Iron Building, 1579 N. Milwaukee Ave.
 Tickets: 312-226-9633;
 www.collaboraction.org; \$15-\$30
 Runs through: June 21

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

When I was in my 20s I was busted for minor marijuana possession—then still a misdemeanor. As a first-time offender, I attended a 10-week state's attorney program. Every Saturday I gave a urine specimen and participated in group counseling, and charges were dropped. The problem was the scheme didn't distinguish between marijuana and heroin. It was run by 12-step program leaders and former addicts all convinced that marijuana invariably led to



Crime Scene: The Next Chapter.
 Photo by Joel Maisonet

hardcore addiction. Ain't so, McGee.

Crime Scene: The Next Chapter unhappily brought this back to me. This third annual edition of Collaboraction's effort to combat urban violence is too 12-step for me, too one-size-fits-all, especially at the beginning, when audience members cannot sit but must mingle onstage with cast members. When the performance does begin, viewers are asked to hold hands, asked at random to comment on Chicago and challenged to share complicity for Chicago's endemic violence, which is traced back

to 1818 race laws when Illinois became a state (before Chicago was incorporated). The lengthy opening history lesson jumps to the Civil War's Camp Douglas, the Everleigh Club whorehouse (1900), Al Capone (1930s), redlining (1950s), the Robert Taylor Homes, John Burge and corrupt politicians among other examples and implies a cause-and-effect link between them and today's criminal violence. I don't buy it.

When the show's heart finally rolls, it presents five true-life histories of Chicago individuals who overcame violence to become commu-

nity leaders and beacons of non-violence and hope in our city. They are inspired, courageous and unique people whose endurance humbles me. Some are well-known, such as the parents of Hadiya Pendleton; some are less-known (perhaps especially in the white community), such as rap poet/gymnast Sir Taylor (founder of Example Setters Youth Poetry). Some have stories of moving and unexpected compassion, such as Project NIA founder Mariame Kaba.

As profound as the personal stories are, the production is discomfiting (even beyond the opening) for two reasons. The first is that the ensemble of nine (among them two of the actual story heroes, Sir Taylor and Luis Crespo) tells us rather than shows us the tales. We're given bald narrative, even bullet points, rather than being allowed to discover characters and connections. The exception is professional actor Crespo, who takes on multiple characters in a compelling show-within-the-show. The second reason is more serious: The show focuses exclusively on violence in minority communities. Surely violence in Chicago has no boundaries of race or neighborhood?

Crime Scene: The Next Chapter is performed with energy and directness, much of it moving and compelling. Unfortunately, its opening pushed me away rather than pulled me in, and some of the writing (such as the TV newsroom scene) is heavy-handed and unnecessary.

CRITICS' PICKS

The Diary of Anne Frank, Writers Theatre, Glencoe, extended through Aug. 2. The revised script of this familiar drama incorporates long-expurgated diary passages which make Anne more human and less saintly. The production also looks afresh at the characters to make them less archetypal and more nuanced. JA

MIRACLE!, Hell in a Handbag Productions at Mary's Attic, through July 10. Dan Savage makes sure that you'll never think of William Gibson's Helen Keller drama The Miracle Worker the same way again since he has hilariously reset the action in modern-day gay drag and lesbian bars. SCM

Twisted Melodies, Congo Square Theatre at Athenaeum Theatre, through June 14. It takes a brave actor to put himself into the mind of a frightened man preparing to commit suicide, but Kelvin Roston Jr. does it in his solo portrayal of R&B musician Donny Hathaway. MSB

The White Road, Irish Theatre of Chicago at Den Theatre, through June 13. Forget psychological subtext—it's nothing but men against nature in this docudrama about a party of explorers trekking across the Antarctic ice cap in 1912. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

THEATER REVIEW

The December Man

Playwright: Colleen Murphy
 At: Mary-Arrchie Theatre Company at Angel Island, 735 W. Sheridan Rd.
 Tickets: 866-468-3401;
 www.maryarchie.com; \$25
 Runs through: June 28

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The mistake that amateur shooters make, according to novelist Thomas Perry, is that they don't think beyond the moment of the kill, so that often they find suicide to be their sole escape from the chaos and confusion of deciding what to do next. The perpetrator of the 1989 "Montreal Massacre" embarked on his deadly rampage as a protest against feminism—separating a classroom of engineering students by gender, before executing the women—leaving him with no further ideological directive following his initial attack but to discharge his firearm upon himself.

The mess left behind is what Colleen Murphy explores in her microcosmic portrait of PTSD as communicable disease. The first victim of survivor's guilt, to use the more traditional term, is Jean Fournier, one of the young men dismissed by the self-proclaimed defender of masculine privilege. Granted a reprieve, Jean fled in terror; however, like most males in our culture, he later ruminates on whether he could have prevented the bloodbath, his hindsight giving way to recriminations over not having done so. Nightmares lead him to neglect his studies, to the dismay of his parents, whose concern exacerbates his inner conflict, until he is driven to seek solace in a solution serving to launch his mother and father on their descent into fatal despair.

Murphy recounts her fable in reverse chronological order over 90 minutes and eight scenes, beginning in 1992 with Benoit and Kathleen Fournier preparing to end their emotional pain, with the assistance of the kitchen gas stove. As they await unconsciousness, their conversation back-references objects and incidents marking the progress of their

unhappiness—the unfinished architectural model standing crookedly on a side table, the many financial sacrifices necessary to pay for Jean's education, Benoit's affinity for ice fishing, a red Christmas parka.

Gradually, we come to realize that the journey to tragedy is composed of just such infinitesimal steps, and that the taking of a life—even one's own—only perpetuates the suffering. Whatever considerations Benoit and Kathleen may have implemented in orchestrating their demise, there is still the latter's sister, who will arrive in the morning to discover her kin untimely deceased and her future forever scarred by the memory.

Under Patrick New's direction, Murphy's concisely written parable is rendered appropriately grim through the subtle nuances bestowed by Mike Speller, Rudy Galvin and Barbara Roeder Harris on dialogue as stark and commonplace as the Fournier's drab home decor. These make their lesson no less gloomy, but helps us to emerge wiser for having witnessed it.

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THEATER

Gloria and Emilio Estefan land on their feet

BY JERRY NUNN

Gloria Estefan still remains on her feet after a historic career over the years. The Cuban singer started with Miami Sound Machine where the single "Conga" took off. Hit singles continued until a tour bus accident almost took her life.

She came back with a new album titled *Into the Light*, followed by a Spanish-language album, *Mi Tierra*, that became the first diamond album in Spain. The talented performer has starred in movies, written books and sold more than 100 million albums worldwide. She has won seven Grammy Awards as well as an American Music Award for Lifetime Achievement, and has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Gloria and Emilio Estefan have won 26 Grammy Awards combined, and became grandparents in 2012.

Their latest project, *On Your Feet*, is a jukebox musical telling the story of their life and career (starring Ana Villafane and Josh Segarra). Directed by Jerry Mitchell with a book by Alexander Dinelaris, this production debut in Chicago covers the life of two people pursuing the American dream. New music is penned by the Estefans, but there are classic hits such as "Rhythm Is Gonna Get You," "1-2-3" and, of course, "Get On Your Feet."

Gloria and Emilio Estefan sat down with *Windy City Times* after a press conference to do a rare print interview acknowledging their gay fans.

Windy City Times: Hi, Gloria and Emilio. This interview is for a Chicago LGBT newspaper.

Gloria Estefan: Wonderful.

WCT: You have been a big supporter for gay rights.

GE: Listen: We are all people—that is the bottom line.

WCT: I heard from director Jerry Mitchell that there is a not a specific gay character in the musical but is there at least some of your disco cover songs in *On Your Feet*?

GE: In the megamix at the end, for sure, because it is a time span with a lot of our hits in the show.

WCT: "Wepa" was a huge gay hit.

GE: I know! When we did that in the studio I kept thinking the Zumba classes are going to go to town on this one.

WCT: How long was the creation process of this musical?

GE: Well, the producers, the *Nederlanders*, came to me over 20 years ago. It was kind of premature. I think the timing is perfect right now for us. The cosmos has helped to move this



From left: Ana Villafane, Gloria Estefan, Emilio Estefan and Josh Segarra. Villafane and Segarra are the leads in *On Your Feet*.

Photo by Bruce Glikas

along. We have a dream team. Physically we have been working on it three years, which is very fast to have a musical onstage. We worked with Alexander Dinelaris, our writer, for a year and a half before he wrote the book. He blew me away when he did.

All of a sudden we are here in Chicago. It is like mind-blowing to me! It has been very fast.

Emilio Estefan: I think this musical will inspire a lot of people because it shows that it doesn't matter if you are Latino, gay or whatever happens—people need to accept you the way you are. In our time, they tried to get us to change our name and our sound. We didn't do that. I think it is important to stick to what you believe in. I hope this will allow a lot of people to follow their dreams and make them come true.

WCT: How far into your career does the show go?

GE: There is a little Gloria and a little Emilio, so it goes way back in spots. It is not linear completely. We go back and forth in time. It goes from when I was 17 years old, when I joined the band, to age 32, right after I got back onstage after my accident at the American Music Awards.

You can't tell my whole life story. It's impossible. It was hard enough to get that much in. We are so fortunate to have had so many hits that it's impossible to put everything in the play. We let Alex pick the songs that would advance the story.

WCT: Why is the title *On Your Feet*?

GE: It is *On Your Feet* because that is what we have done repeatedly in our lives. We just get back on our feet. We are hoping that the people that come to our show will learn the

universal message is that there will be curve balls thrown in life, you may be at the top of your game, a superstar, then—boom!—something happens and you are learning to walk again. We have constantly had to get on our feet in many ways, from leaving our country, starting in a new place, starting school, Emilio trying to make a living doing a band that he loved for fun and then, physically, when I had to literally walk again. That is why we didn't put *Get On Your Feet*—we didn't want to tell people what to do. We want them to realize that is what you have to keep doing in life. Whatever happens, get on your feet!

WCT: Speaking of feet, do you have a favorite pair of shoes?

GE: My favorite pair are the ones actually signed by Louis Vuitton. It was for his 20th anniversary. He is a big fan and he signed the sole of my shoe.

WCT: Is there anything in your massive career that you would like to accomplish but haven't?

GE: Oh, my gosh; we have really gone beyond any dream but I think one day singing in a free Cuba. Being able to actually sing "*Mi Tierra*" in a free Cuba would be phenomenal. Hopefully I am not too old by the time that happens! [Laughs] I know me and Celia Cruz talked about it a lot but it wasn't meant to be for her. We were hoping that it would be sooner, but hopefully it will happen one day.

On Your Feet! dances to life June 2-July 5 at the Oriental Theatre, 24 W. Randolph St., before a Broadway debut Nov. 5. Call for tickets at 800-775-2000 or look online at www.BroadwayInChicago.com.



Gloria and Emilio Estefan with director Jerry Mitchell (center).

Photo by Bruce Glikas

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eta to reopen June 5 with 'Liberty City'

eta Creative Arts Foundation—Chicago's oldest African-American theater production company—will officially reopen Friday, June 5, with the Chicago premiere of the off-Broadway hit play *Liberty City*, written by Tony Award-winning producer/actor April Yvette Thompson and actor/writer/director Jessica Blank.

The one-woman play tells a story of Miami in the 1980s, where race, politics and police brutality spark a community on edge and ignite a city-wide riot. In the midst of it, a 10-year-old girl must get her young brother home safely.

The production will be staged in eta's Gallery Theater at 7558 S. South Chicago Ave. and is scheduled to run through July 12, with a possible two-week extension.

Performances are 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, and 3 p.m. Sundays. General admission tickets are \$20 each; call 773-752-3955 or visit www.etacreativearts.org.

Internat'l Cultural Festival thru June 6

Black Ensemble Theater, 4450 N. Clark St., will host the first-ever International Cultural Festival through June 6.

The festival will present a week-long cultural montage of music, theater, film, and dance from around the world.

During the week, the festival will present two international films: *The World Before Her* and *After the Fall—HIV Grows Up* (looking back at the Pandemic of Pediatric AIDS in Romania and the health care workers on the front lines).

The Chicago Association of Black Storytellers presents ASE, a storytelling form from West Africa, on June 5. The festival closes with Muntu Dance Theatre of Chicago.

Visit www.BlackEnsembleTheater.org or call 773-769-4451.

THEATER REVIEW

**Sweet Tea:
Black Gay Men
of the South**

Playwright: E. Patrick Johnson
At: Project& at Northwestern University's Wallis Theatre, 1949 Campus Dr., Evanston
Tix: www.communication.northwestern.edu or www.projectand.org; \$10-\$15
Runs through: June 7

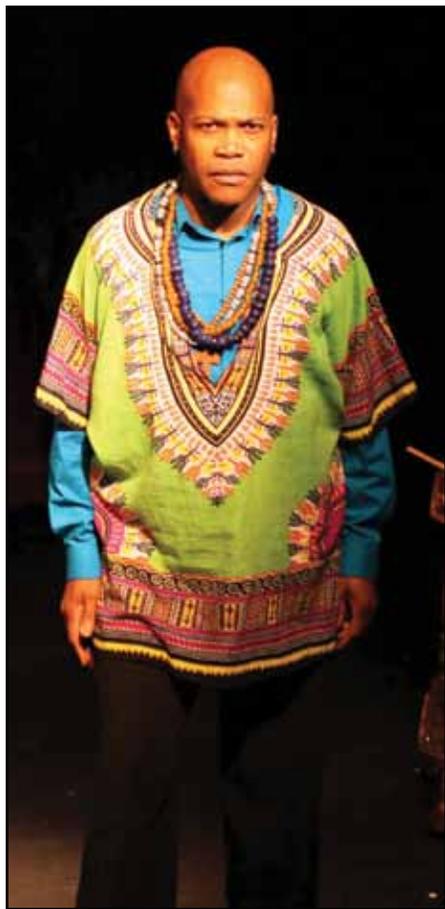
BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

"This show needs some kind of thesis statement." That was my main thought back in 2010 when I saw About Face Theatre's professional Chicago premiere of Sweet Tea: Black Gay Men of the South. The show was E. Patrick Johnson's theatrical adaptation of his own 2008 scholarly book of the same name.

A one-man performance where a chameleon-like Johnson craftily embodied a number of his book interviewees drawn from all over the South, Sweet Tea was full of colorful and specific details about how folk from an often misunderstood minority group function from within a wider U.S. minority group that has carried a burden of centuries of servitude and discrimination. But Sweet Tea, back then, seemed to meander along without a clear-cut goal or framing device to tie the stories together.

Now that Sweet Tea is back again in a limited run produced by Project& at Northwestern University in Evanston, I'm very impressed to see that Johnson has found stronger way to tie together all of his collected characters' stories. And he's done it via a thoroughly revised script and a streamlined production directed by Joseph Megel.

Sweet Tea is so much richer this time around, since Johnson has injected many of his own stories of growing up gifted and gay in Hickory, North Carolina, and how that upbringing



E. Patrick Johnson in Sweet Tea: Black Gay Men of the South

Photo from Keisha McClellan

has impacted his life in relation to his many interview subjects. This approach doesn't allow Johnson to hide behind the mask of his real-life characters, so Sweet Tea is much more emotionally direct and incisively personal this time around.

Megel's staging also helps you feel like you're traversing on a number of life journeys

SPOTLIGHT



The national tour of eight-time Tony-winning Broadway musical **Once** is back in town, this time with Tony winner and Arlington Heights native Scott Waara joining the cast in the supporting role of Da. Fall in love with this sweet stage adaptation of the Academy Award-winning 2006 film romance again, or experience its many charms for the first time if you missed its previous Chicago stint in 2013. Once continues through Sunday, June 7, at the Cadillac Palace Theatre, 151 W. Randolph St. Remaining performances are 7:30 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday, June 3 to 6, with 2 p.m. matinees June 3, 6 and 7. Tickets are \$27-\$92; call 800-775-2000 or visit www.broadwayinchicago.com. Photo by Joan Marcus

through the South thanks to Alex Maness' map-filled projection designs that flit across the dominant dressing screen in David Navalinsky's simplified scenic design. Megel and lighting designers Kathy Perkins and Jim Davis also help to keep the transitions speedy as Johnson adds costume designer Marissa Erickson's suggestive adornments to help delineate between the wide array of African-American men from different generations and classes.

Understandably, with the inclusion of more of Johnson's autobiographical stories, some of

the previous material in Sweet Tea had to go. I particularly miss the explanation of why so much sugar is necessary in recipes for Southern sweet tea and the joked about health hazards that came with it.

Yet Sweet Tea is so much stronger in Johnson's new and deeply personal brew this time around, so there's not much to quibble about. Johnson's stories of his subjects sing and dance again on stage in Sweet Tea, but this time around he's bravely sharing right up alongside all of them.

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KNIGHT at the movies

BY RICHARD KNIGHT, JR.

'54' and more

The movie **54**—out writer-director Mark Christopher's fictional portrait of Studio 54, the glittery, heady disco palace that epitomized the hedonistic party scene—was a flop when it was released in 1998.

Although Christopher's film certainly had its strong points (Mike Myers' performance as giggling, drugged-up club's gay owner Steve Rubell was perfection), it also had many flaws. The biggest was the disappearance of the bisexuality of its leading character, Shane, a gorgeous blonde Adonis with a "Joisey" accent (portrayed by hunky Ryan Phillippe) whose body finds him work at the club as a shirtless barback.

Screening audiences strongly responded to Christopher's somewhat darker vision, which focused on Shane's discovery that his hot bod and angelic looks have appeal for both men and women and are his ticket out of his working class roots. They also loved the sexed-up love triangle between Shane and his new best friends (Breckin Meyer and Salma Hayek), a married couple who are, respectively, another barback and a hat-check girl at the club. But as Christopher has explained in recent interviews, after filming completed, several of the movie's young cast (which also included Neve Campbell in a minor role) started blowing up. What had been intended for urban audiences now seemed to have mainstream appeal.

With that in mind, producer/distributor Miramax ponied up more money and ordered a batch of new scenes, lightening the overall tone of the film and replacing Shane's bisexuality with an improbable romance with the character of the rising young actress that Campbell played. But the tampering pleased no one and the film died a quick death upon release with both audiences and critics. For some—myself included—the tantalizing prospect of what might have been kept interest in **54** alive.

Now, after strong word-of-mouth reaction to a top-secret screening of a version with outtake footage cobbled together from various sources, Christopher has had the opportunity to recut the film, adding back in 36 minutes of excised footage and deleting the other scenes forced on him. The unapologetic bisexuality of Shane, his less-than-innocent motives and the restoration of the love triangle (which feels like a disco-era version of the one between Liza Minnelli/Michael York/Helmut Greim in *Cabaret*) make for a much more interesting movie. One of the restored scenes includes a passionate kiss between Phillippe and Meyer, which the actor has applauded in interviews.

Both versions of the movie artfully caught the "anything goes" atmosphere of the period, and the restored scenes and edgier tone have made for a much more satisfying cinematic experience—no less because the film is now openly queer. **54: The Director's Cut** is available now on HD digital. <http://www.miramax.com/press/54-directors-cut/>

Pride releases

A nice assortment of LGBT-themed films will debut in June—a nice way to celebrate Pride at the movies.

They include **Flawless**, out director Joel Schumacher's 1999 dramedy with Philip Sey-

mour Hoffman as a flamboyant drag queen enlisted to help his less-than-liberal neighbor (Robert DeNiro) overcome a stroke. David Au's 2014 queer film festival fave **Eat with Me** is about an Asian mother coming to terms with her son's sexuality.

Eastern Boys (2013) follows the surprising romance that ensues when a middle-aged Frenchman hires a gay hustler. *She Must Be Seeing Things* is an intriguing 1987 lesbian romance with a fair amount of twists, and *Tiger Orange* (2015) focuses on two, estranged gay brothers (one played by Frankie Valenti aka Johnny Hazzard) struggling to reconnect after their father's death.

Dylan

Emmy Award-winning filmmaker Elizabeth Rohrbach is releasing her short film **Dylan**, about a transgender man finding freedom in self-love and acceptance. Based on an interview with Rohrbach's childhood friend Dylan Winn Garner, the film has played at LGBT film festivals and now, in order to inspire and celebrate Pride, is available for complimentary viewing at the film's website, DylanMovie.com.

Upcoming movie calendar

Highlights from films opening in Chicago, June 5 and 12 (or available digitally)

Entourage (6/5)—The HBO series centered on the antics of a rising young movie star and his three best friends (including his brother) makes the leap to the big screen. Adrian Grenier plays the movie star (based on the life of Mark Wahlberg, who produced the movie and makes a cameo), Jeremy Piven plays caustic agent Ari Gold (based on Rahm Emanuel's brother) and out actor Rex Lee returns as Lloyd, the gay man who is Gold's one-time flustered assistant.

Spy (6/5)—Melissa McCarthy's latest comedy finds her as a nebbish CIA analyst who volunteers to infiltrate the organization of a nefarious arms dealer and thwart a plot to create a global disaster. Rose Byrne and Jason Statham co-star.

Purple Sea (6/8)—Based on a true story, this Italian-made LGBT film-festival favorite is the story of the illicit love affair of Angela and Sarah, who must go to great lengths (think Albert Nobbs) in 19th-century Sicily in order to protect their romance. A free screening will be presented by the Queer Film Society and the Bezazian branch, 1226 W. Argyle Ave., of the Chicago Public Library on Monday, June 8, at 6 p.m. <http://queerfilmsociety.org/pages/events.html#event2>

The Farewell Party (6/12)—A drama with comedic overtones, the movie follows a group of senior citizens in a nursing home in Israel (including a gay couple) who help end the life of a terminally ill friend and who suddenly find themselves asked for similar help by others. Opening at the Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport Ave., and the Renaissance Place Cinema in Highland Park. <http://www.landmarktheatres.com/chicago/film-info/the-farewell-party>

Jurassic World (6/12)—Decades after the tragic and hair-raising events chronicled in the first three movies, Jurassic Park has become the renowned tourist attraction founder John Hammond envisioned. But with visitors and profits declining, a new attraction is brought back to life and, naturally, new tragic and hair-raising events are about to occur. Chris Pratt, Judy Greer, Ty Simpkins and Bryce Dallas Howard star.

Testament of Youth (6/12)—This is based on the true story of a young British woman who leaves her studies at Oxford to become a nurse during WWI, following in the footsteps of her brothers and fiancée. Based on Victoria Brittain's post-WWI memoir, the film stars Swedish actress Alicia Vikander (*The Fifth Estate*, *Ex Machina*).



Purple Sea.



Caitlyn Jenner.
Photo by Annie Leibovitz

Jenner cover unveiled

The upcoming Vanity Fair cover with the woman formerly known as Bruce Jenner has been revealed—and it features the caption "Call Me Caitlyn."

The picture, shot by the magazine's long-time star photographer, Annie Leibovitz, and the headline are the only things on the cover. Inside is an interview with Jenner by journalist Buzz Bissinger. Speaking publicly for the first time since completing gender transition, Caitlyn Jenner compares her emotional two-day photo shoot with Leibovitz to winning the gold medal for the decathlon at the 1976 Olympics.

On Twitter, Caitlyn posted, "I'm so happy after such a long struggle to be living my true self. Welcome to the world Caitlyn. Can't wait for you to get to know her/me."

Tambor, Henson win critics' awards

Jeffrey Tambor added to his accolades by winning the award for best actor in a comedy (for his groundbreaking role in the Netflix series *Transparent*) at the fifth Critics' Choice Awards that took place May 31.

Also, Empire actress Taraji P. Henson showed that she's just as unstoppable as her character, Cookie Lyon, as she won best actress in a drama.

Bessie—the biopic about late blues singer

Bessie Smith that stars Queen Latifah and Mo'Nique—won for best television movie.

HBO's *Olive Kitteridge* took three awards, including best limited series, best actress in a movie or limited series (Frances McDormand) and best supporting actor in a movie or limited series (Bill Murray). In addition, out actress Sarah Paulson won for best supporting actress in a movie or limited series for her work on *American Horror Story: Freak Show*, and Lorraine Toussaint was named best supporting actress in a drama series for *Orange Is the New Black*.

Midler touring, in Chicago June 18

Grammy-winning singer and legendary performer Bette Midler's first major tour in a decade, "Divine Intervention," has launched.

She started her tour with shows in the Florida cities of Hollywood and Tampa, and she's slated to stop by Chicago's United Center on Thursday, June 18.

Accompanied on stage by a 12-piece band as well as backing vocals by the Harlettes, the show features a stage production courtesy of stage designer Michael Cotton.

For complete tour and ticket information, visit bettemidler.com and www.livenation.com.



Bette Midler.
Photo courtesy of Warner Bros.

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Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin in *Grace and Frankie*.
Photo by Melissa Moseley/Netflix.



TELEVISION

The bold standard: Lily Tomlin and Jane Fonda

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Lily Tomlin was watching Jane Fonda weep.

As the showbiz icon released a steady stream of waterworks—she’s “wiping tears away,” Tomlin noted—Fonda pauses slightly to collect herself before answering.

The question? Why gay men have forever revered older women even when the rest of the world—and Hollywood—have not.

“I find the question so moving that it makes me cry,” said Fonda.

There was one revelatory moment among many during this candid conversation with the 77-year-old actress and Tomlin, 75, who appear together in the new Netflix original series *Grace and Frankie*. The beloved pair play two golden girls forced to start anew after their husbands drop a big truth bomb: They’re in love with each other.

This isn’t the actresses’ first time working together, of course.

In 1980, Tomlin and Fonda memorably joined forces with Dolly Parton to put misogynistic men in their place in *Nine to Five*. Decades later, the film is a feminist-celebrated comedy classic.

Will Dolly make a cameo on *Grace and Frankie*? During our freewheeling interview, the two longtime friends talked about the possibility of a *Nine to Five* reunion on their new series, but they revealed plenty more too. Fonda opened up about her own experiences dating high-profile gay men, one of whom proposed to her. Tomlin recalled the time she lashed out at Chita Rivera. But first, the crying.

Windy City Times: You’ve both addressed aging in Hollywood, and this show deals a lot with aging as well. Historically, gay men—we love our Golden Girls, we already love *Grace and Frankie*, we love our Chers and Bette Midlers. Why do you think, despite Hollywood’s reputation for ageism, there has always been a place for older women in the gay community?

Lily Tomlin: I may be terribly wrong and cutting my tongue out for this: It’s like, well, we’re women of a certain age, and maybe we’re considered more audacious.

JF: I find the question so moving that it makes me cry. I had never thought of it before, and it makes me so moved. I think Lily put her finger on it just now. Older women tend to be more audacious; they’re bigger and bolder and, God knows, gay men love big and bold, right?

WCT: Does it go any deeper than that, do you think?

LT: It’s like [drag performer] Lypsinka. I knew he was from Mississippi, and he’s like a little kitten in a way; his hair is so soft and pale red,

and he’s got a big, high, very white-skinned forehead. When I first saw Lypsinka, I could just see this little boy—4 or 5 years old in Mississippi—growing up around all these Southern women, and my family’s Southern, too.

I just saw him seeing through them and into their hearts. He saw the women being oppressed and being pigeonholed and how they act kind of audaciously just to free themselves. I just could see that little boy, and he satirized women’s behavior so brilliantly—all the stuff, the travails they have—and I just wept when I saw him because he was so brilliant. I think there are hinges between those two things. Jane is wiping tears from her eyes.

JF: How she said that—that he sees through them into their hearts. And also: The notion of surviving.

LT: And him making up this incredible creature who’s just so much fun to watch, and yet it’s painful. I could feel his little boy pain all through those years.

WCT: You both have had a profound influence on the LGBT and ally movements. Can you share a moment in your lives as LGBT activists and trailblazers that stand out as particularly memorable to you?

JF: Campaigning with Harvey Milk in the Castro District in San Francisco for Prop 6. He was the most joyous. He was like Allen Ginsberg. He was always smiling and laughing, and he was beloved and he was funny. The most lovable person. I was so happy when I was with him. And it was just so much fun going into those gay bars with him—oh my God!

LT: I never got to meet Harvey Milk. I knew [LGBT activist and historian] Vito Russo; he was my good friend. I used to exchange so many stories with him. I was up on the Strip one night when I was not on *Laugh-In* yet. I was unknown and a woman that I was friends with, who was a publicist, had brought Chita Rivera to meet me, and Chita talked with a Bronx accent, and she’s talking really fast and you don’t know what she’s saying. I kind of zoned out for a minute because I could hardly understand her at that point, and then I suddenly heard her say, “purse nelly.” First she had said my “boy dancers” and the skin on the back of my neck bristled up, and that’s when she said “purse nelly” and then I just went ballistic. I said, “What did you say?!”

WCT: You lashed out at Chita Rivera?

LT: I lashed out. She said, “I dunno! WHADISAY?” I said, “You said, ‘purse nelly.’ I wanna know what that means. What you meant by that!” “I don’t know. Whadisa? Pursesnelly? Personally.” She was saying “personally!”

JF: Personally! [Laughs]

LT: And I didn’t even cop to it. I was so em-

barrassed. I just doubled over laughing and fell on the floor.

JF: I just went to my 60th high school reunion. I went four years to an all-girls boarding school, and in the days leading up to the reunion I kept wondering, “God, I wonder whatever happened to Pat Johnson?” Because everyone in the class knew that Patty Johnson was gay, or at least we thought that she was. But no one talked about it. Not even among ourselves. Nobody ever said anything. And she was at the reunion—there were only four of us at the reunion.

LT: Four out of the whole class?! Awww.

JF: And Pat Johnson was there, with an oxygen tank, mind you. It was the first time she’d been out to dinner in five years because she had some allergies to chemicals. And there she was with her wife! An amazing woman violinist! And I thought, well, this is very great. I never ever would have imagined back in the day that Pat Johnson would be able to get married to her lady friend.

WCT: Let’s talk about your friendship with each other. Was it smooth sailing from the very beginning?

LT: Yeah; we hit it off right away. I was so excited when Jane came to see one of my shows way back in the day

JF: This was pre-*Nine to Five*!

LT: Yeah. I was all excited. She came backstage and was very complimentary, and then next thing I knew...

JF: I was offering her a role in *Nine to Five*, which was originally going to be a serious movie until I saw Lily’s one-woman show called *Appearing Nightly*. I decided I didn’t want to make a movie about office workers until she was one of them. And it had to be a comedy. It took me a year to convince her and Dolly to be in it! During that year we kind of saw each other because we’d be talking about different ideas and stuff, and so we kind of became friends before *Nine to Five*.

WCT: What is different about working with each other on *Grace and Frankie* compared to when you worked together on *Nine to Five* 35 years ago?

JF: We’re together more! I mean, it’s four months, almost every day for almost 15 hours, which is a real treat for me. You know, Lily is very unusual. She has a real funny bone. So, watching her take on not just the scripts but life is a pleasure.

LT: Thank you, Ms. Fonda!

WCT: After doing the first season of *Grace and Frankie*, what advice do you have for women who are romantically involved with a gay man?

JF: Try to stay friends. You know, it happened

to a friend of mine when I lived in Atlanta, and she told me about it and it was very hard for her because she really loved him a lot. Because she loved him, she was able to understand that he needed to become who he really was, and they remained very, very close friends and they still live in the same building. I think that’s the way to do it. Compassion, empathy, love, understanding—we need more of it.

WCT: Have either of you dated a gay man before?

JF: Oh, yes! Oh my god. When I was young, I was the female that gay guys wanted to try to become heterosexual with. A very famous actor who’s gay—and I will not name names—asked me to marry him. I was very flattered, but I said, “Why?” This was 1964. And I mean, he wasn’t the only one. It’s very interesting. And I lived for two years with a guy who was trying to become heterosexual. I’m intimately acquainted with that.

WCT: Did that come to mind as you were shooting this show, where you are married to a gay man?

JF: [Laughs] No! Not until you made me think of it right now.

WCT: Lily, have you had any similar experiences?

LT: No, I didn’t; but I had girlfriends who dated gay guys in college and they couldn’t understand why so-and-so didn’t, you know, take them into their arms and sweep them away. Because they danced together so well! They were beautiful, tall blonde people! They were just kind of breathtaking, and they did make a nice looking couple, but that was about as far as it would go—looks.

I had a girlfriend and we got into a big fight about being gay when I first moved to New York. She was watching *Lust for Life* with Anthony Quinn, who is so macho as Gauguin in that movie, and I said something like, “Look how macho this guy is—he’s unbelievable!” She said, “If I were gay, I’d beat down the door of the nearest psychiatrist.” I said, “If I fell in love with my refrigerator, I’d give it lamb chops!”

WCT: Netflix has really been a pioneer in reaching beyond LGBT stereotypes and being LGBT-inclusive, and it’s done it again with *Grace and Frankie*. How do you feel about the state of gay characters on TV as a whole? And what is it about this platform that allows Netflix to tell LGBT stories without getting gimmicky or exploitative?

LT: I think it’s been a long time coming. Although, it’s happened because of so many things that have gone before, and this culture has changed. Large parts of the culture have changed. Not the culture as a whole. You know, there’s still a lot of—

JF: Homophobia. I lived in the South for 20 years, and, unfortunately, homophobia is all too alive and rampant, but because there are so many more gay men and women in mass media and they’re very lovable—and more and more people are coming out—Americans know somebody who’s gay and lesbian. Once that happens, it’s a lot harder to remain homophobic.

WCT: Did you ever think that gay marriage would be a reality in your lifetime?

LT: No, I did not.

JF: No, I didn’t either.

LT: I mean, I began to suspect. The last generation or two that have come along, they so demanded to be visible and they’ve taken for granted everything that the gay community had fought for so hard for a long time—it was wiped away from their minds that they were not accepted or not loved. I mean, they may have known it but they didn’t own it.

JF: I agree, and I’m very optimistic. I found what Justice Kennedy said—that it should be looked at as sex discrimination—cause for optimism.

WCT: I remember when this show was announced, everyone was really hyped about you two getting back together, but they were also hoping for a Dolly Parton cameo.

Turn to page 27

MOVIES

'The Overnight' director talks taboos, uncomfortable moments

BY GARY M. KRAMER

The awkward comedy of manners *The Overnight* has Alex (Adam Scott) and Emily (Taylor Schilling) anxious about having to make new friends in Los Angeles, where they recently moved.

When their son, RJ (RJ Hermes), befriends Max (Max Moritt) at the playground, Max's father, Kurt (Jason Schwartzman), invites RJ and his parents over for pizza with his wife, Charlotte (Judith Godrèche). The bond that starts to form between the adult couples quickly mirrors the easygoing friendship between the kids. However, after RJ and Max are put to bed, things become a bit more intense. Alcohol is consumed, bongos are shared, and clothes are shed. Then Alex reveals his concerns about inadequacy, and things get even more sexually explicit and intense. Writer/director Patrick Brice met with *Windy City Times* to talk about his inspiration for the sexual shenanigans that happen during *The Overnight*.

Windy City Times: So, let's talk about penises. Why are they a source of awe and shame for the film's adult male characters?

Patrick Brice: I wanted the movie to be about this guy [Alex] overcoming this issue [inadequacy] and gaining self-acceptance.

WCT: Did you write about this issue because it is taboo? You find it funny? It's something you grapple with?

PB: [Laughs] I have never seen it done in this context or point of view where it's almost taking an empathetic approach to it. I wanted it to be funny, but not in a way where you are laughing at the characters. You are laughing

with [Alex] as you are discovering stuff.

WCT: So given the penises on display, and discussions about them in the film, I'm curious to know about your issue with nudity and body image?

PB: I wouldn't call them issues! Obviously, I saw it as fodder for comedy. It goes back to this joke I pull on my wife, where I do this impression of Buffalo Bill from *Silence of the Lambs* and do a little dance. Nothing brings me more joy than that.

WCT: I would love to see that! It's a shame we are in a hotel lobby and not in a private room.

PB: [Laughs]. I know! ... I saw it as being this kind of interesting almost bait and switch. That 20 minutes into the movie, you find out of the crux of the main character is that he has this body issue. I also knew that because the movie takes place in 24 hours, there could only be so much of an emotional arc, or growth or journey for the character in that amount of time. I wanted his thing to be overcoming this small—no pun intended—issue.

WCT: The film is about various bad decisions, uncomfortable moments, inappropriate behavior and awkward exchanges. Why did you explore these aspects of human nature?

PB: I don't know. Maybe it's a reflection with how I deal with this human journey as well. An awkward interaction can feel like life or death in the moment. I wanted to take that roller coaster model of a crazy journey and make it about human interaction going wrong or right.

WCT: What can you say about the morality



Adam Scott and Taylor Schilling in *The Overnight*. Photo by Melissa Moseley/Netflix.

in the film?

PB: It's a comedy of manners. I think one of the things that's driving Alex and Emily's characters to stay in the house is their fear of offending Max and Charlotte. How far do you go with that?

WCT: What can you reveal about the, ahem, climactic scene, which I don't want to spoil?

PB: That scene was initially written to be much more intense and emotional. Once we got to that point during filming, that didn't seem to be the right way to go. One of the things that was refreshing and surprising to me was that we left a lot up to the actors. You can only control so much. You create these boundaries for people to play with them and I think it's really cool to have a movie like this where you are laughing and being surprised by it and then

having this moment of calm and sweetness. It's interesting to see different audiences react to it—laughing or completely fucking uncomfortable or in complete shock.

WCT: Which character are you most like: Kurt, who is expanding and open to experience, or Alex, who is more of a puke-and-rally kind of guy?

PB: I'm a puke and rally kind of guy, for sure. It's something I actually do. I'm known for it. I have stomach issues. My anxiety manifests itself in my stomach. But I respond to this dynamic of Alex and Emily for sure. I've been married to my wife for three years but we been together for ten. It's very much me stepping in potholes and my wife berating me about it. And I'm obsessed with sex.

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Honeybird: Bisexual musician on coming out and new album



Honeybird.
Photo by Bianca Bourgeois.

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Multi-instrumentalist singer-songwriter Honeybird aka Monique Mizrahi's journey as an out bisexual has culminated with her new album, "Out Comes Woman."

"The title refers to the fact that I came out for the second time about a year ago. The first time was ten years ago and I feel like if you come out and no one listens it's not exactly coming out," said Honeybird. "I realized that the only way I'm going to get past this is to try coming out again so that's partially why I titled this album 'Out Comes Woman.' The title is empowering to me and it can also refer to any woman's rebirth. In my case I was inviting everyone to accept me and who I am."

The album has 14 tracks, six of which are related to her coming out process. The theme song is "TMBLGBT (They Might Be LGBT)" and the other LGBT-focused tracks are "Must Get To You, Ypsilon" (about her ex-girlfriend), "Wanted In, Wanted Out" (about leaving her husband) and "Come Out" (about pride).

"The final LGBT song is 88 Bi Dead Chickens," said Honeybird. "It's the name of the band I had when I was 13 years old which consisted solely of me and my electric bass. I thought it was apropos to include that title in the album, as a flashback to when I realized I was bisexual versus when I actually owned it, some 24 years after that. It gives me courage."

Honeybird's journey as an out bisexual began when she attended the Pride Festival in Bologna, Italy, in 2013. She met Chiara from Le Cose Cambiano, the It Gets Better affiliate in Italy, at the festival and after that meeting Honeybird decided to record her coming out video for the site. This was the first time she came out publicly and since then she's only gotten positive responses from the video.

Recently, Honeybird played at the LGBT expo at the Javits Center in New York City and is making arrangements to play at other LGBT events in the future.

Mizrahi chose Honeybird as her stage name in 2002 while she was living in Rome. "I think that birds are glorious. They wake up and just sing. I love that they are instinctual like that. I chose honey because I love honey. It's sticky and sweet and delicious," said Honeybird.

Music has always been a part of Honeybird's life. "As a young kid, I would play the piano really loud and I always really enjoyed that but that was when I was three years old. When I was 13 I started playing electric base and punk stuff," said Honeybird. "My parents always supported my musical aspirations and even gave

me the chance to study it."

Honeybird plays a variety of other instruments, many of which are featured on "Out Comes Woman." They include the charango (a 10-string traditional Andean instrument that she found in Bolivia in 2003), a salmon-colored electric P-bass, woodwinds, double bass and assorted percussion instruments.

Not only did Honeybird study music at home, she also attended Interlochen Arts Academy at the Interlochen Center for the Arts in Michigan during her senior year and then went on to get a degree in music production and engineering from Berklee College of Music in Boston.

Honeybird spent the first year out of college working for a recording studio as an audio engineer in Los Angeles and then moved to Rome when she was 22-years-old. She spent the next 14 years there before moving back to the states. She now resides in Brooklyn.

A first generation Los Angeleno, Honeybird was born in 1977 and spent her childhood in Los Angeles with her now divorced parents and a younger brother. She first realized that she was bisexual when she was 13-years-old but it wasn't until she attended a boarding school in Rome (her dad grew up there) during her sophomore year that she acted on these feelings with one of her friends.

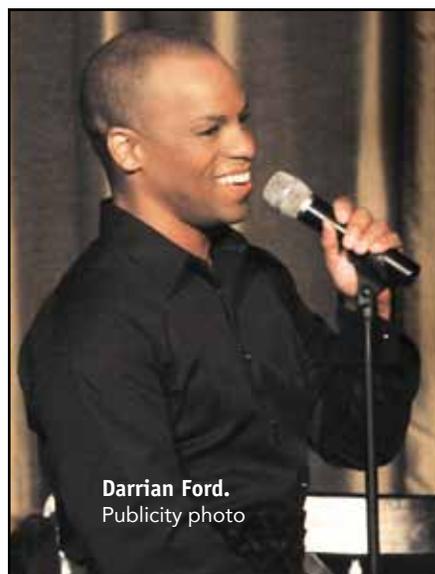
"While I was in boarding school, I went to a place near the Coliseum with my friend and that's where we kissed. I could feel some attraction to her, that she was bisexual or a lesbian and I almost wonder if either of us had said something if we could've empowered each other to be more comfortable with our sexuality," said Honeybird. "I think one of the reasons why it took me so long to come out was her rejection. After the kiss she didn't want to talk to me and not only was she not my friend anymore she was also really angry and that hurt me for many years. In my mind, I knew there was nothing wrong with it but the way she reacted after the fact was jarring. That's why I'm happy to be doing this album because if one person hears it and begins to think that it's OK to be an out and proud bisexual that would be amazing. If I had at least one positive experience earlier in my life then it would've made the world of difference to me and I hope this album helps other young people accept themselves for who they are."

When Honeybird came out to her family her brother was the first one to accept it. "My dad has dealt with it a lot better than I ever expected and my mom is slowly accepting that I'm bisexual," said Honeybird.

Honeybird noted that living in Rome was cre-

atively satisfying; however, it was also hard for her because she said it's a difficult place to be openly LGBT. She moved back to the States because of the economic situation and the fact that it was impossible for her to be an out bisexual in Italy.

While in Rome, Honeybird started writing poetry and songs. She says she wouldn't have pursued music again if she'd stayed in the states because she wasn't listening to her in-



Darrian Ford.
Publicity photo

Local singer covers Sam Cooke in concerts

Chicago singer Darrian Ford brings the music of "The King of Soul" Chicagoan Sam Cooke to the city's south side in "The Cooke Book—The Music of Sam Cooke" at Hyde Park's Promontory, 5311 S. Lake Park Ave West, at 7:30 p.m. on July 12, 19 and 26.

Among Cooke's hits are "Twistin' the Night Away," "Change is Gonna Come" and "You Send Me."

This August, Ford will release *The New Standard*, his first album of new original music in more than a decade.

Tickets (\$20, \$27 and \$35) are on sale; visit www.promontorychicago.com or call 312-801-2100.

Read an interview with Ford at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/A-change-is-coming-for-out-performer-Darrian-Ford-/48676.html>.

ner creative self. She got Italian citizenship through her grandfather which meant that she could work so she formed a band in 2006 and they began performing shortly after that. In 2013, Honeybird did 200 shows throughout Europe and it was then that she realized she should be making music for a living. Over the years her musical style has evolved from punk to jazz/jazz inspired tunes.

As for Honeybird's musical inspirations, she singled out jazz bass player Charles Mingus, Perry Farrell, Paul Simon and Tom Ze from Brazil. Honeybird's favorite artists as a kid were Siouxsie and the Banshees and Sonic Youth. Another musician that has influenced her recently is the English rock singer Skin.

"I teach Italian, and Skin contacted me about learning Italian so we had one week of lessons. What struck me the most about her was that she was an out and proud bisexual artist and has been for years," said Honeybird.

When it came time to move back to the states Honeybird decided to live in Brooklyn because her brother lives in the area and New York City is a place where musicians converge.

"Brooklyn was a happy medium between California and Rome and it seemed like a good place for me discover new territory musically and explore myself creatively," said Honeybird. "It's such a vibrant community and I've had some great encounters. It was interesting moving back to the states after being overseas for years."

Honeybird will be holding a release party for the album May 14 at Nublu in New York City. "There's going to be hula hooping," said Honeybird. "I want this release party to be more of a celebration of coming out than a traditional release party. After that I'm going to try and do as many shows as possible abroad and here in the states."

See www.honeybird.net for more information.

UChicago to honor Joffrey's Wheater

Joffrey Ballet Artistic Director Ashley Wheater will be awarded the University of Chicago (UChicago) Jesse L. Rosenberger Medal at the school's 523rd convocation on Saturday, June 13.

Wheater is the 51st recipient of the Rosenberger Medal, established in 1917 by Mr. and Mrs. Jesse L. Rosenberger. The medal recognizes achievement through research, in authorship, in invention, for discovery, for unusual public service or for anything "deemed of great benefit to humanity."

Wheater joined The Joffrey Ballet as its artistic director in 2007.

The Joffrey Ballet recently announced its 60th-anniversary season of celebration in 2015-16, including three world premieres.

DJ competition at Center on June 13

Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., will host "By Women For Women: Everything Old is New Again," which will pit female DJs of the LGBTQ community against each other while promoting an evening of music and dance.

The event—to take place on the rooftop terrace, reception hall and theater Saturday, June 13—will crown the DJ. DJ All The Way, DJ Gemini Jones, DJ Kirby, DJ Kristin, DJ Rhated R, and DJ Sandra Suave will compete for the title.

Doors open at 5 p.m. with a cocktail reception until 7 p.m. and the DJ competition to follow until 9 p.m. Tickets are \$30 before June 10, and \$45 after that date.

Event sponsors include B.Blyss, Dykes on Bikes, L-Stop and She100. The evening will benefit both Center on Halsted and the Veranita Gray LGBTQ Youth Fund. For more information, visit www.centeronhalsted.org.

TELEVISION

'Becoming Us': A real-life 'Transparent'

BY MELISSA WASSERMAN

Evanston teen Ben Lehwald lets television viewers into his world when he introduces us to his family on the ABC Family docuseries *Becoming Us*, premiering June 8.

This is not another family sitcom. Ben's parents divorced only a few years ago. The plot twist came later: when Ben's dad, transitioned from being Charlie Lehwald to Carly Lehwald. The series follows Ben, his family and friends as they live this not-so-traditional family life. This includes his girlfriend Danielle, who also has a transgender father, which the two did not realize upon initially meeting.

Ben said his first reaction to the news he got left him understandably dumbfounded and wondering if his parents were going to be okay.

"I tried running away from how I felt for a really long time," said Ben. "I got into a really bad phase. That's my number one thing now is being in touch with my emotions because it's not good to hold it in. I was just trying to run away for a really long time and I just got to a point where I couldn't do it anymore and I just had to deal with it."

Ben is usually the one taking photos and named himself "Abstractive" on Instagram. He also enjoys video games and practices his artistic (hereditary) talents by playing guitar.

"At first, it was like meeting a stranger that I've known for a really long time because I still saw Charlie, but I saw all these Carly things now," said Ben about taking in his dad's transition. "She was free, basically. She didn't hold anything back."

Ben is close with both his parents; however, as Ben and his mom, Suzy Crawford, talked with *Windy City Times*, they were in sync and finished each other's sentences. When asked how they would describe Carly, Ben says, "butterfly."

"She's delicate as hell, she's just all over the place sometimes," said Ben. "She's just a delicate, little butterfly. Butterflies are compassionate, pretty and sweet ... and they change; they transition."

"They hop from thing to thing," Crawford added lightheartedly.

Ben and Crawford said the whole decision has flung open the doors and opened their eyes to the LGBT community. As for how Ben understands his trans parent's big decision, he said, "For people to understand it better, I would say ask yourself if you wake up in the morning and you say I don't want to go to work because I hate my job. That's exactly the same as I'm going to wake up in the morning and I don't feel comfortable in my skin. It's all about genuine happiness and you just got to accept their life because it's not yours."

Carly, who lives in Chicago, said it has been something she struggled with since childhood. Not knowing the term "transgender," or the definition, she said there was a lack of understanding from her own perspective. At 40, she saw a friend go through the transition and the research began.

"I learned it was something I could do and realized that it was something I really wanted to do," Carly said. "After 40 years of being socialized one way, it really does take a lot to re-socialize as a female. It's not just dressing, it's not just looking the part, it's not just having the body parts, it's really learning to live as a woman. All the good and the not so good that come with it."

Carly said she has taken the transition slowly by the helpful advice of a psychologist. "The best transition is the longest transition," is something that resonated and helped navigate her transition.

"I wanted to go guns blazing and finish tomorrow," said Carly. "I had those words from her to really guide me because that kind of kept me grounded and helped me move slowly. The result of that was when I did that, I've had a great transition. All throughout the right people have been put in my life at the right time continuously."

Ben came up with the concept of the show. He explains it started as a joke he threw out to his mom while watching TV in the living room one night. After having a good laugh, they left the idea alone, but then followed up on it after everyone was on board. The series is executive produced by Ryan Seacrest.

The goal, Ben said, is to help as many people as he possibly can.

"I really want to appeal to the kids that are dealing with it because we looked on the Internet and there isn't really a platform for kids to go to to express how they feel about it,"

Ben said. "Really, I was just thinking of being able to help those kids that are dealing with it that really don't know where to go and having someone to look up to. Hopefully, that inspires them to do better in everyday life."

"Mostly, what our message in the show is that for people who might be in the middle of thinking about doing a transition, for people who are affected by people who might be transitioning, everybody's feelings are valid," Crawford said about the show's mission. "Everybody's feeling should be honored and everybody needs to find a way to support each other because there's so much sadness and pain connected in the community, so many suicides and it's just really not necessary."

Carly said she also wants to be able to be of service to her community, saying she hopes "the show can help normalize the transgender experience and empower trans men and women to live their authentic lives. And to get the people on board who aren't on board today."

"We're just normal people," Carly said of what viewers can expect to see. "We're loving, we're creative, we're energetic, we have families, we go to work, we are normal everyday people that deserve a chance at life."

For more on *Becoming Us*, visit: <http://www.abcfamily.com>.



Carly on 'Becoming Us.'

Photo by ABC Family/Jean Whiteside



WINDY CITY TIMES



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Chicago native helps make others look great

BY ROSS FORMAN

Alma Izquierdo was attending Columbia College, majoring in photography, when she decided to take a makeup class. The instructor, Sam Mayer, asked Izquierdo during the class if she'd be interested in training to be a substitute makeup artist for the NBC-5 News.

She accepted the offer and was trained to do TV news makeup, which led her to the makeup departments at CBS, WGN, PBS, the Lyric Opera and elsewhere. She's done makeup for TV, film, video, photography, theater, and fashion shows.

"My intentions were to become a photographer like my father, but life took me in a different direction and I couldn't be happier," she said.

Izquierdo is a North Side native who now lives in Chicago's East Lake View neighborhood and is a multitasking lesbian in a committed relationship with Michelle Figueroa. Izquierdo is a self-employed business owner (Art & Soul Bodyworks, Inc.), a massage therapist and freelance makeup artist. She is the makeup department head on the TV show Chicago PD.

She has been doing makeup since 1982.

"With technology, social media and our current culture being as [it is], there aren't too many people [who] don't have an idea of what being on [a television show] set may be like," she said. "However, most cast and crew members reflect the true experience of it when you ask them 'How's it going?' and they reply 'Oh, living the dream' or 'Living the glamorous life,' with a light tone of sarcasm.

"Working on set is an intense experience: it's exhilarating, exhausting, demanding, fun, educational, and stressful to name a few [adjectives]."

As a makeup artist on set, Izquierdo is responsible to keep an eye on the television monitors to make sure that the actors look as they should for that scene, she said. "It also requires one to be prepared for any changes that the director may ask for, to have your set bag stocked in order to be able to supply the actors with anything they might need like lotion, eye drops [or] floss," she said. "You'd be surprised what we're asked for and how much we carry in our set bags. My set bag easily weighs 45 pounds.

"Most importantly a makeup artist is responsible for continuity. That means, one needs to be mentally aware of the sequence of scenes, how the actor is supposed to continue to look in each one and when there should be a change. Since all scenes are [not] shot in order, it can be a challenge. For this reason you're always on, always watching the actors and the monitors, always ready to jump in when necessary."

Izquierdo said her experience working with celebrities has been, for the most part, "an incredible experience." She said she's worked with some "wonderful, gracious, down-to-earth, talented celebrities," including Leonard Nemoy, Mike Ditka, Raquel Welch, David Carradine, Oprah Winfrey, John C. Reilly, Rosie O'Donnell, Jane Lynch, Cheech Marin, Quincy Jones, Placido Domingo, Daryl Hannah, Kristin Chenoweth, Ernie Banks, Deepak Chopra, Blair Underwood and others.

"I've had the opportunity to have conversations with some of these talented people. It's really one of the most fulfilling parts of my job," she said. "What amazed me most in the beginning of my career is how 'regular' they are. For the most part, they're just like you and me."

Izquierdo's resume is impressive, as she's worked on such shows/productions as Boss, Playboy Club, Mob Doctor, Shameless, Chicago Fire, Chicago PD, The Dark Knight, Public Enemies, Contagion, Divergent, Man of Steel, CBS News, NBC News, WGN News, Telemundo



Alma Izquierdo.

Photo courtesy of Izquierdo

(news), Lyric Opera, Wicked and Easy Abby. Naturally, she has fond memories, such as:

—Doing makeup on Jesse Jackson during the Democratic Convention while he spoke to a dozen of his advisors at the head of a conference table. "He didn't blink an eye or pause for even a moment," she said.

—"I watched as Rachel Welch took off her sweater and skirt in front of me without a word of warning in a small makeup room."

—Placido Domingo gave her a private performance and sang an old romantic Spanish song when he learned she is Mexican.

—"I did makeup on Rosie O'Donnell [during] one of her R Family cruises when the ship was rocking back and forth on turbulent waters. All I could think to myself the whole time was 'Don't throw up on Rosie ... don't throw up on Rosie.'"

—While doing makeup on David Carradine, he rolled a cigarette and put it in his mouth. Carradine was told that smoking was not allowed in the building, to which he replied, "Who is going to stop me?" He never lit up, Izquierdo said.

So what's the key to making someone look incredible for TV?

Experience, and a fairly large bag of tricks, she said, laughing.

"Not all celebrities are naturally beautiful and flawless," Izquierdo said. "Over the years, I've been fortunate to work with some very talented makeup artists who've shared their secrets. Sometimes, like in any profession, you learn through trial and error or when flying by the seat of your pants.

"The media and our culture continuously promote the notion that people in the limelight should be flawless when the truth is that very few people, compared to the majority, actually are and then of course it doesn't last forever. I can't say there's any particular product or technique that makes everyone look incredible. It's different for everyone. However, I take it upon

myself to find the beauty in each person and accentuate it, then camouflage and downplay any flaws."

Izquierdo said the main difference between getting ready for TV and getting ready to go out on, say, a Friday night, is lighting. "The lighting on set varies of course and colors translate differently through the lens and onto the TV," she said.

For example, some shades of red lipstick translate more blue than how they actually look.

Izquierdo said the time in her makeup chair for each actor/actress varies greatly, depending on the person and the situation. An actor can take as little as 10 minutes or as long as several hours. On average a female actress with regular beauty makeup takes about 45 minutes.

Izquierdo's specialty is corrective and beauty makeup. "I'm a stickler for corrective makeup and making the bare face look its absolute best before applying color, [such as lipstick, eye shadow or blush]," she said.

"Being the makeup department head of a TV show or movie is extremely challenging. The hours are long and the work is challenging, physically and mentally. My longest workday on Chicago PD was 17 hours; my longest workday

was 23 hours on Public Enemies. On a daily basis, I'm responsible for making sure we're adequately staffed and supplied, that the actors are done on time, that everything goes well on set, and that we keep within budget.

"Additionally, before each episode I read the next script, take notes on any FX makeup that goes into play, pre-plan to schedule my staff, order supplies, and meet with my key makeup artist (FX specialist) and [the] director. My mind is always working and I'm constantly communicating via text with my staff, the crew, the assistant director and the production office. As part of keeping track of continuity, all of the makeup artists are responsible for taking pics of every actor with each makeup change and filing them in a continuity book. There are other not-so-glamorous tasks as well like washing the facial towels and sanitizing the makeup brushes. There's always something to do."

But still, "I love helping people look their best," she said. "I love interacting and working with talented people. It's a dream job."



Big Freedia.

Photo by Kareem Black

Pride Fest set for June 20-21

Chicago Pride Fest returns to Boystown June 20-21 with a mix of national headliners and festival favorites.

The annual event, which the Northalsted Business Alliance hosts, is debuting the "Keep Pride Proud" catch phrase.

On Saturday (June 20), Deb Gibson, Jessica Sutta and The Veronicas take to the Main Stage. Sunday (June 21) will feature Big Freedia, Crystal Waters, Estelle, Cazwell and St. Lucia.

The event will take place on Halsted Street from Addison to Grace streets, 11 a.m.-10 p.m. There is a \$10 suggested donation.

EXPO Chicago names exhibitors

EXPO CHICAGO, The International Exposition of Contemporary & Modern Art, announced the list of premier galleries that will exhibit Sept. 17-20 at Navy Pier's Festival Hall, 600 E. Grand Ave.

President/Director Tony Karman released the 2015 exhibitor list of 140 leading galleries representing 15 countries and 40 cities from around the world. Countries represented

at the 2015 exposition include: Austria, Belgium, China, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the United States.

Some of the Chicago exhibitors include casati gallery, Corbett vs. Dempsey, Stephen Daiter Gallery, Douglas Dawson, McCormick Gallery, Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Carrie Secrist Gallery and Volume Gallery.

Visit EXPOChicago.com.

'Dance for Life' on Aug. 15

Seven of Chicago's dance companies will once again come together for Dance for Life on Saturday, Aug. 15.

The gala reception will be at Hilton Chicago, 720 S. Michigan Ave., at 5 p.m. The performances will take place at Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, 50 E. Congress Pkwy., at 7:30 p.m.

Participating companies include Giordano Dance Chicago, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Joffrey Ballet, River North Dance Chicago, C5, Chicago Human Rhythm Project and Same Planet Different World Dance Theatre.

Tickets are \$15-\$75 (performance only) and \$250-\$600 (includes admission to the gala reception and premiere seating at the performance); call 312-922-5812 or visit www.danceforlifechicago.org.

Black Alphabet Film Festival July 23-26

The Black Alphabet Film Festival (BAFF) returns for its third outing of showcasing films and other works that highlight and explore the Black LGBTQ and same-gender-loving (SGL) experience on July 23-26.

This year BAFF's international film festival will now take place beginning Thursday, July 23, and closing on Sunday, July 26, at Center on Halsted and a venue to be determined in the near future.

Tickets will be available for purchase as of early June.

BAFF is conducting an Indiegogo campaign at <http://igg.me/at/BAFF2015>. The campaign ends July 17. Last year, the festival raised \$3,120; this year's goal is \$5,000.

Also, BAFF is accepting film and video submissions. For details on how to submit a film or video, visit <http://blackalphabet.org/submission> or <https://filmfreeway.com/festival/baff>.

Visit www.blackalphabet.org for more information.

Late gay baseball player Burke to be honored

BY ROSS FORMAN

Glenn Burke, the late gay professional baseball player who died from AIDS-related causes in 1995, is receiving an honor from the Baseball Reliquary Inc., a Southern California-based nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering an appreciation of U.S. art and culture through the context of baseball history.

Burke is one of three inductees—in his eighth year on the ballot—for its 17th class of electees to the Shrine of the Eternals, the national organization's equivalent to the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Burke will be honored in a public ceremony on July 19, at the Donald R. Wright Auditorium in the Pasadena (Calif.) Central Library, along with fellow inductees Sy Berger and Steve Bilko.

the Shrine of the Eternals since elections began in 1999, including Jim Abbott, Moe Berg, Yogi Berra, Ila Borders, Jim Bouton, Bill Buckner, Roberto Clemente, Josh Gibson, "Shoeless" Joe Jackson, Roger Maris, Minnie Minoso, Satchel Paige, Jimmy Piersall, Pam Postema, Jackie Robinson, Pete Rose and Don Zimmer, among others.

Bigger, better Lakefront PRIDE Party, race planned

BY ROSS FORMAN

Organizers for the second annual Lakefront PRIDE Party & 5K Run/Walk have lofty goals for the event, scheduled for 6-10 p.m. on Thursday, June 25, at Fullerton Avenue and Lake Shore Drive.

Last year, the event drew about 500 participants and raised more than \$1,000 for charity. This year, organizers are shooting for more than 1,000 attendees and they are hoping to raise \$10,000 for the Center on Halsted.

"Our goal is for this year's event to [be] bigger and better than 2014 and to get the community excited and engaged for Pride weekend by hosting an unforgettable lakefront party and 5K run/walk that will benefit a well-deserving local community organization," said Michelle Krage, president of StarEvents, which is producing the event.

"Last year, the event focused on the 5K run/walk, which culminated in an after-party for participants to celebrate with their friends. This year, we're inviting the larger community—runners and non-runners alike—to kick off their Pride weekend with an unforgettable lakefront party. The 5K run/walk is just one part of the party.

"This will be an unforgettable party for a great local cause—a chance for participants to show their true colors. There's no better feeling than having fun with your friends while knowing you're helping to advance the good work of a respected local community organization."

Krage said the Center was selected because of its mission of advancing the LGBTQ community and people of the Chicagoland area to have them live powerfully in a supportive and

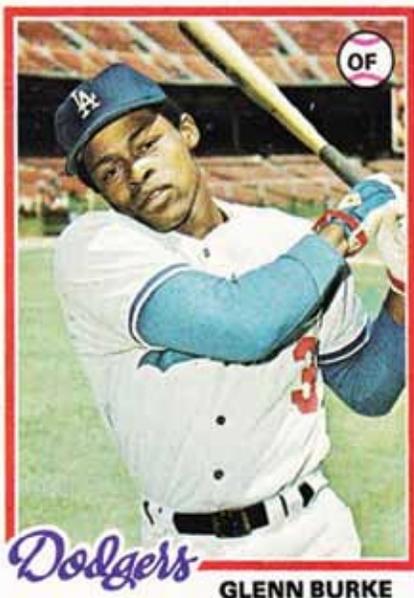
inclusive environment. "As an event producer, StarEvents believes in supporting local nonprofit groups and giving back to the community," she said.

"The lakefront party will be bigger and better than [last year], with some of the best DJs in the industry who will start Pride Week off with a bang," Krage said. "We encourage participants to dress up in colorful costumes and will have beads and boas on-hand for everyone. If participants sign up as a team of 10 or 20, they will get access to a private tent/cabana with costume essentials, snacks and complimentary champagne."

The party will feature DJs Matthew Harvat and Adam LeBlanc. "These industry veterans know how to engage a crowd and will set the perfect pace for the party and Pride week," Krage said.

Last year's race winners (individual male and female and top couple) were pampered with services from a local spa, said Krage, who would not reveal the winners' names.

Participants can register for the Pride 5K walk/run and reserve their team cabana at <http://starevents.com/events/pride-5k/>.



Of the 50 eligible candidates on the 2015 ballot, Berger received the highest voting percentage, being named on 33 percent of the ballots returned. Bilko and Burke each received 31 percent. Runners-up in this year's election included Bob Costas (30 percent), Bo Jackson (29 percent), J.R. Richard (29 percent), Lisa Fernandez (26 percent) and Charlie Finley (26 percent).

"It's great to see Glenn Burke not just remembered, but honored," said Chicago-based sportswriter Christina Kahrl. "The pressure he faced as an out athlete, and the harassment he dealt with that undermined his career, are critically important for the lesson offered, that the major sports have an obligation to not let that happen to their players, and that they, like every employer, should be ready to provide a safe workplace for everyone with the talent to be there."

Burke was an outfielder for the Los Angeles Dodgers and Oakland Athletics during a four-year major league career from 1976-79. He was the first big league ballplayer to publicly acknowledge he was gay. His public disclosure that he was gay came after he had retired, but Burke's sexual orientation was well known during his playing days.

One of Burke's most noted contributions to sports came at the end of the 1977 season. Teammate Dusty Baker hit his 30th home run of the season, and Burke raised his hands in celebration at home plate. As Baker crossed the plate he reached up, slapped one, and the high-five was born.

Burke competed in the 1982 and 1986 Gay Games in basketball and track.

"Like the man himself, Burke's courage should never be forgotten," Kahrl said.

Burke, Berger and Bilko join 48 other baseball luminaries who have been inducted into



2015 SCHEDULE

JUNE 2015		
Fri. 5	Indiana	7:30PM
Wed. 24	Atlanta	11:30AM
Tue. 30	New York	7:00PM
JULY 2015		
Fri. 10	Minnesota	7:30PM
Sun. 12	Connecticut	5:00PM
Wed. 15	Washington	11:30AM
Sun. 19	San Antonio	5:00PM
Tue. 21	Atlanta	7:00PM
Fri. 31	Los Angeles	7:30PM
AUGUST 2015		
Sun. 2	Washington	5:00PM
Tue. 4	Indiana	7:00PM
Fri. 7	New York	7:30PM
Sun. 9	Phoenix	12:00PM
Fri. 21	Washington	7:30PM
Sun. 30	Connecticut	6:00PM
SEPTEMBER 2015		
Sun. 6	Seattle	5:00PM
Fri. 11	Tulsa	7:30PM

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Chicago singer Sami Grisafe goes forward with music career

BY ROSS FORMAN

Sami Grisafe launched her third album earlier this year, and it's her first solo project.

"This album is about progress both individually in fulfilling our dreams and collectively in what we can do together to inspire social change," said Grisafe, now retired from her illustrious football career as the starting quarterback for the Chicago Force to fully focus on music. "Musically, we have merged a raw, classic rock style of the past with lots of soul and modern arrangements.

"The focus of this album is about telling untold or rarely told stories with unique narratives. The title track specifically speaks to the worldwide marriage equality movement but the over-arching message is about being the author of your own life's story. If you can't find your dreams depicted in a storybook, write them. This theme is present throughout the album. Progress is made when we stretch beyond the limitations of comfort. My hope is to provoke conversation, action and smiles with Brand New Fairy Tale."

Grisafe, who lives in Evanston, released two singles on Valentine's Day: "Tiny Victories" and "Brand New Fairytale" and a music video. She is inspired by Janis Joplin and Dave Grohl, and Grisafe's music has a folk-rock feel with provocative lyrics, often incorporating additional styles such as reggae, blues and rap.

And she also plays the ukulele.

"The Wick on Wax was my first album with my first band. I wrote all of the songs on that album, but it was far from polished. We, The Wick, became a band one week before heading into the studio to record. It was a good jumping off point," Grisafe said. "The second album, ATLANTIS, was originally created as a soundtrack for a play that became a web series. It is a collaboration between myself and two other artists, Shannon Nicole and Jaclyn Rada. This was the first time I wrote songs for a specific project and worked with a producer. I learned a lot in that process, grew a ton and met my future business partner/manager, Kathryn Kuras. Our production company and record label, Vicious Muse, was born from this album. We received six Grammy pre-nominations and a lot of growing pains from ATLANTIS.

"We are applying what we've learned from the first two albums [to the third album]. This project has been carefully thought out. Every song, musician, engineer, music video, image and social media campaign has been carefully developed. We are working with an accomplished, professional publicist and have a strong marketing plan. We believe great work takes time to cultivate and as an independent artist/label, we have the luxury of working on our own time line."

Grisafe, 29, received the received the 2013 Chicago Music Award for "Best Rock Entertainer" after garnering national attention for singing her version of the National Anthem. She is openly lesbian, formerly a bartender at The Closet in Chicago's Lake View neighborhood, and noted for singing at the 'marriage equality bill signing' at the request of then-Illinois Governor Pat Quinn.

"I believe in the message [on this third album], the work, the sound and the people who are collaborating with me to create it," Grisafe said. "I began working on songs for this album shortly after we released ATLANTIS in 2012. Some of the songs have been written for a couple of years and re-worked and some have been written in just the last few months. I believe people are ready for something new and that's just what we're going to give them."



Sami Grisafe.
Photo courtesy of Grisafe

The single "Brand New Fairy Tale" is inspired by the worldwide marriage equality movement and was first performed live at the March for Marriage Equality in Springfield. "Brand New Fairy Tale" features Eric Himan, a nationally touring, openly gay singer songwriter who recently played several dates with Ani DiFranco and Leon Russell.

"Eric and I are both known for our social change-laden lyrics and we wanted to come together to spread a message people can draw inspiration from," Grisafe said. "Although the verses of the song clearly speak to the LGBTQ community, the chorus and overall concept of a 'brand new fairy tale' is about encouraging progress and writing stories that have never before been written."

The second release, "Tiny Victories," has a throwback, classic-rock vibe with timely commentary on break-ups in the Internet age. "The screaming guitar solos and raw vocals tell this modern-day, relationship-gone-sour story in the only way a song of its nature should be told, without artificial flavoring," Grisafe said.

In late March, Grisafe played at the House of Blues in Los Angeles and was interviewed by Adam Carolla. That came only a few weeks after she was spotlighted in The Advocate, alongside country singer Ty Herndon and others.

April marks the launch of the music video for "Brand New Fairy Tale" as well as a Kickstarter campaign for the rest of the album.

On June 27, Grisafe will perform with her band at the Back Lot Bash in Andersonville as part of Pridefest.

"I have spent years writing the songs for this [third] album and the last nine months polishing and fine-tuning them. I have been lucky to work with people on this album who are supportive, brilliant and honest," Grisafe said. "When I was a kid, the fairy tales I dreamed about looked different than anything I could find in the storybooks; from having crushes on girls to wanting to be a professional baseball/football player like Bo Jackson. Brand New Fairy Tale is about standing by your dreams, even if you don't have the support from others and even if there is no example of what you are striving for. Brand New Fairy Tale isn't about seeing what's been written and using that as an outline for your life. Rather, it's about hav-

ing the guts to write your own life story."

Grisafe certainly is proud to incorporate the marriage equality message into her music.

"Everything we do is shaping our future through the eyes of young people," she said. "What will they learn if we give up on fighting for equality? Hate wins. I want to have a hand in changing the way people look at the LGBTQ community. The feelings of love are the same whether you are straight or gay. The youth and young adults of today are part of the most diverse generation in U.S. history and I believe they will become known as the greatest advocates for equality. We like to refer to them as the Equality Generation."

Grisafe confirmed she is close to the final

draft of the story for a children's book. She said the first renderings of the illustrations for the book are "fantastic."

So what about the Force?

"My former teammates, who I call my sisters, are going to be very strong this season," Grisafe said. "They have a talented squad, [primarily] the same wonderful coaching staff and management team. I have faith they will continue to dominate in the Women's Football Alliance (WFA) and keep the Chicago Force legacy alive and well."

Sami Grisafe is performing Sunday, June 7, at 2 p.m. at the Landshark Beer Garden at Navy Pier. For more about Grisafe, visit www.samigrisafe.com.

Second City Tennis Classic June 12-14

The Second City Tennis Classic will take place June 12-14 at Northwestern University. At least 100 people are slated to compete.

Proceeds from this year's tournament will benefit Chicago House.

Visit <http://sctclassic.com/> for more information.

Chicago Pride Classic calls for volunteers

The Chicago Gay Hockey Association will host the Chicago Pride Classic hockey tournament June 25-28, during the city's annual Pride weekend.

The tournament will be held at Chicago Park District's McFetridge Sports Center, 3843 N. California Ave. Online registration is open.

Volunteers are needed for a variety of committees, including sponsorship, hockey operations, Chicago Pride Day/Parade, social events, giveaway/award, marketing/advertising and tournament weekend groups.

Visit <http://www.ChicagoGayHockey.org/ChicagoPrideClassic> or email anthony@chicagogayhockey.org.

'Turn It Up for Change' June 13 at W City Center

W Hotels of Chicago and The Human Rights Campaign, in partnership with Lesbifriends and CPR & Events, will host "Turn It Up for Change: Casino Royale" on Saturday, June 13, 7-11 p.m., at the W City Center, 172 W Adams St.

There will be roulette, blackjack, slot machines, poker—and a secret mission.

RSVP at Do312.com/CasinoRoyale.

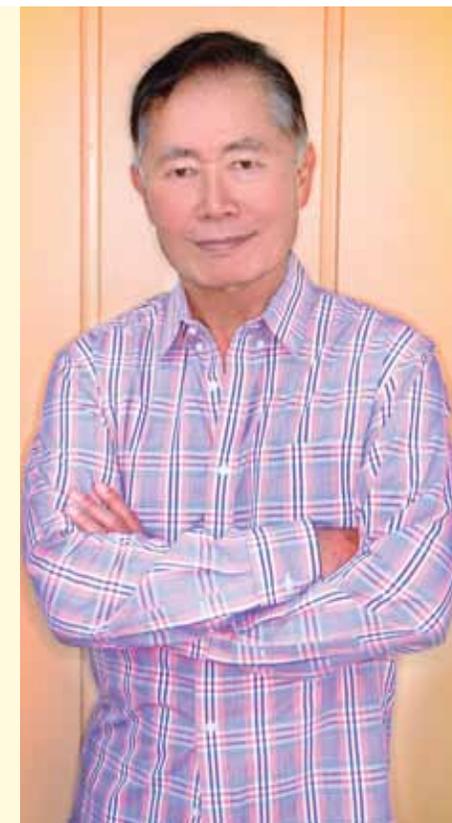
DJ competition at Center on June 13

Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., will host "By Women For Women: Everything Old is New Again," which will pit female DJs of the LGBTQ community against each other while promoting an evening of music and dance.

The event—to take place on the rooftop terrace, reception hall and theater Saturday, June 13—will crown the DJ. DJ All The Way, DJ Gemini Jones, DJ Kirby, DJ Kristin, DJ Rhated R, and DJ Sandra Suave will compete for the title.

Doors open at 5 p.m. with a cocktail reception until 7 p.m. and the DJ competition to follow until 9 p.m. Tickets are \$30 before June 10, and \$45 after that date.

Event sponsors include B.Blyss, Dykes on Bikes, L-Stop and She100. The evening will benefit both Center on Halsted and the Veranita Gray LGBTQ Youth Fund. For more information, visit www.centeronhalsted.org.



George Takei.
Photo by Adam Bouska

Takei in town for 'Mission Tour' June 14

Star Trek fans will celebrate a weekend of everything "Trek" as Creation Entertainment brings "The 49-Year Mission Tour" to the Chicago area June 12-14.

This event will be held at the Westin O-Hare Hotel, 6100 North River Rd., Rosemont.

Among those slated to attend are out actor George Takei (Sulu from the original Star Trek; June 14), Karl Urban (Bones on the new Star Trek films; June 13) and Chase Master-son (Leeta of Deep Space Nine; June 12).

General-admission tickets are available at the door for \$20 on June 12, and \$30 on June 13-14. Visit www.creationent.com.

Frankie Knuckles CD released

Defected Records has released House Masters Frankie Knuckles—with tracks the late DJ personally selected, according to a press release.

The two-CD set is a charity release in collaboration with Def Mix Management and the estate of Frankie Knuckles. A few of the tracks include Knuckles' mix of Inner City's "Whatcha Gonna Do With My Lovin'," Knuckles' "The Whistle Song" (Sound Factory Mix) and Pet Shop Boys' "Left To My Own Devices" (Frankie Knuckles Royal Piano Version).

All profits are donated directly to The Frankie Knuckles Fund/Elton John AIDS Foundation.

To purchase the CD, visit <http://store.defected.com>.

the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR Staytion

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Renaissance Chicago Downtown Hotel, 1 W. Wacker Dr., has always seemed to have a reputation as a more formal place with a sustained air of tradition.

Not that tradition is bad (in most cases), but sometimes it's also good to shake things up here and there. A recent visit to the hotel—and the eatery **Staytion** (<http://renaissance-hotels.marriott.com/events/renaissance-chicago-downtown-hotel/04-09-2015-mix-bite-and-play-at-staytion>) confirmed this.

Executive Chef Daniel Perez told Savor that the name comes from the fact that Staytion is supposed to resemble a CTA station. Indeed, there are components that bring the CTA to mind, such as the murals on the north sides of some of the surrounding pillars and the window from which chefs dispense their wares.

The idea of having eateries with a Chicago theme is hardly new. However, Staytion certain brings a different (and modern) take on the approach—from unique wall maps on the wall to artwork of a taxi made with pencils. There is also a game of sorts at the bar area, as patrons can match depictions of Chicago-based celebrities behind the bartender with names that are painted on the ceiling.

The decor also reflects sleekness and openness. (I know I'm talking a lot about how Staytion's decked out, but there's a lot of innovation here.) There are very unique chairs (some more comfortable than others), stadium seating in another spot and what's called the "artists' lounge."

As for the cuisine, it's impressive. (It's being advertised as a unique take on street food.) The

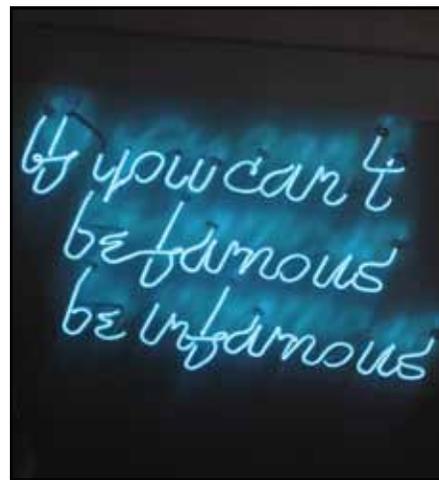
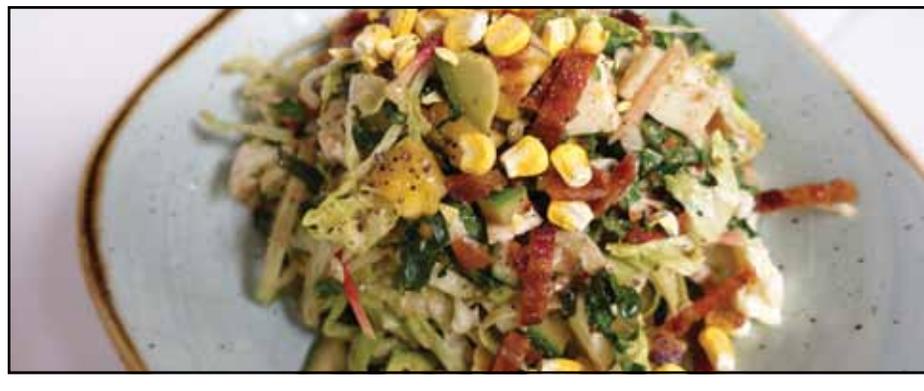


Staytion.
Interior photos by Andrew Davis

burrata was among the best I've ever had and my friend really liked the large cup of potato chips (which is a deal at 99 cents). The mushroom sage flatbread and tuna crudo were also top-of-the line.

However, be sure to save room for dessert, as they might even be better than the appetizers and entrees. My friend and I sampled different varieties of eclairs, for example, filled with chocolate goodness—but even those are outshone by the deep-fried croissant pieces that were rolled in chocolate and topped with drizzles of chocolate.

By the way, there's also a huge June 11 event to officially open the hotel with singer Robin Thicke at 7-10 p.m. An RSVP is required at www.renaissancechicagodowntown.com.



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SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

ARE YOU INTELLECTUALLY GIFTED? Are you interested in meeting other LGBTQs like you? Come join the LGBTQ and Allies Special Interest Group in Chicago Area Mensa. **To inquire, contact lgba@chicago.us.mensa.org.** (4/20/16-52)

SURVEY

DO YOU IDENTIFY AS lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ), and have you ever been in a romantic or sexual relationship? Would you like a chance to earn a \$100 Amazon.com Gift Card? Researchers at Northeastern Illinois University invite you to participate in an important ONLINE survey! **For more information, visit www.surveymonkey.com/r/P3K9BGQ** (6/24/15)

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LGBTRIVIA

From page 11

**ANSWER:
Jann Wenner**

Questions from That's So Gay! A Game of LGBTQ Discovery, a 2400-question board game available from Women & Children First Books and on Amazon.com.

TOMLIN/FONDA from page 20

Has that been discussed as a real possibility amongst showrunners?

LT: Well, it's been discussed because so many people inquired about it and thought about it. Of course, Dolly's a good friend and the three of us really like each other and we've been friends all these years, but because Grace and Frankie is set apart, we want to establish our identity before we think about dragging the Nine to Five life into it.

JF: It's a different style. It's a different animal. We wanna keep it that way—for now, anyway.

WCT: What do you think your Nine to Five characters, Judy and Violet, are up to these days?

JF: Violet's probably heading up a Silicon Valley company! Maybe we're married!

Chris Azzopardi is the editor of Q Syndicate, the international LGBT wire service. Reach him via his website at www.chris-azzopardi.com.



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wed., June 3

Remembering the Pink Triangle: A public event Commemoration of the fate of gay people in Nazi Germany. Learn how the Pink Triangle came to mean "never again" See the mock-up of "The Pink Triangle" plaque that will be joining the Legacy Walk this fall. A Legacy Project, Safe Schools Alliance, US Holocaust Memorial Museum event 11:00am Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago Tickets: https://www.dropbox.com/s/4iqermw2mpf6or9/The%20Pink%20Triangle%20_%20May%2017%20Event.pdf?dl=0

Sweet Tea: Black Gay Men of the South A play exploring blackness, sexuality and Southern hospitality. Based on his award-winning book, Dr. E. Patrick Johnson stars in this one-man exploration into the Southern black gay community. 7:30pm Hal and Martha Hyer Wallis Theatre, Northwestern University, Evanston, <http://www.projectand.org>

Author Reading: Cherilynn Veland Stop Giving It Away: How to Stop Self-Sacrificing and Start Claiming Your Space 7:30pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

Thursday, June 4

The Night Ministry's 2015 Lighting Up the Night Awards dinner and auction. \$400. More information to come. Time:TBA The Standard Club, 320 S. Plymouth Court, Chicago <http://www.thenightministry.org> Tickets: <https://thenightministry.ejoinme.org/MyPages/LightingUpTheNight/tab-id/668789/Default.aspx>

6th Annual United Latin@ Pride week Queer/Trans Latin@ events throughout Chicago through June 11. All free. 6:00pm - 10:00pm, <http://www.unitedlatinopride.org>

How to make comics The Ladydrawers way Performances, readings, games from international comics creators and the new anthology, "How to make comics The Ladydrawers Way." The Ladydrawers Comics Collective is a diverse ("queer") group. Performances, readings, games, and possibly interpretive dances from international comics creators. Peruse the debut of new anthology, "How to make comics The Ladydrawers Way" 6:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

American Veterans for Equal Rights (gay veterans) monthly meeting AVER is a non-profit, chapter-based association of active, reserve and veteran servicemembers dedicated to full and equal rights and equitable treatment for all present and former members of the U.S. Armed Forces. 7:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago

Move Your Body: The Evolution of House Music Exhibition in the Chicago Rooms celebrating more than 30 years of a home-grown art form that is now heard around the world. Through August 16, 2015 7:00pm - 9:30pm Chicago Cultural Center 78 E. Washington St. Chicago http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/moveyourbody.html?utm_source=Move+Your+Body+Exhibit+Preview+2015&utm_campaign=Move+Your+Body+Exhibit+Preview+2015&utm_medium=email

Out! Bowling 60+ bowlers, third season. \$10 weekly in dues, plus shoe rental. Cost of games and end of season event included. Karaoke in the bowling alley's bar every Thursday through July 30 with holiday break July 2. Info outbowling-league2014@outlook.com 8:00pm - 12:00pm Naperville Brunswick Zone XL, 1515 Aurora Ave., Naperville

The Attic Stand-up show featuring four comics performing 20-minute-sets. First Thursday of every month. Josh Johnson (Laugh Factory), Brandon Kieffer (WIP Theater), Ed Towns (Theater WIP) & Joel Boyd (Bob Curry Fellowship) 9:30pm Under The Gun Theater, 956 W Newport, Chicago 773-270-3440 <http://www.undertheguntheater.com>

PIECE OF CAKE
Saturday-Sunday, June 6-7

The Chicago Alternative Comics Expo (CAKE) returns to Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St.

Photo from 2014 by Andrew Davis

Friday, June 5

Kick-Off Ceremony: Commemorating Chicagoland HIV Testing Month FREE HIV Testing near CTA "L" Stations: Roosevelt (Red, Orange, Green lines), 87th & Dan Ryan, Howard (Red line), Central & Lake (Green Line) - 63rd & Halsted St., Harvey Bus Terminal and Humboldt Park 10:00am - 4:00pm Various locations as listed. <http://www.StepUpGetTested.com>

First Friday Film: The Birdcage Starring Robin Williams and Nathan Lane, a remake of the farce "La Cage aux Folles." Adults and seniors are invited to join us for coffee, donuts, and a movie. 10:30am Chicago Public Library Roosevelt Branch, 1101 W. Taylor St., Chicago <http://chipublib.org>

Milwaukee Pride Fest Celebration of local LGBT culture and community. 100+ performer entertainment line-up, LGBT community icons, including headliners Ani DiFranco, Ty Herndon and En Vogue, and emerging national talent and local Milwaukee favorites on ten stages. Through June 7. 12:00pm Henry W. Maier Festival Park, Milwaukee, WI Tickets: <http://pridefest.com/tickets/>

Crayons 2 Cans - Evolution of an Artist Chicago based artist Camilo Cumpian shares the evolution of his art from the origins of graffiti, to painting, exploring mixed media. Through June 28. 6:00pm Pilsen Outpost, 1958 W 21st St., Chicago

Voices A Musical Performance Their album Sailing Free is a collection of songs that add reggae and Latin rhythms to this veteran political folk group 7:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

Chicago Sky opening game vs. Indiana Fever Women's National Basketball Association. \$16 or \$250. 7:30pm Allstate Arena 6920 N Mannheim Rd., Rosemont, IL 60018 <http://www.wnba.com/sky/>

Ben Kessler, 16-year-old singer/songwriter from Philadelphia One of the winners of the 2014 Philadelphia Songwriters Project's annual songwriting contest and an award winner of the National YoungArts Foundation's annual national talent search. \$10. All ages. Reserve by phone 8:00pm Uncommon Ground on Clark 3800 N. Clark St. 773-929-3680

Launch of Off The Sidelines Chicago First local chapter of the national organization that calls upon women to take action - civically, philanthropically and politically - on

important issues. Refreshments. 8:00pm - 9:00pm The Chopping Block, Merchandise Mart, 222 Merchandise Mart Plaza, Chicago <http://www.OTSchicago.org>

Pup Night Fundraiser for PAWS Chicago Hosted by Katerina Heights, with special guests Int'l Puppy 2014, Int'l Trainer 2014, Midwest Puppy 2015 and Mr. Chicago Leather 2015 Luis Tipantasi. Best-in-show contest and raffle with over \$1,000 in prizes. Get your moshing fix and explore your wildest puppy fantasies in the wet-friendly fetish space. \$5 suggested donation. Proceeds benefit PAWS Chicago. 9:00pm - 12:00am Jackhammer 6406 N Clark St

Saturday, June 6

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>

Farmer's Market: Chicago Nettelhorst French Market Through Nov. 7. A French Market brings sense of community like the markets of France, a place to gather, socialize and purchase fresh produce, flowers, artisanal oils and vinegars, fresh baked croissants. 8:00am - 2:00pm Nettelhorst School, Broadway & Melrose, Chicago

Addressing LGBT Homelessness and Housing Discrimination through Federal Policy Training for housing professionals, local governments, housing authorities, community organizations, members of the LGBT community, LGBT allies, advocates. Lambda Legal Community Educator Crispin Torres and Staff Attorney Kyle Palazzo will present throughout. RSVP online. 9:00am - 12:00pm Access Living 115 W. Chicago Ave. Tickets: http://www.lambdalegal.org/events/150604_educ-housing-federal-policy

The Fourth Annual Chicago Alternative Comics Expo Panel and round table conversations: the Hernandez Brothers; Comic Books and Speculative Fiction; Comics in Cyberspace; The Real Truth with three cartoonists discussing creative nonfiction; workshops and competitions. Free. 11:00am - 6:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.cake-chicago.com>

Screening: Our Hour Has Come: The Gay Rights Movement in 1920s Germany 1920s Germany is often seen as a setting of unprecedented personal freedom. However, gay German men still had to deal with the existence of Paragraph 175, the law against male homosexual acts. 2:00pm Edgewater Library, 6000 N. Broadway, <http://chipublib.org>

Ladybug Reunion 2015 Reunion begins here. Also see June 7. 7:00pm Davenport's Piano Bar and Cabaret 1383 N Milwaukee Ave Chicago <https://www.facebook.com/events/461330057353207/>

"Proud to be...Me!" Artemis Singers Pride concert and dance Chicago's lesbian feminist 40-member Artemis Singers specializes in performing music written or arranged by women. "All About that Bass" by Meghan Trainor; "Proud" by Heather Small; "Big-Boned Gal" by k.d. lang; and "Try" by Colbie Caillat. Dance with live DJ follows. 7:00pm - 10:00pm Broadway United Methodist Church 3338 N Broadway Chicago (773) 764-4465 Tickets: <http://artemisprideview.brownpapertickets.com>

Bear Night w/The Great Lakes Bears Get cozy with the bears at this monthly club night. Midnight pizza panic. 10:00pm - 2:00am Touche 6412 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.touchechicago.com>

Sunday, June 7

Church on the Beach The Lighthouse Church and United Latino Pride join for an hour of uplifting music, moving prayers, and inspirational messages in a Multi-ethnic, LGBT-inclusive worship experience. Meet new friends at the free lunch after worship. 11:00am 3900 South Lakeshore Drive, Burnham Park 7

WACT brunch Women of All Colors Together. Bring chairs. cpattin@earthlink.net 2:00pm Contact organizer for location

Doubt: A Parable Pulitzer Prize-winning play about authority, suspicion, ambiguity and religion: a progressive young priest's

conduct comes under question. Writers Theatre presents through The show runs July 19. Tuesdays & Wednesdays: 7:30pm (with select 2 pm Wednesday matinees). Thursdays & Fridays: 8 pm, Saturdays: 4:00pm and 8 pm, Sundays: 2 pm and 6 pm 2:00pm Glencoe Union Church, 263 Park Ave, Glencoe

Tea in A-ville: Pride Kickoff DJ Moose and hosts Brad, Vince, Michael and Daniel have pulled together their biggest pride anthem favorites from the past 40 years and will be serving them up with our signature East Coast Planters Punch. No cover. 4:00pm - 8:00pm Mary's Attic 5400 N Clark Chicago <http://www.hamburgermarys.com/chicago>

Monday, June 8

TransSafe Drop In Resource Center Trans and gender non-conforming. Hang out, socialize, enjoy some food. Access medical, hormones, legal, housing, social, employment New day and location. 1:00pm - 4:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.chicagohouse.org/?post-causes=translife-center>

If You Feel Too Much book tour Jamie Tworowski, founder of To Write Love on Her Arms, a non-profit movement dedicated to presenting hope and finding help for people struggling with addiction, depression, self-injury and suicide. 7:00pm Hollywood Palms Theater, 52 South Route 59, Naperville <http://www.twloha.com>

Tuesday, June 9

Learning to be a Rainbow Ambassador 101, Tools for the Casual Activist Discuss how to approach ignorance from co-workers, strangers, or family with education and practice real life scenarios. 6:00pm - 9:00pm Youth Services Project, 3942 W. North Ave., Chicago <http://www.youthserviceproject.org>

6th Annual United Latin@ Pride week Queer/Trans Latin@ events throughout Chicago through June 11. All free. 6:00pm - 10:00pm See website <http://www.unitedlatinopride.org>

B2B Networking Breakfast \$20 Pre-registered members, \$25 members at door, \$30 Non-members 7:00pm - 9:00pm GL Chamber Headquarters, 3179 N. Clark St. 2nd Floor, MB Financial Chicago Tickets: http://db2.windycitymediagroup.com/webup/000_CAL_INSERT.php

Sappho's Salon Open Salon, featuring expressions of queerness, gender, and feminism. Co-hosted by Eileen Tull and Liz Baudler. Alternating each month between curated showcases and open salons for cis and transwomen, trans men, and non-binary artists to express creative work. Pay what you can to support performers and the Women's Voices Fund. Info: sapphoswcf@gmail.com. 7:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

Wed., June 10

State's Attorney Anita Alvarez LGBT Reception Honorary Hosts Alderman James Cappleman, State Rep. Kelly Cassidy and Alderman Deb Mell 5:30pm - 7:30pm Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St Chicago <https://www.facebook.com/events/1645872825645145/>

Screening: Out in the Night In 2006 in New York City a group of African-American lesbians were violently threatened by a man on the street. They fought back and were later charged with gang assault and attempted murder. 6:00pm Chicago Public Library Roosevelt Branch, 1101 W. Taylor St., Chicago <http://chipublib.org>

Thursday, June 11

Sidetrack's 2015 Anniversary Party No invite required, invite your friends. Bring a donation for Groceryland (paper products, cleaning supplies, grooming items, coffee, or make a cash donation) for entry into drawings at 8 and 11 pm. Celebration party prices include \$1.75 domestics, \$2 well cocktails and \$2.50 frozen. Food trucks on hand, including Mil's BBQ, DonerMan, Chubby Wieners and Slide Ride. 6:00pm - 2:00pm Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St Chicago <http://www.sidetrackchicago.com>

Move Your Body: The Evolution of House Music Exhibition in the Chicago Rooms celebrating more than 30 years of a home-grown art form that is now heard around the world. Through August 16, 2015

7:00pm - 9:30pm Chicago Cultural Center 78 E. Washington St. Chicago http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/moveyourbody.html?utm_source=Move+Your+Body+Exhibit+Preview+2015&utm_campaign=Move+Your+Body+Exhibit+Preview+2015&utm_medium=email

Jennifer Morales Reading and Signing Author Meet Me Halfway: Milkwaukee Stories. When an African American teen, is hurt in the home of his white neighbor, his community must bridge black and white, gay and straight, old and young. 7:30pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

Friday, June 12

Free HIV Testing Across Chicagoland See more dates and location on site. 10:00am - 2:00pm Wilson CTA "L" Station (Red line) <http://www.StepUpGetTested.com>

Andersonville Midsommarfest Annual summer street festival. Bands include sixteen-candlesband and JC Brooks & the Uptown Sound. More information to come. Through June 14 5:00pm 5200 N. Clark St. and Foster Ave., Chicago <http://www.andersonville.org>

Lori Horvitz and guest Lee Ann Roripaugh Humor compared to that of David Sedaris, Horvitz grew up ashamed of her Eastern European Jewish roots, confused about her sexuality. Roripaugh is a second-generation Japanese American, author of On the Cusp of a Dangerous Year. 7:30pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

Lily Tomlin Over a 40-year career, she's transformed herself into a small army of unforgettable characters. She breathes life into a cast that spans age, gender and race. \$45 8:00pm Overture Hall, Madison, WI Tickets: <http://www.overturecenter.org/events/lily-tomlin>

Saturday, June 13

By Women for Women: Everything Old is New Again Center on Halsted's Women's Action Committee. Richard M. Daley Roof Terrace. Music by female DJs: DJ All the Way, DJ Gemini Jones, DJ Kirby, DJ Kristin, DJ Rhated R, and DJ Sandra Suave compete for the crown of the BWWF Hottest DJ! Judges include Tracy Baim, Angela Barnes, Laura Barry, Lora Branch, DJ Feen, and DJ Lady D. Cocktail 5-7pm, DJ competition 7pm. \$30 before June 10, \$45 after, includes admission, 1 drink ticket, and hors d'oeuvres. 5:00pm - 9:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago Tickets: <http://community.centeronhalsted.org/ByWomenForWomen>

"Proud to be...Me!" Artemis Singers 5th annual Pride concert & dance Showcases songs about individuals' inherent worth and dignity. The chorus will perform "All About that Bass" by Meghan Trainor; "Proud" by Heather Small; "Big-Boned Gal" by k.d. lang; and "Try" by Colbie Caillat, among other pieces. The dance with live DJ immediately follows the concert. 7:00pm Beverly Unitarian Church, 10244 S. Longwood Drive, Chicago Tickets: <http://artemispridebeverly.brownpapertickets.com>

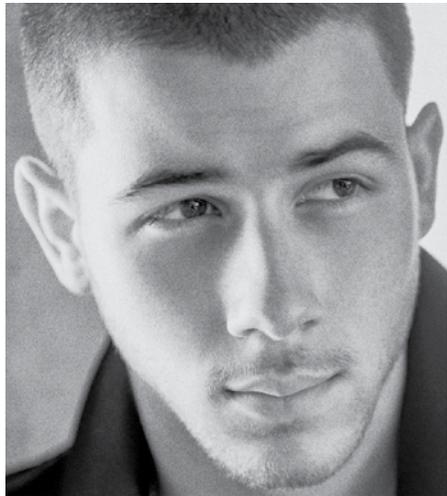
Turn it Up for Change W Hotels of Chicago and The Human Rights Campaign in partnership with Lesbifriends and CPR & Events will host at 007 Gala. DJ sets. Variety of casino games. RSVP online. 7:00pm - 11:00pm Casino Royale, W City Center Ballroom, Chicago <http://Do312.com/CasinoRoyale>

Sunday, June 14

Affinity Jazz in July Kick Off Party Continuing the celebration of the 20th anniversary. Learn about the Affinity event season and the upcoming Jazz in July. 1:00pm - 5:00pm Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St Chicago Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/jazzinuly-2015-kick-off-event-tickets-17023540869>

Edna Vazquez Openly gay singer-songwriter will give Chicago's pride celebrations a Latin American flavor with an intimate solo performance. Doors 6:30 pm. 7:30pm Joe's on Weed, 940 W. Weed St, Chicago <http://SylviaHevia.com>

BILLY MASTERS



Grease may be the word for Nick Jonas, according to Billy.

"Girl, I got one or two you could have of mine. I'll give them to you!"—Sherri Shepherd returned to *The View* and responded to Raven-Symoné's desire to have a child. Some people have taken Sherri to task for this quip but, given the context, I thought it was hilarious.

You know summer is here when ABC trots out *The Bachelorette*. And I'm totally happy spending my Monday nights with a gaggle of guys vying for my attention ... er, Kaitlyn's attention. Or are they? The show has always featured bromances between contestants. But this week, we are being teased with promos for "Brokeback Bachelorette" showing contestants Clint and JJ spending oodles of time gazing into each other's eyes. Clint says, "Falling in love with a man never crossed my mind." But has it now? He continues, "Kaitlyn's not the right girl for me. I love JJ, so I need the rose tonight." We hear from people in the know that this footage has been manipulated—with the boys' blessings. Clint tweeted a photo comparing himself to one of the "Brokeback" stars with this message: "If you have to be a #BrokebackBachelor, Be Heath Ledger. Always be Heath Ledger."

Over the years, there has been lots of crossover between *The Bangles* and *The Go-Go's*. When Charlotte Caffey's pregnancy coincided with one of *The Go-Go's* reunion tours, Bangle Vicki Peterson filled in. When Michael Steele retired from *The Bangles*, she was replaced by Abby Travis, who subsequently replaced fired *Go-Go* Kathy Valentine. So it's somewhat poetic that last weekend, Valentine took her place alongside *The Bangles* at the renowned Troubadour in West Hollywood. While I don't expect this will be a regular occurrence (Valentine is quite busy with her own band, *The BlueBonnets*), you can see some of our exclusive footage on *BillyMasters.com*.

In more good news, Netflix has renewed *Grace and Frankie* for a second season. For those of you who felt the first episodes were somewhat slow, you will be rewarded if you stick with it—the last few episodes of the season were great. And I'm not the only fan out there. Miley Cyrus tweeted "I found my show! #GraceandFrankie. On a bender! Jane & Lily are so bad a\$\$" Shortly thereafter, the brass at Netflix renewed the show. Thank you, Miley.

Whenever Jane Fonda is acting, she provides plenty of fodder for this column. In an interview with *W* magazine, Jane shares her initial impression of Warren Beatty: "I thought Warren was gay. He played piano, and all his friends were gay." Based on that, I should be gay—which actually worked out. Warren recalls that their meeting took place 56 years ago, when they both did their first screen test in 1959. Warren says the two of them were "thrown together like two lions in a cage and kissed until we had practically eaten each other's heads

off." Proving how different memories can be, Fonda claims to have no recollection of the screen test!

According to *Star* magazine, Brad Pitt has a penchant for gay male hookers. The rag quotes the ravings of a deluded gay gossip (obviously not moi), who tells them, "I don't want to define Brad Pitt's sexuality, but whatever it is, he's into guys." That sounds like a definition to me. The story claims that Pitt often hires fetching young lads who strike his fancy from escort websites. But just getting that call doesn't mean you'll be having sex with Brad Pitt.

According to the report, Pitt will make that decision once he meets you. If he's not suitably impressed, you'll be dismissed—but not before being paid for your time. The source claims that the late porn star Cameron Fox was someone Pitt hired and dismissed after meeting him at a hotel in Monterey, California. The reason? Pitt didn't think Fox looked that good in person. As someone who knew Foxy intimately, I can tell you that: a) he looked as good or better in person than he did in photos and b) if he had ever met Brad Pitt, he would have told everyone he knew. On the positive side, Cam did make the cover of *Star*—that would have tickled him.

I understand that alcoholism is a disease and that people with this disease should be supported and get help. That said, let me tell you that should you ever be fortunate enough to meet Jonathan Rhys Meyers, pray that he's drunk. I can tell you from personal experience that after he's had a few, he's all hands. Admittedly, he'll grab anything to stop from falling down, but I'll take what I can get. It must also be said that when he's drunk, he's not so pretty. Last week, the paparazzi snapped him stumbling home in the morning hours, looking unwashed, unshaven, unkempt, and carrying two bottles of vodka—one of which he took a swig from! I forgot the best part—his button-fly jeans were unbuttoned, which means at some point his penis was exposed. Of course, we've all already seen his penis—and if you haven't, get thyself to *BillyMasters.com*.

After the photos were published, JRM said, "Sorry for my disheveled appearance as I was on my way home from a friends and had not changed." Or washed or showered for a few days. But he doesn't appear to be too concerned, as he said, "I feel I made a mistake and feel quite embarrassed, but this was just a blip in my recovery otherwise I'm living a healthy life."

We spoke to some of our sources at FOX about the upcoming *Grease: Live*, the network is planning for Julianne Hough and Vanessa Hudgens. Last week, it was announced that Keke Palmer will be playing Marty (who sings "Freddie, My Love"). While no other casting has been officially announced, I hear they are thisclose to landing Nick Jonas as Danny Zuko. That may be exciting, but even more thrilling is the hope of coaxing Olivia Newton-John into making a cameo as Principal McGee—memorably played in the film by Eve Arden. I'd suggest John Travolta in the role of Coach Calhoun, but that idea may be too hot to handle. You know—shades of Sandusky.

When I'm connecting John Travolta with one of the few sex scandals he wasn't involved in, we've definitely come to the end of yet another column. A little Broadway, some TV, some music, some films, and some penises—all in a days work at *www.BillyMasters.com*, the site that's one-stop shopping. We didn't have room for an "Ask Billy" question this week, but that doesn't mean you can't ask me directly. Email *Billy@BillyMasters.com*, and I promise to get back to you before Brad Pitt sends Jonathan Rhys Meyers a case of vodka. Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

★ ★ ★ ★

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BOOK REVIEW

**Bettyville:
A Memoir**by **George Hodgman****\$27.95; Viking; 279 pages**

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Throughout your life, your parents ignored many things.

That time in high school when you snuck out to party? They knew, but they looked the other way. The same thing happened with wearing make-up, missing curfew and that one regrettable hair style. They often "didn't see" more than you'll ever know.

The problem is that sometimes, they ignored too much. Did they, for instance, know who you really were? In the new book *Bettyville*, by George Hodgman, one man wondered.

Elizabeth Baker Hodgman—Betty, to most people—didn't sleep much.



At age 90, she was prone to wandering, fussing at the kitchen, piling and restacking paperwork, and playing the piano in the middle of the night. She was "suffering from dementia or maybe worse."

Unfortunately, that also meant her son, George, didn't get much sleep, either.

An out-of-work editor and freelancer, George Hodgman had moved to Paris, Missouri, from New York for what was supposed to be a week. Or a month. Or a year to take care of his mother. Betty didn't like it; she hated needing someone. Hodgman didn't like it, either; too much had changed.

"I was Betty's boy," he says, and he'd been that way all his life. Hodgman loved his father fiercely, but he absolutely favored his mother. Still, he desperately wished he'd been able to tell his parents he was gay, that he felt alone, that he'd survived too many failed romances, that he'd had substance abuse issues. Surely, they knew but no one ever talked about it.

Now, as he cared for her, there were times when Betty infuriated Hodgman. She could be rude and stubborn, prone to fits of anger for no reason, and loud. She flatly refused any thoughts of nursing homes or assisted living. The problem was her dementia, Hodgman reminded himself repeatedly. He understood that she was rightfully fearful because she knew she was losing herself and "I can only imagine how scary it is..."

And yet, "I think I have survived because of Betty, more than anyone," Hodgman said as she eased away. "There are so many things I will carry when I leave Bettyville with my old suitcase."

Without a doubt, you'd be forgiven for reaching for a tissue while you're reading this book. Heck, you might want a whole box of them—but there's a lot more to *Bettyville* than heartstring-tugging.

I found joy inside this story, in between its inevitable sadness. Author Hodgman keenly remembers his small town childhood from all sides: churchgoers and alcoholics, kindness and bullying, adolescent crushes, baffling foes, and off-limits subjects that no small-townie discusses. We meet, through the eyes of Hodgman, Betty's friends and family and we're told a story about a time past, a life well-loved, and losing a mother long before she's really gone.

Be prepared to laugh a little, but be prepared to cry, too, as you're reading this fine memoir—especially if you're a caretaker for an elderly parent. For you, for sure, *Bettyville* is a book that can't be ignored.

Want more? Look for *The Man I Might Become: Gay Men Write about Their Fathers*, edited by Bruce Shenitz, foreword by Andrew Holleran; or *Mothers and Sons: Stories*, by Colin Toibin.

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