



U.S. Rep. Nancy Pelosi.
 Photo by Kat Fitzgerald/www.mysticimagesphotography.com

EQUAL TIME

Pelosi joins Equality Illinois in anniversary celebration

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Many of the advancements made in LGBT rights in Illinois have served as models for laws that have, or need to be, passed at the federal level, according to U.S. Rep. Nancy Pelosi.

The Democratic House Leader was among those who gathered Feb. 6 for Equality Illinois's gala celebrating its 25th anniversary. About 1,500 guests attended the sold-out event at the Chicago Hilton, according to organization officials.

Pelosi received the organization's 2016 Freedom Award. In her remarks, she noted that the award had been given in 2005 to activists Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon. "When we argued the Defense of Marriage Act, I displayed their portrait, in large form, on the floor of the House as a tribute to them, [to inspire] a vote against the so-called Defense of Marriage Act," she recalled.

She paid tribute to gala chair J.B. Pritzker, chairman of the Pritzker Group, recalling her work with his mother, Sue, with whom she worked on an early Democratic platform supporting LGBT families. "He comes by his support and his values in a family way," Pelosi said, acknowledging activist and businessman Fred Eychaner's role as well. "Without Fred Eychaner, none of the accomplishments that we celebrate tonight would have been possible."

She added, "For 25 years, Equality Illinois has stood at the front lines, advancing LGBT values. Indeed, expanding freedom in America, that belongs to every American. Your determined leadership has returned key legislative victories for LGBT rights in Illinois. Your engagement has empowered vital progress on the national level."

Pelosi called for passage of a federal ban on anti-gay conversion therapy on minors as well as passage of the Equality Act in her remarks.

Turn to page 14



STATE OF THE UNION

Credit union offers gender-affirming loan packages.

Photo of Lee Dewey by Denise Saucedo

10



AMY LANDECKER

'Transparent' star marvels at her good fortune.

22

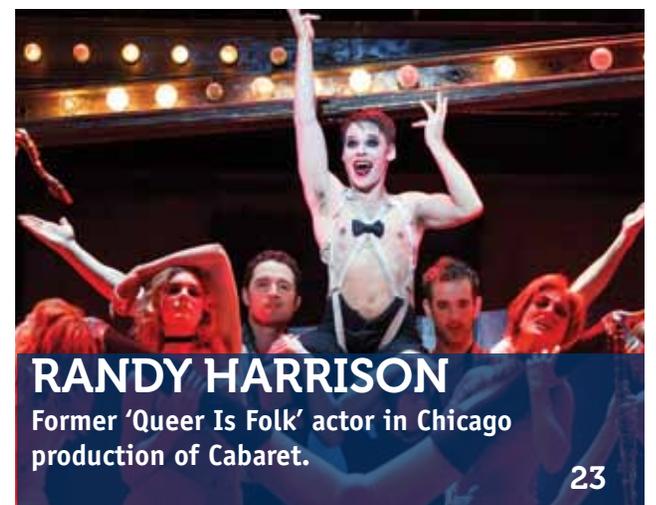


BLACKS AND HIV/AIDS

Press conference held to mark National African-American HIV/AIDS Day, observed Feb. 7.

Photo by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

12



RANDY HARRISON

Former 'Queer Is Folk' actor in Chicago production of Cabaret.

23



GenvoyaTM 
elvitegravir 150mg/cobicistat 150mg/emtricitabine
200mg/tenofovir alafenamide 10mg tablets

**New Genvoya[®]
is now available**





Actual Size

One pill contains
elvitegravir, cobicistat, emtricitabine,
and tenofovir alafenamide (TAF).

Ask your healthcare provider
if GENVOYA is right for you.

To learn more visit
GENVOYA.com

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

Brief Summary of Patient Information about GENVOYA

GENVOYA (jen-VOY-uh) (elvitegravir, cobicistat, emtricitabine, and tenofovir alafenamide) tablets

Important: Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist about medicines that should not be taken with GENVOYA.

There may be new information about GENVOYA. This information is only a summary and does not take the place of talking with your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment.

What is the most important information I should know about GENVOYA?

GENVOYA can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Build-up of lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis).** Lactic acidosis may happen in some people who take GENVOYA. Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Lactic acidosis can be hard to identify early, because the symptoms could seem like symptoms of other health problems. **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms, which could be signs of lactic acidosis:**
 - feel very weak or tired
 - have unusual (not normal) muscle pain
 - have trouble breathing
 - have stomach pain with nausea or vomiting
 - feel cold, especially in your arms and legs
 - feel dizzy or lightheaded
 - have a fast or irregular heartbeat
- **Severe liver problems.** Severe liver problems may happen in people who take GENVOYA. In some cases, these liver problems can lead to death. Your liver may become large and you may develop fat in your liver. **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms of liver problems:**
 - your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice)
 - dark “tea-colored” urine
 - light-colored bowel movements (stools)
 - loss of appetite for several days or longer
 - nausea
 - stomach pain
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking GENVOYA for a long time.**
- **Worsening of Hepatitis B infection.** GENVOYA is not for use to treat chronic hepatitis B virus (HBV). If you have HBV infection and take GENVOYA, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking GENVOYA. A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before.
 - Do not run out of GENVOYA. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your GENVOYA is all gone.
 - Do not stop taking GENVOYA without first talking to your healthcare provider.
 - If you stop taking GENVOYA, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly for several months to check your HBV infection. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or unusual symptoms you may have after you stop taking GENVOYA.

What is GENVOYA?

GENVOYA is a prescription medicine that is used without other HIV-1 medicines to treat HIV-1 in people 12 years of age and older:

- who have not received HIV-1 medicines in the past **or**
- to replace their current HIV-1 medicines in people who have been on the same HIV-1 medicines for at least 6 months, have an amount of HIV-1 in their blood (“viral load”) that is less than 50 copies/mL, and have never failed past HIV-1 treatment

HIV-1 is the virus that causes AIDS.

GENVOYA contains the prescription medicines elvitegravir (VITEKTA®), cobicistat (TYBOST®), emtricitabine (EMTRIVA®) and tenofovir alafenamide. It is not known if GENVOYA is safe and effective in children under 12 years of age.

When used to treat HIV-1 infection, GENVOYA may:

- Reduce the amount of HIV-1 in your blood. This is called “viral load”.
- Increase the number of CD4+ (T) cells in your blood that help fight off other infections.

Reducing the amount of HIV-1 and increasing the CD4+ (T) cells in your blood may help improve your immune system. This may reduce your risk of death or getting infections that can happen when your immune system is weak (opportunistic infections).

GENVOYA does not cure HIV-1 infection or AIDS. You must stay on continuous HIV-1 therapy to control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses.

Avoid doing things that can spread HIV-1 infection to others:

- Do not share or re-use needles or other injection equipment.
- Do not share personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them, like toothbrushes and razor blades.
- Do not have any kind of sex without protection. Always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.

Ask your healthcare provider if you have any questions about how to prevent passing HIV-1 to other people.

Who should not take GENVOYA?

Do not take GENVOYA if you also take a medicine that contains:

- alfuzosin hydrochloride (Uroxatral®)
- carbamazepine (Carbatrol®, Epitol®, Equetro®, Tegretol®, Tegretol-XR®, Teril®)
- cisapride (Propulsid®, Propulsid Quicksolv®)
- ergot-containing medicines, including: dihydroergotamine mesylate (D.H.E. 45®, Migranal®), ergotamine tartrate (Cafergot®, Migergot®, Ergostat®, Medihaler Ergotamine®, Wigraine®, Wigrettes®), and methylergonovine maleate (Ergotrate®, Methergine®)
- lovastatin (Advicor®, Altoprev®, Mevacor®)
- midazolam, when taken by mouth
- phenobarbital (Luminal®)
- phenytoin (Dilantin®, Phenytek®)
- pimozone (Orap®)
- rifampin (Rifadin®, Rifamate®, Rifater®, Rimactane®)
- sildenafil (Revatio®), when used for treating lung problems
- simvastatin (Simcor®, Vytorin®, Zocor®)
- triazolam (Halcion®)
- the herb St. John’s wort or a product that contains St. John’s wort

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking GENVOYA?

Before taking GENVOYA, tell your healthcare provider if you:

- have liver problems including hepatitis B infection
- have kidney or bone problems
- have any other medical conditions
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if GENVOYA can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking GENVOYA.

Pregnancy registry: there is a pregnancy registry for women who take HIV-1 medicines during pregnancy. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Talk with your healthcare provider about how you can take part in this registry.

- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you take GENVOYA.
 - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
 - At least one of the medicines in GENVOYA can pass to your baby in your breast milk. It is not known if the other medicines in GENVOYA can pass into your breast milk.
 - Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Other medicines may affect how GENVOYA works. Some medicines may interact with GENVOYA. **Keep a list of your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.**

- You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for a list of medicines that interact with GENVOYA.
- Do not start a new medicine without telling your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider can tell you if it is safe to take GENVOYA with other medicines.

How should I take GENVOYA?

- Take GENVOYA exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to take it. GENVOYA is taken by itself (not with other HIV-1 medicines) to treat HIV-1 infection.
- GENVOYA is usually taken 1 time each day.
- Take GENVOYA with food.
- If you need to take a medicine for indigestion (antacid) that contains aluminum and magnesium hydroxide or calcium carbonate during treatment with GENVOYA, take it at least 2 hours before or after you take GENVOYA.
- Do not change your dose or stop taking GENVOYA without first talking with your healthcare provider. Stay under a healthcare provider's care when taking GENVOYA.
- Do not miss a dose of GENVOYA.
- If you take too much GENVOYA, call your healthcare provider or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away.
- When your GENVOYA supply starts to run low, get more from your healthcare provider or pharmacy. This is very important because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time. The virus may develop resistance to GENVOYA and become harder to treat.

What are the possible side effects of GENVOYA?

GENVOYA may cause serious side effects, including:

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

The most common side effect of GENVOYA is nausea.

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

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

General information about the safe and effective use of GENVOYA.

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Patient Information leaflet. Do not use GENVOYA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give GENVOYA to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them.

This Brief Summary summarizes the most important information about GENVOYA. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about GENVOYA that is written for health professionals.

For more information, call **1-800-445-3235** or go to **www.GENVOYA.com**.

Keep GENVOYA and all medicines out of reach of children.

Issued: November 2015

Genvoya[™]
elvitegravir 150mg/cobicistat 150mg/emtricitabine
200mg/tenofovir alafenamide 10mg tablets



EMTRIVA, GENVOYA, the GENVOYA Logo, GILEAD, the GILEAD Logo, GSI, TYBOST, and VITEKTA are trademarks of Gilead Sciences, Inc., or its related companies. All other marks referenced herein are the property of their respective owners.

© 2015 Gilead Sciences, Inc. All rights reserved. GENC0003 11/15



National Gay Media Association

www.nationalgaymediaassociation.com



WINDY CITY TIMES

INDEX

NEWS

- HRC releases State Equality Index 8
- Chicago priest comes out 9
- Credit union's gender-affirming loan package 10
- HIV press conference; HIV education 12
- Ellen Meyers 13
- Equality Illinois gala 14
- Film about race, mental health gets Oscar nod 16
- In the Life 17
- Views: Andonoplas; letters 18

ENTERTAINMENT/EVENTS

- Dancin' Feats 19
- Amy Landecker interview 22
- Talking with actor Randy Harrison 23
- A profile of lesbian duo Whatismu 24
- NIGHTSPOTS 26

OUTLINES

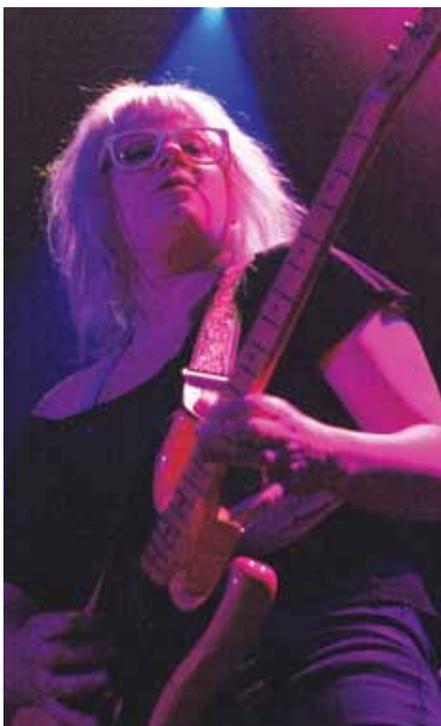
- Classifieds 28
- Calendar Q 30

DOWNLOAD THIS ISSUE

AND BROWSE THE ARCHIVES AT WWW.WINDYCITYTIMES.COM



online exclusives at www.WindyCityTimes.com



STRAWBERRY JAM

Bent Nights spotlights a concert featuring the acts Strawberry Jacuzzi, Le Tour, Velocicopter and Absolutely Not.

Photo of Velocicopter's Meaghan McDuff (left) by Vern Hester

ART-FELT



WCT showcases performance artist Levan D. Hawkins.

Photo courtesy of Hawkins

JUST DESSERTS



Patisserie Vanille (above) opened in Lake View; Fogo de Chao does the same in Naperville.

Photo by Jerry Nunn

SCREEN GEMS

Steve Maxey discusses what's new in wedding videos.

VOLLEY GEE WHIZ

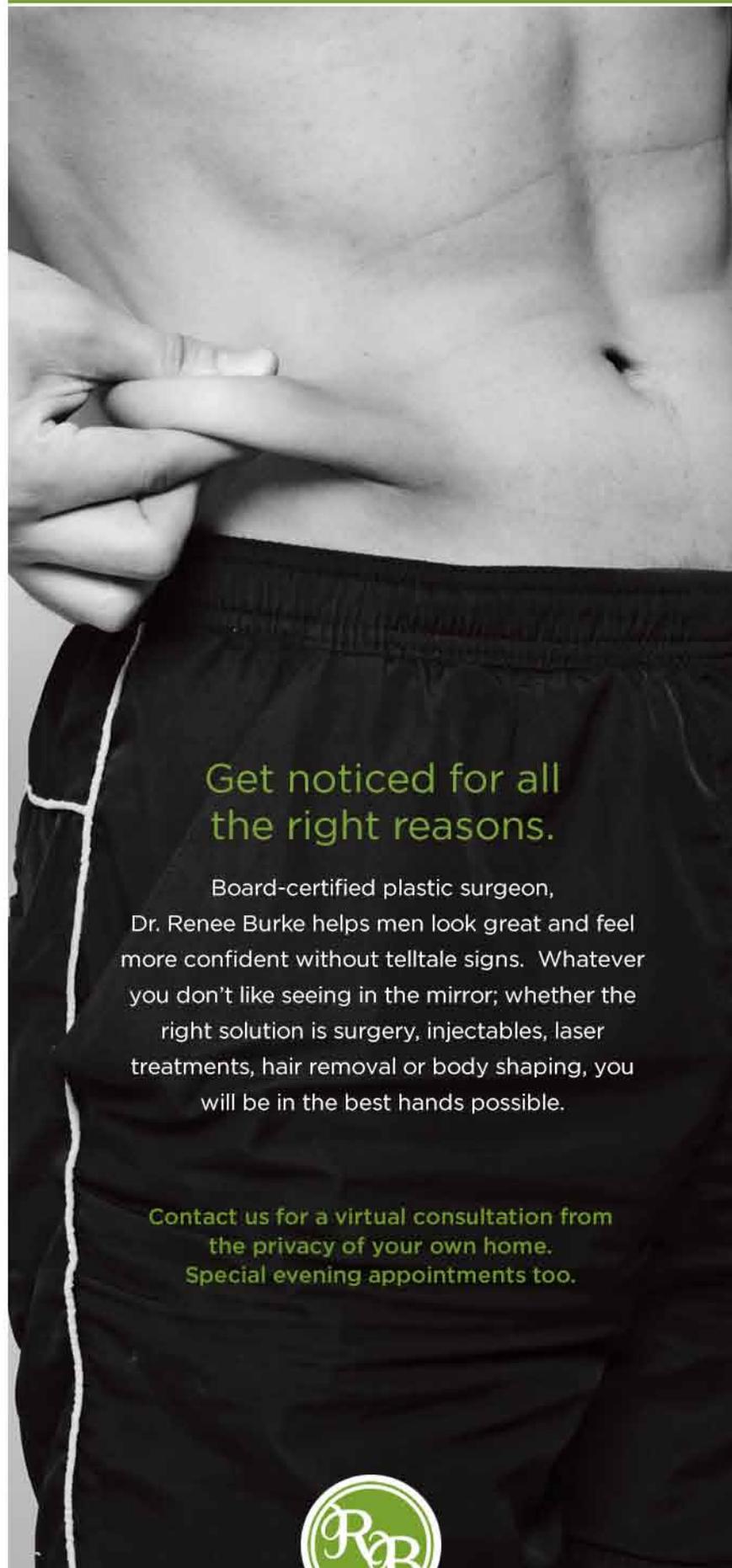
The Athletic Alliance of Chicago (AAC) held its drag volleyball tournament The Cotillion at the Center on Halsted..

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Miley Cyrus, showrunner Pete Nowalk and Laverne Cox.

plus **DAILY BREAKING NEWS**

SOME THINGS CAN'T BE SOLVED AT THE GYM



Get noticed for all the right reasons.

Board-certified plastic surgeon, Dr. Renee Burke helps men look great and feel more confident without telltale signs. Whatever you don't like seeing in the mirror; whether the right solution is surgery, injectables, laser treatments, hair removal or body shaping, you will be in the best hands possible.

Contact us for a virtual consultation from the privacy of your own home. Special evening appointments too.



RENEE BURKE MD

18 E. Dundee Road Building #3, Suite 200 Barrington, IL 60010
Phone: {847} 382-4400 www.reneeburkemd.com

HRC releases State Equality Index

A Human Rights Campaign (HRC) report says that a patchwork of state and local non-discrimination laws continues to leave millions of LGBT people—including those who are legally married—without reliable protections from discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation.

HRC's 2015 State Equality Index (issued in partnership with the Equality Federation) also reveals that, in many states, opponents of equality are stepping up efforts to sanction discrimination against LGBT people by proposing state-level laws that would undermine existing protections, erode marital rights of legally joined same-sex couples, target transgender people, and limit the ability of cities and towns to pass their own inclusive laws.

Illinois was tagged with the rating "Working Toward Innovative Equality." (This compares to states like Indiana and Louisiana, which were given the label "High Priority to Achieve Basic Equality.") Illinois' scorecard lists non-discrimination laws regarding sexual orientation and gender identity in areas such as public accommodations, education and credit—and protective parenting measures regarding adoption and surrogacy, among other issues.

However, the state is lacking in several areas, including non-discrimination in jury selection, gender-marker change on birth certificates and

LGBT-inclusive sex-education laws.

The index also lists what HRC considers to be bad measures; Illinois does not have most that are listed, with the exception of a state RFRA



Cover image of HRC's most recent State Equality Index.

(Religious Freedom Restoration Act).

"Even with marriage equality now the law of the land, the battle for LGBT rights at the state level continues to be a story of both successes and setbacks," said HRC President Chad Griffin in a statement. "Though a number of states are expanding access to full equality for LGBT people and their families, a majority of states are still struggling to reach even a basic level of equality for LGBT people."

The index is at <http://www.hrc.org/campaigns/state-equality-index>.

Univ. of Minnesota libraries honored for LGBT service

The American Library Association's (ALA's) Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round Table (GLBTRT) has named the Jean-Nickolaus Tretter Collection in Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Studies at the University of Minnesota Libraries as the inaugural recipient of the Newlen-Symons Award for Excellence in Serving the GLBT Community.

The award was established to honor a library, librarian, library staff member, library board and/or library friends groups who serve the GLBT community.

The award will be presented Monday, June 27, at the ALA Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida. The award is funded by and named after Robert R. Newlen, chief of staff of the Library of Congress, and John W. and Ann K. Symons. Ann Symons is past president and treasurer of the American Library Association and the immediate past chair of GLBTRT.

FBI needs info in Near North arson case

The FBI continues to seek information from the public regarding the arson that occurred at the Noble Horse Theatre, 1410 N. Orleans St., in February 2015, announced Michael J. Anderson, Special agent-in-charge of the Chicago office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Anderson also stated the reward being offered for information leading to the arrest of the individual or individuals responsible for this crime is being increased to \$10,000.

Thirteen horse-drawn carriages, worth approximately \$130,000, were destroyed in the fire, and significant damage was caused to the building. Investigation identified the cause of the fire as arson, and graffiti typically associated with the animal-rights movement ("SAVE THE HORSES" and "FREEDOM") was also discovered.

Anyone who has information regarding this fire is strongly encouraged to contact local police or the Chicago office of the FBI at 312-421-6700.



Linda Kuczka, Agent
954 W Webster
Chicago, IL 60614
Bus: 773-975-9111
linda@lindakuczka.com

Family. Friends. Community.

We're all in this together.

State Farm® has a long tradition of being there. That's one reason why I'm proud to support the LGBT community.

Get to a better State®.



En la Vida

BY RAVEN RODRIGUEZ



It feels like a lifetime ago

This is part two of Raven's En La Vida column. Part one was in the Jan. 20 Windy City Times.

I stopped talking to my mother in 2002. Having absolutely no relationship with her whatsoever made it difficult to maintain one with the rest of my family so for years my wife, our daughters and I lived in a bubble ... one that eventually burst.

My then-wife and I split up in 2005. The demise of my marriage had nothing to do with my mother or anything that was going on with my extended family. This was something altogether removed but it was still a difficult situation to be in without having family to fall back on.

I had honestly been more than prepared to never speak to my mother again. After all, she had spent her lifetime becoming who she was. The odds of her changing were not in her favor. We Latinos are a stubborn breed and the Rivera women ... pfff! Forget it! I'd have better luck expecting her to change eye color by sheer will. So I went about my business getting over the deterioration of my marriage.

A couple more years went by and I slowly recovered from the breakup and was once again out and about, doing the things I truly enjoyed. One of those things was singing backup for a band called Pulsation and as we were performing at Northalsted Market Days in 2009, with my youngest daughter in the crowd with one of my sisters, my mother made an appearance.

I was caught completely off-guard as it had been years since I had last laid eyes on her. From the stage I saw her conversing with my daughter and I became flustered. Thankfully with two other backup singers, I was able to feign that my microphone had gone out (when really the words to the song had escaped me). There was nothing to be done in the moment other than rehearse in my head the tongue lashing I was about to give my sister for allowing this. Once the set was over, I leapt off stage and walked right up to my mom ready to remove my youngest from her presence. However, the minute I saw that lady, my heart softened.

She was different, somehow. Her demeanor was unfamiliar to me. She was humble and not aggressive, meek and not arrogant, almost apologetic and open. This woman before me was not the woman I stopped speaking to seven years ago. This woman was human, and not el demonio I had run from for the last seven years.

We made small talk and she asked if she could visit with my daughters sometime. I told her I would think about it. I asked my daughters if they were comfortable with that, and they were. So little by little I began visiting my mom and bringing my daughters around. Little by little I began the process of getting to know this woman. This woman who now not only welcomed me but also insisted I bring the woman, which has turned out to be my soul mate, with to family events. This woman who was lighter, no longer angry,

bitter or broken. This woman who was, by all accounts, a stranger to me.

At first it was a bit difficult, especially when she would tell me she loved me. I could not say it back. How could I love her? I spent seven years forgetting the woman she was and had only just started getting to know the woman she had become. Some will argue she was still my mother. I will argue that that didn't matter. That mother-daughter bond never felt like it existed anyway so it wasn't a stretch to say I could not love someone I didn't know.

As we became closer, my mother opened her heart to my new wife, to my happiness, accepting that her definition of a good life was not an absolute, and that she could follow her God and I could follow my Mother and we could still co-exist in peace.

I won't lie, at first I always waited for the catch. Like someone suffering from PTSD, some little motion or word would make me think I was going to be tossed back into the pit I had worked so hard to crawl out of. I was always on edge.

Soon I learned to relax and one night while at one of my sisters' house barbecuing and drinking, my mom took shots of Patron with me, a HUGE deal in and of itself and not because she was drinking, as the Rivera women can go just as hard as the men in our family, but because it was with ME. This was what she needed to completely let down her guard, and she called me out to the back porch and everything changed.

Through tears she asked me to forgive her. She apologized for everything, from birth up until the day we stopped speaking. The woman was so overcome I think she even blamed herself for the curse on the Cubbies! Had I been holding a grudge all those years we went without speaking, this probably would have brought me to tears. Instead, through chuckles, I hugged her and explained I had already forgiven her years ago so not to worry. She cried into my shoulder as I held her tighter. Then it happened.

"I love you mommy."

And with those words, all the emotions of a child longing to be loved by her mother came pouring out and soon I was in tears as well because I meant it. I had a mother. Not just someone who gave birth to me, not just someone who fed and clothed me, but a MOTHER. I knew she would never again make me feel less than what I was. I knew she realized that losing her daughter and granddaughters was not worth whatever darkness she clung to that created the animosity she had toward me. She would be my MOM!

Since that moment about five years back now, our relationship has only gotten stronger. The transformation has been nothing short of miraculous. She has become someone I can turn to, someone I can rely on emotionally and spiritually. I learned that people, when aptly motivated, can change and she learned to love me por lo que soy.

Raven Rodriguez grew up in the Humboldt Park area as the oldest of six sisters. She has two daughters of her own, happily married and working full time for Northwestern University. She still finds time to pursue her passion for sketching pencil portraits and playing volleyball.

Priest comes out in newspaper article

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A Chicago priest, on Jan. 31, publicly came out in the pages of the Washington Post. The priest, Michael Shanahan, is listed as pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, according to reports.

The Post article discussed priests living closeted lives. According to reporter Michelle Boorstein, Shanahan initially wanted to remain anonymous, but knew that coming out might have a meaningful impact on LGBT people or their family members. His name is revealed in the final sentence of the article.

Archbishop Blase Cupich, on Feb. 1, released

a statement that said, "We support all our priests as they live out the promises they made on the day of their ordination."

The Chicago Archdiocese has been embroiled in legal disputes with employees dismissed after marrying a same-sex partner. Shanahan described conflicting feelings about those matters.

"I have a problem with Monday-morning quarterbacking," he said. "There's always stuff you don't know about why people are fired ... But where do you draw the line? There are all kinds of folks not in line on morality stuff."

Chris Pett, a spokesman for the LGBT Catholic organization Dignity/Chicago, said Shanahan's

coming-out "is a very positive kind of sign," since it's an instance "when an individual recognizes that, as a committed celibate priest, he's able to express his identity and feel that that's [both] a point of freedom for him and an opportunity to maybe put a face on our community ... so people understand that you can be who you are, and that you can be faithful to

your community, gospel and ministry, and live with a level of integrity."

Pett added, "I'm hoping he has the support of his community and his parish, and the rest of the Archdiocese."

The Washington Post's article is at <http://wapo.st/1POvHJZ>.

Girl Scout uses anti-trans incident to sell lots of cookies

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A transgender girl in downstate Herrin, Illinois, has used an incident of anti-trans bigotry as the impetus to sell thousands of Girl Scout cookies, according to BuzzFeed.

The 9-year-old girl, named Stormi (just her first name was revealed in the report), was told by a neighbor that, "Nobody wants to buy cookies from a boy in a dress." Stormi, who lives with a foster mother, joined the Girl Scouts last fall.

"It made me sad, because I'm a girl," Stormi recalled.

Stormi and her foster mother later moved all of her sales online to a digital portal, and decided to sell cookies that would be donated to other foster children like herself. After her foster mother detailed what happened on an online forum for parents of transgender kids, the story went viral and sales skyrocketed—within days, Stormi had sold over 3,000 boxes of cookies.

"I want kids like me to know they are perfect just the way they are," she said. "There are people all over the world that love you. Never give up because it does get better."

According to the Girl Scouts website, "[If a] child is recognized by the family and school/community as a girl and lives cultur-

ally as a girl, then Girl Scouts is an organization that can serve her in a setting that is both emotionally and physically safe."

In June, 2015, Girl Scouts of Western Washington returned a \$100,000 donation after the donor stipulated that the money could not be used on behalf of transgender scouts. The council was able to subsequently raise nearly \$249,000 in an online campaign to replace the donation.

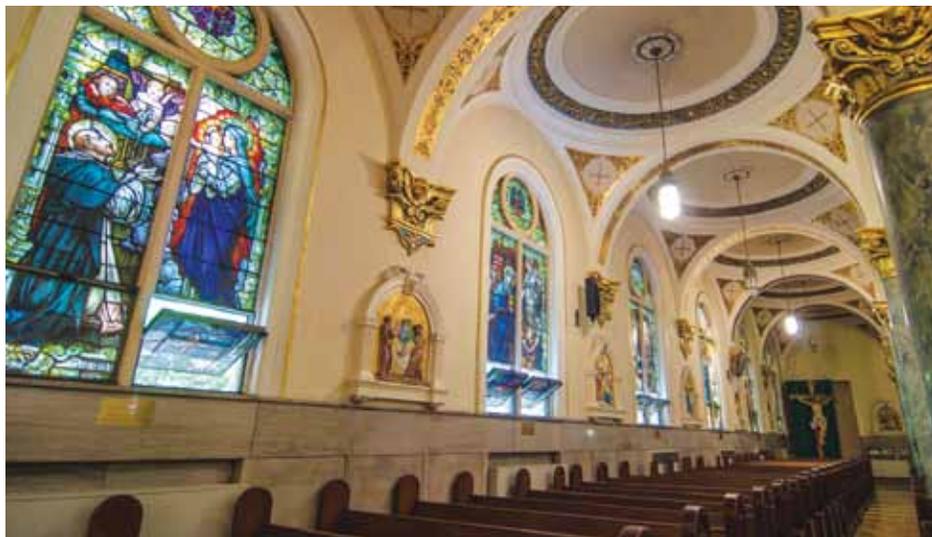
Buzzfeed's article is at <http://bzfd.it/1Sa3VqP>.

Quigley backs HOPWA change

U.S. Rep. Mike Quigley (IL-05), vice-chair of the Congressional LGBT Equality Caucus, supported the passage of the Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) program formula change through the Price-Aderholdt Amendment.

This amendment will alter the manner in which HOPWA funding is distributed throughout the country—and result in increased HOPWA funding for Chicago.

Instead of basing HOPWA funding on a system using cumulative AIDS cases—which includes both people who are living and who have died of AIDS—the amendment requires that funding is distributed based on a number of factors, including the number of people living with HIV/AIDS cases, along with the poverty level and cost of housing in a jurisdiction.



Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Church. Facebook photo



OUR PRIDE IS ON DISPLAY




5625 N. Broadway, Chicago | 866-725-9900 | ChicagoToyota.com

BOB LOQUERCIO AUTOGROUP






THE WORKS \$39.87

- Oil & Filter Change
- Rotate & Inspect 4 Tires
- Visually Inspect Brake Linings /Drums and Pads/Discs
- Multi-Point Inspection

Up to 4 qts oil. Synthetic additional. Toyota vehicles only. Must present coupon when order is written. May not be used on previous purchase or combined with any other specials. All specials exclude shop supplies and hazardous waste disposal fees. Expires 3/31/16.

Credit union unveils gender-affirming loan package

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

North Side Community Federal Credit Union (North Side) has announced a groundbreaking Gender Affirming Procedures Loan Product (GAP LP) package.

GAP LP was created by Lee Dewey, a trans person and accounting manager at North Side. It is designed to assist trans people who are looking for help in covering the expenses related to surgeries, procedures and anything else associated with their transition including, but not limited to, voice lessons and a new wardrobe.

Dewey, who holds an economics/business degree and is also a community organizer, explained that he's "been aware of much unmet demand for a product like this for some time."

North Side's mission is, according to its website, "to promote the financial well-being of our diverse community by providing affordable services and expanding the availability of alternative financial resources."

In announcing the GAP LP, North Side noted that they "strongly feel that providing the trans community with access to our services and developing a loan product package tailored to them is integral to our mission."

Dewey noted that due to North Side's history of inclusion they knew their idea to create this loan package would be embraced wholeheartedly.

"Through my experience working for the credit union for the last two years and the knowledge of their ethically serving diverse



Lee Dewey.
Photo by Denise Saucedo

groups of marginalized communities since their inception in the 1970s, I have come to trust their lived intent towards harm reduction," said Dewey. "I have come to trust their intent to responsibly, ethically and equitably serve the queer and trans communities through a thorough queering of our internal culture. We have had an in-house Trans 101, I have been able to institute a truly non-binary dress code and my co-workers have willingly followed my recommendations in how to de-gender our interactions with our members until they confirm what pronouns/language they use."

GAP LP is made up of three levels—Starting Small, Build and Save and Signature Access. These levels are designed for those with poor or no credit to those with excellent credit. There is also the ability to sponsor someone

under the program's Benefactor Secured loan.

Dewey noted that in order to take advantage of what they have to offer with this program, one has to become a member of the credit union.

"We are a local credit union, with a service area limited to a large swath of the North Side of Chicago, that one must live, reside, work, worship or receive services in to qualify for membership," said Dewey. "Many queer and trans folks access services within this area already, from the Center on Halsted, Howard Brown Health, Chicago Women's Health Center, TPAN, etc. If one cannot qualify this way, however, we do also have an internal 501c3 Credit Counseling department, where if one receives free credit counseling, they may thus qualify for membership."

When asked during the research and development phase if this product seems predatory, Dewey explained that North Side is a not-for-profit, community development financial institution with a low-income designation from the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) and was founded on the principles of fighting against redlining practices as well as serving under-banked and un-banked populations.

Dewey has been given full creative control and is also the point person for the GAP LP at the credit union.

"Although I have had full creative control over this product, I absolutely couldn't have done it without this credit union as a platform and the support and collaboration of all the folks that work here, are on our board and in our committees," said Dewey. "Not all folks want or need surgeries, but many of those that do experience multiple high barriers to entry, causing them to seek out underground resources or predatory means; this is about harm re-

duction."

Ahead of the Feb. 1 official launch date, Dewey distributed the GAP LP marketing materials at the Creating Change Conference. Dewey noted that the response from conference attendees was overwhelmingly positive.

As for this specific product, Dewey noted that to the best of their knowledge this is the first of its kind.

"We've asked around in the credit union world, and although I have heard of one specifically LGBT credit union in Washington, D.C., no one has heard of this product anywhere else in the country," said Dewey. "I further asked everyone I met at the Creating Change Conference and no one there had ever come across a similar product, either. If anyone out there does know of another provider, please do let me know. I'd love to network with them, in my quest to inspire similar products, and queer the world."

"Lee has been a strong advocate for the transgender community over the course of their employment at North Side," said company CEO Sarah Marshall. "They have evolved and continued to mature in their activism and outreach while educating staff about issues facing the transgender community. Lee personally identified a need in a marginalized community that they felt the credit union could address, in a way that was in line with our long history of providing affordable credit to diverse groups. They showed a tremendous amount of initiative in the development of this product, as well as engaged their peers in the process. North Side is excited to offer a unique product that will provide expanded access to financial stability for the transgender community."

See www.northsidecu.org/loans/gaplp-products for more information.

AFC criticizes Rauner speech

The AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) issued a statement about Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner's most recent State of the State speech, saying he omitted important issues.

Among said issues:

—Help for Illinoisans who need vital human services: AFC said Rauner failed to note "the human suffering playing out across the state as the seven-month budget impasse between himself and the General Assembly continues to devastate the social service sector." Many programs are being closed as a result of the impasse.

—A plan for those living with HIV: The statement said that the governor's "actions are undermining HIV/AIDS programs like the Pediatric AIDS Chicago Prevention Initiative (PACPI), which works with medical providers statewide to ensure that pregnant women who are HIV-positive deliver HIV-negative babies."

—A way forward: AFC said that compromise is needed instead of the "mutual respect"

Rauner mentioned. The organization noted, "In a United Way of Illinois survey of human service agencies in every state county that receives state funding, 85% of respondents reported cutting the number of clients they serve, up from 34% in July 2015. This is not the way forward for Illinois."

Howard Brown meeting March 30

Howard Brown Health will hold its annual meeting Wed., March 30, 6-8 p.m., at the Brown Elephant Andersonville, 5404 N. Clark St.

According to a release, Howard Brown will "share highlights of 2015, discuss our goals for the future, and honor community members who have gone above and beyond to support our mission of improving LGBTQ healthcare."

Afterward, there will be a reception with complimentary hors d'oeuvres and cocktails. Interested persons should email events@howardbrown.org with their full names, addresses and names of any guests.

Nominations sought for 30 Under 30 Awards

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

Nominees should be 30 years or under as of June 30, 2016, and should have made some substantial contributions to the Chicagoland LGBT community, whether in the fields of entertainment, politics, health, activism, academics, sports or other areas.

The deadline to nominate individuals is Friday, April 15.

Windy City Times Managing Editor Andrew Davis coordinates the awards program for the paper. Hundreds of people have been honored by the paper in the more than 10 years since the awards were established. Most honorees have gone on to great success in their careers and

educations, including working for the Obama presidential campaign and administration, plus individual successes in music, legal, professional and academic careers and much more.

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

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

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

Honorees will be notified in May and recognized at a free ceremony in June.



Dr. Menachim (Marc) Singer

passed from this world on
November 18th, 2015, while visiting family in Israel.

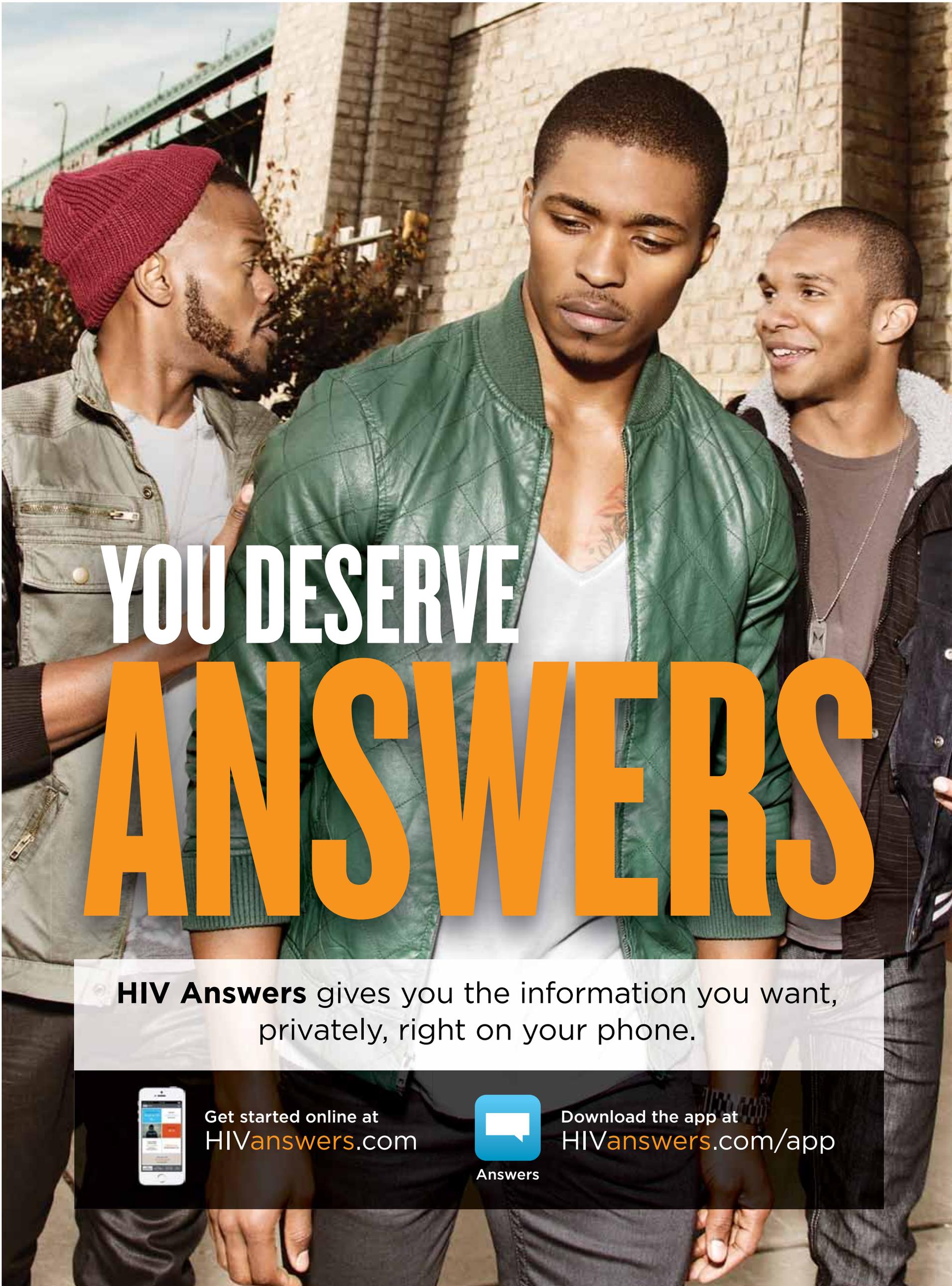
Marc was born on July 29th, 1950 in Romania, the son of Ilana and Max Singer. He is survived by his life partner, Michael Hora, his mother Ilana, children Ronit and Solomon, his brother Dov and wife Ola, three nieces and a large gathering of friends throughout the world.

**On February 21st, 2016,
there will be a Celebration of Life Service,**
remembering and honoring

Marc at the Hoover-Leppen Theatre located at
The Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, Chicago
At 11:00a.m.

There will be a brunch reception following in
The Irving Harris Family Foundation Reception Hall.

Donations may be made in Marc's memory to:
The Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights
208 S. LaSalle Street Suite 1300
Chicago, IL 60604



YOU DESERVE ANSWERS

HIV Answers gives you the information you want, privately, right on your phone.



Get started online at HIVanswers.com



Answers

Download the app at HIVanswers.com/app



Illinois state Sen. Jacqueline Y. Collins at the press conference.

Photo by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

Black HIV/AIDS event addresses progress and challenges

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

Ahead of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (Feb. 7), members of the West Side HIV/AIDS Resource Provider Council (WHARP), U.S. Congressman. Danny K. Davis (IL-07) Sen. Jacqueline Y. Collins (IL-16) and Rep. LaShawn K. Ford (IL-08) joined representatives from the University of Illinois Hospital & Health Sciences System, The Illinois Department of Public Health, AIDS Foundation of Chicago, The Chicago Gay Black Men's Caucus, The Black Treatment Advocate Network (BTAN) and the Center on Halsted (The Center) in a Feb. 5 press conference at Chicago's Miles Square Health Clinic.

The image of more than 15 noted political and nonprofit leaders in the battle against HIV/AIDS surrounding the podium was as much about demonstrating solidarity in the face of challenges such as an alarmingly disproportionate growth of the disease in the Black community (representing half of new cases) along with income-loss fallout from Springfield's ongoing budget impasse as it was to make announcements such as legislation renewing the Red Ribbon Cash Lottery Ticket while sending out a call to action urging all citizens to take an HIV/AIDS test.

"The need to celebrate the success of this work and the need to push for continued progress go hand in hand," Collins said before addressing the renewal of (SB 2397)—the Red Ribbon Cash Lottery Ticket for which she served as the Senate's chief sponsor.

The genesis of the Red Ribbon legislation occurred in 2007 when Collins was approached with the initiative crafted by Chicago activists Ben Montgomery Jr. and Michael O'Connor following a Gay Black Men's Caucus workshop called "Gay, Black and Dying." It resulted in both the idea and the foresight to directly generate money in order to combat HIV/AIDS rather than rely upon a dangerously fickle legislature.

Collins noted that, since 2008, the Red Ribbon Cash Lottery Ticket has generated \$6.4 million for Quality of Life grants, with 100 percent of its proceeds distributed to organizations statewide providing education, testing, counseling and care for HIV/AIDS affected and

at-risk individuals.

"Keeping these resources flowing has not been easy given the circumstances that we now encounter in this state," Collins added. "I have filed legislation to extend this program for an additional eight years and extend it to 2025. The fight against HIV/AIDS is a long-running battle we have waged for decades."

Ford and other presenters discussed the challenges for the African-American community in that battle.

One in 16 Black men and one in 32 Black women will be diagnosed with HIV. Black individuals represent approximately 15 percent of the U.S. population but accounted for an estimated 47 percent of new HIV infections in 2012. Youth are the largest population that the disease affects.

The need for routine opt-out HIV screening to be implemented at all medical centers in Illinois for individuals aged 13-64 as well as the removal of the stigma associated with the disease has never been more essential.

To that end, Ford noted the 2015 unanimous passage and signing into law of HB 1004—The African-American HIV/AIDS Response Act.

"Early diagnosis saves lives and prevents new infections," he said. "With the new law, we can diagnose people early by ensuring that everyone gets tested and is linked to treatment. Now the Illinois HIV testing law falls in line with CDC [Centers for Disease Control] recommendations, we can reduce the barriers and increase access to testing and linkage to care."

Described as a "prizefighter against HIV", Davis celebrated the work of the country's community health centers like Miles Square "providing quality health care for more than 28 million low and moderate income individuals all over America."

"Being healthy is more than the absence of disease," he said. "The obligation that each one of us has, if we live in a free and democratic society, is to try and make sure that society addresses the issues of the day."

Quoting poet Dante Alighieri, he added, "the hottest places in hell were reserved for those individuals who didn't take a position on the great issues of their time."

The consequences from those politicians in

Springfield who refuse to address the state's budget were alarmingly illustrated by The Center's Director, HIV/AIDS/STD Hotline and HIV Testing & Prevention Jill Dispenza, who said that loss of manpower for the organization's HIV programming has already had a calamitous result in the numbers of youth they are able to test and link to care.

"[There are] 12 [youth] potentially out there that we had tested last year that are transmitting, unknowingly, HIV to their social networks, their health is going down," she asserted. "We can't grab that back from these young people. This budget is hurting individual human beings who we love."

HIV Care Connect reworks education on HIV, mental health

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

Among the questions on Illinois HIV Care Connect's HIV and Mental Health Quiz is 'people living with HIV and a mental health condition have a more difficult time achieving viral suppression: True or False?'

According to Illinois Health Association Assistant Director for Programs and Compliance Jeffery M. Erdman, his colleague/HIV Project Manager Michael Maginn and Illinois HIV Care Connect Communications Manager Ray Valek, knowing the correct answer to that question is essential for those living with and at risk from HIV/AIDS.

That is why at the beginning of this year, Illinois HIV Care Connect announced the launch of a "new, educational website content designed to reinforce the importance of good mental health among people living with HIV."

The idea for the campaign was seeded in the Illinois Department of Public Health's Quality Improvement Committee, which had been looking at a number of different initiatives to improve the quality of care for clients across the state living with HIV.

The results thus far have illustrated the need.

Valek noted that, in order to garner a baseline idea of people's understanding of HIV and mental health, the quiz was administered Nov. 1-Dec. 15, 2015, without any educational content available to read. Starting on Dec. 16, the content was included.

The viral suppression question showed a 22-percent improvement in correct answers once the educational information became available. Another question showed a 17-percent increase in correct responses.

"We know that, just in general, one in five Americans [is] affected with a mental-health condition to start with and that can be exacerbated when an individual has HIV," Erdman told Windy City Times. "The medications one is taking for HIV can sometimes lead to issues with mental health but there are also the challenges of being HIV positive."

Erdman added that some of those challenges include a combination of stress factors such as societal discrimination, stress when disclosing an HIV condition, insurance problems and the day-to-day ability to live well.

"We also know from looking at data from the Illinois Department of Public Health that about 40 percent of the clients who are case managed and are HIV positive have a history of mental health," he said. "For those clients who are not virally suppressed—not controlling their HIV well, that number is almost 50 percent."

Thus the principal message of the program is that if a person has HIV, it is vital for them to tend to their mental health.

"For example, make it a part of your regular discussions with your health care provider," Valek urged. "If you notice any symptoms of mental health conditions you should seek treatment."

Another problem is society's prevalent attitude of burying its head in the sand con-



Jeffery M. Erdman.

Photo courtesy of Erdman

cerning mental health in general, according to Erdman.

"We don't talk about these issues in society," Erdman said. "There's a lot of ignorance around them. So a lot of people really do not understand what good mental health is and what it means to have a mental health condition and they are not aware of how to take care of themselves. That's one of the reasons why we are doing this campaign—to make more people aware of the importance of good mental health."

Among the list of important factors the campaign asks participants to consider is working with HIV doctors and infectious disease specialists who understand the interactions between HIV and mental health medications.

"We wanted to explore potential barriers to seeking diagnosis or treatment for mental health," Maginn said. "There was a relatively high percentage of respondents who still think that their health insurance may not cover mental health conditions. There is still a feeling among the HIV community that mental health conditions may not be covered or people can get their insurance taken away from them."

Under the Affordable Care Act, such prohibitions no longer exist.

"You can talk to your doctor about it, you can seek treatment for it and you will feel better," Maginn added.

The campaign is also targeted at case managers.

"They will become more aware of the importance of mental health," Erdman said. "They're going to be working with mental health providers in their communities. All these services are free under the Ryan White program."

For more information and to take the quiz, visit: <http://hivcareconnect.com/hiv-and-mental-health>.

Catching up with Hall of Famer Ellen Meyers

The Illinois secretary of state's office has the two highest ranking out lesbians in any branch of state government. The newly appointed chief of the Illinois Secretary of State Police is Sydney Thomas, who formerly was the chief deputy chief of police. Meanwhile, Ellen A. Meyers is the deputy director of intergovernmental affairs for Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White, a post she's held since 1999. Meyers is a 2001 inductee into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame.

BY ROSS FORMAN

Ellen A. Meyers and her longtime partner, Elena Yatzcek, eloped Dec. 1, 2014, fittingly coinciding with World AIDS Day.

"It was a very meaningful day for me, on multiple levels," said Meyers, a Maryland native who lives in Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood.

Meyers, after all, has spent decades supporting human-rights laws, persons affected by HIV/AIDS or aging, and electoral involvement, among other major, often personal missions.

"I am so very fortunate; I have been very lucky with this job, to work for a great guy, Secretary [Jesse] White. It's been wonderful. He's been extremely supportive," said Meyers, whose work has included considerable time on the passage of the state's human-rights bill. "The secretary was one of the original sponsors of this legislation."

Meyers' long career has included many milestone moments and key roles and duties. She was, at a time, the highest-placed out lesbian in the executive branch of Illinois state government. She served as liaison for lesbian and gay issues in the Cook County state's attorney's office, and more.

Trans issues have been a key interest of support, too.

"Sixteen years ago, it was [relatively unknown] what office you'd go to in the state to be able to get your name changed and/or your gender [marker] changed on your license or state ID," she said.

That's not true anymore. Now, applicants can even change their gender designation on IDs online.

Meyers said those changes, for instance, are a "reflection of the journey that our community has [taken]."

Marriage equality for same-sex couples also, of course, is now legal in Illinois, "which is something I never thought we'd have in my lifetime," she admitted.

"The primary part of my job that I do [nowadays] is, I work, design and develop programs with correctional entities—federal, state and certain counties—and I work with people and staff for people who are incarcerated as well as federal, state and county parolees and probationers for when they come out," Meyers said. "The focus is, what you need [to do] to get a state ID and license reinstatement."

The work, she said, "is very important. ... We want to make this as smooth as possible, so the applicant has success with the government agency, which they probably haven't" in the past.

In recent years, Meyers also has worked extensively with the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice, mostly around the issues of state IDs and license re-instatement. She also has worked with the Cook County Juvenile Probation Office.

And whenever applicable, she's always talking about gender identity, she said.

Jesse White is the state librarian, so Meyers "thought we needed more LGBT authors in our collections at the Illinois State Library," she said. "To my knowledge, we are the only state library in the U.S. that has a specific collection for [the state's] LGBT authors."

Meyers, who has been out at every job she's held, said her current work is "very, very rewarding, and I'm very thankful to Secretary of

State White for really supporting me and this work."

Also in her job, Meyers has worked with the Illinois Department of Corrections on a two-year project to identify growth industries in Illinois, where somebody with a criminal background could get training and employment and advance within that profession, she said.

That work also has expanded into some community colleges and elsewhere.

As for Sydney Thomas, Meyers said she is "thrilled" for Thomas' recent promotion. "She brings a lot of leadership to that position," Meyers said.

Meyers said being out in a high-profile post "is something I take with great pride," but it certainly comes with a great deal of responsibility. "I am always really focused on my job, what I'm supposed to be doing, and at the same time, I know that I am representing the LGBT community in a position of policy-making and authority within state government that can really affect a lot of people's lives," she said.



Ellen Meyers.
Photo courtesy of Meyers



LOVE REDEFINED - DIAMONDS CREATED WITHOUT CONFLICT
MEN'S & WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT RINGS

TAKE 10% OFF AND SAVE UP TO \$500

5 S. WABASH AVENUE 17TH FLOOR CHICAGO IL 60603
872-221-0331 NUMINED.COM

NUMINED
DIAMONDS

Images from Equality Illinois' 25th anniversary gala, Saturday, February 6, at Hilton Chicago. Photos by Kat Fitzgerald/www.mysticimagesphotography.com

EQUALITY from cover



Equality Illinois' Bernard Cherkasov (left) with Robert Mariano and Kevin Hauswirth.

Guests were given a copy of a letter from President Barack Obama that honored the anniversary. "By striving to lift up the LGBT community, you have helped set the continued trajectory of our society toward justice and equality," Obama wrote. "Your work to build a more inclusive country serves as a reminder to the lasting change we can bring about when we all come together in common purpose."

Robert Mariano of Roundy's Supermarkets accepted the 2016 Business Leadership Award on behalf of the Mariano's chain of groceries. "This will stand as one of the finest honors I will ever receive," Mariano said. "... Thank you for acknowledging what we do every day."

Equality Illinois CEO Bernard Cherkasov announced in January that he would be stepping down from his role soon. Equality Illinois Institute Board Chair Anthony D'Amato, in opening remarks, elaborated on Cherkasov's contribution to the organization.

"When Bernard joined Equality [Illinois], he faced an agency confronting multiple challenges—organizational, financial, reputational," D'Amato said. "As a result of his tireless leadership, he is leaving a successful agency that is expanding, with an enhanced Chicago-based staff and our first permanent presence in downstate Illinois. We have strong and stable finances, and a long list of legislative and civic accomplishments, crowned by the passage of marriage equality."

Also speaking during the presentation were co-founder Arthur Johnston and Board Chair Grant Gochnauer. Cherkasov introduced Pelosi, while Mariano was introduced by Equality Illinois Institute board member Kevin Hauswirth. Equality Illinois PAC Chair Nicole Bashor announced the political officials.

Equality Illinois Institute board member Jason Santos read a tribute to members and friends of the community who have passed away in the previous year, among them activists Kit Duffy, William Kelley and Julian Bond; state Rep. Esther Golar; psychiatrist Robert Spitzer; baseball player Ernie Banks; and LGBT individuals who have fallen victim to violence.

Art Johnston.



Left: Anita Alvarez and Dorothy Brown. Right: Mike Quigley, Tammy Duckworth and Jan Schakowsky.



Left to right: Cherkasov and Rep. Pelosi; Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle; Ald. Joe Moore and Ald. Tom Tunney.

Equality Illinois holds pre-gala event

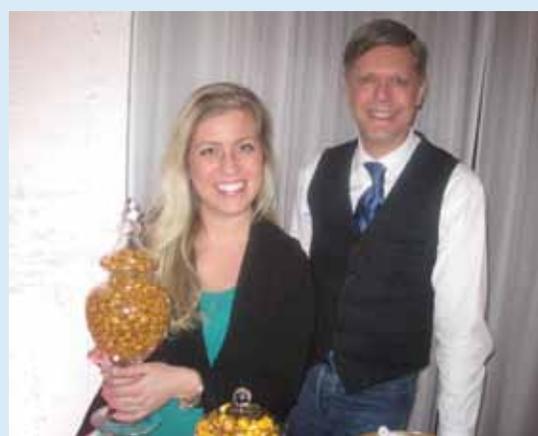
On Feb. 5—the evening before its 25th-anniversary gala—Equality Illinois held a “Jubilee Reception” at Chez Chicago, 247 E. Ontario St.

There were a buffet, a dessert cart (which quick drew patrons), a Garrett Popcorn table with samples and even a wedding-themed stop. A DJ provided aural entertainment.

Bernard Cherkasov—in his last year as CEO of Equality Illinois—addressed the crowd, improvising by speaking through the DJ’s headphones when his mic failed. “Thank you for supporting us year-round and making our work possible in every part of the state,” he told the crowd while thanking everyone from sponsors to the venue.

Talking with Windy City Times, Cherkasov reflected on his last year: “Even though I’m leaving my role, I’ll always be a part of the organization. I’ll never really leave.”

Photos and text by Andrew Davis



EMBASSY STUDIOS

CHICAGOLAND’S ONLY FULL HAIR RESTORATION CENTER SERVING CHICAGO FOR OVER 40 YEARS

VALENTINE’S DAY SPECIALS

LOVE YOUR LIPS
JUVEDERM

\$450
PER SYRINGE



SEXY GLO PEEL
(WITH NO DOWN TIME)

\$100

KISSABLE SKIN
DERMAPLANING

\$85



BOTOX
\$12 PER UNIT

LATISSE
\$100

10% OFF ALL WAXING

GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE

747 N LASALLE, SUITE 200, CHICAGO, IL 60654 • 312-642-9800

WWW.EMBASSYHAIRLOSS.COM



MORE CLUB THAN GYM.

With world-class indoor tennis courts, state-of-the-art fitness equipment and a philosophy that nurtures a feeling of community, isn't it time you upgrade from gym to club? Join Midtown in February and we'll waive your initiation fee. [Learn more at midtown.com](http://midtown.com)



Last Day of Freedom filmmakers Nomi Talisman and Dee Hibbert-Jones.
Photo by Kelly Sullivan

Lesbian filmmakers earn Oscar nod for film about race, mental health

BY SARI STAVER

When San Francisco filmmakers Dee Hibbert-Jones and Nomi Talisman were nominated for an Oscar for their film *Last Day of Freedom*, friends started asking one question: "What are you wearing?" to the Academy Awards gala.

"That was the last thing on our minds," said Hibbert-Jones, 53, an associate professor of art at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

"I thought matching socks might be appropriate," said Talisman, 49, a freelance editor and animator.

The women, who are married, have been collaborating on art for over a decade, although this is the first film for each. The 32-minute animated documentary, produced over a five-year period on a \$120,000 budget, is the story of Manny Babbitt, a homeless Vietnam War vet suffering but untreated for PTSD, who commits a murder. Manny's brother Bill, the film's narrator, reports the crime, eventually leading to his brother's execution.

The film has already won prestigious awards, including best documentary short at the International Documentary Association and Full Frame film festival. New York Times film critic Stephen Holden, in a Jan. 28 article on the Oscar nominees, wrote that *Last Day of Freedom* was the "most moving documentary" of the nominees, and predicted that the film "will break your heart."

In addition to being available on Netflix, the film can be seen on the big screen beginning on Feb. 6 at the Roxie Theater, with question-and-answer sessions with the women following the film. See the endnote for details.

In an interview in their Mission District flat, the filmmakers discussed their hectic lives. The most recent chapter began at 5 a.m. on Jan. 14, when they sat in bed with their six-year-old son Max watching the live telecast of the nominations. Just as the announcements for documentary shorts were about to begin, the local station cut to a traffic announcement. Before they had a chance to go online, their mobile phone lit up with texts and calls from friends around the world.

"It's been absolutely crazy" since then, said Hibbert-Jones. "When we're not sleeping or building Legos with our son, we are working" on the film. In addition to scheduling the interviews and screening requests that have flooded in, the filmmakers are also dealing with the nitty-gritty of fundraising and distribution.

Fundraising has been a part of their life for the past five years, when they first began the film. "We basically financed it from grant to grant," said Talisman. It was produced for \$120,000, she said. Fundraising efforts continue, with details about needs as well as a link to make a contribution, on the film's website, lastdayoffreedom.net.

The idea for the film came up while Talisman was working as a media specialist for the Community Resource Initiative, a local nonprofit that collects narratives to build cases against capital punishment.

"I came home every night and told Dee that I was hearing stories that we need to tell," she said. They explored telling the stories of a number of other families, but when they met Bill Babbitt, "we knew this was our story," said Talisman.

Both are experienced at drawing, and decided to use animation because it allowed them the "intimacy" of telling a story that was "difficult to hear" because it was so sad and painful. During the film's five years of production, "we would often come home crying after hearing some of the details about what this family went through," said Hibbert-Jones.

The Babbitt family saga took place in Sacramento, when Manny returned from two tours of duty in Vietnam suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as earlier mental health problems, also untreated, after several falls.

Narrator Bill Babbitt describes his painful struggle after learning that his brother has probably committed a murder. After law enforcement assured him that they would not seek the death penalty, Bill turned his brother in. But the case was grossly mishandled by the defense team, and Manny was executed at San Quentin Prison in 1999, soon after being awarded a Purple Heart behind bars.

The film, said Talisman, "is a portrait of a man at the nexus of the most pressing social issues of our day: veterans' care, homelessness, race, class, mental health access and criminal justice." By using Bill as the film's narrator, they wanted to "give voice to a perspective that is rarely broadcast," she added.

Although this is their first film, the women have had earlier collaborations. They were part of the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts' artists-in-residence program, where they created *Living Conditions*, an interactive project that focused on the lives of families with relatives on death row. *Last Day of Freedom* is a stand-alone film that is part of that project.

Hibbert-Jones, originally from the United Kingdom, and Talisman, from Israel, both attended Mills College, where each received a master's degree in fine arts. They started dating shortly after graduation, and married in 2014. They are already planning future projects, but in the meantime are trying to cope

with the attention from the Oscar nomination.

"We are so honored!" said Hibbert-Jones. "I remember we were dancing around the kitchen when we heard we were accepted" into our first major festival. "To have come so far with our first film, it's all beyond our wildest dreams."

Amidst the excitement, they haven't forgotten the question their friends all want answered: their wardrobe on the evening of Feb. 28.

"Someone in Los Angeles is dressing me," said Hibbert-Jones, "and Nomi is working with several suit companies locally" to find just the right outfit.

This article originally appeared in the Bay Area Reporter.

This film will show at Chicago's Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport Ave., with other Oscar-nominated short films through Thursday, Feb. 11.

Argentinian trans activist dies

Longtime transgender activist Lohana Berkins died Feb. 5 after several weeks of hospitalization, prompting an outpouring of grief and tributes, according to the Buenos Aires Herald.

In 2002, she applied for a job as a teacher at a public school. When authorities denied her the right to do so under her own name, she filed a complaint with Buenos Aires City's ombudsman's office, which ordered the school to respect her gender identity.

From her hospital room, Berkins delivered a message, translated here from publications such as *La Nacion*: "Dear sisters, my health is very critical and does not allow me to meet with you personally. So I want to thank them for their expressions of affection and convey a word through partner Marlene Wayar, whom I bequeath this post.

Many wins we obtained in these years. now it is time to resist, to fight for their continuity. the time of the revolution it is now, because the prison did not return anymore. I am convinced that the engine of change is love. love it they denied us our impulse is to change the world. All blows and contempt that I suffered, do not compare with the infinite love that surrounds me right now. Furia Transvestite always. A hug."

A wake was held for Berkins in the Buenos Aires city legislature.

The Herald article is at <http://www.buenosairesherald.com/article/208246/infinite-love>.

Police kill trans man in Arizona

Police in Arizona killed 24-year-old Mesa transgender man Kayden Clarke, according to the Arizona Republic.

Friends had called police fearing Clarke, who had Asperger's syndrome, was suicidal. When police arrived, Clarke allegedly charged at two officers with a knife and at least one of them opened fire.

Authorities identified the person they killed as Danielle Jacobs, although friends said they knew him as Clarke. It been noted that Clarke gained viral fame last year after uploading a video showing his service dog calming him during a meltdown; the video had more than 2.5 million views and nearly 1,500 comments

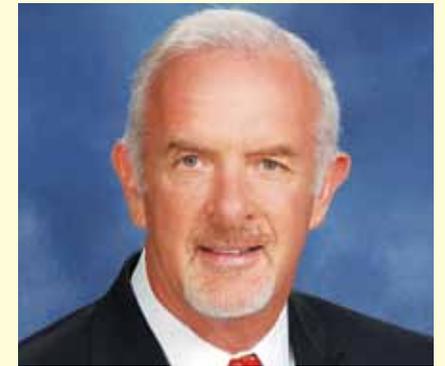
The article is at <http://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/mesa/2016/02/05/mesa-woman-viral-aspergers-meltdown-video-killed-police/79867822/>.

Indiana gay-rights measure fails

In Indiana, Senate Bill 344—the so-called "LGB, no T" bill because it did not provide protections for the transgender community—died in the state Senate on Feb. 2 without a vote, WISHTV.com reported.

The Indiana Senate Rules and Legislative Procedure Committee had previously passed the bill.

The author of the bill, Sen. Travis Holdman (R-Markle) refused to permit amendments



Indiana state Sen. Travis Holdman.

when his name was called—effectively killing the bill for this session. Republicans would not vote for a measure that includes trans people, and Democrats refrained from backing a bill that excluded the same demographic.

"Senate Bill 344 provides such a broad license to discriminate based on religion that it is nothing short of a Super RFRA," Camilla Taylor, counsel in the Midwest Regional Office of Lambda Legal, said in a statement when SB344 passed out of committee. "This bill also does not even pretend to protect transgender Hoosiers, excluding them entirely, which is completely unacceptable.

The ACLU of Indiana—which was hoping the bill would stay alive long enough to add trans-related protections—called the measure's death "extremely disappointing" in a statement "Lawmakers left this crucial issue [of equal protection for LGBT people] unanswered despite our tireless efforts to help fix the deeply flawed legislation, and despite strong support across the state from faith leaders, business leaders and public officials interested in moving Indiana forward," Executive Director Jane Henegar said.

Senate Bill 66—a so-called "Super RFRA (Religious Freedom Restoration Act)" bill—was stopped Jan. 27, *IndyStar.com* reported.

The article is at <http://wishtv.com/2016/02/02/lgb-no-t-bill-dies-in-indiana-senate/>.





in the LIFE
Roberto Rodriguez

TEXT BY ROSS FORMAN

PHOTOS COURTESY OF RODRIGUEZ

- **Age**
37
- **Neighborhood**
North Center
- **Relationship status**
Married
- **Education**
Graduated from Waukegan High School in 1996, then the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign in 2001
- **Career**
Urban Planner for Knight Engineers and Architects.
- **Nickname**
Berto
- **Background**
Born in Puerto Rico, raised in Waukegan, Illinois
- **Favorite drink**
"Jack and Diet."
- **Favorite movie**
Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind
- **Favorite TV shows**
Mr. Robot, Game of Thrones, Modern Family and Family Guy
- **Little-known fact**
"I have no middle name, but two last names."

Roberto Rodriguez Torres is a team player, on and off the fields of play.

Torres manages the contract for a team of architects, engineers and planners for a team of Knight Engineers and Architects, who, under contract, manage CDOT (Chicago Department of Transportation) Streetscape and Sustainable Design projects throughout the city, he said.

"We rebuild streets and sidewalks in commercial areas throughout the city, making them safer, attracting pedestrian traffic, and encouraging economic development, for a walkable more sustainable city," Torres said.

"Urban planners plan for the development of urban and suburban areas to effectively accommodate population growth by creating more sustainable cities and protecting the environment. Urban planners are the technical experts that advise developers, private property owners and government agencies on decisions they will make regarding where to best locate commercial, residential and industrial land uses, parks, public spaces, roads, and transit based on changes in the economy and cultural trends."

His career goal is to direct a planning department or be a partner in a planning or engineering firm.

"The best part of what I do is that I build urban places that positively affect an entire city of people, but what I enjoy most about my day-to-day experience is making sense of a complicated process," Torres said. "There is a strong sense of satisfaction when you figure it all out and it works."

Torres also takes the team-approach to softball through the Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA), and he previously CMSA played flag football, too.

"Spending every summer Sunday outdoors, enjoying the weather and enjoying the company of my teammates and friends," is the best part of the league, he said. "I think my favorite CMSA story is how our team went from bad to actually becoming a competitive



team ... as competitive as a D2 team can be anyway," as D2 is CMSA's lowest tiered league.

He is teammates with his husband.

Their 2015 team was the Scruff Bad News Beards, and Torres played third base and left field. The team finished in second-place for the regular-season and also in the post-season playoffs.

"I was in a troubled relationship some years

ago that was negatively impacting other areas of my life," Torres admitted. "I was beginning to lose contact with friends and family, and I did not like the direction my life was going. I gathered the courage to break it off. That was when I decided to move to Chicago from the suburbs. My life has since changed for the better in every way."

#MoreHeart

MORE THAN 100 CONVENIENT LOCATIONS

Heart. You follow it. You love with it. It changes you. At Advocate Heart Institute we offer more top cardiologists, at more than 100 convenient locations, performing more heart procedures than any other hospital in Chicago. Because the more we do, the better the results. And your heart deserves the best. Visit AdvocateHeartInstitute.com for more information.

Advocate Heart Institute
At Illinois Masonic Medical Center

viewpoints



**Frank
ANDONOPLAS**

FRANKLY SPEAKING

What's hot and what's not: Wedding trends for 2016

As a wedding consultant, every wedding that I design and coordinate is totally inspired by that couple's style, so the details are completely unique to each wedding.

Here are the latest trends that I see in weddings for this year. Remember that these are trends, not the rules. So the first thing I do with every couple is ask a lot of questions about their style, likes and—even more importantly—dislikes. I strongly feel your wedding should reflect your style. That's where I come in and make it unique to both of you, "marrying" your style to what is trending. For me, it is all about creating a unique event experience for the couple and their family and friends.

—**Food:** I'm seeing a return to a sit-down plated meal. This can be a lavish 12-course tasting menu that is also complete with wine pairings to a Downton Abbey-inspired European-style meal complete with French service.

For those on a budget and who don't want to spend a lot of their reception time eating, keep it simple with a salad or appetizer course (I love doing a duet of soup and salad at the same time) and then an entree course followed by wedding cake for dessert. This way, you have the seated meal experience with minimal cost. Keep in mind that when doing a lavish dinner, keep your cocktail hour food to just passed hors d'oeuvres so that they can enjoy the meal they are not expecting.

—**Wedding cake:** Couples are opting for smaller cakes for the traditional cake cut. Fun desserts are on trend. From make-your-own doughnuts to pie bars, dessert, in itself, is an event of the evening. Coffee stations, complete



with baristas, are still very popular.

—**Libations:** Signature cocktails are still the rage. Instead of the usual martini or Manhattan, I love to have my clients meet with a mixologist and create cocktails all their own. Also, a dedicated bar for tasting of different varieties of scotch, sparkling wines or craft beers can be fun and great source of conversation.

—**Floral:** You can spend a little, or you can spend a lot. I'm finding that in my centerpieces are becoming more unique. Instead of just one large one, multiple smaller arrangements can make real statements on the tables.

—**Lighting:** Pin-spotting tables, textured dance floors, walls, ceilings and perimeter LED lighting (that can change color—great for dancing) are all great options. Video mapping—where changing 3D images can light a wedding cake, dance floor or a whole building—is the new trend.

—**Seating for guests:** If you're doing a sit-down meal, you must have seating for everyone. But think outside the box. Using rented couches, ottomans and banquettes make it much more interesting than just chairs. Also, think beyond the round banquet table: Rectangles, squares and even serpentine shapes can mix up things.

—**Entertainment:** In addition to your orchestra or DJ, think of other things to keep the guests entertained. Photo ops, live oil paintings of the weddings, tarot card readers and

butt (yes, as in your rear end) sketch and Etch-a-Sketch portrait artists can add that extra pizzazz to your reception.

—**Invitations and stationery:** Much more simple designs are being used. Layered papers are still popular but are very fussy, with ribbons and bows not being used much anymore. Use of your custom wedding brand still adorns save the dates, invitations, programs and menus.

—**Late-night fun:** Whether it be sweet or savory, it's great to surprise guests with something being passed on the dance floor. Root-beer floats, milkshakes or miniature gyros as well as traditional Chicago sliders, hot dogs or pizza—guests love all of these. You can also do this where they are getting the items as they are exiting, as a final good night. A food truck parked outside as guests leave is another great way of ending the night.

I also found providing some sort of a breakfast item is a big hit. A cereal bar—as guests wait for the valet to get their cars—is an unexpected surprise.

Last word of advice: Don't be pressured by trends. Your wedding should be what you want it to be, and what you can afford. From simple to spectacular, it's your day—and it's your way. Long may you love!

Author and bouquet photos by Joe Kozak of KTK Design

letters

Pride and protests

Dear Editor:

Shouting false charges of "anti-Semitism" is a frequent tactic used by pro-Israel forces to marginalize those who protest the devastating, racist—yes, racist—policies that Israel carries out against the Palestinian people.

Pro-Israel reaction to our recent protest at the National LGBTQ Task Force's Creating Change conference in Chicago is no exception. Never mind that many of the protest organizers were themselves Jewish. Never mind that Jewish Voice for Peace not only co-sponsored our protest, but organized a pro-equality Shabbat to precede it. And never mind that independent observers like Windy City Times noted it was false that we broke into the pro-Israel Shabbat service.

Supporters of the reception, organized by A Wider Bridge (AWB), claim that our protest was misguided because AWB has no relationship to the Israeli government. This is false. AWB de-

scribes itself as a "pro-Israel" group and brags of marching with the Israeli consulate last year in NYC's Pride Parade. Moreover, an anti-Zionist Jewish website notes that AWB "regularly partners with StandWithUs, a pro-occupation propaganda outlet that works closely with the Israeli government."

The charge that our protest constituted "censorship" was also nonsense, unless you think that the Task Force should "balance" its pro-equality message by giving venues to homophobes, transphobes, sexists and racists. In fact, as with the vigorous protest against the Task Force for inviting immigrant-deporting ICE (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement) representatives, our protest against the racist AWB was also against the Task Force for failing to live up to its proclaimed ideals.

To avoid taking action, some say the issue is too "complicated." But it's not: Like apartheid South Africa, Israel was founded on the racist expulsion of people from their land. The areas under formal Palestinian control have yearly shrunk, now resembling the notorious Bantu-

stans to which most South African Blacks were once confined. Leading South African freedom campaigners, such as Bishop Desmond Tutu, recognize the parallels and explicitly call Israel a racist, apartheid state.

Chicagoans organizing against the Chicago Police Department's racism also recognize Israel's profound racism. Most local #blacklivesmatter organizations are now explicitly pro-Palestinian, and some helped lead the Creating Change protest. As one pro-Israel commentator noted, "American Jewish leaders confide that generating support for the Jewish state is becoming increasingly difficult these days—even within the Jewish community, and especially among younger people."

Israel today resembles a country with a Donald Trump-like president. Think Trump is racist for talk about excluding Muslims and building a border wall? Well Israel already has such a wall, and leading Israeli politicians regularly call for the expulsion of remaining Palestin-

WINDY CITY TIMES

VOL. 31, No. 20, Feb. 10, 2016

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

PUBLISHER & EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Tracy Baim

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER Terri Klinsky
MANAGING EDITOR Andrew Davis
ASSOCIATE EDITOR Matt Simonette
BUSINESS MANAGER Ripley Caine
DIRECTOR OF NEW MEDIA Jean Albright
ART DIRECTOR Kirk Williamson
SENIOR REPORTER Gretchen Rachel Hammond
SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES Terri Klinsky, Kirk Williamson, Amy Matheny, Chris Cheuvront, Gretchen Rachel Hammond, Scott Duff, Freddie Bain
NATIONAL SALES Rivendell Media, 212-242-6863
SENIOR WRITERS Bob Roehr, Tony Peregrin, Lisa Keen, Yasmin Nair
THEATER EDITOR Scott C. Morgan
CINEMA WRITER Richard Knight Jr.
SPORTS WRITER Ross Forman
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT WRITERS Mary Shen Barnidge, Lawrence Ferber, Mel Ferrand, Jerry Nunn, Jonathan Abarbanel
COLUMNISTS/WRITERS: Yvonne Zipter, Jorjet Harper, Charlesie Dewey, Carrie Maxwell, Billy Masters, Sarah Toce, Dana Rudolph, Melissa Wasserman, Joe Franco, Nick Patricca, Liz Baudler, Rex Wockner, Marie J. Kuda, Angelique Smith, Meghan Streit
SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHERS Mel Ferrand, Hal Baim, Tim Carroll, Ed Negron
WEBSITE LISTINGS VOLUNTEER Gene Naden

CIRCULATION

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

Copyright 2016 Lambda Publications Inc./Windy City Media Group; All rights reserved. Reprint by permission only. Back issues (if available) for \$5 per issue (postage included). Return postage must accompany all manuscripts, drawings, and photographs submitted if they are to be returned, and no responsibility may be assumed for unsolicited materials. All rights to letters, art and photographs sent to *Windy City Times* will be treated as unconditionally assigned for publication purposes and as such, subject to editing and comment. The opinions expressed by the columnists, cartoonists, letter writers, and commentators are their own and do not necessarily reflect the position of *Windy City Times*. Publication of the name, photograph, or likeness of a person or organization in articles or advertising in *Windy City Times* is not to be construed as any indication of the sexual orientation of such person or organization. While we encourage readers to support the advertisers who make this newspaper possible, *Windy City Times* cannot accept responsibility for advertising claims.

(773) 871-7610 FAX (773) 871-7609
e-mail: editor@windycitymediagroup.com or Andrew@windycitymediagroup.com

www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com
podcast: WindyCityQueercast.com

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

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

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

FOUNDING MEMBER

National
Gay Media
Association

WINDY CITY TIMES

DIVERSIONS

THEATER • FILM • ENTERTAINMENT • SPORTS



26

Del Frisco's.



26

Mardi Gras at Sidetrack.



Let's shake on it

20

Windy City Times reviews *The Old Friends*.

Photo by Dean La Prairie

DANCIN' FEATS

Milwaukee Ballet starts conversations with 'Dorian Gray'

BY LAUREN WARNECKE

The full-length story ballet is back in style, thanks to a number of in vogue, internationally renowned choreographers like Christopher Wheeldon, Stanton Welch, John Neumeier and Alexei Ratmanský creating new narratives or reimagining classical favorites.

Add Michael Pink to this list, who, for de-

cadés has created original and reimagined ballets while steering the helm at Milwaukee Ballet since 2002. His latest ballet, *Dorian Gray*, is an ambitious new project first envisioned in 1999. After premiering a pilot version on a small German company, Pink will now bring the full production to loyal dance-goers in Milwaukee.

Sparing Windy City Times readers from too

much literary analysis, Oscar Wilde's only novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, has long been recognized as a good, though slightly controversial, example of literary excellence. Filled with hedonism (pleasure and passion above all else), arrogance, and homoerotic undertones, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* reads as easily as any trashy romance novel. Make no mistake, this is a great and historically significant piece of literature, which is probably why your middle school English teacher made you read it, but then didn't really tell you what it was about.

The book is thought to be a metaphorical autobiography in which Oscar Wilde is Basil Hallward, the painter, while the aesthete Lord Henry Wotton (portrayed in Pink's ballet with spoken dialogue by actor James Zager) is what the world perceives of him, and the pulpit for Wilde's philosophical platforms. Hallward is smitten by the young and beautiful muse Dorian Gray, who finds a proverbial fountain of youth in his portrait, but in it is forced to observe his decay. A few years after publication, the author found himself on trial for gross indecencies with men, for which the book was Exhibit A, and he eventually served hard labor before falling into obscurity and dying at age 46. Almost instantly a gay martyr, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* has long been a source of discussion in LGBT literature, but is perhaps now not so scandalous as it once seemed. In a 2011 article for *The New Yorker*, Alex Ross wrote:

"In many major cities, at least, gays and lesbians ... no longer seem to need the tragicomic Oscar [Wilde]; the young gays of today can revel in the wit and wisdom of Neil Patrick Harris. All of which leaves Wilde in an interesting limbo. What will he mean in a perhaps not too distant time when homosexuality has ceased to be a conversation stopper?"

But there is so much more conversation to be had, particularly when pitting the story against a wordless artform carried out by pillars of youth and beauty. "When I look at my dancers," said Michael Pink in an interview with *Windy City Times*, "they are the beautiful people. There is nobody better to portray the story of *Dorian Gray* than the beautiful dancers because of the direct parallel: their lives as dancers will be over before they grow old. They will never grow old as dancers."

Moreover, Wilde's views about the pending post-Victorian society in which he lived, amid massive instrumentation arising out of the Industrial Revolution, are perhaps meant to resurface as we face a similarly volatile period of political, societal, and technological change—one in which the arts are often viewed as superfluous. Dance, theater, painting ... are, at times, useless luxuries, as Wilde proclaims in the forward of the book, but starting conversations is likely art's biggest contribution to society.

The point is, dance seems a perfect vehicle for this story in particular, and Michael Pink

wishes to extend such dialogues about art and dance beyond Milwaukee's borders. Pink's challenge has not been recruiting dancers, collaborators or enthusiastic audience members. Rather, Pink has maintained that getting national, or even regional, exposure has been his greatest hurdle. Chicago and Milwaukee are fewer than 80 miles apart, and yet there has been little collaboration between the Windy City's ballet companies and Milwaukee Ballet—and while some of his ballets have been commissioned by other companies, Milwaukee Ballet has yet to establish a viable touring schedule. "I have wonderful dancers who are committed to staying here in Milwaukee. You can see it all here," he said. "People should be able to access all aspects of dance and theater, and we have that here. We are close to many places, and what we see as a vibrant arts scene is one in which there is competition. Remove the dark cloud that we are inferior to Chicago and realize what we have here! We have it all, it's just, how do we embrace that and celebrate it?"

Need audience members read up on *Dorian Gray* before seeing the ballet? No, not really. According to Pink, the story will be accessible to most ages and levels of familiarity with the story, and the ballet will likely be interpreted and appreciated in very different ways by having read or not read the book. Perhaps that is a crucial part of the dialogue, and a number of pre-show talks and special events have been scheduled to bring dancers, literature buffs, and arts goers together to ensure that *Dorian Gray* the ballet isn't as silly as Wilde claimed art to be.

Wilde himself wrote, "A fresh mode of Beauty is absolutely distasteful to them, and whenever it appears they get so angry and bewildered that they always use two stupid expressions—one is that the work of art is grossly unintelligible; the other, that the work of art is grossly immoral. What they mean by these words seems to me to be this. When they say a work is grossly unintelligible, they mean that the artist has said or made a beautiful thing that is new; when they describe a work as grossly immoral, they mean that the artist has said or made a beautiful thing that is true."

Milwaukee Ballet presents *Dorian Gray* Feb. 12-14 and 19-21 at the Pabst Theater, 144 E. Wells St., Milwaukee. Tickets are \$31.25-98.25, available at the Pabst Theater box office, Milwaukee Ballet box office, by phone 414-902-2103, or online at milwaukeeballet.org.

There is a gala event prior to the Saturday, Feb. 20, performance including hors d'oeuvres and a moderated discussion with University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee faculty specializing in LGBT literature. For more information on this event, contact Megan Spangberg at 414-902-2107 or mbspangberg@milwaukeeballet.org.

Patrick Howell, who will star as *Dorian Gray* in Michael Pink's project.
Photo by Tom Davenport



THEATER REVIEW

American Buffalo

Playwright: David Mamet

At: Mary-Arrchie Theatre Company
at Angel Island, 735 W. Sheridan Rd.

Tickets: 773-871-0442;

www.maryarchie.com; \$30

Runs through: March 6

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

With the wrecking ball looming on the horizon, Mary-Arrchie Theatre returns to its roots for one last stand, and in doing so, demonstrates once again the blend of visceral and cerebral performance that launched its 30-year-career as one of our city's foremost off-Loop companies.

David Mamet's terse little morality fable was a driving force in putting Chicago on the map in 1975, spawning a wave of imitations lasting into the mid-1990s. Its McGuffin is the rare coin—a 19-ought-something buffalo-head nickel—referenced in the play's title, recently purchased from Don Dubrow's seedy junk shop by a collector. No sooner has the unprepossessing relic left the premises, however, than badass buddy "Teach" Cole hatches a scheme to steal it back. As the progress of this plan grows increasingly complicated—thanks to the interference of teenage street-waif Bobby and assorted unseen (but vividly described) acquaintances—each of these would-be hustlers will find the extent of his greed tested to the brink of inhumanity.

Young actors also frequently find themselves tested—by Mamet's dialogue. Teach's propen-



American Buffalo.
Photo by
Michael Brosilow

sity for multiple vituperations conjuring veritable symphonies of vitriolic language too often makes for words gushing forth in a burst of unwavering adrenaline that directors are either unable or unwilling to interrupt, resulting in a thrilling ride for the perpetrators and a boring one for audiences. Not Mary-Arrchie, however: Under the orchestration of Carlo Lorenzo Garcia, players Richard Cotovsky, Stephen Walker and Rudy Galvin take advantage of their intimate playing space to carefully pace their text so that our attention is focused, not on ver-

bal showiness, but on the ethical values under examination. For example, after Don has explained to Bobby the necessity of separating business and friendship, we become attuned to the subtle shades of meaning ascribed to those two words when uttered by speakers of widely varying scruples.

Lest we discern this dramatic question too quickly, its author has cleverly buried it in a welter of distracting elements, beginning with Don's cluttered inventory— assembled by John Holt to encompass, among other detritus, five

deer-head trophies, a pig butcher's spreader and stacks of lightweight metal tsotchkes to facilitate one of fight designer David Woolley's splendid bash-crash-and-trash debacles. Whether you have experienced Mamet's seminal masterpiece many times before, or number among the few theatergoers seeing it for the first time, be assured that your final climb up the stairs to the loft above the grocery store will lead you to what may be the best production in its long history of defining "Chicago-style theater" to the world.

THEATER REVIEW

The Explorers Club

Playwright: Nell Benjamin

At: Windy City Playhouse,
3014 W. Irving Park Rd.

Tickets: 1-773-891-8985;

www.windycityplayhouse.com; \$25-\$55

Runs through: April 17

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

A deft cast and director make this silly little farce exactly what it should be: a silly little farce. I mean that in the best way because it's not easy.

There aren't enough stars in heaven to number the times otherwise-capable playwrights and directors have slipped on farce's banana peel. You see, people in the United States (vs.

Europe) grow up with sitcom rather than farce, and they aren't the same thing. Fortunately, playwright Nell Benjamin and director David H. Bell understand that farce cannot be loud, fast and furious from the get-go (the usual errors) but must carefully establish its characters and situations in order to set up successful comic payoffs. Farce characters can become silly, misguided and foolish (and usually do) but they must not be stupid and unbelievable.

The setting is the late-1800s Explorers Club of London, an enclave of sexism, racism and male privilege disguised as Science and Discovery. We quickly meet botanist Lucius (Alex Goodrich), herpetologist Cope (Zack Shornick), biblical explorer Sloane (Dan Rodden) and animal behaviorist Walling (Matt Browning), all friends and members. Lucius stirs things by proposing the first female member, anthropologist Phyllida Spotte-Hume (Cristina Pan-

filio), recently returned from uncharted tribal regions with a native warrior whom she calls Luigi (Wesley Daniel). That Lucius loves Phyllida only deepens the motivation. The club president, Sir Henry Percy (Ryan Imhoff), soon returns from his search for the East and West poles (the North and South ones already having been discovered).

It gets complicated when Luigi, presented at Court, slaps Queen Victoria in a traditional tribal greeting. She isn't amused. Looking for Luigi, the British Army surrounds the Explorers Club, which also is besieged by an angry Irish mob and an army of Asian warrior priests, while Percy competes with Lucius for Phyllida, whose identical-twin sister (also Panfilio) briefly appears, and there's a snake. Got it? Naturally, everything ends well when the Club makes Luigi its new bartender and makes Phyllida a member.

The cast triumphs by playing this fluff with nearly-deadpan earnestness, which is the only way to go. Given the largest roles, Goodrich and Imhoff are especially effective, with Goodrich playing arguably the only sane clubman, repeatedly trying to set things right. Tremendously athletic Daniel (mostly in loincloth and body paint) also is ingratiating while speaking hardly any English. Jeremy W. Floyd's costumes are lavish, colorful and highly-suggestive of the Victorian Era. Scott Davis' club setting is filled with appropriate rich details (oriental carpets, animal heads). Finally, Bell has engineered dazzling physical business—worthy of Lucy—involving glasses repeatedly caught in mid-air as bartender Luigi sends drinks sliding off the bar.

Order a drink yourself at the comfy Windy City Playhouse and enjoy The Explorers Club.

THEATER REVIEW

The Old Friends

Playwright: Horton Foote

At: Raven Theatre, 6157 N. Clark St.

Tickets: 773-338-2177;

www.raventheatre.com; \$42

Runs through: March 26

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Romantic impulses are usually better indulged in early life, when the odds are greater that the perpetrators will emerge with minimal damage, but at an age where their peers were following their bliss, the Bordons and Ratliffs of Harrison, Texas, were following the money instead. This was 1921, the setting of the late Horton Foote's first of three plays chronicling the progress of these warring clans. This final chapter opens in 1965, with the various family members attempting to reverse the choices they made in a last grab for what they missed. It's not pretty.

Take Gertrude Ratliff, for example—having finally buried her neglectful husband, she has appointed his brother-in-law Howard her estate manager and *de facto* consort. Howard's affections, however, have been rekindled by the return of cousin Sybil, whom he jilted in high school, leading her to marry Hugo Bor-



The Old Friends.
Photo by
Dean
La Prairie

don, recently deceased en route to the homecoming occasioning the present reunion. This brings us to matriarch Mamie Bordon, currently dwelling uncomfortably with her man-chasing daughter Julia and the latter's ill-tempered husband Albert. Enablers include two indifferent housekeepers and young townie Tom Underwood, dispatched by his mother to seek employment from their wealthy neighbors.

Audiences might be forgiven confusion, given this complicated genealogy and absence of backstory—particularly since it encourages us to assume that the characters have always been exactly as we see them now. How are we to know that meek Mamie once ruthlessly

bullied Julia into a loveless marriage, thereby inviting her offspring's rancor, or that Gertrude's unlamented spouse, himself, sowed the seeds of his widow's infantile dependency upon the bachelor sibling charged with escort duties. Monsters are rarely *born* monstrous, but more information would assist us in understanding the motives behind the destructive behavior we witness.

None of this diminishes our enjoyment at watching the kind-hearted poor achieve contentment and the selfish rich get their comeuppance, however petty the stakes for both. (Albert, after brandishing a gun, winds up shooting a kitchen wall, while Gertrude's fury finds expression in pillow-punching chair-throwing tantrums—Jacobean tragedy this isn't.) Raven's technical team replicates museum-accurate environments highlighting the contrast between the chic Ratliff household decor and the fifty-year-old furnishings of the Bordon homestead, as well as that of Julia's fashionable Emilio Pucci mini-shift with Sybil's flowered late-1950s cocktail dress. Michael Menedian's direction of an all-star ensemble for this Raven Theatre production makes it all enjoyable, even if the play ends just as we begin to know its personnel well enough to care about their future.

CRITICS' PICKS

The Hairy Ape, Oracle Theatre, through March 12. Eugene O'Neill's 1922 expressionist drama about the American underclass has been explosively reinvented and choreographed by director Monty Cole. It's a don't-miss show. JA

High Fidelity, Refuge Theater, through Feb. 28. Even if you never saw the film, this exuberant young ensemble's rendering of Tom Kitt and Amanda Green's rock-infused score for its musical adaptation will send you home glowing with nostalgic warmth. MSB

The Last Defender, The House Theatre of Chicago at Chopin Theatre, through March 13. Audience members are the stars of this amazingly designed 1980s-inspired interactive puzzle room where the fate of causing or preventing a nuclear holocaust is partially in your hands. SCM

London Wall, Griffin Theatre at the Den, through Feb. 14. John Van Druten's cozy 1931 comedy pays homage to the pioneering women who endured social prejudice and economical discrimination to dominate the corporate clerical profession. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge
and Morgan

THEATER REVIEW

Body/Courage

Playwright: Danielle Pinnock
 At: Waltzing Mechanics and Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, 5779 N. Ridge Ave.
 Tickets: 773-334-7728 or www.rivendelltheatre.org; \$32-\$35
 Runs through: Feb. 27

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

There's no denying the enjoyable acting talent of Danielle Pinnock. As the star of her one-woman show *Body/Courage*, Pinnock engagingly morphs from character to character while also displaying a wonderful flair for quirky comic timing.

So it's no wonder that Pinnock keeps an audience rapt throughout the reflective journey that is *Body/Courage*. Where Pinnock is on slightly shakier ground is with the overall structure of the show.

Body/Courage is drawn from Pinnock's life-long struggles with body image issues. Pinnock fills the audience in on her boisterous family heritage stretching back to Jamaica and the never-ending contradictions she is fed about diets and food.

Pinnock also augments her own story with excerpts from interviews she conducted with more than 300 people about their own body image issues. The diverse array of interviewees range in age, gender, religion, nationalities and sexuality, so there are a plethora of enthralling voices to be heard.

But that's also a partial failing of *Body/Courage*. Pinnock's own life story is worthy of a show in of itself, especially with her harrowing family conflicts and a frightening brush with alcoholism.

Conversely, you could also argue that many of the people Pinnock interviews deserve more time to be heard instead just having their bright gems of insight interspersed into the show. For instance, the body shaming involved for those who are heftier in the gay male community could have been dwelled upon a tad longer. So could have the many incisive before-and-after perspectives of a transgender woman.

Or perhaps Pinnock needs to make a more concerted effort of sign-posting the overall dramatic course and framework of *Body/Courage*. That way, audiences might have a better sense of where they're headed with the piece,



Danielle Pinnock of *Body/Courage*.
 Photo by Joe Mazza/Brave Lux

even if Pinnock's chameleon characterizations largely keep those questions at bay.

Director Megan Carney keeps *Body/Courage* moving at an engrossingly clipped pace, while Diane Fairchild's ever-shifting lighting design keeps abreast of Pinnock's multitudes of amusing and touching characterizations. Regina Garcia's household set also provides a great playground for Pinnock to inhabit, giving *Body/Courage* a richer sense of shifting places than if it was performed on a bare stage.

Body/Courage bursts at its seams with hard-hitting questions and emotions tied to body-image issues. At its current state of an 80-minute, intermission-less show, *Body/Courage* could easily stand to be expanded on both personal and societal levels.

Or it might need a more determined focus to lay out exactly to audiences about where they're headed along with Pinnock and her thoughtful journey. Either way, Pinnock's strong performance should make it all an entertaining ride.

"LARGER-THAN-LIFE FLAVOR"
"A ROLICKING, SPRAWLING... AND EYE-POPPING SHOW"
 -CHICAGO TRIBUNE

ANOTHER WORD FOR BEAUTY

BY JOSÉ RIVERA
 MUSIC BY HÉCTOR BUITRAGO
 DIRECTED BY STEVE COSSON

NOW THROUGH FEBRUARY 21

FOR MATURE AUDIENCES ONLY

CLUB COLOMBIA: DRINKS, DANCING AND A DJ
 THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11

Attend a performance of *Another Word for Beauty*, then head to the Goodman's rehearsal space (transformed into a Colombian nightclub!) for a post-show party. Tickets are just \$35 with code **COLOMBIA**.

DISCOVER A CELEBRATION OF LATINAJO ARTISTS
GoodmanTheatre.org/LCelebration

SPOTLIGHT

See what happens when Jewish prisoners interred at Auschwitz concentration camp in 1942 try to perform a comedy based upon the Dreyfus Affair in Jake Rosenberg's Holocaust drama **Muse of Fire**. As the play goes on, dark secrets emerge and many questions arise about comedy in the face of horror. Genesis Theatrical Productions' *Muse of Fire* plays from Saturday, Feb. 13, through Sunday, March 13, at Redtwist Theatre, 1044 W. Bryn Mawr Ave. Tickets are \$20; call 800-838-3006, ext. 1, or visit www.genesis-theatricals.com.

Photo courtesy of Genesis Theatrical Productions

312.443.3800
GoodmanTheatre.org
 GROUPS OF 10+ ONLY: 312.443.3820

GOODMAN THEATRE

Theatre Commissioning and Production Initiative
 EDGERTON FOUNDATION New Plays Award
 Katten Major Corporate Sponsor
 pwc Corporate Sponsor
 Time Warner FOUNDATION Lead Support of New Play Development
 THE PRITZKER PUCKER FAMILY FOUNDATION Major Support of New Play Development
 ELIZABETH F. CHENEY FOUNDATION Major Support of New Play Development
 THE GLASSER AND ROSENTHAL FAMILY Support of New Work Development
 THE HAROLD AND MIMI STEINBERG CHARITABLE TRUST Support of New Work Development
 Hoy Media Partner for Celebration of Latina/o Artists

NUNN ON ONE: TELEVISION

Amy Landecker lands dream job on 'Transparent'

BY JERRY NUNN

Actress Amy Landecker has finally hit it big, playing Sarah Pfefferman in the breakout Amazon Studio hit *Transparent*.

Her roots began in Chicago as the daughter of radio personality John Records Landecker. After a theater career in the Windy City, she moved to L.A. when she was 38 to begin films and TV commercials. She struck a chord in the Coen brothers movie *A Serious Man* and had a supporting role in the film *Dan in Real Life*.

It was in *Transparent* where she has really made a mark as the daughter of actors Jeffrey Tambor and Judith Light. The family tree is shaken when Maura Pfefferman, played by Tambor, comes out as transgender late in life in L.A. Now in a second season with more to come, *Windy City Times* talked with her about her *Transparent* train ride recently.

Windy City Times: Hi, Amy. Where in the world are you calling from?

Amy Landecker: I'm in Beverly Hills. I'm on my way to a fitting for the SAG Awards. I'm going to talk to you while I drive, if that is okay with you.

WCT: Sure. Last time we chatted was at lunch in Chicago.

AL: I wondered if you remembered that! It was at Hub 51. I think I was meeting with you because I was on that Paul Reiser television show and it was cancelled two weeks later! [Laughs]

WCT: I was so bummed. How did you get on *Transparent* after that?

AL: Well, you know, Jill Soloway is from Chicago. She grew up listening to my dad and had me on her radar. She said she saw me on the show *Louie* on FX. I played a girl he went on a date with on season one on an episode called *Bully*. She thought I should play Sarah Pfefferman.

I turned down the audition for *Transparent* because I didn't want to do on-camera sexual nudity, which was required for the show. She asked to have lunch with me and I immediately fell in love with her. She assured me as a female director that this would be from a woman's perspective.

I watched *Afternoon Delight*, which was her feature film at Sundance and I was blown away by her abilities as a director and writer.

I went through a series of auditions because Amazon needed me to prove that I could take on such a large role. Luckily they let me do it. I almost missed out on the greatest role of my life!

WCT: Speaking of nudity, are you okay with your character moving into S&M territory this season?

AL: [Laughs] We certainly went the other way, didn't we?! Yeah, I am okay. We actually do don't that much on camera nudity. I do on camera sex and on camera nudity. When I separate the two I am much more comfortable. That might seem like a strange distinction but



Amy Landecker.

it actually makes a big difference on how I feel doing it.

It is a funny little rule of mine that we worked out and discussed. I will say when I am uncomfortable Jill will change the situation to make me comfortable. There is something about that trust level that makes you even more free in a weird way because you know you are being taken care of.

I can trust her and the show pushes boundaries and explores sexuality in a way that is really important. It is not just to titillate; it is to teach. People can laugh, learn and be inspired. It is a show I am willing to go all the way for.

WCT: Your character certainly goes on a journey so maybe that is good for you, personally.

AL: Yes; it is an incredible ride and we have only done two seasons. I think I am going on to a more spiritual [and] less physical exploration for season three, from what I am hearing—but that can always change.

WCT: On the episode with the makeup being dropped on the carpet, did you only have one take for that?

AL: Everybody loves that scene! Jill came in and directed that scene. She is tired of me calling her a genius, but it was so brilliant the way she did it. She had me kneel down with the makeup almost like it was an altar. It is so cool the way she motivates your actions because it is so far out of the range of what you might think.

No, that wasn't one take. There are little tricks in there. I think the actual color palette one, you are right, was one take but we did other ones with a dummy set.

It seems to resonate with people in a big way.

CULTURE CLUB

"MOVING. AN IMPORTANT PLAY"
—Chicago Tribune

"★★★★★"
Sensitive, Heartfelt
—TimeOut Chicago

"Beautifully Crafted"
—New City

mothers & sons
BY TERENCE MCNALLY
DIRECTED BY STEVE SCOTT

PLAYING TO FEB 27

NORTHLIGHT THEATRE
9501 Skokie Boulevard | FREE PARKING

847.673.6300
NORTHLIGHT.ORG

Far from Heaven

The NEW MUSICAL from the Creators of *Grey Gardens*

MUST CLOSE MARCH 13!

porchlight at STAGE 773 1225 W. Belmont Ave
PorchlightMusicTheatre.org

WCT: The women's-music festival was a highlight for me from that season.

AL: It was incredible, hot as fuck—but really fun. I loved filming the festival. For my character Sarah it was a rising after a rough year. She may have been the freest and the most alive at that festival. We had the Indigo Girls there. I don't know if people even noticed there was a small cameo with Sia there singing to me and Gaby Hoffman *a capella* as a wood nymph.

WCT: It was based on a festival where transgender people were not allowed to be a part of, correct?

AL: Yes, I believe that festival is not happening because of that controversy. The feminist movement really grappling with this topic is interesting that it comes up on the midst of transgender and women's civil rights.

Personally, I don't agree with the separation but I can understand the argument coming from women who were traumatized or felt unsafe around men. We all talked about it, and it was discussed. Jill takes on topics like that. As long as we are having a conversation about it I think it is good.

WCT: Does the *Transparent* cast feel like a family after filming two seasons?

AL: Yes, except it is a really happy family, so maybe not like a regular family. It is sort of like an idealized family. I have never been part of an ensemble as close as this. Jill is very intuitive about assembling a cast who really care about the core issues of a show, which is love, acceptance and giving voice to someone who doesn't normally have a voice.

In some ways, all of us come from strange worlds a little bit. Some of us are older, most of us are female, many are gay or trans. It's a group of artists that are normally relegated to doing theater at Cafe Voltaire in 1992 who are actually being given millions of dollars from Amazon to create art. I think there is a root to that, keeping us moved and inspired at work all the time. We are very much in love with each other. Everyone is very smart, sexy and funny, so that helps.

I know Gaby and Jay truly feel like my siblings. I call Judith Light my mom all the time. Jeffrey is Maura on the show but has a patriarchal feel to us off camera. He is very good at taking care of everybody.

WCT: I heard you have part in the new superhero flick *Doctor Strange*.

AL: I am, but not allowed to speak of what I do in the movie. I think the reason I got the role was a throwback to the movie I did: *A Serious Man*. I found out the director had a real soft spot for that film. That is why I found myself in England for a small but lovely role in the movie. That cast is outrageously good. I would have swept the floors if they wanted me to!

Amazon Prime members can stream both seasons of *Transparent* currently at www.amazon.com.

Gallery to host sexual-assault exhibit

The Awakenings Foundation—the home of the only known collection of rape-survivor artwork—has announced its first curated exhibit, "Graphic Relief," which will feature international comic book, graphic novel and zine media artists who deal with the topic of street harassment.

Artists are welcome to submit, regardless of survivor identity, as long as works speak to the topic.

The Awakenings Foundation exists to help survivors of sexual assault heal through the creative arts. This exhibit will open up our mission to a wider community of artists and patrons by tackling the epidemic of street harassment and catcalling, which has been thrust into a spotlight in recent digital and social media.

Email Laura Kinter at laura@awakenings-foundation.net.

Trans exhibit at Columbia College through Feb. 13

Columbia College Chicago's Glass Curtain Gallery, 1104 S. Wabash Ave., presents "Bring Your Own Body: transgender between archives and aesthetics," which is open through Feb. 13. Jeanne Vaccaro and Stamatina Gregory are the curators, with Cooper Union organizing.

Taking its title from an unpublished manuscript by intersex pioneer Lynn Harris, the exhibit historicizes the sexological and cultural imaginary of transgender through a curatorial exploration of historical collections, including the Kinsey Archives.

See Colum.edu/deps.

NUNN ON ONE: THEATER

Life is a 'Cabaret' for Randy Harrison

BY JERRY NUNN

Actor Randy Harrison may always be remembered as fresh-faced Justin Taylor on the Showtime drama *Queer as Folk*. He played the part for five seasons, which led him to being internationally recognized.

Many may not know of the thriving theater career that he has hammered out over the years, being in productions of *Wicked* and *Amadeus*, among many others.

Harrison leads the national tour of the Tony-winning version of *Cabaret* this month. Set in the Kit Kat Klub in Berlin, this production, which the Roundabout Theatre Company is presenting, has him playing the emcee each night.

Windy City Times rang Harrison while he was out on the road to hear more about it.

Windy City Times: Hi, Randy. Your resume is packed with theater credits.

Randy Harrison: It is primarily what I have done. Obviously, I am known more for television because people see it.

WCT: How did you land on *Queer as Folk* in the first place?

RH: I had just graduated from [the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music]. I auditioned. I knew of the show because of the British incarnation. I knew the role and knew I could do it. They put me on tape. They flew me out to LA for two different call backs and I booked it.

WCT: How old were you when you were on the show?

RH: I was 22 when I started. I did it from the ages of 22 to 27.

WCT: There was noticeably a mix of gay and straight actors on *Queer as Folk*.

RH: Yeah—Peter Paige, Robert Gant and I were out but all of the lead actors were straight.

WCT: Will there be a reunion?

RH: I don't know. We get together periodically for convention kind of things. There is a big fan base around the world. We would be open to it but I don't know if there is a market for making any more of it.

The first time we all got together was Cologne five years ago with Sharon Gless and everybody. We will do events together depending on the demand.

WCT: There was a lot of nudity with roles you have played such as *Equus* and *Queer as Folk*. Did you ever have any issues with that?

RH: No, but it depends on what it is. *Equus* was a role I always wanted to play so I didn't think too much about it.

I know the nudity in *Queer as Folk* got more graphic as the show went on. Initially, I thought sexuality was a really important part of the show because it needed to be on television and people needed to see it. As it continued, it felt like we had done it a million times.

It really depends. If I feel I am being taken advantage of or I feel it is complete objectification with no political or social significance then I am irritated and don't want to do it.

WCT: This version of *Cabaret* has Sam Mendes and Rob Marshall attached to it?

RH: Yes; it is their production. Sam Mendes originally did a revival that is not quite this production in the early '90s at the Donmar Warehouse and it had Alan Cumming in it. Todd Haimes, who is the artistic director of the Roundabout Theatre Company, wanted to bring it to New York but Sam Mendes would only do it if they could find a cabaret space so it took a few years. Then they came up with Rob Marshall being co-director and choreographer. It opened at the Henry Miller Theater, then moved to Studio 54. The rebirth of Studio 54 was with this production.

It is simultaneously stripped down and blown out, thematically. I think the big concept that



Randy Harrison.

Sam had was that in the original production it was a play that has a cabaret in it but he wanted this whole thing to take place within the cabaret. All the scenes happen in the cabaret at some capacity.

WCT: Had you seen *Cabaret* before?

RH: I saw it three times between 1999 and 2004. I saw it twice with Alan and once with John Stamos, near the end of the run. It is a really great production and I am happy to be a part of it.

WCT: Did you work out a lot since you are shirtless so much?

RH: Yeah; I lost 15 pounds. I wanted to be a little bit muscular. The character is on heroin; it is not obvious all of the time but I think it works better if he is physically leaner. I am still not as skinny as I want to be but I can only do so much.

WCT: Stay away from that Chicago pizza while you are here...

RH: I will, although I just had some weird crepe at this Pittsburgh diner. That has to stop right now!

WCT: How is working with Andrea Goss, who plays Sally Bowles?

RH: She's amazing. When it was revived most recently last year, she covered Sally and went on a bunch. She was understudying Michelle Williams, Emma Stone and Sienna Miller. She did it like 40 or 50 times so she knows the show really well. She such a beautiful performer that it kind of breaks my heart. I am able to watch the final scene from the wings every night and it is just heartbreaking.

WCT: Have you been to Chicago before?

RH: Once. When I was there I went to a Second City show and it was *Paradigm Lost*, with Amy Poehler and Rachel Dratch. This was back in 1997, so it has been a while.

WCT: Are you still on the TV series *Mr. Robot*?

RH: Yes, I was on two episodes and they want to bring me back. It will depend on how I work it when I am on tour. I think it is shooting while I am on tour so I might have to take a few days off then go back. I am proud of being part of that show. I think it is incredible!

Come hear the music play at The Private-Bank Theatre, 18 W. Monroe St., through Sunday, Feb. 21. Visit www.BroadwayInChicago.com for ticket information.

JOFFREY ★ BALLET
CHICAGO
ASHLEY WHEATER
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Bold Moves

FEBRUARY 10-21

**POWERHOUSE COMPOSERS
GROUNDBREAKING CHOREOGRAPHERS**

TICKETS START AT \$32
JOFFREY.ORG/BOLDMOVES
800.982.2787

PERFORMS AT:
AUDITORIUM THEATRE
of ROOSEVELT UNIVERSITY
50 East Congress Parkway, Chicago

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS

<p>BOLD MOVES PRESENTING SPONSOR</p> <p>SAGE FOUNDATION</p> <p>SEASON SPONSORS</p> <p>Abbott Fund</p>	<p>TIPPING POINT PRODUCTION SPONSORS</p> <p>The Anne and Burt Kaplan Fund of the Mayer & Morris Kaplan Family Foundation</p> <p>Jay Franke and David Herro</p> <p>ALPHA WOOD FOUNDATION CHICAGO</p> <p>N-1-B FOUNDATION</p> <p>Daniel and Pamela DeVos Foundation</p>	<p>RAKU PRODUCTION SPONSOR</p> <p>MACLEAN-FOGG</p> <p>OFFICIAL PROVIDER OF PHYSICAL THERAPY</p> <p>ATHLETICO PHYSICAL THERAPY</p>
--	--	--

Joffrey dancers: Victoria Jaiani and Fabrice Calmels | Photo by: Cheryl Mann

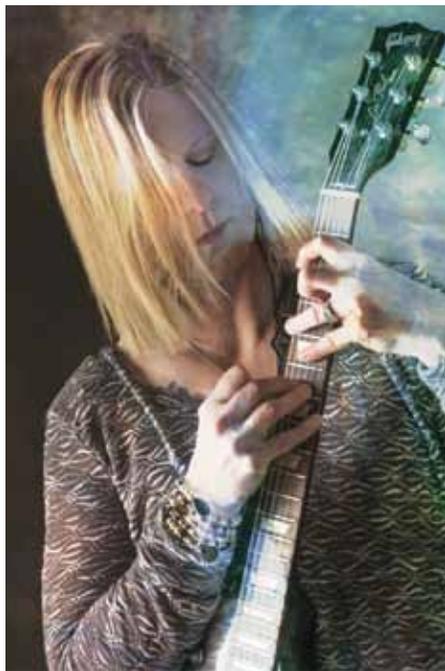
MUSIC

Married lesbian couple make music as Whatismu

BY TERRI-LYNNE WALDRON

Musician Lorrie Kountz and wife Laura Jansons make up the instrumental guitar fusion duo Whatismu.

The two musicians released their self-titled debut CD in 2015 and have embraced a sound that is a hybrid of Indian percussion, rock guitars and EBM synthesizers—think Anoushka Shankar meets Led Zeppelin. Kountz talked with Windy City Times about her musical his-



Lorrie Kountz of Whatismu.

Photo by Ed Peterson Photography

tory, what inspired the duo's name and why they got married in Canada.

Windy City Times: What inspired you to get into music and at what age did you embrace it?

Lorrie Kountz: I started at the age of 8. My first instrument was drums, but after two weeks of running home from school and playing drums non-stop without instructions, I came home from school and there were no more drums. My mom stuck a guitar in my hand and said, "We have lessons for you."

WCT: Was there a time when you thought of doing music long-term?

LK: It was probably at the age of 13 when I started my first young band and I started realizing that this is something that I want to do. I actually started teaching music at 14 to the neighborhood kids.

WCT: How did you meet Laura [Jansons], who is your wife and one-half of Whatismu?

LK: We met in October 2008 online at a spirituality meetup group. It's non-denominational; it's all faiths, including Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity, and we started dating soon after that.

WCT: When did you realize that she played guitar?

LK: She was self-taught and we clicked right away. We had a lot in common—one being music. She is a neuropsychologist and I work in behavioral health also because music by itself nowadays doesn't pay the bills and you need health insurance. We got married in April 2010 and we didn't really start playing together formally until 2014.

WCT: When you started playing with Laura in 2014, what style of music were you do-



Lorrie Kountz (left) and Laura Jansons of the lesbian musical duo Whatismu.

Photo by Ed Peterson Photography

ing?

LK: I had nine CD releases from different bands prior to that. I played in bands that were rock, heavy metal and new wave and I got displaced with what types of music. In 2014 Laura and I talked and we said, "Why don't we—like an artist—throw paint on a mural. What if we took different genres and put them all together. So we started working with Indian percussion and Indian instruments, heavy guitars and electronic dance music and we started putting it all together and we liked what we were hearing. We wanted to do the whole album with just instrumentals—so no vocals. It was a nice personal challenge for me to play all the leads and sing them through the lead guitar work.

WCT: Your music has been described as a cross between Anoushka Shankar and Led Zeppelin. Did it take a long time to develop that sound?

LK: Yes, it did. It took a lot of successes and failures. Since we both like the heavier type bands we wanted to have the heavy guitars like Zeppelin. But we both—not only adore Indian music and the food—wanted to mesh the tablas and everything with the hard guitars and see what happened.

WCT: The self-titled debut record for Whatismu came out in 2015 on both vinyl and CD?

LK: We recorded it in 2014 and the vinyl wasn't released until May 2015 because it took that long to actually press the vinyl.

WCT: The name Whatismu comes from your personal introduction to koan study. How did you get involved in that?

LK: I am a Zen Buddhist and in Zen Buddhism part of the curriculum can be koan's study. "What is mu" (separate words) is from a Buddhist koan. The purpose of a koan is to help you understand deeper what you're looking for. It is a key to enlightenment to end suffering. It's only one way to study and the main study is meditation and one-on-one with your teacher. The koan's are thrown in there to help you get more of an understanding about how to release suffering.

WCT: You got married to Laura in 2010 and the nuptials took place in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Same-sex marriage became legal in Canada in 2005. Why did you choose to get married in Toronto?

LK: We'd been to Toronto and we thought that it was a beautiful city. Since [same-sex marriage] was not yet legal in Illinois, we wanted to go somewhere that we really felt good about. We were just treated so kind there and we just love the [Canadian] feel. And since then we have been back several times.

Whatismu will perform at Great Plains Zen Center Benefit, Countryside Church, 1025 N. Smith St., Palatine, on Saturday, Feb. 20, at 7 p.m. For ticket information, go to www.greatplainszen.org/benefit_concert.

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE PERSON SLEEPING NEXT TO YOU?

COCKED
BY SARAH GUBBINS DIRECTED BY JOANIE SCHULTZ

FEB. 12 - MAR. 13

GET TICKETS 1 BLOCK FROM THE FULLERTON EL
773.871.3000 VICTORYGARDENS.ORG 2433 N. LINCOLN AVE

VICTORY GARDENS THEATER

South Side art center gets \$300K grant

The South Side Community Art Center—the oldest African-American art center in the country—has received a grant totaling \$300,000 from the Alphawood Foundation.

The center will receive the grant over the next three years.

The South Side Community Art Center was founded in 1940 with funding from President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Federal Art Project. Today, it is the sole survivor among the 110 community art centers created nationwide by the Works Progress Administration.

Alphawood Foundation is a Chicago-based grant-making private foundation that awards grants to more than 200 organizations annually, primarily in areas including the promotion and protection of the rights of LGBT citizens and people living with HIV/AIDS as well as other human and civil rights.

Patricia Racette in 'Humaine' Feb. 14

Chicago Opera Theater (COT) continues its 2015-16 season with a double bill featuring Francis Poulenc's *La Voix Humaine* and Giacomo Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph St., on Feb. 14 (at 3 p.m.).

The evening of one-act operas begins with "Humaine," starring soprano Patricia Racette as Elle in her COT debut. Racette has garnered particular acclaim for her portrayals of the title roles of *Madama Butterfly*, *Tosca*, *Jenufa*, *Katya Kabanova* and all three lead soprano roles in *Il Trittico*.

Performances will be at the Harris Theater. Tickets are \$35-\$125 (with student tickets for \$15); call 312-704-8414 or visit COT.org.

BOOK REVIEW

Marie Equi: Radical Passions and Outlaw Politics

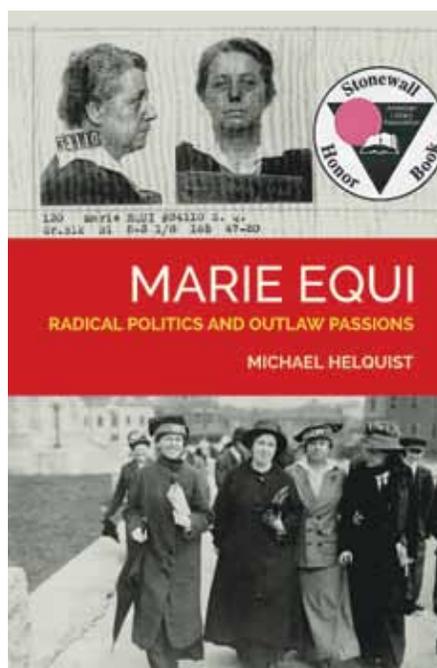
by Michael Helquist
\$24.95; Oregon State University Press; 309 pages
BY LIZ BAUDLER

Marie Equi's name had many reasons to be in the news in the early 1900s. She was a physician at time where women doctors were still a curiosity. She was a labor activist who believed in abortion and birth control. She rushed to provide aid in the wake of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. And—known as both “bril-

liant” and “a stormy petrel”—she got her first headlines in her adopted state of Oregon by horsewhipping a man who insulted her girlfriend in the town square.

Historian Michael Helquist uncovers the compelling history of a forgotten figure of early feminism and a nascent LGBT icon. Equi had multiple relationships with women, including possibly with the mother of birth control, Margaret Sanger. A child of working-class parents in a Massachusetts mill town, she owed her education and subsequent future to the largesse of her first girlfriend, who funded Equi's high-school tuition. She later followed this sweetheart off to Oregon, where they proceeded to openly share a house. She also legally adopted and raised a daughter with one of her female partners, while a court battle about the partner's inheritance raged on.

Reading her biography requires some background knowledge of social movements in the early 1900s. Equi hopscoches between the Progressive Movement, being a suffragette, and



labor rights, and having some passing familiarity with these groups will greatly aid the reading experience. Simply put, Equi couldn't ignore a cause—treating laborers in her Oregon medical practice led to her own anarchy and demonstrations, and when she was imprisoned

for subsequent activities, her letters see her calling for prison reform.

Helquist has done a great service in detailing Equi's life, as biographies at the intersection of pre 1950s West Coast activists and LGBT individuals are not common. With her blustering personality and zealous commitment to her values, it'd be a fascinating exercise to see Equi as a fictional character or some sort of time-traveling lesbian feminist superhero. It's not hard to imagine her as a ferocious ACT UP protester, or as part of second-wave feminism's Lavender Menace. Still, Helquist lets her speak through quotes in news accounts and snatches of correspondence, and that is often enough to enchant the readers. The book has been named a 2016 Stonewall Honor title by the American Library Association and the research alone deserves recognition.

Should Equi be a household name? With her genius for being tied to so many notable events of the 20th's century's first quarter, it seems odd that her tale hasn't arisen more often. But perhaps she's just such a singularly unique figure that it's only now that history can appreciate her intersections of class and sexuality. Equi openly shared her life with women: her closet has been historical. But LGBTQ people, with Helquist's help, should be proud to claim Equi as one of them.

GLAAD Award nods announced

GLAAD has announced the nominees for its 27th Annual GLAAD Media Awards.

The GLAAD Media Awards ceremonies will be held in Los Angeles on April 2 at The Beverly Hilton, and in New York on May 14 at the Waldorf Astoria New York. Special honorees for each city will be announced in coming weeks.

Among the nominees are Academy Award nominees Carol and The Danish Girl; Golden Globe nominee Grandma; Film Independent Spirit Award nominees Appropriate Behavior and Tangerine; FOX's hit drama Empire and Netflix's Sense8, Master of None, Orange Is the New Black, and Grace and Frankie; Amazon's Transparent; HBO's Besie and Looking; Logo's Banana and Cucumber; ABC's 20/20 for its Diane Sawyer interview with Caitlyn Jenner; and musicians Troye Sivan, Adam Lambert, Miley Cyrus, Le1f and Brandi Carlile.

Some of the magazines and newspapers receiving nods include Essence, The Advocate, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Time, Variety and The New York Times.

Of note: For the first time more than 50 percent of the nominations are trans-inclusive.

See GLAAD.org.



Adam Lambert.
Photo by David Roemer



Thank you, Chicago, for an invigorating and transforming 2016 Creating Change Conference!

Love and respect,
The National LGBTQ Task Force Staff and Board of Directors



Premier Sponsors

Media Sponsors

the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR

Del Frisco's

BY ANDREW DAVIS

The 24,000-square-foot, three-story Del Frisco's Double Eagle Steakhouse (58 E. Oak St.; DelFrisco.com) certainly makes a dramatic statement—and, in a sense, it's no wonder.

The behemoth occupies 70 percent of what used to be the Esquire movie theater, and Del Frisco's has even retained some touches, such as the "ESQUIRE" sign displayed upon entering, and even knobs on the second-floor wall that represent popcorn.

However, the steakhouse has its own features—some which have prompted an intriguing range of reactions. Most prominent is a ginormous wine tower (that could have its own zip code) that's suspended in the middle of the restaurant and which contains 21,000 bottles of spirits—most which might be out of the financial reach of the average Joe. (You can also try one or more of several cocktails, including the very tasty VIP, which mixes Svedka Clementine Vodka with fresh Hawaiian pineapple.)

General manager Bryon Cruz led Savor on a detailed tour of the place, pointing out everything from its private rooms (including one that Chicago Bulls player Derrick Rose likes to frequent) to pa-



trons such as jeweler Lester Lampert, whose business is right across the street.

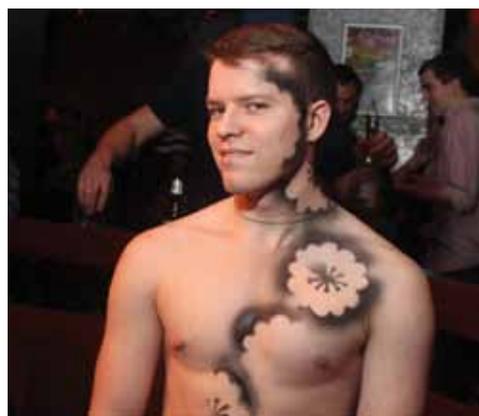
Speaking of the neighbors, door prizes from nearby stores (including Gucci purses) are attracting people to the restaurant's "Wednesday Night Del-ight," which has a selection of appetizers, the Prime DF Burger and Buffalo Style shrimp available at half price (and there's discounted drinking).

As for the cuisine, Executive Chef Jared Case (who is so laid back he could be anyone's drinking buddy) mostly impresses. While I missed the cheesesteak eggrolls at lunch, my dining companion and I honestly enjoyed starters such as pork-belly bao and lobster tempura—and the lobster mac 'n' cheese was the best I've had in a while. The pressed-steak sandwich (with wild-mushroom duxelles, caramelized onions, arugula, Emmental cheese, horseradish and au jus) was solid, although the prime ribeye or even the avocado chicken-salad wrap might be a better way to go.

By the way, Valentine's Day is on its way. If you want to make a statement, this just might be the place to do it. (There's a \$79 steak-and-lobster pairing Feb. 12-14.)



Del Frisco's.
Photos by Paul Hirsch



SIDETRACK

Painted for the gods at the Mardi Gras party, Saturday, February 6.
Photos by Jed Dulanis

nightspots the big TO-DO

OUR WEEKLY PICKS TO PLAN
YOUR NIGHTLIFE CALENDAR



FABITAT: Lucy's Love Bazaar & Dating Game

Wed., Feb. 10, 10 pm

Double Door's Door No. 3,
1551 N. Damen Ave.

Three lucky peeps will compete for the chance to win a date with some of the hottest and most available ladies on the scene: The Lady Ivory; Alex Kay; Curlene Ribbon and Joan Waters. Live music from Chicago band Jolly Korea.



Fireball Flashback w/Matthew Harvat

Sat., Feb. 13, 10 pm

Manhole, 3210 N. Halsted St.

Relive the last of the great circuit parties as Manhole remembers The Hearts Foundation's Fireball parties. Beginning in 1993, Matthew Harvat played a role in this piece of Chicago nightlife history as a performer, promoter, producer and DJ.



The Big Red Valentine's Day Show

Sun., Feb. 14, 9 pm
Uptown Underground,
4707 N. Broadway

Put on your rose-colored glasses for the best love-fest this side of the Mississippi! Meghan "Big Red" Murphy (pictured) serenades you with your favorite tunes. All kinds of love welcome.



"Reporter Amanda Hess, in a story published Monday, acknowledges she wrongly wrote that 'one in three Black men who have sex with me is HIV-positive.' In fact, the statistic applies to Black men 'who have sex with men.'"—The Washington City Paper corrects a typo. It's amazing the difference in meaning caused by a dropped "n."

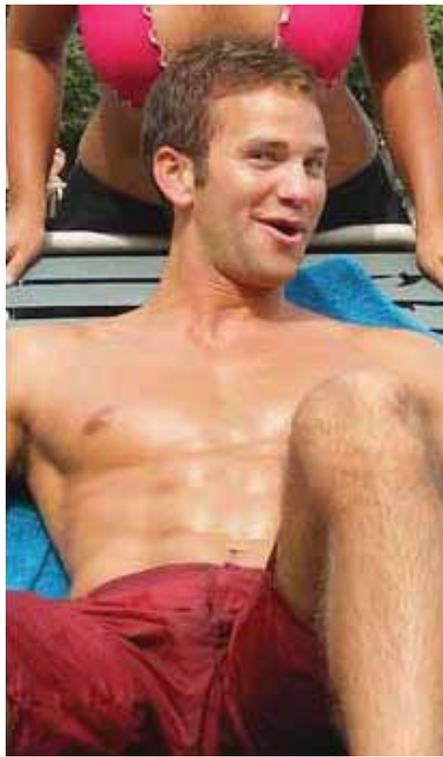
In years to come, youngsters will ask, "Where were you on Jan. 30, 2016? What was it like living through such a dark period in U.S. history?" Yes, I am referring to what will forever be called the Great Grindr Blackout of 2016! For a scant few hours, the noted gay hookup app was on the fritz—and I don't mean on some horny German guy in lederhosen! Some people got a "Server Error" message, some people got nothing. It's bad enough being horny and alone—but when even your app ignores you, it's downright tragic!

A fistful of gay rumors have been making the rounds about **Marco Rubio**. One columnist claims that young Marco was often described as a "very extroverted homosexual"—like that isn't redundant! Prior to his 19th birthday, Rubio was arrested for being in a park after closing time. Nope, he wasn't drinking with some friends. According to records, Rubio was in a parked car ... with another boy! Angel Barrios, said other boy, recently told a reporter, "We were there just hanging out." Maybe. But it should be noted that Barrios had a more recent run-in with the law—he was sued for running a gay-porn studio!

Rubio was certainly a looker in his day. A shirtless photo of the high school lad shows him onstage vying for the title of King Cobra 1989 with a group of guys that allegedly "combined the Chippendales with The Village People"—a winning formula replicated shortly thereafter by 98 Degrees! However, it's another photo that disturbs me—one that allegedly shows Rubio at a foam party at Miami's Warsaw Ballroom. While I'm not sure if it's Marco, I'm fairly confident I spy someone else frolicking in the foam—your very own Billy Masters! And, if I'm not mistaken, it was at that very party where I lost my favorite Fossil watch!

Aaron Schock has never been one to miss an opportunity to flaunt his fantastic physique. Perhaps he could cash in on his muscular paycheck and wipe out the debt he's run up with the legal firm that helped him navigate the waters of his disgraceful exit from Congress. The gay-porn company Titan Men, is willing to pay Aaron's legal bills up to \$1 million if he will make a series of films for them. Perhaps he'd be more comfortable if they allowed his "personal photographer" to work on the crew ... or, perhaps, the star.

Very often, plays will warn patrons that strobe lights or other special effects will be employed. Well, the Broadway production of *A View from the Bridge* might want to issue a warning that the sight of actor **Russell Tovey's** torso can cause euphoria, lightheadedness or fainting. That was the case last week, when a male patron quite literally swooned when he found himself a few feet from the talented thespian. To make matters worse, he was one of the few patrons seated in on-stage risers! Someone yelled out, "Is there a doctor in the house?"—just like in the movies (well, not very good movies). Three people tended to the man until EMTs arrived, and whisked him out of the theatre. The man, Davin Cutchall, had driven six hours to see Tovey's torso ... or, perhaps he just wanted to see the play. Regardless, Davin tweeted: "@russelltovey Sorry for disrupting the show tonight. I'm feeling better, now. You were great!." Apparently, he was healthy enough to attend the Sunday matinee



Former Congressman Aaron Schock has received a(n) (in)decent proposal.

performance—but he wisely sat in a less obtrusive seat!

In other heart-stopping theatre news, **Dolly Parton** just purchased a dinner theatre in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. The newly christened "Dolly Parton's Lumberjack Adventure Dinner & Show" is just a hop, skip and a jump from Dollywood and is slated to open in May. "I'm truly excited to be working on a new show for families to enjoy while they are in town. We did a lot of work to come up with the name of the new show and I think we found the perfect fit." Which begs the question—what were the rejected monikers?

It's been a couple years since the divine **Charles Busch** trod the boards in one of his outrageous spectacles. But he hasn't been slacking. In fact, he's been touring hither and yon with his pianist, the delicious **Tom Judson**, entertaining the masses with his cabaret show. Good news—Busch is returning to the stage with a new creation, appropriately titled "Charles Busch's Cleopatra." Needless to say, Charles will be playing the Queen of the Nile—fitting, since he has such a lovely asp. His Caesar will be the equally appealing **Tony Sheldon**, who was in the Broadway musical *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*. *Cleopatra* opens March 22 at the Theater for the New City in NYC. It's a limited one-month run, so grab your tickets fast at SmartTix.com.

Our brief "Ask Billy" query comes from Jason in Virginia: "Have you heard about nude photos of **River Viiperi**?"

First, I need to let my readers know who **River Viiperi** is. He's a 24-year-old Spanish model who dated Paris Hilton a couple of years ago. And you know what that means—he's had his shots! Professionally, he seems to be featured whenever an ad requires a hot, nearly naked man. But the photos we've uncovered go beyond nearly ... he's simply naked. Actually, he's naked and aroused. And somewhat "slick." And they clearly were taken in River's bathroom. If a photo is worth a thousand words, then check out a few thousand more at BillyMasters.com.

When we're identifying penises by tile patterns, it's definitely time to end yet another column. Let me remind you that Feb. 13 is the birthday of your beloved Billy. In lieu of gifts, check out www.BillyMasters.com, the site that doesn't look its age (and neither does Billy—in a dimly lit room...filled with foam). If you have a question of your own or want to send me a birthday greeting, drop a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com, and I promise to get back to you before Vicki Lawrence (Schultz) records "The Night The Servers Went Out At Grindr." Or, before Rubio gives me back my watch! So, until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

SUNDAY, FEB 14
VALENTINE'S/
PRESIDENT'S DAY
WEEKEND PARTY
10PM-2AM

WE R and BEY

DANCE TO
YOUR
FAVORITE
R&B DIVAS
NO COVER

OPEN AT 1PM

SUPER-SIZED SHOWTUNES 4-10PM

3349 N HALSTED SIDETRACKCHICAGO.COM

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 17

ALL THINGS
BEYONCÉ

ENTER OUR BEYONCÉ
DANCE-OFF CONTEST
NO DRAG REQUIRED
WIN FUN PRIZES
HOSTED BY
DIXIE LYNN CARTWRIGHT

CENTER
ON 3656 N.
HALSTED

PRESENTED BY
redbox.
Inspired by Outerwall

SPONSORED BY
National
Equity Fund

RED CARPET ARRIVAL BY
MINI
OF CHICAGO

ON THE RED CARPET:

a Night with Oscar

ACADEMY AWARDS VIEWING PARTY
TO BENEFIT CENTER ON HALSTED

Sunday, February 28, 2016

Center on Halsted | 3656 N. Halsted St.

6:00 p.m. Live Red Carpet Arrival
Bar Service and Auction
Buffet Courtesy of
Paramount Events Catering

7:30 p.m. Academy Awards Telecast

Introducing the **Green Room**, a lavish celebration of music, fabulous fare, and craft cocktails and concoctions with the excitement of the Academy Awards streaming live on nearby monitors.

Or pop a cork of champagne at your private cabaret table and enjoy concessions while the Academy Awards streams live on the big screen in the **Screening Room**. During the commercial breaks, join your friends in the Green Room for some red carpet revelry.

Tickets centeronhalsted.org/ANWO
#ANIGHTWITHOSCAR | @OSCAR3656N

CLASSIFIEDS

ADULT MALE ENTERTAINMENT

BORED?? WE HAVE THE SOLUTION! Check out www.gayflicks.com. Buy DVDs, Stream Gay Movies, Download them or just Pay Per Minute and watch only the scenes you want to! You will love these xxx gay movies. WWW.GAYFLICKS.COM (2/3/16-4)

ANTIQUES

ZURKO ANTIQUE EVENTS

ANTIQUA MARKET

Saturday, Feb. 13th

Sunday, Feb 14th

Hours: Sat. 9am-5pm

Sun. 9am-3pm / \$7

Lake County Fairgrounds

GRAYSLAKE, IL

(1060 E. Peterson)

ANTIQUA FLEA MARKET

Sunday, Feb. 28th

8am - 3pm / \$5

County Farm & Manchester

Dupage County

Fairgrounds

WHEATON, IL

New Vendors Welcome!

\$1 off with this ad.

ZURKO Promotions

715-526-9769

www.ZurkoPromotions.com

BOOKKEEPER AVAILABLE

QUICKBOOK BOOKKEEPER AVAILABLE. Accounts Payable/Accounts Receivable, Invoicing, Collections, Time Tracking, Bank & Credit card reconciliations, Financial Statements, Journal Entry, Reports for accountants for year-end and Much More! www.rockstarbooks.webs.com

CLEANING SERVICES

CHICAGO CLEANING CO.

Chicago Cleaning Co. offers cleaning services for the LGBTQ Community. A residential and small-business cleaning service, we do it all—from routine to deep cleaning. Our services are professional and competitively priced. Chicago Cleaning Co. is fully bonded and insured. Please call us for a FREE quote today at (773) 896-7161 or email us at chicagocleaningco79@gmail.com.

CHESTNUT CLEANING SERVICES: We're a house cleaning service for homes, small businesses and small buildings. We also have fabulous organizational skills (a separate function at a separate cost that utilizes your assistance) for what hasn't been cleaned in many months or years due to long-term illness, depression, physical/mental challenges, for the elderly, if you have downsized and more. Depressed about going home to chaos? We can organize your chaos, straighten out your chaos, help you make sense of your chaos and finally clean what is no longer chaos. Can we help you? Bonded and insured. **Chestnut Cleaning Service: 312-332-5575. www.ChestnutCleaning.com** (11/23/16-52)

CHICAGO CLEANING COMPANY offers cleaning services to our community. A residential and small business service, we do it all—from routine to deep cleaning. We are professional, bilingual, work with you to fit your budget, and are fully bonded and insured. **Call us today for a FREE quote at (773) 896-7161 or email us at chicagocleaningco79@gmail.com** (3/16/16-CC)

HELP WANTED

ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRITS WANTED. Achieve Personal & Financial FREEDOM. Help us help you help others. It's what we do. Earn \$10,000/month while you learn to invest VERY PROFITABLY in Real Estate. **For a brief online overview, call or text your name to 708-292-8778.** (3/23/16-8)

FIREWOOD

GOOD WOOD FIREWOOD

30 Years Experience

PREMIUM SEASONED FIREWOOD

Oak • Apple • Cherry • Birch

No Criss Cross

No Tree Service Wood

773-975-0251

www.goodwoodfirewood.com

HOME IMPROVEMENT & PAINTING

MAKE YOUR HOME LOOK FABULOUS! We do Bathroom Remodeling, Carpentry, Drywall Repairs, Painting and more. "A+" with BBB. Licensed-Bonded-Insured, One year Warranty. Free Estimates! **Andy OnCall 847-328-3100 www.andyonthecallchicago.com** (12/16/16-56)

HOME SERVICES

ELAIN O'SULLIVAN, HANDY MA'AM. Experience, Knowledge and Tools are why you select someone handy. Reputation, Skills and Safety is why you call Elain O'Sullivan, Handy Ma'am

Gives us a call 312 768 0689, ehomeservice@gmail.com. (2/10/16-2)

RECRUITERS NEEDED

RECRUITERS NEEDED - DEPRESSION TRIAL In need of persons who have access to individuals who are "treatment resistant" to depression medications. We will pay \$100.00 for each qualified referral who screens for the clinical trial. We are studying the effects of a nasally inhaled investigational medication to treat depression. Participants must be between 18-64, in good physical health, no other psychological conditions, have tried from 2-5 anti-depressant medications, be on a current anti-depression medication that is not working. Study participants are paid \$75 for their time and travel, many visits required. Study conducted during the day with strict medical supervision. **Please call Dean @ 773-275-3500 for more information.** (2/3/16-4)

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

HELLENISMOS
THE ANCIENT GREEK RELIGION



ORPHISMOS
STUDY AND WORSHIP

inquire.hellenicgods@gmail.com
www.hellenicgods.org

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 lgbt@chicago.us.mensa.org.** (4/20/16-52)

WINDOW TREATMENTS

WONDERING WHAT TO DO WITH THOSE WINDOWS?: Call me! I take care of it all from design through installation, customizing to your needs. **JOSEPH RICE Interiors, Inc.** Full Decorating Services with a specialty in window treatments for over 25 years. **773-799-8707. www.JosephRiceInteriors.com** (3/9/16-13)

REAL ESTATE

ONE BEDROOM APTS FOR RENT

EDGEWATER COMMUTER ADVANTAGE. Walk to beach, bus, red line and shops. Big kitchen with pantry and dining room. Large bed room with super closets. \$925 with heat. Plus laundry and patio. **Call 773-275-3216.** (2/10/16-3)

TWO BEDROOM APTS FOR RENT

EDGEWATER COMMUTER ADVANTAGE. Walk to beach, bus, red line and shops. One bed room with office or two bedroom. Huge living room. Big kit. with pantry. \$1500 with heat. Plus laundry and patio. **Call 773-275-3216.** (2/10/16-3)



JOSEPH RICE

INTERIORS, INC.

CHICAGO

(773) 779-8707

www.josephriceinteriors.com

Specializing in Drapery Treatments

Get the REAL ESTATE Edge!

Mark Zipperer / RE/MAX Edge



- Buyers
- Sellers
- Rentals
- Consulting
- Advice

RE/MAX is a worldwide leader in selling real estate. Offices are locally owned and operated by Brokers who are experts in their markets. The combination of global resources and locally expertise gives clients of RE/MAX agents the EDGE they need to buy, sell or rent their homes.

773.435.1601 / mzipperer@remax.net

3843 N. Broadway, Chicago, IL, 60613

www.chicagorealestateedge.com



Alan Sanchez, CPA, P.C.

Accounting Services

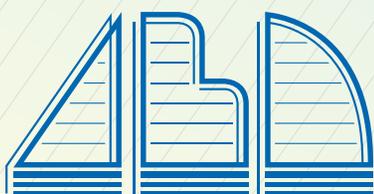
Tax Consultation/Preparation

3418 North Sheffield Ave.

Chicago, IL 60657-8589

Telephone 773-871-1256

www.alansanchezcpa.com



ACHILLE BENKO & DUVALL

BUSINESS SERVICES and CPAs

SERVING: ARTISTS
PROFESSIONALS
BUSINESS OWNERS

www.abd-cpas.com • (847) 257-7330

Mulryan & York

Attorneys At Law

4001 N. Wolcott

Chicago, IL 60613

(773) 248-8887

The Law Offices of Roger V. McCaffrey-Boss & Associates



When experience counts...
In service to the community
for over 35 years.

- Bankruptcy
- Wills, Trusts & Probate
- Real Estate Closings
- Premarital Agreements

33 N. Dearborn St., Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60602

312-263-8800 RVMLAWYER@AOL.COM

We are a debt relief agency.

We help people file for bankruptcy relief under the bankruptcy code.

CONNEXIONS MAKE IT YOUR BUSINESS

BA ATTORNEYS AT LAW
 Robert T. Badesch
 Tina Abramovitch
 Cory Blalock · Nicole McKinnon
 William McSurley · Karen VanderMeer

BADESCH · ABRAMOVITCH

LGBTQ Family Law · Divorce · Mediation
 Adoption · Paternity · Division of Property
 · Custody · Children's rights
 Child support and enforcement
 · Maintenance · Domestic violence
 Post divorce enforcement and modification
 Grandparents and extended family rights
 Pre-nuptial and post nuptial agreements

Phone: 312-372-1639 www.bafamilylaw.com
 120 North LaSalle Street · Suite 1030 · Chicago · Illinois 60602

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY
 FOR OVER 15 YEARS



CHAD DUDA
 Broker Associate

773.398.4097
 CHADDUDA@GMAIL.COM
 CHADDUDA.COM

@properties

"I'm excited to get you into your new home!"

OLIN IS PROUD
 TO REPRESENT THE LGBT COMMUNITY AS THEIR PROFESSIONAL RESOURCE WITH EXPERT KNOWLEDGE OF THE LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET

Call for a **FREE COMPARATIVE MARKET ANALYSIS** of your home or neighborhood.



Olin Eargle
 ABR, CNE, GRI
 Realtor® / Broker
 Accredited Buyer's Representative
 Certified Negotiations Expert
 c: 312-771-1328
 oeargle@atproperties.com
 www.olinsellschicago.com

Olin
 OLIN SELLS CHICAGO
 @properties
 ABR CNE

ANDERSON & BOBACK
 Attorneys and Counselors at Law



Janice L. Boback Kimberly J. Anderson

- Divorce
- Child Custody
- Adoption
- Cohabitation Agreements
- Domestic Violence
- Spousal and Child Support

Proudly serving same-sex couples!

115 S. LaSalle St., 26th Floor
 312-715-0870
 www.illinoislawforyou.com

Ray J. Koenig III and **Clark Hill PLC**



- Probate
- Trusts
- Guardianship
- Estate Planning
- Elder Law

Clark Hill is an entrepreneurial, full service law firm that provides business legal services, government & public affairs, and personal legal services to our clients throughout the country. With offices in Arizona, Delaware, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C. and West Virginia, Clark Hill has more than 300 attorneys and professionals.

312.985.5938 | rkoenig@clarkhill.com
 clarkhill.com CLARK HILL

BEREYSO & ASSOCIATES, P.C.
MARK J. BEREYSO



30 Years' Experience in Employment Law, General Business, Real Estate and Condominium Litigation

www.bereysolaw.com
 312-726-4290

LAURENCE A. JACOBS, M.D.
 Building Your LGBT Family

See Dr. Jacobs for all your infertility needs, including:

- COMPLETE EVALUATIONS
- INSEMINATIONS
- IVF • RECIPROCAL IVF • SURROGACY



For a consultation, call **847-549-3746**
 Sat & Sun appointments available.

We Bring the Showroom To You®



Helping our clients with:
 Flooring Projects including Wood, Laminate, Carpet, Vinyl and Tile.
 Window Covering Projects from Shades to Shutters to Draperies.

NATIONWIDE FLOOR & WINDOW COVERINGS
 We Bring the Showroom to You®

Schedule a Free Estimate
 Mention this ad for a 20% discount

Charles Jones
 (773) 935-8700
 (773) 915-3271 Cell/Text
 cjones@nfwchicago.com
 www.nfwchicago.com

2014 Angie's List Super Service Award
 Gay owned and operated Chicago small business since 2007

AAA SERVICE CO.
 Heating & Cooling

Family Owned & Operated Since 1965
 24-Hour Emergency Service
 We Service ALL Makes & Models

- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Service
- Installation
- Sales

Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/AAService
847-729-7889
www.AAServiceCo.com
 550 Anthony Trail, Northbrook, IL

ilolo



CUSTOM FRAMING
 Framing Chicago's art since 1991.
 1478 W. Berwyn - 773.784.3962

Susan O'Dell, PhD
 Down to earth, change oriented therapy

I see individuals, couples, children & families for crisis and ongoing work.

I also offer wellness support for persons living with chronic illness, including cancer and HIV-AIDS, their partners and families.

773.262.7010
 1435 W. Rosemont Ave, #1W, Chicago, IL, 60660

Mr. Porch™
 "If it's not a Mr. Porch, it's just another porch."

Call today for a **FREE on-site inspection!**

Call Mr. Porch at **877-677-6724** or email us at info@mrporch.com.

100% SATISFACTION GUARANTEE



Scan QR Code with smart phone to view more samples of our previous work!

For more information please visit: www.MrPorch.com

Building Porches and Decks in the Chicago Area for Over 15 Years

Wed., Feb. 10**SHE100 Quarterly Social and Presentation**

LGBTQ women's community, organized for charitable, philanthropic and community work in Chicago. Open bar with beer on tap and light food. RSVP with full name so we can add you to the building guest list. sheonehundred@gmail.com 5:30pm - 7:30pm Trading Technologies International, 222 S. Riverside Plaza, Chicago Tickets: <http://she100.org>

Panel on homelessness and survival sex in the LGBT community

Whitney Capps, host and co-creator of The Gala's Art Break podcast, moderates a discussion about LGBTQ youth homelessness and the role the sex trade plays in the LGBTQ community with panelists Tracy Baim (publisher and executive editor Windy City Times and founder Pride Action Tank), Lourdes Nieto (Chicago police officer), Sam Kirk (artist and founder of Provoke Culture as part of her current exhibit "Surviving the Times" through Feb. 24. 6:30pm - 7:30pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=11308>

Joffrey Ballet Winter Program: 'Bold Moves'

Including World Premiere by Ashley Page and returns of two audience favorites: Forgotten Land and RAKU. Through Feb. 21 7:30pm Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University 50 E Congress Pkwy Chicago <http://Joffrey.org> Tickets: <http://ticketmaster.com>

SlutTalk: A Performance & Dialogue

To raise awareness of slut shaming and sexual assault, five Chicago artists will perform true stories about their experiences with sex and gender. Click bold headline for more info. \$10 8:00pm East Room,

**'LOVE' STORY
Thursday, Feb. 11**

B. Proud, creator of the photo book First Comes Love, will discuss enduring LGBT relationships.

Photo of B. Proud

Logan Square, 2345 N Milwaukee Ave., Chicago Tickets: <http://www.eastroomchicago.com/events/sluttalk-a-performance-dialogue/>

Thursday, Feb. 11

Billie Jean King Former top-ranked professional tennis player and World TeamTennis co-founder Billie Jean King will speak at The Executives' Club of Chicago's Women's Leadership Breakfast \$59 for members and \$99 for non-members. Registration and networking 7:15-8 am. 8:00am Fairmont Chicago Millennium Park, 200 N. Columbus

Dr. Tickets: <http://www.executivesclub.org/EventDetail?EventKey=WLB0216>.

LGBTQ Valentine's Day Party Portraits of enduring LGBTQ relationships featuring a discussion between WCPT's Out Chicago host Scott Duff and B. Proud, the creator of First Comes Love, a book of photographs and love stories that celebrate the LGBTQ community. 7:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com/event/lgbtq-valentines-day-party-b-proud>

Chicago Theatre Week With 100 theatre productions, a celebration of Chicago's world-class theatre scene presented by the League of Chicago Theatres in partnership with Choose Chicago. \$15 or \$30. Through Feb. 21 7:00pm Various locations including The Goodman and About Face Theatre at Theater Wit

Friday, Feb. 12

From the Heart Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus will socialize and present community leader awards to Dr. Mildred Williamson, Ben Montgomery, and Ruff N Stuff. Hors d'oeuvres. Free. More information from info@chiblackgaycaucus.org 6:00pm Jeffery Pub 7041 S Jeffery Blvd Chicago <http://chiblackgaycaucus.org>

Sugar Brown Burlesque Show! The story of a young woman who is seeking love and fulfillment through the art of Urban Burlesque Dance and poetry 7:00pm The Promontory, 5311 S. Lake Park Ave. West, Chicago <https://www.facebook.com/events/990002711084449/>

Uncommon Women and Others Dramatic comedy telling the story of alumnae from Mount Holyoke College meeting for lunch in 1978 to talk about their experiences, some raunchy, others sobering. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays for three weeks. 16+ 8:00pm PM&L Theatre, 877 N. Main Street, Antioch Tickets: <http://www.pml-theatre.com>

Saturday, Feb. 13

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

Lady Arm Wresters' (CLLAW) 24th match My Bloody CLLAW-ENTINE Benefiting Sideshow Theatre Company & The Chicago Human Rhythm Project. \$10 advance, \$15 at door. Doors 9 pm. 9:30pm Logan Square Auditorium 2539 N Kedzie Blvd Chicago Tickets: <http://www.cllaw.org>

Sunday, Feb. 14

ACHurch4Me MCC Sunday Worship Service Diverse congregation welcomes all walks of life, paths of faith, and spiritual connection. 11:00am AChurch4Me MCC, 7366 N Clark St, Chicago <http://www.achurch4me.org>

Pretty In Pink Valentine's Day Brunch at Kit Kat Don your shoulder pads and rat out your hair. Madam X will perform '80s love songs while the beloved John Hughes film plays on Kit Kat's seven jumbo screens 11:00am - 4:00pm Kit Kat Lounge & Supper Club 3700 N Halsted Chicago <http://kitkatchicago.com>

Monday, Feb. 15

Legacy Wall traveling wall exhibit Traveling interactive LGBT history exhibit, created by Chicago-based non-profit Legacy Project, on display on the main floor featuring stories of LGBT people from all walks of life throughout history who have made great contributions in more than 20 distinct fields. Free. Through Feb. 27 12:00pm Milner Library, Illinois State University, 201 N School St, Normal, IL <https://news.illinoisstate.edu/2016/01/legacy-wall-speakers-highlight-contributions-of-lgbt-individuals/>

Movie Musical Mondays: Moulin Rouge Monday nights through February, screening past movie musical Oscar winners. Bring your own snacks and warm up your voice - it just may turn into a sing-along! \$5 suggested donation. 6:30pm - 9:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=11250>

Bayard Rustin: Black Gay Quaker Thinker and Civil Rights & Labor Activist For Black History Month, Carlos Figueroa of Ithaca College will explore politics at the confluence of race, religion, sexuality, and policy development in conjunction with The Legacy Wall exhibit at Milner Library. 7:00pm Prairie Room, Bone Student Center, Illinois State University, 200 N. University Street, Normal, IL <https://news.illinoisstate.edu/2016/02/speaker-series-talk-explore-civil-rights-leader-bayard-rustin/>

Tuesday, Feb. 16

Homolatte: Amy Andrews, Homer Marrs & Adam Hoak, all music Chicago's premier queer music and live lit series now in its 16th year. Performers are of the LGBTI community, but event open to all. Curated and hosted by Scott Free. Admission free. 7:30pm Big Chicks 5024 N Sheridan Rd Chicago <http://www.homolatte.com>

Wed., Feb. 17

Chicago in Focus. State of Chicago's Neighborhoods How will the budget affect neighborhood life? Panel: Alderman Tom Tunney, 44th Ward Chicago; Kevin Jackson, Chicago Rehab Network; Karen Kolb Flude, Forward Chicago; Giselle Mercier, ElevArte Chicago; Lauren Nolan, Voorhees Center for Neighborhood and Community Improvement, UIC. Free, cash bar. RSVP League@LWVChicago.org 5:00pm - 7:00pm Urban League Club, 65 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago 312-939-5949 <http://lwwchicago.org/>

LETTERS from page 18

ians. As a cabinet minister recently boasted, "I have killed lots of Arabs in my life—and there is no problem with that."

As reflected in their politicians' frank, racist comments, Israeli political life has gotten more brutal as Palestinians in the next few years are projected to become a majority within the region controlled by Israel—what their commentators, echoing apartheid South Africa, call the "demographic timebomb" where a population's majority is effectively disenfranchised.

Israel's relentless land thefts have created a result that only a few deluded voices in the West still believe a two state solution is possible. The slogan "From the river to the sea, Palestine shall be free" is a call for one secular state where no people or religion is privileged. It's the only just solution.

It's ironic that people, particularly LGBT activists, see no absurdity in Israel's claim to be a "Jewish democracy." We fought for decades against the religious right's attempt to turn the United States into an oxymoronic "Christian democracy." Why would we think it would be any different with a "Jewish democracy," or any other kind of theocracy?

Andy Thayer
Roger Fraser
Gay Liberation Network

Blog days are over

An Open Letter to GLAAD
regarding the 2016 Media Awards

We, the undersigned, respectfully but strongly disagree with your decision to remove the category of Outstanding Blog from the GLAAD Awards and with your rationalization behind this decision.

LGBT blogs and independent media play a crucial role in relaying information, providing new and diverse voices, and bringing attention to LGBT issues that have been overlooked and omitted by the mainstream media. Bloggers are the last truly independent voices of lived LGBT experience, and those who undertake this task typically do so without pay or recognition. They don't grace the cover of magazines. They don't get book deals. They don't win Oscars. What they accomplish through their sacrifice of time and energy is the proper dissemination of information which serves to make our community stronger and better educated.

The Outstanding Blog award bestowed by GLAAD was one of the only few ways LGBT bloggers has been given their due. The idea that these voices will now have to compete with larger and more powerful news entities such as The New York Times, MSNBC and BuzzFeed is unfair and, frankly, humiliating. The elimination of the category implies that unless one is a celebrity or affiliated with a publication with a high profile and finances to match, you are held without regard in the LGBT media landscape, or at least as GLAAD sees it.

It is sadly ironic that GLAAD, an organization which prides itself on lifting up positive LGBT portrayals, has rendered grassroots LGBT voices invisible and unworthy of recognition. While an initial statement from GLAAD explained that bloggers are still welcome to compete with national outlets in other journalism categories, a simple fact speaks for itself: Among the 2016 award nominees, there is not a single blog (or community-based LGBT outlet, for that matter) to be found anywhere on the list. The crucial voice of first-person LGBT voices has simply disappeared from the GLAAD Awards. This is a troubling message to send to the general public, to up-and-coming LGBT writers, and to the LGBT community itself.

In the spirit of a community in which every

voice is an asset in our march to full equality, we ask that the Outstanding Blog category be fully reinstated immediately. Please conduct a nomination process at once so that this critical error might be rectified before your 2016 awards dinner. Actually announcing the winner of this category from the stage, unlike in year's past, would also be a nice touch.

Sincerely,
Mark S. King
MyFabulousDisease.com
2015 GLAAD Award Nominee

Alvin McEwen
Holy Bullies and Headless Monsters
2014, 2015 GLAAD Award Nominee

Accountability

Dear Editor:

This letter is in response to the Windy City Times Article "Fewer entries planned for 2016 Pride Parade," which Matt Simonette wrote.

The Chicago Police Department, like the organizers of the Gay Pride Committee, have lost trust of those who once trusted in their leadership. Like the police, the organizer of the Gay Pride parade must be held accountable and responsible questions must be asked.

What exactly will cutting back 200 entries to 150 do, except bring the Pride Parade in compliance with city guidelines? Event organizer Richard Pfeiffer said in the Windy City Times article, "The reduction is an effort to get all the entries to the ending point quicker," which would put the parade into compliance with cities guidelines that govern the parade. That begs the question: Why was the parade not in compliance in past years? Exactly how does this help crowd control and irresponsible alcohol consumption?

Like the Chicago Police Department, we cannot hide behind a code of silence, while the very safety of paradegoers are put in question. Crowd control and response to an irresponsible partying environment, in my opinion, are at the heart of the problem. Trying to tell someone to drink responsibly in such an environment only denies the reality of the situation.

Has Pfeiffer, for instance, asked the bar owners on Halsted Street in Boystown to volunteer to not open their bars until after the parade is over? That would go a long way in sending the message that public and private boozing will no longer be tolerated by either the Pride Parade, or by the bar owners when it goes to the streets. We all need to take responsibility. If the police are enforcing the open-container law, I don't think it too much to ask the bar owners to also step up to the plate in trying to get a handle on irresponsible alcohol consumption.

I would also like to know who is paying for the extra security that is being put in place. Are we talking about off-duty police, on-duty police or a separate security company?

Even more troubling for me is that the parade attracts crowds from outside the Lake View area who, at times, do not show respect either for the local residents or their property—and this behavior is usually motivated by alcohol abuse. Has any thought been given by the event organizer to have sponsored activities after the parade to give options to a mindless boozing environment?

Finally, I think 52 arrests are way too much for a 2015 parade that celebrates our better selves. I don't see fewer parade entries affecting this number. We can and should do better.

Joe Murray
Rainbow Sash Network



NEW YEAR, **NEW BODY**

Visit our website:
www.davidshifrinmd.com

Mention
WINDY CITY TIMES
and get
\$500 off
liposuction.

Through February 2016

Discover what others know ...



DAVID SHIFRIN MD
PLASTIC SURGERY

Award-Winning Plastic Surgery
DR. DAVID SHIFRIN
Board-Certified Plastic Surgeon

CHICAGO • 312.590.3572
680 N. Lake Shore Dr.
www.davidshifrinmd.com



Member



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
PLASTIC SURGEONS

PrEP

ONE PILL.
ONCE A DAY.
Protect against HIV.



PrEP4love.com

Chicago PrEP line:
872.215.1905