

**WINDY CITY TIMES**

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

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# ★ PRIMARY ★ RACE 2016

## The race for the White House



**UNDER THE GUN**

Kelli Simpkins on 'Cocked' and gun violence.  
Photo of Kelli Simpkins (left) with Patrese D. McClain in *Cocked* by Michael Courier

26



Bernie Sanders.  
Photo by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

Hillary Clinton.

## Plus local LGBT candidates



Left to right: Deirdre Baumann, Ed Underhill, Sam Yingling, Kelly Cassidy, Greg Harris, Jacob Meister.

BEGINS ON PAGE 7



**WILL DAVIS:**  
Trans man is ATC's artistic director.

28



**QUARE SQUARE**  
Group features queer-identified artists of color.  
Photo of Nikkel "Niki Gee" Goss by Omar "BrotherO" Gadling

30



**TAI TRANG**  
Gay man competes on 'Survivor'.  
Photo from CBS

32

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# WINDY CITY TIMES

## INDEX

**NEWS**  
 Advocates on PrEP case; column 4  
 Jean Hardisty event 5  
 State reps and trans rights 6  
 WCT Primary Election Guide: charts, interviews 7  
 ELECTIONS 2016: Anita Alvarez interview 8  
 In the Life 21  
 Views: Rudolph; letters 22

**ENTERTAINMENT/EVENTS**  
 Dancin' Feats 23  
 'Cocked' actress Kelli Simpkins 26  
 Trans artistic director Will Davis 28  
 Quare Square 30  
 TV: 'Survivor' Tai Trang 32  
**NIGHTSPOTS** 33

**OUTLINES**  
 Calendar Q 36  
 Classifieds 38

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### CHERRY BYE

Ava Cherry (left) and Sinead O'Connor were among those at a David Bowie tribute at the Metro.  
Photo by Jerry Nunn

### MUTT, SERIOUSLY



Bent Nights looks at shows by Meat Wave and The Mutts (headed by Mike Maimone, above).  
Photo by Vern Hester

### ENJOY THE VIEWS

Chicagoans make their thoughts known about which political races they're following.

### WHAT DOES THE FOX SAY?

Julia Fox discusses how staying in the closet can negatively affect people physically and emotionally.

### THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Ruby Rose, Eddie Redmayne and Gloria Trevi.

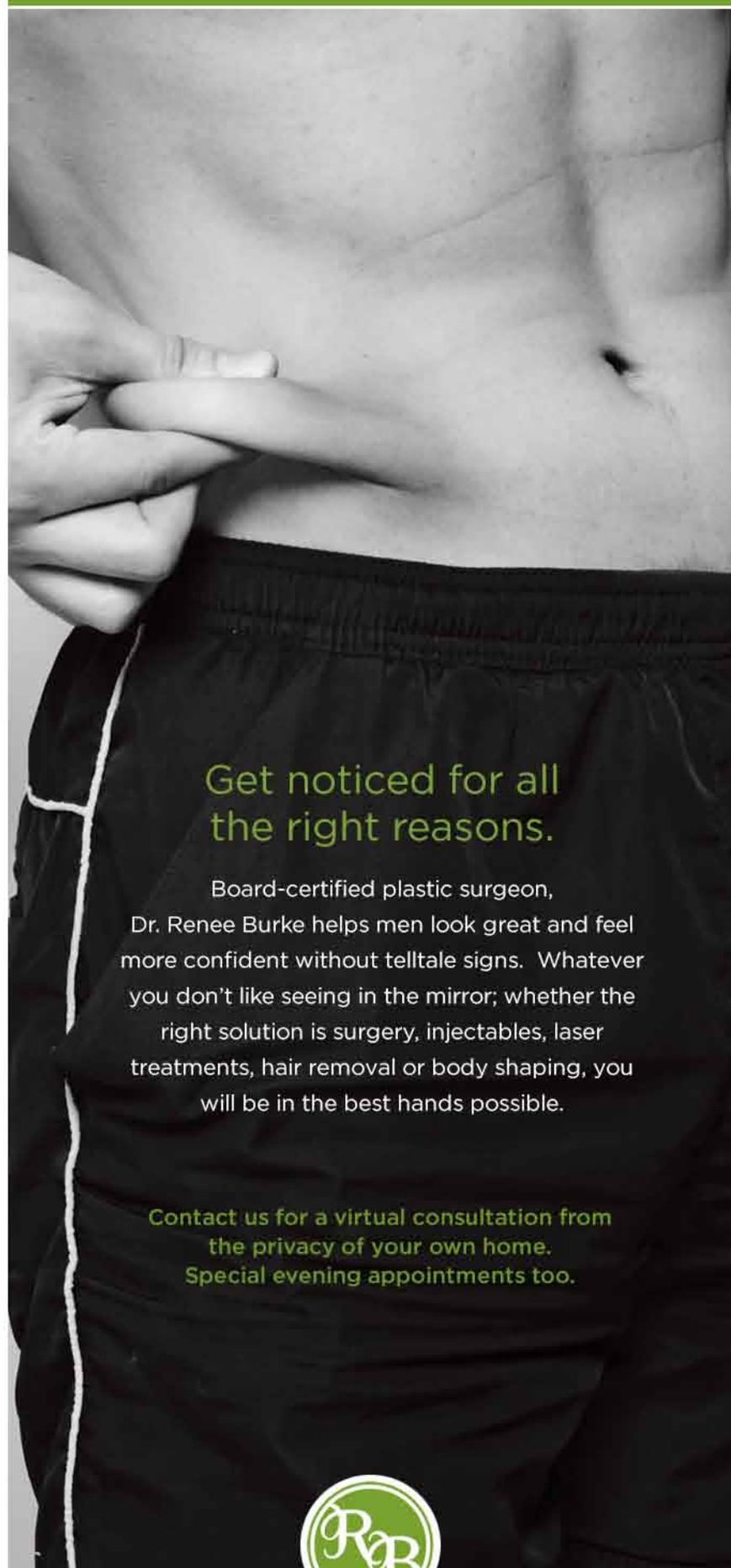
plus  
**DAILY BREAKING NEWS**

### TRANS MISSION



Presenters discussed trans issues to educators in McHenry County.  
Photo of Carolyn Wahlskog, Owen Daniel-McCarter and Jennifer Leininger by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

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AT THE GYM



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# Advocates: HIV case should not cast doubt on PrEP effectiveness

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Researchers at the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) in Boston, on Feb. 26, reported that a Canadian man, who had been using the medication Truvada for pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP, had been infected with HIV. It was the first reported case of an individual with full compliance to a Truvada for PrEP regimen getting HIV.

Truvada has been reported as being up to 92- to 99-percent effective in reducing that risk; researchers currently estimate about 40,000 persons are using Truvada for PrEP.

But news of that infection, while calling for some reflection on individual sexual practices, should not take away from the fact that PrEP has served to protect “tens of thousands” from infection, said Jim Pickett, director of Prevention Advocacy and Gay Men’s Health for AIDS Foundation of Chicago.

“There’s no such thing as a 100 percent-safeguard,” said Pickett. “That’s why we’ve always said that Prep is up to 99 percent effective in preventing infection. ... Now we have one case out of 40,000 individuals and many drug trials. We can still say confidently that PrEP offers a considerable amount of protection.”

The patient, whose identity was not made public but was identified with the first name “Joe” in a March 3 POZ.com interview, was infected with an HIV strain that was resistant to both emtricitabine and tenofovir, the two main components of Truvada. Joe began taking Truvada in early 2013 and had adhered to the prescribed daily regimen. In early 2015, he became ill with persistent stomach issues and his infection was discovered thereafter. He immediately began treatment to reduce his viral load.

“I said, ‘Let’s nip it in the bud,’” Joe told POZ.com. “He put me on a very strong course of medication, and within three weeks my viral level disappeared. Now I’m on a different course of HIV medication, just once a day, in the morning.”

Cori Blum, MD, medical director at Howard Brown Health’s Sheridan Road location, also said that news of Joe’s infection should not change the message about PrEP.

“PrEP is extremely effective—we can’t say 100 percent, because here’s a case where it wasn’t effective—but nearly 100 percent effective if the medication is taken daily,” she added. “It’s important for people taking PrEP to be aware of this very small risk. It highlights that knowing the HIV status of your partner or partners could be useful in gauging the vulnerability to infection. But I don’t think we need to change what we’re saying about PrEP being effective and preventing HIV transmission. This is a rare event, but it highlights that people on PrEP need to take their medicine daily, get tested for HIV, pay attention to their bodies and stay connected with their medical providers.”

Advocates and healthcare providers have faced numerous challenges disseminating messages about PrEP since Truvada was approved for that purpose by the Food and Drug Administration in 2012. Among their hurdles have been the high cost of the drug—a month’s supply is about \$1,600—as well as insurance difficulties, low community and physician awareness and stigmatization around perceived promiscuity.

Blum said there should indeed be more urgency focused on getting PrEP into the hands of individuals whose communities are being disproportionately affected by HIV. Researchers for the Centers for Disease Prevention and

Control (CDC) said at CROI that, if infection rates remain constant, one out of two Black gay men will at some point be diagnosed with HIV, as would one out of four Latino gay men. CDC projections indicate that those numbers would be significantly reduced if those communities had greater access to PrEP and other safer-sex measures.

“Rather than doubting the effectiveness of this wonderful tool that we have in PrEP because of this case, we have to be strong about its effectiveness and use, and be expanding access as much as we can,” she said.

The POZ.com interview is at <http://bit.ly/21LWA2R>.



Hanke Gratteau.

## Darrow symposium to explore racism, poverty

The annual Clarence Darrow symposium—marking the 78th anniversary of Darrow’s passing, and taking place Sunday, March 13—will examine the issues of racism and poverty.

Speaking on the topic “Cook County Jail: Then and Now, The Impact of Poverty and Racism,” Hanke Gratteau, who is director of the Cook County Sheriff’s Justice Institute, will describe today’s jail population and the efforts underway to create enlightened policies and practices regarding incarceration and housing evictions. This year’s event also includes a dramatic performance by actress and producer Fawzia Mirza of Darrow’s famous 1902 address to the prisoners in Cook County Jail.

The day begins with a brief ceremony and wreath-tossing near the Darrow Bridge in Jackson Park at 10 a.m., where Darrow’s ashes were scattered after his death and where, as a bet, he once agreed his spirit would return if it turned out communication was possible from the afterworld.

After the ritual outdoor wreath-tossing, guests will move inside to the Museum of Science and Industry’s Rosenwald Room (formerly the Columbian Room) for light refreshments and presentations at 10:45 a.m. by the featured speakers.

Darrow, who died March 13, 1938, is remembered for his crusading role as “attorney for the damned” in such controversial cases as the Scopes Monkey Trial, the Leopold and Loeb murder case, and the pardoning of the Haymarket anarchists.

See [DarrowBridge.org](http://DarrowBridge.org).

## Relationships & the Law Today

BY COURTNEY POSNIK



### Quality and culturally sensitive healthcare for the LGBTQ community

In February 2007, Lisa Pond unexpectedly collapsed after suffering an aneurysm aboard a cruise ship while it was docked. Lisa was transported to a Miami trauma center where she was admitted at 3:30 p.m.

Lisa’s partner of 18 years, Janice Langbehn, informed the admitting clerk that she was Lisa’s life partner and offered to provide Lisa’s medical history, but the clerk rejected Janice’s offer and refused to provide Janice with information about Lisa’s condition. Over the next eight hours, the clerk repeatedly denied Janice and their three jointly adopted children access to Lisa despite receiving Lisa’s executed power of attorney, which allowed Janice to make medical decisions for Lisa in case of her incapacity. Janice and her children were unable to be at Lisa’s side until 11:30 p.m. after Lisa was transferred to the intensive care unit. Lisa was declared brain dead the next morning.

Progress has been achieved in the past nine years. However, LGBTQ patients and their families still face challenges in securing quality and culturally sensitive healthcare. The struggles the Langbehn-Pond family faced influenced a 2010 presidential memorandum recommending that the Department of Health and Human Services (“DHHS”) update hospital visitation policies for hospitals participating in Medicare or Medicaid to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. In 2011, DHHS revised its Conditions of Participation in accordance with the presidential memorandum, and The Joint Commission, the largest national hospital accreditation organization, updated its standards to include equal visitation for LGBT patients and visitors. Additionally, the following state and federal regulations protect a patient’s right to receive non-discriminatory care, equal visitation, and accurate medical records.

#### Patient Non-Discrimination

A 2009 Lambda Legal survey revealed that 56 percent of LGB respondents and 70 percent of transgender respondents had experienced at least one of the following types of discrimination in healthcare: being refused needed care; healthcare professionals refusing to touch them or using excessive precautions; healthcare professionals using harsh or abusive language; being blamed for their health status; or healthcare professionals being physically rough or abusive.

Recently enacted federal and state laws combat these types of discrimination. Federally, the Affordable Care Act (“ACA”) and implementing regulations prohibit discrimination based on sex, defined to include gender identity and sex stereotypes, in any health program receiving federal funds.

The Illinois Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in housing, employment, and public accommodations, which includes the professional office of a healthcare provider and hospitals. Additionally, the Chicago Human Rights Ordinance prohibits the denial of equal treatment to any individual based on sex,

gender identity, and sexual orientation in places of public accommodations.

Individual healthcare facilities can be proactive in adopting written non-discrimination policies that include “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” to convey their organizational commitment to LGBTQ non-discrimination. These policies may be posted online, in patient waiting areas, or provided directly to patients.

#### Visitation

The presence of family and friends is a crucial part of a patient’s healing process. As mentioned above, federal law requires that a hospital participating in Medicare and Medicaid must “not restrict, limit, or otherwise deny visitation privileges on the basis of ... sex, gender, identity, [or] sexual orientation.” Additionally, Illinois law requires that every healthcare facility in the state permit visitation by any person designated by a patient unless the facility does not allow any visitation or if visitation would endanger the health or safety of a patient.

Healthcare facilities may place reasonable and necessary limitations on visitation, including the hours of visitation and the number of visitors per patient. However, hospitals must adopt written policies and procedures concerning visitation rights, and patients or their support person must receive notice of their visitation rights, including the right to receive visitors designated by the patient.

#### Medical Records

Many electronic health record (“EHR”) platforms inadequately document gender identity and gender expression. In 2014, only 13 percent of healthcare facilities had an explicit method of recording whether a patient’s current gender identity differed from the sex on their birth certificate, and only 45 percent of providers included this information in free-form notes. The sex entered into an EHR can have clinical implications, including determining normal ranges for certain blood tests.

To address these inadequacies, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services published new rules in October 2015 requiring EHR systems certified under Stage 3 of the Meaningful Use program to have the capacity to collect sexual orientation and gender identity information from patients. This provides healthcare professionals more information on a patient that can assist with identifying treatments most helpful to a particular patient.

To assure that medical records contain accurate demographic information, patients may request access to their medical records. Generally, under Illinois law, healthcare facilities must permit patients to examine and copy their medical records within 30 days from a written request. Healthcare facilities may, however, charge patients for the cost of copying their medical records. Patients may request an amendment to a record containing inaccurate or incomplete information.

If you are interested in learning more about regulations affecting your healthcare, please feel free to contact myself or any of Clark Hill’s experienced attorneys.

Courtney Posnik is an Associate Attorney in Clark Hill PLC’s Health Care Practice Group in the firm’s Chicago office. She focuses her practice on health care law, assisting clients with transactional, corporate, regulatory, and litigation matters. You may contact her at (312) 985-5535 or [cposnik@clarkhill.com](mailto:cposnik@clarkhill.com).

# Jean Hardisty remembered with special program

BY TRACY BAIM

Crossroads Fund and Political Research Associates (PRA) hosted a discussion of the work of political scientist and social activist Jean Hardisty, who died March 16, 2015. Hardisty was a co-founder of Chicago-based Crossroads Fund, and founder of Political Research Associates; both agencies have been existence more than 30 years.

The focus of the discussion, held March 3, 2016, at Saint James Commons in downtown Chicago, was on “neoliberalism,” a belief system that is almost the opposite of what traditional political liberalism means. It is, rather, a support of privatization, austerity, deregulation and authoritarianism, according to Tarso Luis Ramos, PRA’s executive director. Ronald Reagan popularized the approach during his presidency.

Tarso was the featured speaker at the event. PRA board member Lynette Jackson, an associate professor of gender and women’s studies and African-American studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago, moderated the discussion. Crossroads Executive Director Jeanne Kracher also spoke about Hardisty and her support of her agency for so many years.

Hardisty founded PRA in 1981 as a research center based in Chicago. She moved its headquarters to Boston a few years later. Her mission was to “get people to take the right seriously.” For more than 35 years, she offered cogent and far-reaching analysis about its impact on women, people of color, immigrants, educators, and the LGBTQ community.

She served on the board of directors of the Highlander Research and Education Center,

Ms. Foundation for Women, Center for Women Policy Studies, Grassroots International, Center for Community Change, and the Women’s Community Cancer Project. In addition, she was a consultant for 10 years to the Women Donors Network, where she led seminars on the political right wing. In 2010, she was given a Lifetime Achievement Award by Community Change, Inc., a Boston-based anti-racism organization.

Some audience members also paid tribute to the work of Hardisty, and her impact on their lives personally and professionally.

See obituary for Hardisty here: <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Longtime-political-activist-Jean-Hardisty-dies/50844.html>.

See the video interview with Hardisty at <http://chicagogayhistory.org/biography.html?id=795>.

The online edition of this article has video from the March 3 event.



Tarso Luis Ramos (left) and Lynette Jackson at Hardisty event. Photo by Tracy Baim

## Trans woman dies after consuming poisonous seeds

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A Calumet City transgender woman was found dead the week of February 15 after ingesting poisonous seeds, according to reports.

Lucia Anderson, 22, was found by her mother, Natosha Anderson, after ingesting the seeds of the Cerbera odallam plant, which is also known as the “suicide tree” or “pong-

pong tree.” Lucia had purchased the seeds from an online source in Thailand for just over five dollars. The seeds gradually release toxins that cause the heart to stop beating and are native to India and other parts of Southeast Asia.

Lucia spent several hours in pain before she died, according to her mother, who discovered her on the floor of the bathroom in their family home. She died hours later at a hospital in Hammond, Indiana.

“I can go online and purchase something for five dollars ... and that can literally devastate a family and kill someone,” Natasha told ABC 7.

Lucia had recently petitioned to have her name changed and was quite frequently bullied when she was in school, according to Natosha. Lucia was a graduate of Urban Prep Academy, according to a Facebook post from the school.

Officials of the Trans Lifeline helpline, on March 3, noted that ABC 7 had downplayed Lucia’s gender identity in favor of details about the seeds, as well as repeatedly used her name and gender pronouns incorrectly. Trans Lifeline also launched a change.org petition demanding a correction.

The petition is at <http://chn.ge/1X5gAdu>. ABC 7’s story is at <http://abc7.ws/1LKq8Ki>.

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# Illinois state reps divided over trans issues

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

While Illinois has been embroiled in budget battles and who should control Chicago Public Schools, two bills were introduced in the Illinois House of Representatives aimed specifically at the transgender community.

State Rep. Greg Harris introduced HB 6073, which would amend the Illinois Vital Records Act to be consistent with other Illinois and federal processes for changing one's sex marker on their Illinois birth certificates. At present, the law requires a person to have proof from a physician that they've had an "operation" before the documents can be updated to reflect one's gender identity.

The bill currently has seven co-sponsors—state Reps. Kelly Cassidy, Will Guzardi, Cynthia Soto, Le Shawn K. Ford, Silvana Tabares, Emanuel Chris Welch and Ann M. Williams.

Illinois has been ahead of the curve in protecting transgender rights, including being one of the first states to ban discrimination on the basis of gender identity and the first state, in 1962, to give transgender individuals a way to change their sex designation on their birth certificate.

In 2007, a version of this bill was introduced by state Rep. Sara Feigenholtz—HB 1732. During the floor debate, a number of GOP state representatives mocked transgender people and the bill subsequently failed to get the votes needed for passage after its third reading.

"As there have been many advances in medical treatment and health care in this and many other areas in the last 50 years, we need to update our statutes to reflect the most current standards of medical practice," said Harris. "That's what this bill does, as well as making Illinois law conform to similar requirements in Federal statutes relating to passports, social security cards and the laws of 11 other states that have modernized their requirements."

"We're hopeful that this year Illinois will modernize our Vital Records Act with this bill," said Owen Daniel-McCarter, Esq., policy and advocacy director of the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance. "Among other things, this will allow many people who currently have mismatched identity documents to align them with their gender identity."

"I'm optimistic that the progress we've made in Illinois educating people about LGBT issues will be reflected in the outcome of this legislation and will do all I can to assist in its passage," said Feigenholtz. "This is common sense legislation."

"We applaud Rep. Harris' work to modernize the Illinois Vital Records Act through HB 6073," said Kim Hunt, executive director Pride Action Tank—a project of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago. "The language and spirit of the bill are consistent with the views of medical professionals and the lived experiences of transgender individuals."

"It's an overdue measure we should all welcome, because it responds to the needs of individual trans folks born in Illinois, catching up to the standards already in use by the Illinois Secretary of State on drivers licenses and IDs as well as the State Department on passports," said Christina Kahrl, ESPN's Major League Baseball editor and writer. "This puts the power where it should be: with the people."

"It's time to bring Illinois in line with the federal standards for gender markers on official documents since many transgender people opt out of gender-confirmation surgery for a variety of reasons: cost, health, the wishes of a partner, family relationships or age," said Toni Weaver, president PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois.

On the other side of the aisle, state Rep. Thomas Morrison has introduced HB 4474. This



State Rep. Sara Feigenholtz at ribbon-cutting of Town Hall Apartments.

Photo from Feigenholtz's office

so-called "bathroom bill" would modify the Illinois School Code to prevent transgender students from using the bathrooms/locker rooms in their schools consistent with their gender identity.

HB 4474, which currently has 23 co-sponsors, was introduced by Morrison, whose district falls within the boundaries of Township High School District 211, due to the agreement Township High School District 211 made in Dec. 2015 with the Federal Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights after they were found to be in violation of Title IX of the Civil Rights Act. The violation concerned a transgender high school student in the district being barred from using the locker room consistent with her gender identity.

In a response to queries about why he introduced the bill, Morrison said, "It's appropriate and reasonable to have genuine boundaries in these most private of school settings and to delineate them by anatomy. Exceptions to that standard can be respected and accommodated without compromising the legitimate civil rights of all involved. The feelings and privacy concerns of all students need to be considered. I've talked to many parents, students, educators and LGBT activists and allies. This may not be a perfect solution, but it's a reasonable compromise."

"Sadly, this is another regressive attempt at bad public policy that we're seeing the far right try to run in other legislatures," said Harris. "Earlier this month, South Dakota Republican Gov. Dennis Daugaard vetoed a similar attempt there and I hope my colleagues in Illinois do the right thing and vote down this discriminatory bill."

"The bill is an attack on transgender kids who can't defend themselves," said Cassidy. "This is the trend in state legislatures across the country but I feel confident that we can defeat this bill."

"South Dakota recently considered a similar bill," said Daniel-McCarter. "In vetoing this legislation, Gov. Daugaard made it clear that approving such a bill would 'create a certain liability for school districts and the state in an area where no such liability exists today.' HB 4474 would create that same liability for

school districts and is an unnecessary distraction."

"Pride Action Tank was one of more than a dozen organizations that denounced HB 4474 earlier this year because it discriminates against transgender and gender nonconforming students," said Hunt. "Furthermore, this bill would undo the work of the many enlightened school districts across the state that are focused on creating safe and affirming environments for all students."

"This is Illinois' entry in a nationwide phenomenon of fear-mongering bills animated either out of genuine ignorance or something uglier, and sometimes both," said Kahrl. "The amazing thing is this bill simultaneously invents a problem that doesn't exist, selectively demonizes a couple hundred kids minding their own business, takes responsibility out of the hands of competent teachers and administrators and puts all public education in the state at risk for losing federal funding for violating Title IX. It's a remarkably stupid piece of legislation, and deserves its likely death in committee."

"Rep. Morrison's bill is ill-conceived and

displays fear and ignorance, fear of what he doesn't understand and ignorance of the basic facts about transgender people," said Weaver. "His bill could have horrific consequences for our transgender students for whom any additional stigmatization might prove severely harmful."

"People's support for this bill is based on fear of the unknown," said Mary Genzler, Parents of Transgender Individuals—McHenry County member. "I fully believe that if they met and spent time with transgender individuals, they would realize their fears are unfounded."

"I believe what we're seeing with HB 4474 is a snapshot of where the queer movement needs to turn our attention, to the margins," said Marcus Fogliano, genderqueer president of Peoria Proud. "Even as public opinions around trans issues is improving, public opinion around support for K-12 trans students is sadly in the lower 30 percent range. This is why we must stay vigilant and engaged in the queer movement and increase our education efforts so bills like this don't even get introduced."

Both bills had their first readings and were referred to the rules committee.

## Northwestern launches new institute for LGBT health research

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Northwestern University officials announced, on Feb. 29, that they've launched the Institute for Sexual and Gender Minority Health and Wellbeing, which will be the first university-wide research institute in the U.S. focused on LGBT Health.

The mission of the institute is to connect scholars across disciplines to create collaborations and stimulate new research that will improve the health of LGBT people across their lifespans, according to a statement.

"This new institute represents Northwestern and Feinberg's commitment to support breakthrough research that improves the lives of LGBT people everywhere," said Eric G. Neilson, MD, vice president for medical affairs and Lewis Landsberg Dean at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. "We want to be a leader in reducing health inequalities in LGBT communities."

The institute will be headed up by Brian Mustanski, associate professor of Medical Social Sciences. He told Windy City Times that it would serve as a center for research on numerous issues pertaining to the LGBT community.

"While we have seen great progress in areas such as marriage equality, part of the reason for the institute is our community experiences inequity in a number of areas around health," Mustanski said.

The institute will focus not only on what drives those inequities, but formulating solutions to combat them. Among its initial components are the IMPACT LGBT Health and Development Program which conducts research exploring development of sexual orientation and gender identity; the Evaluation, Data Integration and Technical Assistance Program, which analyzes health interventions focused on sexual and gender minorities, particularly ones focused on HIV; and the Complex Systems and Health Disparities Research Program, which focuses on mechanisms driving health disparities in stigmatized populations.

Mustanski said that a steering committee is under development, and that aging, women's health and transgender health issues would likely be among the foci of programming in the future.

"This is a visionary development for Northwestern," he added. "The big opportunity here is to forge collaborations across the entire university."

## UIC gets grant to expand HIV project

The University of Illinois at Chicago has received a grant in support of an oral history project featuring women's personal histories of living with HIV and AIDS in the United States.

The \$70,000, one-year grant from the MAC AIDS Fund will expand "I'm Still Surviving," a pilot program developed by the UIC-based History Moves project and the Women's Interagency HIV Study (WIHS), a 23-year-old clinical research study of women living with HIV.

With the grant, the Chicago-based initiative will expand to include women living with HIV/AIDS in Chapel Hill, North Carolina and Brooklyn, New York.

"In Plain Sight: A Women's History of HIV/AIDS in Chicago," an exhibition inspired by "I'm Still Surviving," is on view through April 2 at Pop Up JUST Art Center, 1255 S. Halsted St. See <http://news.uic.edu/exhibition-inspired-by-chicago-womens-hiv-stories>.

## Studies: Chicago still very segregated

Two studies released March 2 by the Chicago Urban League and researchers at American University in Washington, D.C., show that Chicago is still one of the most segregated cities in the country, The Chicago Sun-Times reported.

In fact, segregation is so deeply ingrained that even those neighborhoods that achieved racial diversity are moving toward resegregation, according to sociologists at American University who analyzed race and housing patterns in 10,000 neighborhoods in Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles and New York.

The Urban League's study is titled "The Impact of Racial Residential Segregation on Residence, Housing and Transportation"; it is at [TheChicagoUrbanLeague.org](http://TheChicagoUrbanLeague.org). The American University study is titled "The Fragmented Evolution of Racial Integration Since the Civil Rights Movement"; it is at [https://www.sociologicalscience.com/download/vol-3/march/SocSci\\_v3\\_135to166.pdf](https://www.sociologicalscience.com/download/vol-3/march/SocSci_v3_135to166.pdf).

The Sun-Times article is at <http://chicago.suntimes.com/news/chicago-racial-segregation-studies/>.

# Windy City Times Election Guide

Welcome to the Windy City Times Primary Election Guide.

This issue of WCT features interviews, charts (with WCT questionnaire scores, organization endorsements and/or ratings) and features such as "LGBTs in the Mix," which spotlights members of the LGBT community who are running for office. (This publication does not endorse candidates.)

There are several races worth noting. In addition to the intriguing presidential contests, there's the race for Cook County state's attorney between embattled incumbent Anita Alvarez and challengers Kim Foxx and Donna More. Another race that bears watching is the Democratic primary competition for U.S. senator that involves U.S. Rep. Tammy Duckworth, state Sen. Napoleon Harris III and onetime Chicago Urban League president Andrea Zopp. (Zopp's interview ran in the Feb. 24 issue of WCT.)

## Early voting info

Early voting for the March 15 primary election will take place through March 12. (On March 13-14, early voting will be offered at one of 14 "permanent early voting sites," including the Chicago Board of Elections, 69 W. Washington St.) Voters registered in the City of Chicago may use any early voting site in the city, regardless of where the voters live.

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

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

All 51 early voting sites will be open Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. To get a list of sites, visit <http://www.chicagoelections.com/en/early-voting.html>.

## Polling places changed for 48 precincts

Voters in 48 precincts in suburban Cook County will have a new polling place for the March 15 Presidential Primary Election. Evanston, Cicero, Palos Heights and River Forest are among the suburbs affected.

There are 1,599 precincts in suburban Cook County and more than 1,000 polling places. While polling places are primarily public buildings, they can change for a variety of reasons, such as safety issues, construction projects or space constraints.

Households impacted by these changes will receive postcards.

## Grace-period voting, registration

Through March 14, Chicago voters may register and vote in person at any of the 51 early

voting locations. During the "grace period," people must register in person—and then vote during that same visit. Voters must present two IDs with one that shows their current address.

On Election Day, March 15, a Chicago voter may register at the precinct polling place assigned for that voter's home address. Again, two forms of ID are needed, including one that shows the voter's home address.

## ELECTIONS 2016 LGBTs in the mix

The next primary elections, to be held March 15, feature a number of openly gay and lesbian candidates. The following individuals have publicly stated that they are members of the LGBT community and were on the ballot as of late February.

—Kelly Cassidy

**Race:** Illinois state Representative (14th District)

**Website:** RepCassidy.com

**The skinny:** Cassidy, who defeated another lesbian candidate, Paula Basta, in March 2014, is this time running unopposed in the Democratic primary—and she has no Republican challenger, either.

—Sam Yingling

**Race:** Illinois state Representative (62nd District)

**Website:** SamYingling.com

**The skinny:** What's old is new again. Yingling is running unopposed in the primary for his third term. He is the first openly gay House member from outside metropolitan Chicago. And Republican Rod Drobinski of Wauconda is, again, Yingling's opponent for the general election; Yingling prevailed in 2014.

—Greg Harris

**Race:** Illinois state Representative (13th District)

**Website:** GregHarris.org

**The skinny:** Harris—who was chief co-spon-

sor of SB10, the legislation that brought about marriage equality in Illinois—has a district that includes several North Side neighborhoods. He was first elected in 2006 and, like Cassidy, is currently running unopposed, ensuring his re-election.

—Jacob Meister

**Race:** Cook County Circuit Court Clerk

**Website:** JacobMeister.com

Meister has a battle in unseating longtime (and controversial) clerk Dorothy Brown, and he also has Ald. Michelle Harris as a competitor. However, he was received several endorsements, including from the Chicago Sun-Times, the Chicago NOW PAC and a large coalition of Cook County-area Latino elected officials. The winner in the Democratic primary will face Diane Shapiro, Republican committeeman of Chicago's 46th Ward, in the November general election.

—Ed Underhill

**Race:** Judge (Cook-6th Subcircuit—"A" vacancy)

**Website:** EdUnderhillForJudge.com

**The skinny:** The primary is definitely the race that matters, as there are no Republican adversaries in the general election. Underhill—who lives with his husband, Liam, and their dog, Finn—is running against Anna Loftus and Carlos Claudio. Underhill is a trial attorney with 30 years of experience, and has been a Bucktown homeowner for the past 15 years.

—Deidre Baumann

**Race:** Judge (Cook Circuit-Palmer Vacancy)

**Website:** DeidreBaumannForJudge.com

**The skinny:** Baumann finds herself in a very competitive race, with three other primary candidates (Pat Heneghan, Susana Ortiz and Camela Gardner). (Like with Underhill, there is no Republican contender for the general election.) Baumann has 23 years representing people against the government and large corporations, and was lead counsel in the Burr Oak Cemetery litigation.

# JUDGE DEVLIN SCHOOP

**“HIGHLY RECOMMENDED”**

— Lesbian and Gay Bar Association

**“ENDORSED”**

— Cook County Democratic Party

— Personal PAC

— Chicago NOW PAC

**PUNCH  
NUMBER 217**

## ELECTIONS 2016

# Alvarez battles to keep state's attorney post

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Incumbent Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez has been waging a heated battle to retain her position this primary season.

Any election is tough, but Alvarez has had an especially challenging run since this past fall, as details of the Laquan McDonald shooting came to light, sparking vocal protests across the city, many calling for Alvarez's resignation after well over a year went by between McDonald's shooting and murder charges being filed against Chicago Police Officer Jason Van Dyke.

Among Alvarez's challengers are Kim Foxx, formerly the chief of staff to Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, and who has also received backing from the Cook County Democratic Party, and gaming attorney Donna Moore. But Alvarez says that, with 29 years of experience working in the State's Attorney's Office, she brings the most experience to the job.

Windy City Times spoke with Alvarez about gun crime, her relationship to the LGBT community, and what she's taken away from the events that have transpired since November.

**Windy City Times: It has been a difficult several months, with many in Cook County calling for your resignation. But you have not only remained in office—you have pursued your re-election campaign. Why should voters pick you in the primary, and not Kim Foxx or Donna Moore?**

Anita Alvarez: It has been a rough couple of months. When I started the campaign, I don't think anybody could foresee what has transpired since Thanksgiving.

Why should voters vote for me as opposed to my other opponents? Number one is my experience. I clearly have more experience than the both of them put together, in this office and running this office. I think what's important is that that the voters understand—and I think it's apparent based on all these politics—is that I'm not a politician. I'm a career prosecutor, and that's how I run this office. I always make my decisions based on the facts, the evidence and the law, and not because some politician told me to do this or do that. ... I think the state's attorney needs to be independent of any political influence, and I've been that. I think that's apparent to the politicians, and that's why I'm not the endorsed candidate. That's why I'm not racking up all these political endorsements, which I didn't have in my first race anyway.

**WCT: What progress has the office made between when you came in, and now?**

AA: I got some unwarranted criticism as to whether I am reform-minded enough. An unbiased look at my record shows just the opposite. I was sworn in December 2008 and right away in 2009 we came up with something called the Offender Initiative Probation. It was a law that we wanted to change in Springfield, that of course we couldn't pass. So I said, forget it, I'll do it myself in Cook County. This was our Deferred Prosecution Program. ... [We] developed the program to divert those low-level offenders out. It saves them from their felony conviction. They complete the program, we dismiss the case and expunge it, so they avoid the conviction, because we all know what that does to you in so many ways. When I started, there were only eight different alternative sentencing programs available, and now I have 32 different programs to divert people out of the system. Last year we had 5,400 people who were in some type of program. I think that's tremendous, and we're giving people a second chance.

I think we need to be smart on crime. I think we need to focus on the violence. I have my

ideas for when it comes to gun violence and we can, on the front-end, help those people who need a second chance get a second chance to keep them out of the system.

**WCT: So how do we deal with the gun violence?**

AA: I have been an advocate and a proponent—I've tried in Springfield and haven't passed it—of strengthening our gun laws. We're talking about the illegal guns. We are talking about gang members out on the streets with guns. If you get picked up on a gun case, you get a UW—unlawful use of a weapon—a year is the bottom. You don't do a year. You're in and out in about three months, in and back out on the street. What we've seen, and we've been tracking those cases, is that these people are coming right back into the system, and they are not necessarily coming back in just on a possession-of-a-gun case—it's often armed robberies, attempted murders, murder. There's research that's been done that says that 63 percent of gun offenders re-offend within a year.

So they are coming right back in. But what does that mean? ... As state's attorney, I do think we need to look at strengthening our gun laws. I looked at New York; I think they raised their minimum from a year to three-and-a-half, and they saw a decrease in crime. If we do our part to divert on the front end, for those with non-violent offenses and drug offenses, we can focus our resources on the violence. I think that's the way to go—I'll continue to fight for the gun laws and I've had some support down in Springfield, but certainly not enough to get anything passed.

**WCT: What is the role of this office in terms of being a watchdog for the police?**

AA: Obviously it's your job, and you do have to handle these cases. Since I have taken over, I have charged 96 police officers, Van Dyke being the 96th, with a variety of different crimes—bribery, perjury, excessive force. I'm not afraid to charge officers when they break the law. We want a system that's just. We want a system you can have confidence in. When you have officers breaking the law, that shakes the confidence in the system. I'm the only person in this race that has actually tried and convicted Chicago Police officers, so I'm not afraid of those things, and I think that it's our job as state's attorneys to do it.

**WCT: How do you make sure that that task is carried out more speedily?**

AA: Obviously, that's the question everyone has on the Van Dyke case. When it comes to police shootings, they're not easy cases, for a variety of reasons. ... When you investigate these cases, you have to know a variety of things—obviously, the facts of what occurred and the law. What is the use of force model? How was this officer trained? What were the rules and regulations of this department? You have to know the United States Supreme Court law governs the analysis when you're looking at police officer-involved shootings. There are all these things that [don't] come into play with a civilian shooting.

So there are things that are complicated from day one—all the more reason to take your time to get it right. In that particular case, I stand by my decision to involve the FBI and the U.S. attorney. The FBI brought some tremendous resources that we don't have, or [Independent Police Review Authority] doesn't have. The U.S. Attorney and I have a great relationship and we do a lot of joint investigations.

I learned a lot these last three months. With the investigation, it was improper to take that long to get it right. One of the things I don't want to do is rush to judgment and get it wrong. I'd rather take my time and get it right.

I believe we were able to build a stronger case by doing what we did. What I've learned from all of this is that the public wants to know what's going on with all these cases. While we work on a lot of things, and we have to abide by rules of professional conduct and Supreme Court rules that tell us what you can and cannot say—and additional federal rules, also—the public wants to know, "This particular shooting, what is going on with that?"

What I intend to do, once the election is over, is to have a link on my website, to have a link for people to be able to go on and see a particular case. We'll tell if it's pending or what the status is. If no charges are brought you'll be able to link to a white paper that'll tell you why charges were not filed. That's important and it's something I learned—[many in the public think] "you guys did this, but you didn't tell us." ... We're bound by what we can and cannot say, but we can at least say, "Here's the status of this."

**WCT: How do you answer charges of racism by this office in the investigation and prosecution of crime in Cook County?**

AA: I think what's gotten lost in the discussion and coverage of this is, I did charge an on-duty police officer of first-degree murder and that's never happened before in a shooting case in Cook County, in the city of Chicago. Sometimes I think people have forgotten that. I've been doing this job for 29 years. When I started in this office there were probably five Hispanics. When I got hired, I was probably five. One of the most important things to consider, when you do this job, is, who are my victims? My victims are minorities. Minority communities are disproportionately victimized by violent crimes. I have never turned my back on any community.

I've gotten the question, do Black lives matter? My answer is, absolutely they do. If I didn't believe that, I couldn't have done this job for as long as I've done it, because the majority of my victims are African American. They matter every day, and not just when they're lost to a rogue police officer. They matter when that nine-year-old is executed in an alley. When that beautiful aspiring model is shot dead in a drive-by shooting. When that African American senior citizen is beaten to death, damned right, they matter.

**WCT: A colleague [at Windy City Times] wrote an extensive series about a trans woman of color, Eisha Love, who was arrested for attempted murder after an incident in Austin. Love spent nearly four years in jail with no trial, and ultimately pled guilty to a lesser charge and was released. One reason for the numerous delays, the story reported, was ASAs [assistant state's attorneys] not showing up for hearings. How do you explain that delay?**

AA: I am aware of that case, because that was a case that was complicated from the very beginning. I believe there was a plea of guilty and there was one other case still pending from something that happened in the jail. As far as the delay on our end, sometimes things happen just by virtue of where they are and in what courtroom they are in. I don't like hearing about any ASA not being in court—that's not what we're all about. I know this was a case that was sent on to one of those supplemental calls, which always drags things out. But I know that, as far as training and policy, that's something that I won't stand for. I wouldn't say that the fact an ASA might be late for court was the reason; there's other things that transpire in that, but I am aware of that case. That was a tough case from the very beginning, in a lot of different ways, because there were other issues too; I thought the jail was supposed to be 'trans-friendly' and I'm not so sure she was housed properly.

**WCT: She was in an all-male facility. Can you speak on that?**

AA: I don't have any control over that. But I know [Sheriff] Tom Dart does, and we have a great working relationship, and I know he's on record saying that they have the facilities, so I don't understand why that happened.



Anita Alvarez.

**WCT: How would you describe your record on issues pertaining to the LGBT community?**

AA: I've always had a great relationship with the LGBT community and will continue to as I go along. One of the things I'm very proud of is that we have more assistant state's attorneys who identify as LGBT, who are comfortable being out. I can tell you that is not what it was like back in 1986 when I started. We've hired 17 since 2008 that openly identify. We now have a council for hate crimes and LGBT [issues]. We also did a sensitivity-training focusing on LGBT issues. We do all kinds of trainings, but that one was specifically LGBT.

My LGBT advisory council existed under the previous state's attorney. I have African American, Hispanic, Asian, LGBT and a hate crimes council. One of the things that was always done traditionally is give awards—for Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month—but we never gave out anything for LGBT. I brought [openly gay First Assistant State's Attorney] Dan Kirk back to the office, and he first became my chief of staff. I said to him, "Why don't we give awards for LGBT?" So we started it over at Center on Halsted. We always have the biggest turnout of any awards ceremony at that one. I thought it was important to recognize the community, and the people who had made great strides in support of the community.

The hate-crimes council was dormant for a while. Howard Kaplan was head of our council but he passed away and it became dormant. But it's becoming reinvigorated. It's important because we're talking about hate crimes and we're looking at what's been going on at a national level. Knock on wood, we haven't seen any increase in hate crimes, but we want to be prepared for it, and we want to know if there's any particular issue in any community. There's an increase in violence in Boystown. One of my assistants was jumped and robbed a year-and-a-half ago. Another assistant came to the aid of a gay couple at the lakefront, and he himself was beaten pretty bad. We charged a hate crime on that one as well. We have to be mindful in the LGBT community; I'm seeing not necessarily an increase in hate crimes, but the violence—the robberies, for example—is happening way too often.

I think the LGBT community can be victimized in many ways, particularly with the youth. There are a lot of homeless LGBT youth who can find themselves susceptible to violence. Many of them can't come out to their families and they find themselves out on the street. Homelessness, and being able to serve those kids, is a top priority. For us, making sure that we have direct communication and the sensitivity with which we can serve that community the best we can.

Turn to page 9

# Illinois House races hinge on ending Springfield inaction

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

While it may have begun as the political equivalent of Rebel Without A Cause's "Chickie Run" scene, the fight between Illinois State Democrats and Gov. Bruce Rauner has long since sent the budget off a cliff. The resulting number of casualties in critical public and nonprofit service organizations and the people they serve has meant March 15 primary races are no longer referendums of frustration but, for many voters, fear coupled with disgust.

Challengers to House incumbents are taking full advantage of public sentiment towards Springfield. The 5th House District race for the Democratic seat between Rep. Ken Dunkin and challenger Juliana Stratton (whom President Obama recently endorsed) has become one of the most expensive in Illinois state history, with both sides pouring money into planting the perception that a vote for Dunkin is a blank check for Rauner's agenda and a vote for Stratton adds another marionette to the end of House Speaker Michael Madigan's strings.

Defending his seat in the 22nd District, Madigan himself is facing accusations from opponent Jason Gonzales that he has neglected the needs and concerns of the people of his district. Editorials have asserted that the Gonzales campaign is being funded by Rauner's supporters. Gonzales has admitted to both that and the jail time he served for credit card fraud

when he was a teenager.

The prevailing insinuation that incumbents are not doing their jobs is much the same in the 26th District, where Rep. Christian Mitchell is up against a second challenge to his seat from Jay Travis who has attacked Mitchell for not listening to his constituents. Despite Mitchell's voting record of 95 percent against Rauner, in a Feb. 8 press release, the Travis campaign declared "local leaders: Time to replace 26th District "Rauner" Democrat."

In a letter to the Forest Park Review, 7th District Democratic candidate Chris Harris went even further than assertions of an overall poor job performance in Springfield. He believes the entire system is on "a path to self-destruct." He added that his district "suffers from neglect but our rep [Emanuel "Chris" Welch] and the state. His responses to the Windy City Times candidate questionnaire, indicate that the LGBT community's interests will not suffer from a similar neglect, having "seen the struggles" for himself.

Cynthia Soto has held the 4th District House seat for 15 years. Democrat businessman Robert Zwolinski wants to change that with a campaign message stating that 15 years is "too long" for residents of the 4th District to have "lacked a voice in Springfield."

"One of the reasons why we got into this mess is due to career politicians," Zwolinski claimed in a campaign video.

State Rep. Cynthia Soto.  
Photo by Ed Negron



Responding to the Windy City Times questionnaire, Soto highlighted her support for the LGBT community as a significant part of her career including marriage equality, HIV funding and increased funding for LGBTQ homeless youth. Zwolinski's campaign website makes no mention of those or any LGBT issues.

In the 40th District, immigrant and entrepreneur Harish Patel has declared war on the "old-style political machine" represented in Jaime

Andrade Jr. who succeeded Deb Mell when she vacated the seat to represent the 33rd Ward as alderman. Patel called Rauner's budget cuts "outrageous." Should one of Rauner's fellow Republicans win the White House in November, any agenda to round up and deport the state's community of undocumented immigrants will find unashamed defiance in Patel who pledges to make Illinois a sanctuary state.

## ALVAREZ from page 8

Also, I was invited about a year and a half ago, along with a select group of prosecutors, to talk about whether states should have standalone statutes with regards to intentional transmission of HIV. It was really informative. We had several doctors who updated us on what the medicine is, and then I learned about other states. Illinois is actually better than a lot of other states, but I still I think our law needs to be updated—it's kind of 1980s. That's something we're going to be looking at. The strides in medicine that is now available certainly weren't there when this started.

I'm proud of all the strides that we've made. As I said, when I started with this office, it was a much different office. Every year, when I send staff to Lavender Law, we have a line of people waiting to interview with us, because people know that Cook County has a reputation for being accepting of LGBT. We get applicants from across the country that want to come work for us, because they know that the environment that we've created is a respectful environment and they can feel free to be out in our office.

See [AnitaAlvarez.com](http://AnitaAlvarez.com).

*The voice for equal justice*



# DEIDRE BAUMANN

Democrat for Judge  
Circuit Court of Cook County  
Palmer Vacancy

Ballot#  
**224**

*"As a member of the LGBT community, I understand the importance of justice and equal treatment under the law. I will bring professionalism, fairness and balance to the court."*

**Make Your Voice Heard**  
**Vote March 15, 2016**

**ENDORSED**  
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Personal PAC  
Rev. Jesse Jackson

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Candidate for Judge in the Circuit Court of Cook County

**PUNCH 231** **JUDGE FREDRICK BATES**

# Election 2016

## US PRESIDENT

IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization  
 HRC = Human Rights Campaign  
 PP = Planned Parenthood  
 RC = Reclaim Chicago

To see Hillary Clinton's and Bernie Sanders' responses to a survey given by Gay Men's Health Crisis, see <http://gmhc.org/files/editor/file/GMHC-PresReport-2016-A.pdf>

	IVI	HRC	PP	RC
Hillary Clinton (D)	Y	Y	Y	
Willie L. Wilson (D)				
Roque "Rocky" de la Fuente (D)				
Larry (Lawrence) Cohen (D)				
Bernie Sanders (D)				Y
Donald J. Trump (R)				
Marco Rubio (R)				
Ted Cruz (R)				
John R. Kasich (R)				
Ben Carson (R)				

## IL STATE COMPTROLLER

WCT = Windy City Times questions, number listed is of the total questions correct for that race.  
 PPAC = Personal PAC  
 EQIL = Equality Illinois PAC

	WCT	PPAC	EQIL
Susana Mendoza (D)		Y	Y
Leslie Geissler Munger (R)			

## COOK COUNTY RACES

WCT = Windy City Times questions, number listed is of the total questions correct for that race. So for example if there were 20 questions in a race, and we state 18/20, that means they got 18 of 20 answers correct.  
 IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization  
 PPAC = Personal PAC  
 CNOW = Chicago NOW PAC  
 EI = Equality Illinois PAC  
 RC = Reclaim Chicago

### COOK COUNTY CLERK

	WCT	IVI	PPAC	CNOW	EI	RC
Dorothy A. Brown (D)	17/18	Y	Y			
Jacob Meister (D)	18/18			Y		
Shirley T. Coleman (D)						
Tio Hardiman (D)						
Michelle A. Harris (D)						
Diane S. Shapiro (R)	14/18					

### RECORDER OF DEEDS

Karen Yarbrough (D)			Y			
Jan Kowalski (D)						

### STATE'S ATTORNEY

Kim Foxx (D)	22/24	Y	Y	Y		Y
Anita Alvarez (D)	17/24					
Donna Moore (D)						
Christopher E. K. Pfannkuche (R)						

### COOK CO. BOARD OF REVIEW-1ST DIST. COMMISSIONER

Dan Patlak (R)						
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### COOK CO. BOARD OF REVIEW-2ND DIST. COMMISSIONER

Michael Cabonargi (D)			Y			
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### METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT

VOTE FOR THREE SIX-YEAR AND ONE TWO-YEAR TERMS

	WCT	IVI	PPAC	CNOW	EI	RC
Patricia Horton (6-yr.) (D)						
Josina Morita (6-yr.) (D)	16/18	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Barbara McGowan (6-yr.) (D)	15/18	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Mariyana T. Spyropoulos (6-yr.) (D)	16/18	Y	Y	Y	Y	
R. Cary Capparelli (6-yr.) (D)						
Kevin McDevitt (6-yr.) (D)						
Joseph Daniel Cook (6-yr.) (D)	14/18					
Mary Vann (6-yr.) (D)						
Harvey Nathanel (6-yr.) (D)						
Bernie Riley (6-yr.) (D)						
Tyrone Tucker (6-yr.) (D)						
Karen Roothaan (6-yr.) (G)						
George Milkowski (6-yr.) (G)						
Michael Smith (6-yr.) (G)						
Tom Greenhaw (2-yr.) (D)	18/19	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Andrew Seo (2-yr.) (D)						
Martin J. Durkan (2-yr.) (D)			Y			
Robert Shaw (2-yr.) (D)						
Herb Schumann (2-yr.) (R)						

## US SENATE

WCT = Windy City Times questions, number listed is of the total questions correct for that race. So for example if there were 20 questions in a race, and we state 18/20, that means they got 18 of 20 answers correct.  
 HRC = Human Rights Campaign 113th Congress, ratings are a percentage of total 100% based on HRC tracking of how candidates voted in the 113th Congress  
 PP = Planned Parenthood: The Planned Parenthood Action Fund compiles a scorecard to educate and inform citizens about members of Congress' record of support for women's health. The scores are a percentage, based on votes on key legislation related to women's health care and rights.

	WCT	HRC	PP
Andrea Zopp (D)	29/30		
Tammy Duckworth (D)	28/30	100	100
Napoleon Harris (D)			
James T. Marter (R)		78	80
Mark Steven Kirk (D)			

## US CONGRESS RACES

WCT = Windy City Times questions, number listed is of the total questions correct for that race. So for example if there were 20 questions in a race, and we state 18/20, that means they got 18 of 20 answers correct.  
 IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization  
 HRC = Human Rights Campaign 113th Congress, ratings are a percentage of total 100% based on HRC tracking of how candidates voted in the 113th Congress  
 PP = Planned Parenthood: The Planned Parenthood Action Fund compiles a scorecard to educate and inform citizens. The scores are a percentage, based on votes on key legislation related to women's health care and rights.

	WCT	IVI	HRC	PP
<b>1ST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
Bobby L. Rush (D)		Y	100	100
O. Patrick Brutus (D)				
Howard B. Brookins, Jr. (D)				
Harold L. Bailey (D)				
August (O'Neill) Deuser (R)				
Donald E. Peloquin (R)				
Jimmy Lee Tillman II (R)				
<b>2ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
Marcus Lewis (D)				
Robin Kelly (D)		Y	89	100
Dorian C. L. Myrickes (D)				
Charles Rayburn (D)				
John F. Morrow (R)				
<b>3RD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
Daniel William Lipinski (D)			38	20
Arthur J. Jones (R)				
<b>4TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
Luis V. Gutierrez (D)	30/30		100	100
Javier Salas (D)	29/30			
<b>5TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
Mike Quigley (D)	30/30		100	100
Rob Sherman (G)				
Warren "Grizz" Grimsley (G)		Y		
<b>6TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
Robert Marshall (D)	26/30			
Amanda Howland (D)				
Peter J. Roskam (R)			0	0
Gordon (Jay) Kinzler (R)				
<b>7TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
Danny K. Davis (D)	30/30	Y	84	100
Thomas Day (D)	30/30			
Frederick Collins (D)				
<b>8TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
Michael Noland (D)				
Raja Krishnamoorthi (D)	29/30	Y		
Deborah M. Bullwinkel (D)				
Peter "Pete" Dicianni (R)				
<b>9TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
Janice D. Schakowsky (D)	30/30		100	100
Joan McCarthy Lasonde (R)				
David Earl Williams III (R)	20/30			
<b>10TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
Brad Schneider (D)	28/30		100	
Nancy Rotering (D)	29/30	Y		
Robert Dold (R)			65	
<b>11TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
Bill Foster (D)	29/30		100	100
Tonia Khouri (R)				
Herman B. White (R)				
Nick Stella (R)				

### 12TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Charles "C.J." Baricevic (D)  
 Michael Bost (R)  
 Paula Bradshaw (G)  
 Sadona M. Folkner (G)

### 13TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Mark D. Wicklund (D)  
 Rodney Davis (R)  
 Ethan Vandersand (R)

### 14TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Jim Walz (D)  
 John J. Hosta (D)  
 Jesse Maggitt (D)  
 Randall M. "Randy" Hultgren (R)

### 15TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

John M. Shimkus (R)  
 Kyle McCarter (R)

### 16TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Adam Kinzinger (R)  
 Colin M. McGroarty (R)

### 17TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Cheri Bustos (D)  
 Patrick Harlan (R)  
 Jack Boccarossa (R)

### 18TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Darin LaHood (R)

	WCT	IVI	HRC	PP
<b>12TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
Charles "C.J." Baricevic (D)				
Michael Bost (R)			0	
Paula Bradshaw (G)				
Sadona M. Folkner (G)				
<b>13TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
Mark D. Wicklund (D)				
Rodney Davis (R)		0	0	
Ethan Vandersand (R)				
<b>14TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
Jim Walz (D)				
John J. Hosta (D)				
Jesse Maggitt (D)				
Randall M. "Randy" Hultgren (R)		0	0	
<b>15TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
John M. Shimkus (R)		0	0	
Kyle McCarter (R)				
<b>16TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
Adam Kinzinger (R)		0	0	
Colin M. McGroarty (R)				
<b>17TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
Cheri Bustos (D)		100	100	
Patrick Harlan (R)				
Jack Boccarossa (R)				
<b>18TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT</b>				
Darin LaHood (R)			0	

## ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY RACES

WCT = Windy City Times questions, number listed is of the total questions correct for that race. So for example if there were 20 questions in a race, and we state 18/20, that means they got 18 of 20 answers correct.  
 IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization  
 PPAC = Personal PAC  
 EI = Equality Illinois PAC  
 RC = Reclaim Chicago

	WCT	IVI	PPAC	EI	RC
<b>1ST SENATE DISTRICT</b>					
Antonio "Tony" Munoz (D)			Y		
<b>2ND SENATE DISTRICT</b>					
Angelica Alfaro (D)	23/23		Y	Y	
Omar Aquino (D)		Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>4TH SENATE DISTRICT</b>					
Kimberly A. Lightford (D)			Y		
<b>5TH SENATE DISTRICT</b>					
Patricia Van Pelt (D)			Y		
Robert "Bob" Fioretti (D)		Y			
<b>7TH SENATE DISTRICT</b>					
Heather A. Steans (D)			Y	Y	
<b>8TH SENATE DISTRICT</b>					
Ira I. Silverstein (D)			Y		
<b>10TH SENATE DISTRICT</b>					
John G. Mulroe (D)			Y		
<b>11TH SENATE DISTRICT</b>					
Martin A. Sandoval (D)			Y		
<b>13TH SENATE DISTRICT</b>					
Kwame Raoul (D)			Y		
<b>14TH SENATE DISTRICT</b>					
Emil Jones III (D)			Y		
<b>16TH SENATE DISTRICT</b>					
Jacqueline "Jacqui" Collins (D)			Y		
<b>17TH SENATE DISTRICT</b>					
Donne E. Trotter (D)			Y		
<b>19TH SENATE DISTRICT</b>					
McStephen O. A. "Max" Solomon (D)				Y	
Michael E. Hastings (D)					
<b>20TH SENATE DISTRICT</b>					
Iris Y. Martinez (D)			Y		
<b>22ND SENATE DISTRICT</b>					
Cristina Castro (D)	20/23		Y	Y	
Steve Caramelli (D)			Y	Y	
<b>23RD SENATE DISTRICT</b>					
Thomas E. Cullerton (D)			Y		
Seth Lewis (R)					

	WCT	IVI	PPAC	EI	RC
<b>25TH SENATE DISTRICT</b> Corinne M. Pierog (D) Jim Oberweis (R)	21/23		Y	Y	
<b>28TH SENATE DISTRICT</b> Laura Murphy (D) Mel Thillens (R)			Y	Y	
<b>29TH SENATE DISTRICT</b> Julie A. Morrison (D) Benjamin Salzberg (R)			Y		
<b>31ST SENATE DISTRICT</b> Melinda Bush (D) Michael Amrozowicz (R)			Y		
<b>34TH SENATE DISTRICT</b> Steve Stadelman (D)			Y		
<b>40TH SENATE DISTRICT</b> Toi W. Hutchinson (D)			Y		
<b>43RD SENATE DISTRICT</b> Pat McGuire (D)			Y		
<b>46TH SENATE DISTRICT</b> David Koehler (D)			Y		
<b>52ND SENATE DISTRICT</b> Scott M. Bennett (D) Michael P. Madigan (R)			Y	Y	
<b>58TH SENATE DISTRICT</b> Sheila Simon (D) Paul Schimpf (R) Sharee Langenstein (R)			Y	Y	
<b>1ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Daniel J. Burke (D)			Y		
<b>2ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Theresa Mah (D) Alexander "Alex" Acevedo (D) Benny Wong (D)		Y		Y	Y
<b>3RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Luis Arroyo (D) Joaquín Vazquez (D)			Y		
<b>4TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Cynthia Soto (D) Robert Zwolinski (Bob Z) (D)	19/23		Y	Y	
<b>5TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Kenneth "Ken" Dunkin (D) Juliana Stratton (D) Andre Smith (D)	22/23	Y		Y	Y
<b>6TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Darryl D. Smith (D) Kenyatta Nicole Vaughn (D) Genita C. Robinson (D) Eddie Johnson (D) Sonya Marie Harper (D)			Y	Y	
<b>7TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Emanuel "Chris" Welch (D) Chris Harris (D)	21/23 17/23		Y	Y	
<b>9TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Arthur Turner (D)			Y		
<b>11TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Ann M. Williams (D) Gary Mandell (R)			Y	Y	
<b>12TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Sara Feigenholtz (D) Gene Witt (R)	23/23		Y	Y	
<b>13TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Gregory Harris (D)	22/23		Y	Y	
<b>14TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Kelly M. Cassidy (D)	23/23		Y	Y	
<b>15TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> John C. D'Amico (D) Jac Charlier (D) Jonathan Edelman (D)			Y	Y	
<b>16TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Lou Lang (D)	23/23		Y	Y	
<b>17TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Laura Fine (D)			Y	Y	
<b>18TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Robyn Gabel (D) Jessica Tucker (D)			Y	Y	

	WCT	IVI	PPAC	EI	RC
<b>19TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Robert Martwick (D)				Y	
<b>20TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Merry Marwig (D) Michael P. McAuliffe (R)	18/23		Y	Y	
<b>21ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Silvana Tabares (D)				Y	
<b>22ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Michael J. Madigan (D) Jason Gonzales (D) Joe G. Barboza (D) Grasiela Rodriguez (D)				Y	Y
<b>23RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Michael J. Zalewski (D)				Y	
<b>24TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Elizabeth "Lisa" Hernandez (D) Andy Kirchoff (R)				Y	
<b>25TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Barbara Flynn Currie (D)				Y	
<b>26TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Jhatayn "Jay" Travis (D) Christian L. Mitchell (D)		Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>27TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Monique D. Davis (D)				Y	
<b>28TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Robert "Bob" Rita (D)				Y	
<b>29TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Wilbur "Will" Tillman (D) Thaddeus Jones (D) Kenneth "Kenny" Williams (D)	13/23			Y	Y
<b>30TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> William "Will" Davis (D)				Y	
<b>33RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Marcus C. Evans, Jr. (D) Marcel Bright (D)				Y	
<b>34TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Elgie R. Sims, Jr. (D)				Y	
<b>37TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Margo McDermed (D)				Y	
<b>38TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Al Riley (D)	20/23		Y	Y	
<b>39TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Will Guzzardi (D)				Y	Y
<b>40TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Harish I. Patel (D) Jaime M. Andrade, Jr. (D)	22/23		Y	Y	
<b>43RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Anna Moeller (D)				Y	
<b>44TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Fred Crespo (D)				Y	
<b>45TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Cynthia Borbas (D) Christine Jennifer Winger (R)				Y	
<b>46TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Deb Conroy (D) Heidi Holan (R)				Y	
<b>55TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Martin J. Moylan (D) Dan Gott (R)				Y	
<b>56TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Michelle Mussman (D) Jillian Rose Bernas (R)				Y	
<b>57TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Elaine Nekritz (D)				Y	
<b>58TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Scott Drury (D)				Y	
<b>59TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Carol Sente (D) Dawn Abernathy (R)				Y	
<b>61ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Nick Ciko (D) Sheri Jesiel (R)				Y	

	WCT	IVI	PPAC	EI	RC
<b>62ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Sam Yingling (D) Rod Drobinski (R)				Y	
<b>66TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Nancy A. Zettler (D) Paul Serwatka (R) Dan Wilbrandt (R) Allen Skillicorn (R) Carolyn Schofield (R)				Y	
<b>67TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Litesa E. Wallace (D) Wladimiro Aguirre (D) Lisa Jackson (R)				Y	Y
<b>68TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Tricia Sweeney (D) John M. Cabello (R)				Y	
<b>69TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Angelique A. Bodine (D) Joe Sosnowski (R)					Y
<b>71ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Mike Smiddy (D) Tony M. McCombie (R)				Y	Y
<b>72ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Jeffrey D. Jacobs (D) Michael W. Halpin (D) Katelyn Hotle (D) Glen Evans (D) Brandi McGuire (R) Jordan Thoms (R)				Y	Y
<b>74TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Bill Butts (D) Wayne Saline (R) Daniel M. Swanson (R) Michael J. DeSutter (R)	18/23				
<b>75TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Martha J. Shugart (D) John D. Anthony (R)					Y
<b>77TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Kathleen Willis (D) Anthony Airdo (R)					Y
<b>78TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Camille Lilly (D)					Y
<b>80TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Anthony DeLuca (D)					Y
<b>81ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Greg Hose (D) Ron Sandack (R)				Y	Y
<b>84TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Stephanie A. Kifowit (D) Mike Strick (R)				Y	Y
<b>85TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Emily McAsey (D)					Y
<b>92ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Jehan Gordon-Booth (D)					Y
<b>93RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> John Curtis (D) Norine K. Hammond (R)	17/23				Y
<b>94TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Bobby Pritchett (D) Randy E. Frese (R)					Y
<b>95TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Mike Mathis (D) Dennis J. Scobbie (R) Christopher M. Hicks (R) Avery Bourne (R)	19/23			Y	
<b>99TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Anthony "Tony" DelGiorno (D) Sara Wojcicki Jimenez (R) Kent Gray (R)					Y
<b>103RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Carol Ammons (D)				Y	Y
<b>112TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Katie Stuart (D) Dwight Kay (R)					Y
<b>113TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT</b> Jay Hoffman (D) Katherine L. Ruocco (R)					Y





# The Cult of Whiteness: On #OscarsSoWhite, Donald Trump, and the End of America

BY MAX S. GORDON

In this week's Windy City Times, we are publishing the final installment of a four-part in-depth essay by Max. S. Gordon.

## Section Two, Part iv

*"O, I wish I was in the land of cotton, old times there are not forgotten. Look away! Look away! Look away! Dixie Land." — Daniel Decatur Emmett*

*"I get how it can be news to some of you that people are victimized by systems legitimated by your nation, countrymen, and god. But I'm black and female and southern. I call that Tuesday." — Tressie McMillan Cottom*

If it was the plan of Dylann Storm Roof to further the cult of whiteness by attempting to murder a churchload of black parishoners, killing nine, on June 17, 2015 in Charleston, South Carolina, it backfired: he forever changed America's relationship—and very likely ended its romance—with the confederate flag on that same day. At this time in history, in an unprecedented way, whiteness is deeply threatened, shaken to its very core. The threat to whiteness is the reason we should be infuriated, but not surprised, by what may seem like a "rise" in police brutality. The police (and I'm not talking about heroes, and there are heroes) are the arm of the law that acts from our collective consciousness, and, when engaging from its shadow, is calibrated, much like the Klan in the South, to denigrate and destroy black empowerment and black lives. When a black business would thrive in the historic South, daring to compete with a white business, or when a black laborer suggested he was getting less than a fair price for the cotton he picked, the Klan knew whom to maim, whom to kill, whose home to burn down to send the message - you've gone too far, you must be controlled. Emmett Till from Chicago, black, bright and full of spirit was tortured and mutilated for "disrespecting" a white woman, eventually lying in an open casket, a courageous decision made by his mother, Mamie Till, for all the world to see. In that moment, Emmett Till was as much America's son as George Washington is considered the father of our country.

During a recent conversation about politics and black America, a friend said he felt that Trump and Cruz are the businessmen who, for profit, would easily sell your black babies like cattle; the Clintons are the benign slave owners who love money, but also appreciate loyalty, won't beat their slaves (an overseer does it) and who promise never to break up a slave family. Bernie Sanders is the abolitionist farmer who hides you in his basement. My friend is technically a Hillary supporter but worries that Hillary is also the friend who, when everyone is broke but wants to party, collects money outside the club and says, "Pay for me and then when I'm inside I'll open the back door and let you guys in." Hours later, someone goes in after her and finds her partying in the VIP section, laughing and getting her drink on, her friends long forgotten.

Bernie Sanders is new to black people: even he acknowledges this, so it is not clear exactly what he will do for us, and the Clintons have always had an interesting relationship to whiteness. They have been considered to be friends of black people by many of us since the Bill Clinton years, despite enjoying enormous white privilege and supporting policies that have been deleterious to blacks in the past. The comparisons my friends and I make may be unfair to the Clintons, but we laugh as a way to



When Chicago's Emmett Till was tortured and mutilated for "disrespecting" a white woman, his mother decided to lay him out in an open casket for the world to see, making him as much America's son as George Washington is considered the father of the country.

cope with our black disappointment. And there is a lot of black disappointment going around lately.

I was cleaning the closet the other day and deciding which clothes I might give to charity. I lifted a black tee-shirt from the pile and opened it—it was the iconic Obama image, etched in blue and red as if from a woodcarving, with the word emblazoned at the bottom, "HOPE." I remembered the day I bought the tee-shirt on 125th street and wore it everywhere. Standing in the bedroom, I couldn't keep it, and I couldn't throw it out, so I just stared at it, feeling like an asshole for believing back then, and feeling very old now, as I wondered to myself, "Exactly whose face is that?" Obama looks young and vulnerable and full of promise in the image, but it is eight years later and a lot of promises just weren't kept. Obama may have the distinction of being the only president in American history who ran as a progressive, presided as a moderate and was treated by Congress as a radical.

There is still a question as to whether our black president actually did anything to improve underprivileged black lives. Given the platform of black respectability and non-racial identity he ran on, some argue he couldn't, and probably did less than a Democratic white president, however condescending, might have. It's hard to call a black president on his administration's racism. (He and Cheryl Boone Isaacs should have lunch.) Still, having a black man in the most important position in the world has changed whiteness in this country forever. Children all over the country pledge allegiance each morning to an American flag and a black American face.

There is a group of Americans that are aware of this and they are deeply panicked. A majority of people voted for a black president in America, but there is still a question whether

as a society we were truly ready for one or not: evidenced by the obvious contempt and constant resistance to Obama by Congress and his Republican colleagues. Like a poisoned body that detoxifies too quickly and throws up the food that will heal it, the American body desired but never truly integrated its first black president. Paul Ryan sits passively during Obama's State of the Union address, unable to express any goodwill towards him. One thinks that despite their ideological differences, Ryan could garner some enthusiasm for the office itself, to which he clearly has aspirations. Not a chance. His parsimonious and pinched expression reveals his disgust for Obama, and his unwillingness to transcend his own pettiness and bigotry, despite the great challenges Americans face.

Gov. Chris Christie, during a Republican debate, debases himself thoroughly and says to the President, "We are going to kick your rear end out of the White House come this fall", a huge difference from the now infamous hug he gave Obama during Hurricane Sandy. I was proud of that hug at the time because it suggested that during a crisis, we aren't Republicans and Democrats: we are Americans. The simple human fact was that on that day New Jersey needed Obama's help, and Obama was there for New Jersey and Governor Chris Christie.

Lifetimes ago. Now Christie talks to the president as if he were the Grand Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan standing on the Obama's front lawn. In the end, his words are self-destructive and extremely short-sighted. Christie plays at whiteness, but he comes from a state with a large black population, and he is too funky himself to be truly white, and I mean that as a compliment. He doesn't realize that he at one time he had something better to offer than "whiteness"—the potential to be a leader across party lines. But the Republican party, with few exceptions, seems to want only whiteness now and he wants to win, so he delivers. Christie's fatness "others" him, "niggers" him, so he knows what it means to be an outsider and different. Out for whiteness like everybody else, his differences don't sensitize him, or provide a platform for greatness—they make him appear grotesque. Christie betrays himself by using tea-party shortcuts, and in the end they know he is a phony and his poll numbers continue to go down. (Christie's campaign may have been resurrected after his spectacular take-down of Marco Rubio at the New Hampshire Republican debate, proving Donald Trump isn't the only queen on stage who can "read".)

The Republican candidates scramble to get what is for most of them, the ultimate, unattainable prize. It's a mad, mad world. Christie's "kick your rear" comment to Obama is a low point during the debates, but things gets uglier, more despicable. Jeb Bush is in similar trouble with his party, but he has more integrity than Christie, plus a Latino wife. Any walls he builds to keep immigrants out might exclude some of his own relatives. This is a lovely predicament for justice, but not one that the Republicans appreciate. Bush refuses to go full patriarchal, tea-party white, but he doesn't have anything else to offer, and that makes him seem like a cipher. He ends up finishing almost dead last in the polls.

We are a society addicted to whiteness: and as in any other addiction, one reaches a bottom where one either loses everything or uses that low point as a platform for great change. The direction we are going, led by Trump and Cruz, will ultimately lead to the day when we are running through the streets, clutching our children's hands and carrying whatever we can in our arms, as the final confrontation goes down. This isn't conjecture or hyperbole; it is the direct consequence of compulsive whiteness, imperialism and patriarchal domination taken to its most extreme; the ultimate macho showdown. Cruz, who is the Republican front-runner for the presidency at this writing, says that he will carpet-bomb ISIS into oblivion: "I don't know if sand can glow in the dark, but we're going to find out." He seems to be itch-

ing for a confrontation of biblical proportions, and a continuation of the war perpetrated by the whitest man who ever lived; Dick Cheney. But eventually all cults come to an end, as will ours, if we don't decide now that whiteness as a societal construct doesn't offer enough of a pay-off for what it ultimately costs us.

v

*"I would like to be remembered as a person who wanted to be free ... so other people would be also free." — Rosa Parks*

*"America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves." — Abraham Lincoln*

In this moment in our political history, while fighting an anger that threatens, at times, to consume me, I choose to believe there is hope. All eyes are still on America—the great cultural experiment. Sitting in the subway last week, there was a woman across from me, her hair wrapped in an orange scarf, lovely against her dark skin. She was laughing with what I assumed were her husband and child. Crammed next to her in the seat was a middle-aged white man in a suit, holding his briefcase. It was evening around six and his gray hair was a little disheveled, perhaps from the rain outside, or from running to catch the train. In that moment, we were just a few of the thousands of "strangers as backdrop" that you look at every day as you travel through New York City; unremarkable and yet remarkable all at once. There was a Latino woman with headphones, a young Asian man reading a newspaper, and a white woman applying lipstick in a tiny mirror. It was just another day on the subway; we were together for this short ride and would eventually arrive at our separate destinations. But something about the fact that in that moment we were in the same circumstance, on that train uptown, New Yorkers all, yet determinedly different - felt soulful to me, deeply beautiful. I looked at the faces and thought, as I often have since 9/11, Are we prepared, if this is the day, to share some great tragedy together? Do we even see each other?

At the other end of the subway car was a man, black and obviously homeless. Although seemingly impossible on a crowded subway car during rush hour, he was alone. Exhausted people stood on tired legs to avoid sitting in the empty seats near him. He leaned forward, wrapped up in a felt blanket and hiding his face deep inside his coat, his entire head covered with a black plastic bag. One shoe was unlaced and looked damp, the other exposed his naked, slightly green foot - peeling, bloated and covered in crust. As the man's fetid smell suddenly reached our end of the car, I made eye-contact with the gray-haired man, and the woman with her family, and we all shared a knowing, uncomfortable look, finding solidarity in our revulsion for the homeless man and his circumstance. Leaving the train, I considered his shame and what should have been ours, the home that awaited me, and it occurred to me that America hasn't really happened yet, that despite its great potential, we are still waiting on America, as one waits on the platform, expectant and hopeful, for a train to come.

**Max S. Gordon is a writer and activist. He has been published in the anthologies *Inside Separate Worlds: Life Stories of Young Blacks, Jews and Latinos* (University of Michigan Press, 1991), *Go the Way Your Blood Beats: An Anthology of African-American Lesbian and Gay Fiction* (Henry Holt, 1996). His work has also appeared on *openDemocracy*, *Democratic Underground* and *Truthout*, in *Z Magazine*, *Gay Times*, *Sapience*, and other progressive on-line and print magazines in the U.S. and internationally. His published essays include, "Bill Cosby, Himself: Fame, Narcissism and Sexual Violence" and "Maybe Yesterday, But Not Tonight: A Black Homosexual Speaks to Governor Mike Pence." This column originally ran on February 7, 2016 at <http://www.thenewcivilrightsmovement.com/>.**

# Chicagoan volunteers in earthquake-ravaged Nepal

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Anthony Alfano spent six weeks this year in Nepal working with an international non-governmental organization (NGO), All Hands Volunteers, helping communities rebuild after the devastating earthquakes last April and May.

Both earthquakes registered greater than 7.0 magnitude and combined, more than 9,200 were killed.

"When the earthquakes hit, I remember wanting to commit to helping in more than just a monetary way," said Alfano, 25, who lives in Chicago's Uptown neighborhood. "[Local] obligations at the time would not allow me to leave the city, [but], at the end of 2015, I embarked on a few transitions in my professional career and personal life, which allowed me to make the trip over in the beginning of 2016."

All Hands worked with the Nepali government, and villages and communities to help rebuild transitional homes and schools, Alfano said days after returning to his native Illinois—he attended Huntley High School in the suburbs and graduated from DePaul University, where in 2011 he was the school's first openly gay student body president.

"This is a community and beneficiary (person/family) driven process," he said. "As such, each home is built to be earthquake-resilient, but only temporary. The idea is for the beneficiaries and communities to go through government sponsored training and to transition out of the structures and rebuild a more robust and fitting home for themselves and their families."

Alfano tagged the Nepali people as "some of the most peaceful I've ever met."

"You get a real sense that they care about being in the present moment and not worrying

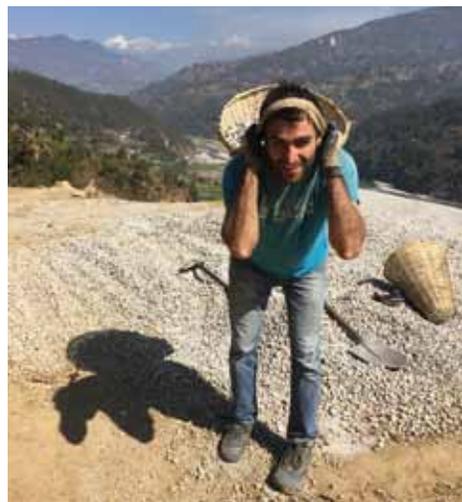
about life's travails that we are sometimes so deeply distracted with in the U.S.," he said. "I love trying [to] chat with them, [due to the language barrier,] sharing stories about our lives and the world in general."

"So many Nepali were impacted by the earthquakes, [so] you're hard-pressed for it not to come up in conversation. Whether or not they were directly affected, most know someone who has lost family members or friends, or had significant damage to their homes and villages. While it's quite sad to hear and see the struggles they are facing, it's also inspiring to witness the resiliency of those who keep moving forward despite the obstacles they face."

Alfano praised his fellow All Hands volunteers, who joined him from such places as the UK, France, Portugal, Australia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Japan, Italy, Israel, Oman, Brazil, and Australia. "Everyone seemed to get on very well



Anthony Alfano (above) volunteers in Nepal. Photos from Alfano



with each other, and we engaged on many aspects of our different countries and cultures," he said.

Alfano fundraised before he left and is still seeking donations through his [gofundme.com](https://www.gofundme.com/q6sezc)

page. "Donations will cover cost overruns as well as donations to the community in Nepal," he said.

To donate, go to <https://www.gofundme.com/q6sezc>.

## The Clarence Darrow Commemorative Committee

invites you to participate in its annual wreath-tossing and symposium commemorating Darrow

**Sunday, March 13, 2016**

10 a.m.-noon

*A tribute on the anniversary of Darrow's death*

Cook County Jail: Then and Now  
The Impact of Poverty and Racism  
Speaker: **Hanke Gratteau**



In 1902, Darrow wrote: [People] are in jail simply because they cannot avoid it on account of circumstances which are entirely beyond their control ..."

Today, many of the inmates of Cook County Jail are locked up because they cannot afford \$5000 bail, because they committed crimes of survival, because they are mentally ill.

Join us as Hanke Gratteau, director of the Cook County Sheriff's Justice Institute, describes today's jail population and efforts underway to shift the paradigm. Under Gratteau's leadership, the Institute mines data to expose the consequences of criminalizing homelessness, mental illness, drug dependency and the devastating effects of generational poverty. The goal: to enlighten policies and practices regarding incarceration and evictions.

Gratteau is a former award-winning journalist, including the 2002 Pulitzer Prize for Explanatory Journalism. She also served as Executive Director of the John Howard Association, a corrections watchdog group, and Vice-President for Public Affairs at Ounce of Prevention.

This year's event includes Clarence Darrow's own words from his 1902 address to prisoners in Cook County Jail, as read by Fawzia Mirza.

Fawzia Mirza is an actress and producer, for stage, TV and film. "I love to use performance, personal storytelling and comedy to break down stereotypes across a multiplicity of identities: race, religion, sexual orientation and gender and defy the concept of the 'model minority' often portrayed in the mainstream," she said.



Please join us at 10 a.m. just EAST of the Clarence Darrow Bridge in Jackson Park (the bridge is under construction) for the traditional tossing of flowers and brief speeches to commemorate Darrow; the Symposium begins at 10:45 a.m. in the Museum of Science and Industry: The Rosenwald Room (formerly the New Columbian Room). Beverages and rolls will be served. (The Darrow Bridge is behind the Museum of Science and Industry: Driving south on Lake Shore Drive, pass the light at 57th Drive and turn right at the next light [Science Drive]. You will come almost immediately to Columbia Drive. If you turn left and follow Columbia Drive there is parking near the bridge. You may park near the OmniMax Theater and walk south to the bridge. Parking is by the bridge.)

See [www.darrowbridge.org](http://www.darrowbridge.org) or call 773-387-2394



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 March and earn back your initiation fee. [Learn more at midtown.com](http://www.midtown.com)

# Illinois LGBTs backing Clinton

Hillary for Illinois announced that nearly 100 LGBT leaders have endorsed and will mobilize their networks to support Hillary Clinton ahead of the March 15 primary.

Hillary Clinton's plan to pass the Equality Act, promote LGBT-inclusive schools and family policies, and champion transgender equality highlights her commitment to supporting LGBT families in Illinois and across the country, the campaign stated.

The following LGBT leaders have endorsed Clinton:

- \* Julius Agers, Activist
- \* Amy Armstrong, Community Entertainer
- \* Alex Arroyo, Delegate, West Suburban Activist
- \* Austin Baidas, Former Illinois Associate Budget Director
- \* Nicole Bashor, Attorney
- \* Jim Bennett, Activist
- \* Dave Bentlin, Central Illinois Activist
- \* Jerry Dean Bowman, Springfield Leader
- \* Juan Calderon, Activist
- \* Evette Cardona, Activist
- \* Buff Carmichael, Springfield Leader
- \* Jamie Citron, Former National LGBT Vote Director, Obama for America
- \* Carol Boyd, Homeless Advocate
- \* Nadi Torres, Homeless Advocate
- \* Kevin Quinn Brady, Community Activist
- \* Gay Bruhn, Delegate, West Suburban, Activist
- \* Mario Camacho, Community Volunteer
- \* Casey Cameron, Southern Illinois Activist
- \* Lori Cannon, Founder, Open Hand Chicago
- \* Hon. James Cappleman, Chicago Alderman
- \* Hon. Kelly Cassidy, State Representative
- \* David Cerda, Actor
- \* Bernard Cherkasov, Community Leader
- \* Rocco Claps, Delegate, West Suburban, Community Activist
- \* Stevie Conlon, Activist
- \* Sue Skau, Activist
- \* Todd Connor, Business Leader
- \* Anthony D'Amato, Attorney
- \* Jack Delaney, Founder, Chicago House
- \* Meakose Edmond, Activist
- \* Xavier Esters, Human Rights Campaign, Board of Governors
- \* Pat Ewert, Activist
- \* C. Doug Ferguson, Activist
- \* Ashley Fowler, Human Rights Campaign, Board of Governors
- \* Dalila Fridi, Community Leader
- \* Rick Garcia, Delegate, North Side, Longtime Activist and Leader
- \* James Gavin, Arts and Community Leader
- \* Aidan Gilbert, Activist
- \* Michele Gilbert, Activist
- \* Grant Gochnauer, Technology Entrepreneur
- \* Charles Good, Delegate, Springfield
- \* Kevin Hauswirth, Business Leader
- \* Richard Hensel, Community Advocate
- \* John Hilgeman, Southern Illinois Activist
- \* Kim L. Hunt, Activist
- \* Art Johnston, Business Owner
- \* Christina Kahrl, Sports Journalist
- \* Anne Klingeberger, Human Rights Campaign, Board of Governors
- \* Robert Kohl, Developer
- \* Liz Lassner, Community Leader
- \* June LaTrobe, Activist
- \* Hon. Ray Lopez & Hugo Orejel, Delegate, Alderman, City of Chicago
- \* Kenny Martin-Ocasio, NGLTF, Co Chair Creating Change
- \* Anthony Martinez, Founding Director, Civil Rights Agenda
- \* Joey McDonald, Activist
- \* Theresa Ann McLaughlin, Activist
- \* Hon. Deb Mell, Alderman, City of Chicago
- \* Ellen Meyers, Long Time Activist
- \* Mary Morten, Long Time Activist
- \* Angeliq Munro, Entertainer, Activist

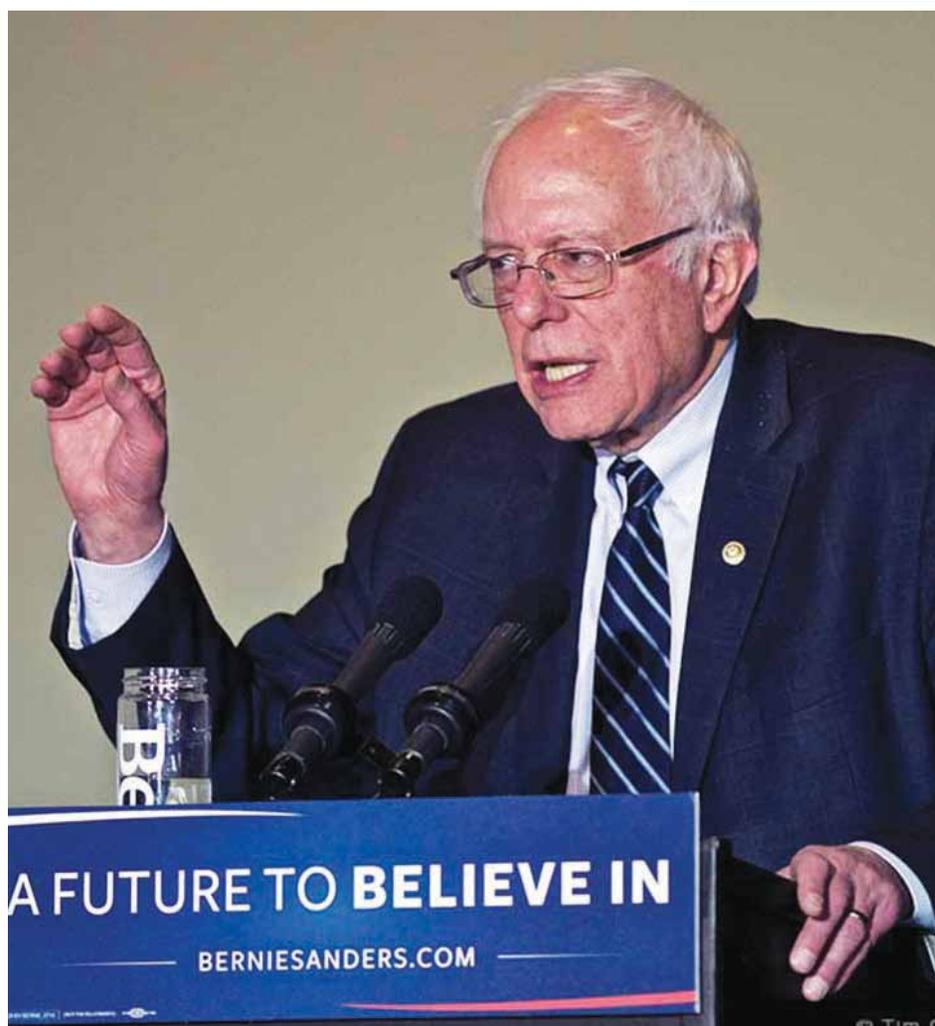
- \* Robert Newhart, Human Rights Campaign, Board of Directors
- \* Mona Noriega, Latina Activist
- \* Greg O'Neill, Business Leader
- \* Jeremy Pelegrin, Activist
- \* John Peller, Activist
- \* Aimee Pine, Activist
- \* Maggie Koehler, Activist
- \* Jonathan "Yoni" Pizer, Activist
- \* Brad Lippitz, Activist
- \* Victor Lim, Human Rights Campaign, Board of Governors



**Hillary Clinton.**

Photo by Tim Carroll

- \* Nancy Reiff, Activist
- \* Jackie Richter, Activist
- \* Jose Rivera, Activist
- \* Donna Rose, Activist
- \* Angelica Ross, Actress
- \* Jack Ryan, Activist
- \* Linda Ryherd-Schroeder, Central Illinois activist
- \* Victor Salvo, Long Time Activist
- \* Mark Saxenmeyer, Media Leader, Activist
- \* Malone Sizelove, Media Leader
- \* Hon. Debra Shore
- \* Stan Sloan, Executive Director, Chicago House
- \* John Smith, Blogger and Community Activist
- \* Richard Streetman, Community Activist
- \* Deb Taft, Human Rights Campaign, Board of Directors
- \* Lourdes Torres, Activist
- \* Betty Tsamis, Civil Rights Attorney
- \* Modesto Tico Valle, Activist
- \* Christy Webber, Business leader & Community Activist
- \* John West, Delegate, North Side, Community Activist
- \* Rodney Wilson, Southern Illinois Activist
- \* Will Wilson, Activist
- \* Mark Wojcik, Civil Rights Attorney and Educator



**Bernie Sanders.**

Photo by Tim Carroll

## Illinois LGBT Sanders endorser list released

Leading into the March 15 primary election in Illinois, volunteer organizers for supporting Bernie Sanders for president have announced an preliminary list of endorsers. Community members from across the area have come forward declaring their support for the U.S. senator from Vermont.

The following LGBT leaders and community members have endorsed Sanders:

- Ald. Carlos Rosa, Chicago's 35th Ward
- Robert Castillo, Community Activist
- Jan Rodolfo, National Nurses United Outreach Director
- Ed Mullen, Delegate, Attorney and Political Activist
- Emmanuel Garcia, Immigrant Rights Activist and LGBT Youth Mentor
- Lynette Aria Jackson, LGBT Scholar and Writer
- Michael Harrington, Delegate, Chicago Teachers Union's Director of Union Operations
- Ryne Poelker, Housing and Anti-Displacement Activist
- Sukie De La Croix, LGBT Historian, Novelist and Photographer
- Paul Law, Delegate, Lake City LGBT Activist
- Matty Zaradich, LGBT Political Activist
- Alex Garza, Labor Organizer and Worker Advocate

Latham Zearfoss, Artist and Organizer  
Staci Robinson, Social Worker and LGBT Housing Specialist

Natalie Alford, LGBT Musician and Political Activist

Blake Monroe, Sex-Worker Advocate  
Alex Fogue, LGBT Political Activist and Labor Advocate

Corrine Mina, LGBT Musician and Co-Founder of Join The Impact Chicago

Jackie Rose, LGBT Healthcare Worker  
Gerardo Calvillo, Housing and Anti-Displacement Activist

Bryan Bautista- Gutierrez, PrEP Health Professional

Gabriela Zapata-Alma, Social Worker and LGBT Substance Abuse Specialist

Andrew Sa, LGBT Singer and Songwriter  
Mallory O'Price, Social Worker and LGBT Therapist

Curtis Cassel, Designer

Nicholas Zahn, Gallery Owner/Curator  
Joshua Ryan Marburger, Chicago Teacher and Education Activist

Ryan McIntyre, President of Local 291 of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU)

### LPAC hosting star-studded benefit

LPAC—the national grassroots lesbian political action committee supporting pro-LGBTQ, pro-women's rights and progressive candidates—announced a first-of-its-kind benefit performance, "Levity & Justice for All," featuring top lesbian and queer comics and women's-rights champions.

"Levity" will take place Thursday, June 16, at the historic Town Hall in New York City.

Slated performers including Kate Clinton, Rosie O'Donnell, Billie Jean King, Lea DeLaria, Karen Williams, Cameron Esposito, Judy Gold, Marga Gomez, Jes Tom, Marsha Warfield, Rhea Butcher and others.

As the first national LGBTQ organization to endorse Hillary Clinton for president, LPAC plans to invest more than \$500,000—including the proceeds of the evening's event—to get out the vote.

For information on event sponsorship and benefit tickets, contact Patricia Evert at [patricia@teamlpac.com](mailto:patricia@teamlpac.com).

# Out judicial candidate wants to represent neighborhoods' interests

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Ed Underhill—who lives with his husband, Liam, and their dog, Finn, in Bucktown—is running against Anna Loftus and Carlos Claudio.

Underhill is a trial attorney with 30 years of experience, and feels that he's the best candidate to be judge of the Sixth Judicial Subcircuit of the Circuit Court of Cook County. He discussed his qualifications, hate crimes—and his writing.

**Windy City Times: What made you decide to run?**

Ed Underhill: I live in Bucktown, and I love our neighborhoods. I think our neighborhoods are hungry for good quality judges—but they need to be judges who reflect the values of the neighborhoods, and who understand the needs and wants of the neighborhoods. I know lots of judges who live in the suburbs—but what do they know about the city? They come from Arlington Heights, drive along the Kennedy and park under the Daley Center. So I thought I'd better find someone who could run for judge. I couldn't find anyone, so I thought I better do it myself.

**WCT: How does a judge, who's supposed to be impartial, represent the concerns of an area?**

EU: That's an important question. It's really a raised sensitivity. For example, what's gang conduct or activity? It's about recognizing a hate crime when it does or doesn't exist. I think, at some level, you have to come from the city to understand what's going on [there].

**WCT: What's your biggest strength and your biggest weakness in this race?**

EU: My biggest strength is that I genuinely know the neighborhoods that make up the Sixth Subcircuit. I've lived in Bucktown for 14 years and I've been in the city most of my life—I can't stress that enough; it makes a big difference.

I'd say my biggest weakness is that I haven't run for office before. It's a constant learning experience; it's been a lot more fun than I imagined.

**WCT: Fun? You're the first candidate I've**

**heard use that word in a while.**

EU: Oh, yeah. No one likes the part about raising money, but the other parts of it I really like. I enjoy knocking on doors and talking with people to find out what their concerns are. In that sense, I've learned so much more than I did when I started.

If you want to run for office, there's one thing I've learned: Democracy in Chicago starts with [literally] opening gates. You've got to reach out and learn how to unlatch those gates. [Smiles]

**WCT: On our questionnaire, you said there are areas under the law in which the LGBT demographic is deprived. Which ones do you mean?**

EU: I do think there are very few openly gay judges, and that has a negative impact on the application of law in Cook County. For example, [regarding] hate crimes; there's a more subtle impact in areas like probate law. Only recently has gay marriage become law; the number-one issue is probably that gay spouses are not treated like [others]. Gay marriage hasn't been around that long; we're going to see how issues play out over the next couple of years. There are things on the civil as well as the criminal side of the law.

**WCT: And there are legal issues regarding the transgender community as well—and it'll be interesting to see how those unfold.**

EU: Yes. It seems to me, from what I've read, that Illinois is responding relatively well to [transgender] issues. There are things happening with schools. It'll be interesting to see how courts handle legal issues.

I participate in a program called From the Courtroom to the Classroom that introduces kids to constitutional rights. One of the points that I stress to them is that your constitutional rights have to be fought for all the time; they're not to be taken for granted. Some of the most important cases ever involve holding back rights. If you don't actively advance your constitutional rights, they'll fall back. You can already see that some of the presidential candidates would love to see gay rights somewhat limited.

**WCT: Also on the questionnaire, you wrote**



Ed Underhill.  
Photo from campaign team

**that it's necessary to, essentially, "come out every day."**

EU: Yes; it's important that there are gay leaders in every community—whether it's the legal community, the arts community or any other. We cannot fall back. We have to be advocates for gay rights and for rights of all minorities. Lawyers, better than anyone else, can understand that rights are not guaranteed.

**WCT: Do you believe a judge can also be an activist?**

EU: I do—but not while the judge is on the bench. While on the bench, the judge must be objective in applying the law. When you're not on the bench, though, there are a lot of things a judge can do to advance social justice.

**WCT: You're also a writer as well as an attorney. What are you working on right now?**

EU: Right now, I'm working on a book called Abraham Lincoln: Chicago Lawyer. A lot of people don't know that Abraham Lincoln's most important cases were tried in Chicago. The primary reason people don't know is because Chicago burned to the ground in 1871—and the records of his cases burned as well.

For more information, see [EdUnderhillForJudge.com](http://EdUnderhillForJudge.com).

## Steinem at Personal PAC luncheon

Personal PAC announced that this year's guest speaker at its Annual Awards Luncheon will be Gloria Steinem.

The luncheon will be held at 12 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 13, at the Hilton Chicago, 720 S. Michigan Ave.

Steinem is a writer, lecturer, political activist and feminist organizer. In 1972, she co-founded Ms. magazine, and remained one of its editors for 15 years. Her books include the best-sellers Revolution from Within: A Book of Self-Esteem, Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions and Moving Beyond Words.

In 2014, she received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Barack Obama. Her autobiography, My Life on the Road, was published in 2015.

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## ELECTIONS 2016

# Christian Mitchell on why he's the 'walk the walk' choice in the 26th

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

Aiming for his third term as House Representative for the 26th District, Christian Mitchell has a roll call of endorsements including Equality Illinois, U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, Rep. Greg Harris, Rep. Kelly Cassidy, Attorney General Lisa Madigan and Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle behind him.

Taking on Gov. Rauner is a quintessential element of Mitchell's platform. It is a battle that, according to the Friends of Christian Mitchell campaign, has been waged in multiple arenas, whether on the House floor voting against Rauner 95 percent of the time and 100 percent when it comes to overriding his vetoes or organizing mass public campaigns against Rauner's refusal to pass a budget.

Once again, Mitchell faces Jay Travis after winning a close race against the activist and civic organizer in 2014. Travis has asserted that Mitchell does not "walk the walk" by, among other things, "not listening to his constituents" or speaking out "in a forthright way" against the expiration of a 2011 temporary individual and corporate income tax increase shortly before Rauner took office.

**Windy City Times: Jay Travis has called the budget impasse in Springfield "indefensible" and that you are not walking the walk as a representative of the 26th District. What's your response?**

Christian Mitchell: Obviously, the impasse has been terrible for folks across the spectrum. I know that we've lost some homeless services for LGBT youth, I know that, for example, the AIDS Foundation of Chicago as well as other folks providing services have been affected and it will continue to affect LGBT communities of color. Restoring some of that funding is going to make a big difference.

In every way that folks have been affected by this impasse, whether that is people who need grants to go to college (funding that we were able to restore today which I was proud to be able to vote for) as well as social services which we also voted to restore today, I have been walking the walk on from the moment I got to Springfield. The lack of will on the Republican side of the aisle for actually solving the state budget problems because they are scared of the governor's \$20-million campaign fund, which he is using to hold them in line and advocate for his frightening agenda which would slash the standard of living of working people, is really the problem.



Christian Mitchell.  
Photo from Mitchell

What we are doing as a caucus is to make sure we fund the services we critically need right now while also making sure that we're presenting an alternative plan—alternative sources of revenue like asking the wealthy to pay their fair share and closing loopholes. I advocated for funding infrastructure, education and services that we all care about. I think Ms. Travis is trying to distract from her own troubled record and habit of misusing public resources.

**WCT: In terms of LGBT issues, what lies ahead for yourself and your colleagues to address, post-marriage equality?**

CM: I was extraordinarily proud to be the

first African American cosponsors on marriage equality. It was one of the pinnacle moments of my career to see that bill passed and understanding what that means in terms of civil rights for my LGBT brothers and sisters. But, as I have also noted, LGBT folks come in all shapes, all sizes, all income levels and all colors.

If you are a Black LGBT youth living in my district right now and you rely on a grant to go to college, if you are an LGBT senior who relies on in-home care so that you can stay in your home and be independent or if you are an LGBT parent who has adopted a child and you want to make sure that child has a safe place to play and be cared for while you're at work, you've been affected by this budget impasse.

I hear a lot about homeless LGBT youth as well as the need for supportive services for the community. LGBT folks are affected by all of the things that are happening in our state right now and I think all of our issues are LGBT issues. They all roll together. Seeing our LGBT brothers and sisters as part of a broader community is important, not just politically but in terms of social capital.

**WCT: The 26th is extremely diverse. The remaining GOP candidates for president have come down hard on undocumented immigrants. What can be done to safeguard the undocumented people in the state should a Republican prevail in November?**

CM: I know that at the Cook County level, they've been very good at standing up to ICE [Immigration Customs Enforcement] and making sure our system is not being used in a way that's going to be harmful to immigrant families. I look forward to supporting those efforts and taking action in a way that makes sure we are not breaking up families while still complying with federal law. I think immigration speaks to where the [Republican] party is going so I understand the fear. I would look forward to working with those communities on what sort of legislation can be passed to make sure we are keeping families together.

**WCT: In 2014, the election was a close call. Tell the voters of the 26th why they should stick with you again this year.**

CM: A choice between Jay and myself is a choice between rhetoric and results. For example, I have been a leading voice on changing education funding formulae in Springfield—something that my opponent and her political backers have opposed. I am the only candidate in this race with a plan to correct the underfunding of Chicago Public Schools.

The difference between myself and my opponent is that in every case, while she might say the right thing, I have either passed a bill to that effect that has made a measurable difference in the lives of my constituents or I have a plan to do so for which I am building concrete support. So if you are looking for someone who is not just going to talk the talk in Springfield but get it done, then I'm your guy.

**For more information about Christian Mitchell, visit: <http://new.friendsofchristianmitchell.com>.**

## Leon Panetta at awards dinner March 17

Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center will host its 2016 Humanitarian Awards Dinner on Thursday, March 17 at the Hyatt Regency Chicago, 151 E. Wacker Dr.

The evening's keynote speaker will be former U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta in conversation with J. B. Pritzker regarding current events, anti-Semitism, genocide and global politics. In addition, The museum will honor Harvey L. Miller with the Survivor Legacy Award and Terry Duffy with the Humanitarian Award.

Learn more at [www.illinoisholocaustmuseum.org](http://www.illinoisholocaustmuseum.org).



Leon Panetta.  
Photo from Illinois Holocaust Museum

## HRC report spotlights anti-trans legislation

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) has issued a report on the flurry of anti-transgender measures that states have already filed in 2016.

According to the report, "Anti-Transgender Legislation Spreads Nationwide, Bills Targeting Transgender Children Surge," 21 anti-trans bills were considered in 2015; already, 44 have been filed (in 16 states) this year. The 44 have been divided into: 29 bathroom/locker room/sports, two health (including prisoner health care), three anti-trans marriage, three discrimination carveout, two birth certificate, and five FADAs (First Amendment Defense Act items).

Twenty-three of the 44 anti-transgender bills filed this year are leveled at transgender children in schools and playing school sports.

The report goes on to state that, overall, "a stunning 175+ anti-LGBT bills have been filed so far this year in 32 states."

The report is at <http://hrc-assets.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/files/assets/resources/HRC-Anti-Trans-Issue-Brief-FINAL-REV2.pdf>.

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# Jay Travis aims to unseat Mitchell in the 26th

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

With a list of endorsements from groups such as the Chicago Teachers Union, the Illinois Federation of Public Employees, Citizen Action/Illinois and United Working Families, among others, a March 15 rematch is on for Democratic candidate Jhatayn “Jay” Travis to unseat 26th District House Rep. Christian Mitchell. She insisted that her 2014 loss was due to voter disenfranchisement at polling places.

Her 2016 platform is built around electing “people who say what they mean and mean what they say.” To that end, in a December 2015 Hyde Park Herald editorial she accused Mitchell of being “missing in action” or voting “dead wrong on issues of critical concern to our residents.”

Travis spoke with Windy City Times about issues affecting the LGBT community and how its members stand to be affected through her list of campaign pledges whether in education, public safety, jobs and economic fairness, gender equality or protecting the most vulnerable.

**Windy City Times: You have said that the budget crisis in Springfield is driven by a “billionaire boys’ club of donors and their lobbyists who leverage for their interests over those of ordinary Illinois residents.” What’s your solution?**

Jay Travis: First and foremost, the budget impasse is indefensible. It’s held vital services to some of the most vulnerable folks throughout the state hostage to an agenda which seeks to undermine the rights of working people. In January of 2015, Rep. Mitchell and his colleagues in the legislature had an opportunity to say ‘let’s not allow this temporary tax increase to roll back when we know that a governor with an austerity agenda is moving into office.’ If Rep. Mitchell cared deeply about protecting public services, he would have spoken out in a forthright way about not allowing that tax increase to expire. It’s also important to note that Rep. Mitchell shares Gov. Rauner’s education agenda point-by-point. We need to close corporate loopholes so that corporations pay their fair share as well. HB 4300 is a step in the right direction which could generate some of the money we need to address the challenges we’re facing in terms of state funding.

**WCT: You have accused Rep. Mitchell of not “walking the walk.” So what does that look like to you?**

JT: I think a good legislator is responsible to listening to their constituents. It’s been a weakness of Rep. Mitchell. The first step is to hear the voices of the people on a regular basis and take action on the issues those folks care about. That sense of accountability to people is a core part of my platform. I will be responsive to the needs of people making sure I hear what they are and taking action on them.

**WCT: How are the problems LGBT kids still face in school and the cycle of abuses they are subjected to in the criminal justice system to be addressed?**

JT: There needs to be more support for services for LGBT youth in our schools. Often young LGBT people are ostracized by their families and sometimes the only support they may have is what they could receive in schools. In terms of the criminal-justice system, we need to strengthen laws that protect folks from crimes such as sexual assault within the system and crimes in general that are committed against people based on their sexual orientation. There is a great deal of work to be done in the criminal justice system but also to prevent people



Jay Travis.  
Photo from Travis

from entering [it] in the first place—support for LGBTQ folks in schools and strengthening laws that prevent discrimination in terms of employment.

**WCT: Illinois has employment nondiscrimination statutes on the books but, particularly in the cases of transgender individuals of color, people can’t even get a job. Employers are under no obligation to explain why they choose not to hire someone and often trans people are turned away. How do you address that?**

JT: The first step is to sit down with people who have been impacted by this problem, then to figure out what kind of policy changes we need to make to address the issue and, more importantly, when we pass the policy what the steps are to implementation that we can take to make sure the issue is effectively addressed.

You can pass a law that says “don’t discriminate” but if people are still doing it, that gets into how these laws are being implemented. The policy process needs to be participatory and ongoing. If we pass legislation that is not getting the job done, we need to strengthen that legislation and implement it in a way that makes sure people aren’t being discriminated against.

**WCT: But the feeling in Springfield seems to be that LGBT issues were all solved with marriage equality. So what are the most important problems facing the LGBT community that you believe must still be addressed and how do you ensure legislation or budget initiatives will not be stymied by a governor who has appointed some outspoken anti-LGBT individuals?**

JT: Support for homeless LGBTQ youth is a critical issue. As someone who has come out of youth organizing, I’ve had a sense of how young people who have the potential to be great leaders have been affected by just the trauma that they experience in coming out and in some cases not being embraced by families and loved ones and ending up on the street. We need to make sure that we get more funding and support for homeless services for LGBTQ youth. In terms of Gov. Rauner, we are going to have really push and build the kind of coalitions we need to move him on a whole host of issues. We can’t let legislators say ‘We passed marriage equality so now we’re off the hook in terms of addressing other critical issues that affect the LGBT community.’

**For more information about Jay Travis, visit: <http://jayfor26.nationbuilder.com>.**



Angelica Ross.  
Photo by Matt Simonette

## Trans activists unite for Clinton

Trans persons and their allies are joining together to campaign for Hillary Clinton, officials from the national group, to be known as Trans United for Hillary, announced Feb. 25.

According to a statement, “During the course of the 2016 election, Trans United for Hillary will provide volunteer opportunities, host events, and release resources for transgender people and their allies to show support for Hillary Clinton.

“...Over the last seven years, the Obama Administration has made significant progress on transgender rights. As secretary of state, Hillary played an integral role in some of the most important advancements for transgender people during President Obama’s first term. From reforming policies related to passports for transgender people to incorporating LGBT rights into U.S. foreign policy, Hillary has a record of results on transgender equality. This election, Hillary has outlined the most detailed plan for transgender equality ever released by a presidential candidate and has the experience and skills necessary to build on the progress of the last decade.”

Chicagoan Angelica Ross is among those on the group’s steering committee. For more information, see [TransUnitedforHillary.org](http://TransUnitedforHillary.org).

## EEOC files first suits for gay employees

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has filed its first lawsuits against companies for allegedly discriminating against gay and lesbian workers.

In the first suit, the EEOC alleges Pennsylvania-based Scott Medical Health Center discriminated against a gay employee. A separate lawsuit accuses Maryland pallet manufacturer IFCO Systems of discriminating against a lesbian worker.

In the Scott case, the EEOC has claimed a gay male employee suffered repeated harassment over his sexual orientation, including his manager calling him anti-gay epithets. After the worker complained, he decided to resign.

The IFCO suit alleges that the lesbian employee suffered discriminatory abuse from a supervisor.

The EEOC itself was formed in 1965, and itself has more than 2,500 employees.

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## ELECTIONS 2016

# Juliana Stratton on resolving conflict, Springfield stalemate

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

The failure of lawmakers in Springfield to reach an accord with Gov. Bruce Rauner has had a devastating impact on everything from grants for low-income students looking for a college education to the operating income of advocacy organizations and nonprofits whose work in fields such as HIV prevention and education or services for the homeless has been jeopardized by cuts in staffing and services and, in some cases, closure.

But as two Democrats square off in a race for the 5th House District that is shaping up to be one of the most expensive in Illinois history, such problems seem to exist outside of a surreal bubble that took shape when Rep. Ken Dunkin (D-Chicago) broke with House Speaker Michael Madigan, leading to a loss in the Democratic supermajority needed to drain the ink from Rauner's veto pen.

This has led to mailers asserting that Dunkin has received donations from Rauner and the Tea Party which also feature Dunkin's mugshot calling him "a deadbeat dad" who was "found guilty of violent and menacing behavior towards women."

Dunkin has characterized his challenger Juliana Stratton as a Madigan pawn. Stratton has accused the seven-term representative of putting politics over people and selling out the families of his district.

Stratton recently talked with Windy City Times about the fights for full equality and against Rauner and how she plans to leverage more than 20 years of experience in mediation and conflict resolution as ammunition in both trenches.

**Windy City Times: In your opinion, what are the consequences of the budget impasse for the people in the 5th?**

Juliana Stratton: Since I officially started my campaign, I've been walking door to door, talking to thousands of people in this district and the real impact of this budget is not just the news headlines. I'm hearing from people who are really struggling because of the cuts to services that have resulted from the failure of our governor in particular to get a budget passed: social services that are a lifeline to many residents just to survive on a day-to-day basis, layoffs that have taken place in a number of organizations that serve the community.

There's a general sense of anxiety for people who serve in vulnerable communities of not knowing when they will be able to carry on

the work they have been doing for so many years. The effects have been devastating, quite frankly.

**WCT: Rep. Dunkin has talked about ethics reform. But isn't the Springfield stalemate an ethical problem—one that has further diminished public respect for their elected officials?**

JS: This is really unfortunate in light of a national effort to disenfranchise communities of color, in particular. There are so many people who are disengaging because they don't believe that [legislators] are putting their interests at the forefront. There were a couple of key votes that Rep. Dunkin missed as a result of his newly formed alliance with Gov. Rauner and I'm hearing from people on a daily basis on how those missed votes have impacted their families—seniors who have been kicked off important medical care, struggling and working families who have been kicked off child care.

When someone like my opponent does not vote in the best interest of constituents, it causes people to lose faith in the system. With the campaign financing of this race in particular, when you see a half-million dollars coming from Republican allies of the governor to support my opponent, it leads to the conclusion that it's going to impact his ability to successfully advocate for the best interests of the people in this district.

**WCT: And a number of those organizations impacted by the budget problems serve homeless youth. Until there is an agreement in Springfield, how do you address those issues?**

JS: When we see a governor who is willing to cut services to homeless youth, we know it will have a severe impact on [those who are] LGBT. I can always serve in a role I've had my entire career as an advocate for youth and then be able to identify how they are disproportionately impacted by the kinds of cuts that Gov. Rauner has been willing to propose—cuts to shelters, to services. Based on my background in criminal and juvenile justice reform, I can tie what happens when we cut services to homeless youth to how that increases the potential for a young person to then be connected to the juvenile justice system.

**WCT: You've worked with Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle on justice reform. What does restorative justice for LGBT people look like?**

JS: When we talk about the need for reform in the [criminal justice] system, we can't just



Juliana Stratton.  
Photo from Stratton

look at it on the back end. People talk about reentry. We have to talk about no entry. That means making sure young people have the resources and services to live, survive, have their needs met and be supported by the communities around them. Most of the people in the Cook County Jail are there awaiting trial. So a determination on who should stay should be based on some sort of validated risk assessment tool.

What we have found is that there are many people who remain in the jail because they cannot afford to post the bond amount that has been given to them. Because it is a very diverse district, there are many people [in the 5th] who can pull out a credit card or a check and they're out. There are many other people charged with the exact same offense who can't come up with the amount. It makes me think

about how many people we have who identify as LGBT are in the jail. We need to do a better job of collecting that data.

**WCT: Similarly, violence against transgender people has been difficult to track. In many ways, it is fueled by anti-transgender legislation including one introduced in the Illinois House earlier this year. How do you address that violence and the perceptions which lead to anti-transgender legislation?**

JS: As we think about the implications of any legislation that is passed, we need to make sure that we collect data so we can assess the impact on the LGBT community. We need to make sure that services families, communities and young people remain intact.

When communities don't feel supported we start to see an increase in violence. When we think about any act of violence committed against an individual it has an impact on the entire community. How do we make sure that conversation comes into play and includes the LGBT community and the kind of harm that is being done to all of us when any act of violence occurs?

**WCT: What are the problems in the 5th District you believe Rep. Dunkin is not addressing and how will you address them?**

JS: When I've been talking to residents they've said that they have not felt that he's been present and that he's not heard their concerns. He's not communicated well in terms of what is happening in Springfield and he's not made himself as available for them to give him feedback on what kind of issues he should be focused on. So I will keep those lines of communication there and available.

Rep. Dunkin has missed some key votes that have helped Governor Rauner push his agenda. I will be there when I'm supposed to be there. I will make the kind of votes that put the needs and interests of the residents of this district at the forefront. As the governor continues his destructive agenda, there are many things we can't do if they are going to negatively impact the residents. You can work in a bipartisan way or cooperate and negotiate if you don't sacrifice what's best for the people you were elected to represent. That's the kind of leadership that I hope to provide for this district.

**Note:** Windy City Times reached out on multiple occasions to Dunkin's office. While acknowledged by staffers, no interview was scheduled.

**For more information about Juliana Stratton's campaign, visit: <http://www.juliana-stratton.com>.**

## Supreme Court reverses adoption ruling

The U.S. Supreme Court, on March 7, unanimously reversed an Alabama court's refusal to recognize a same-sex adoption.

The justices upheld a challenge brought by an Alabama lesbian, "V.L.," after her state's highest court refused to recognize the adoption she and her former partner were granted in Georgia.

V.L., as she is identified in court papers, filed suit against former partner E.L., who gave birth to three children while the couple were together. To win adoption rights for V.L., they established temporary residency in Georgia.

"Any attempt to deny legal rights to our families is reprehensible, and this ruling establishes that bias and discrimination cannot be allowed to undermine the bond between LGBT parents and their children," said Human Rights Campaign Legal Director Sarah Warbelow in a statement. "The nation's highest court today ruled in the best interests of these children, setting a firm precedent for others across our nation. These children have two parents, and should have the security that comes with legal recognition."

## Governor vetoes anti-trans bill; House can't override it

On March 1, Republican South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard vetoed HB 1008, a bill that would have restricted transgender students' use of restrooms, locker rooms and other gender-specific facilities in public schools.

LGBT groups, businesses and child-advocacy organizations as well as celebrities such as Laverne Cox and Caitlyn Jenner had all called on Daugaard to veto the bill.

"If and when these rare situations arise, I believe local school officials are best positioned to address them," Daugaard wrote in a letter to lawmakers, according to The New York Times. "Instead of encouraging local solutions, this bill broadly regulates in a manner that invites conflict and litigation, diverting energy and resources from the education of the children of this state."

On March 3, the South Dakota House of Representatives failed to override the veto. Two-thirds of the Republican-controlled House had to vote in favor of the bill; the vote turned out to be 36-29.

Pro-LGBT organizations lauded the governor's veto.

It would have been the first law of its kind in the United States. Several other states are considering similar measures.

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# in the LIFE

**Steve Figg**

TEXT BY ROSS FORMAN

PHOTOS COURTESY OF FIGG

- **Age**  
49
- **Orientation**  
Gay
- **Relationship status**  
Single
- **Neighborhood**  
Printers Row, Chicago
- **Hobbies**  
"Running for Beer with the Hash House Harriers. I also enjoy working in film, theater and stand-up comedy."
- **Favorite TV show**  
The Blacklist
- **Favorite movie**  
Auntie Mame
- **Favorite pro athlete**  
Australian triathlete Craig "Crowie" Alexander
- **Challenges**  
"One of the hardest obstacles I've overcome in life was adjusting to a new life in Virginia after my mother passed away and I was adopted by my aunt and uncle."
- **Little-known fact**  
"I was adopted by my aunt and uncle when I was 8 years old."



Steve Figg has been involved in sports since he was 9, first playing basketball, soccer, and competing in track.

But his passion was swimming and diving—and that's where he found much success.

In high school, Figg competed in swimming, diving, and on the track team. He then, from 1985-87, was a scholarship diver at James Madison University—and in '87, he was the school's first diver in 10 years to qualify for the Eastern Intercollegiate Swimming/Diving Championships.

Decades later, Figg participated in the 2011 Ironman Wisconsin Triathlon, which he tagged as, "My most challenging sporting event."

Most recently, Figg competed in the 2016 Glenbrook Aquatics Diving Invite, and he won first place on the one-meter and three-meter springboard.

Figg's competition slate for 2016 includes the Windy City Diving Invitational in April; the Illinois State Masters Swimming Championships in April; the U.S. Masters Diving Spring Nationals in Orlando, Florida, in May; the U.S. Master Diving Summer Nationals in Greensboro, North Carolina; and more.

"I work as a marathon and swim coach for a variety of groups, including FFC TriMonster, Live Grit, LifeTime Athletic, Team To End AIDS

and Team Bright Pink," Figg said. "I joined the TriMonster triathlon team back in 2011 and started coaching in 2014. For Live Grit, I became involved with their First Timers triathlon program in 2015 which coaches athletes through their first Chicago Triathlon."

Figg competed in the 2014 Gay Games in swimming, diving and triathlon events. "My best results were: Men's 1-meter springboard (silver medal), men's three-meter springboard (silver), men's 400 meter freestyle relay (bronze medal and national top 10 time)."

Plus, he was awarded the men's swimming Spirit Award along with Le'Mikas Lavender.

"After (the) Gay Games, I wanted to continue on with the sport, but there is no Masters diving team in Chicago, so I contacted the head coach and inquired about practicing with Windy City Diving (WCD), which is a nationally-ranked age-group (18 & under) diving team based out of the University of Illinois-Chicago," Figg said. "I practiced with the WCD team through my first Masters Diving Nationals in May 2015, and then joined the WCD team."

Figg also is a volunteer for the Center on Halsted and a participant in the annual Santa Speedo Run. In addition, he serves as co-social chair for the Chicago Smelts swim team.



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# viewpoints



**Dana  
RUDOLPH**

## Lesbian mom of color played key part in wave discovery

The discovery of gravitational waves—predicted but not seen by Albert Einstein—made headlines in early February. One of the key members of the team that found them is not only a brilliant scientist, but also a lesbian mom of color.

Dr. Nergis Mavalvala, the Curtis and Kathleen Marble Professor of Astrophysics at MIT, has worked on detectors for the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) for 25 years. She explains on her website ([emvogil-3.mit.edu/~nergis/](http://emvogil-3.mit.edu/~nergis/)), “The LIGO interferometers are 2.5 mile long instruments that use laser beams to precisely measure the positions of mirrors separated by long distances. These measurements can tell us if a gravitational wave is passing by.”

What’s the big deal about gravitational waves? The Pakistani-born Mavalvala writes, “Directly detecting gravitational waves will

open a new window to further our understanding of Universe. Gravitational waves will tell us about Black Holes that gobble up light, but radiate gravitational waves, and about the earliest moments after the Big Bang, when light could not escape the birth throes of the Universe.” They were predicted by Einstein’s general theory of relativity, but not detected until now.

In 2010, Mavalvala won a MacArthur Fellowship “genius grant” for her “fundamental contributions to physics at the intersection of optics, condensed matter, and quantum mechanics.” She told Science magazine in 2012 that her outsider status as an “out, queer person of color” has its advantages: “You are less constrained by the rules.”

Some of the rules she’s trying to work around are the rules of the universe itself. “Quantum mechanics limits the performance of the LIGO detectors,” she tells us. “Our goal is to find ways to get around these quantum limits.”

In a keynote speech Mavalvala gave at the 2012 Out to Innovate conference held by the National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals (NOGLSTP), she spoke about being “a little gender bending” while growing up in the “traditional society” of Pakistan. Her family supported what they saw was her tomboyism, but had no sense that she was “a baby dyke in the making.”

After an undergraduate degree in astronomy and physics from Wellesley College, she started graduate school at MIT, where she fell in love



**Dr. Nergis  
Mavalvala.**  
Image from the MacArthur Foundation

with a woman for the first time. “I had very little trouble coming out,” she related. Because she’d seen that women, typically outsiders in science, were treated well in her group, she was more willing to take the “calculated risk” of coming out there as well. Her partner simply started showing up in the lab where Mavalvala was working 16 to 18 hours a day. “Organically, I sort of just came of age as a lesbian in this group,” Mavalvala said.

She advised her audience to “celebrate being different. We’re all different not just because we’re queer and we’re nerds, but we’re different in many other ways, too. ... We all should surround ourselves by [sic] people who can embrace our differences.”

Additionally, she urged them to “Take risks. Cause it’s often really worth it.”

Mavalvala and her partner are now raising their 8-year-old child.

# letters

## Ken folk

Dear Editor,

What was on their minds?

What was on the minds of Equality Illinois Political Action Committee (EI PAC) members when they decided not to endorse Illinois state Rep. Ken Dunkin?

It’s my opinion that it was an organization’s cowardly act, especially in light of Dunkin’s progressive legislative record, and particularly in light of his legislative support on LGBTQ issues. Dunkin has supported all of the LGBTQ legislation that [Speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives] Mike Madigan has allowed out of “committee” and on the Illinois General Assembly floor for “consideration.”

For example, Dunkin supported the last time LGBTQ-specific legislation that “hit” the House floor; he voted for state Rep. Kelly Cassidy’s HB 217. That vote legislatively helped save our LGBTQ youth from suicidal behavior, depression, anxiety, drug use and risky sexual behavior and the psychological trauma associated with conversion therapy!

Did EI PAC endorsement committee members conveniently forget that it was Dunkin—as the legislative Black Caucus “Chamber” leader—who not only stood with US but spoke in support of marriage equality on the General Assembly’s House chamber floor? Dunkin was one of the few African-American legislators who stood up and publicly urged others to vote in support of marriage equality before the vote was taken on the House floor.

Apparently, EI PAC’s endorsing committee membership still isn’t culturally diverse enough to understand how its political inaction would be perceived, and best described by what writer Max Gordon refers to as the “Cult of Whiteness” [in a Windy City Times series]. Only this time, it reared its ugly head in the endorsement process of EI PAC!

Although disappointed, I’m not surprised by

the apparent political abandonment of Dunkin by EI PAC. Not endorsing Dunkin signals a lack of inclusiveness, fairness and respect to the same socially conservative, homophobic, faith-based community leaders who publicly promised to defeat Dunkin if he supported LGBTQ legislation.

Two years and three months later, the EI PAC endorsing committee isn’t politically astute enough to ask itself and others why Dunkin is being solely signaled out for political punishment by Democratic Party loyalists.

Weren’t there two other Democrats who also didn’t vote to overturn the governor’s veto of the public sector union collective bargaining rights? Why aren’t either Illinois State Rep. Jack Franks or Illinois state Rep. Scott Drury facing challenges within their Democratic primaries? Why isn’t either of them involved in a Democratic primary challenge? Why hasn’t either being publicly vilified or bullied by members of their own party on the House floor?

What was on the minds of EI PAC endorsement committee? Clearly, NOTHING!

Michael O’Connor  
Chicago

## Cruz control

Dear Editor:

It is becoming likely that the Republican nominee for president will be either Donald Trump or Ted Cruz.

While Trump has rightly, in my opinion, been brought to task for his tepid disavowal of David Duke, former grand wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, there has been near silence regarding Cruz’s warm embrace of the hatred of Phil Robertson of Duck Dynasty fame. Introducing Cruz the day before the Iowa caucuses, Robertson urged the genocide of homosexuals: “We must rid the Earth of them.” Cruz responded by stating that Robertson “is an unapologetic voice of truth.”

Since then, Robertson has been an integral part of the Cruz campaign, especially in South Carolina and Louisiana. Cruz has said that, if elected, he would seriously consider appointing Robertson to be U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

It is imperative that voters be informed regarding the Cruz/Robertson alliance. Not only does the Chicago Tribune not publish letters containing such information, it instead publishes letters that support Cruz. This past week Michael Imhof of Aurora wrote that Cruz fights for “moral values” and “is an intelligent leader with courage and principles.” If it is courageous, moral, and right to “rid the earth” of all homosexuals, then, clearly, the wrong side won World War Two.

Every American should be appalled at Cruz’s endorsement of Robertson’s hatred. Have we learned nothing from the 20th century? A candidate who endorses genocide of any kind, shape, form or flavor should be prima facie rejected. Based on the results in Iowa, Maine, Kansas, Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas, however, it is clear that pink triangles never go out of fashion.

The Republican Party of Illinois and Gov. Bruce Rauner should be ashamed that Cruz will be featured at the upcoming gala to be held in Chicago in the near-future.

Some may feel that Cruz has little chance of becoming president even if he were to secure the Republican nomination. A lot can happen, however, between now and November.

Ted Cruz must NOT under any circumstances be the Republican nominee. His enthusiastic embrace of Robertson and the hatred and ugliness that Robertson stands for must be publicized far and wide, repeatedly. This must not stand. Albeit tepidly, Trump has disavowed David Duke. With enthusiasm, Cruz has embraced Robertson. No more needs be said.

Sincerely yours,  
Joe English  
Chicago

# WINDY CITY TIMES

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# WINDY CITY TIMES

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34

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33

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## 'Hush' now

23

Secrets are behind the dance production Hush. See below

Photo by RJ Muna

### DANCIN' FEATS

## Secret stories fuel Joe Goode's 'Hush'

BY LAUREN WARNECKE

First developed in 2013, "Hush" is an evening-length dance theater work by Joe Goode, on tour this week at the Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago. Goode, a writer and choreographer, has long been interested in multiple mediums, and Hush uses text, requiring his dancers to vocalize and physicalize his narrative in equal proportions. Inspiration and source material for the work came from a series of interviews; though the setting of six characters in a run-down bar is fictional, the stories came from real people.

"I let that be the text for the piece," said Goode in a phone interview with Windy City Times. "I interviewed people about moments

in their lives where they were disappointed in themselves, or they had failed. Something happened, and life took a turn they weren't prepared for." Talking with young college students, mostly LGBTQ millennials in their late teens and 20s, Goode was surprised at how forthcoming interviewees were about their experiences on campus and elsewhere, particularly regarding identity and feelings of belonging.

According to Goode, the experiences of LGBT young adults has changed over the last several decades, though maybe not by as much as one might hope. "I was a gay teenager in Virginia," said Goode. "I was the only queer kid that existed. I felt that perhaps there was something deeply wrong with me. That wasn't quite the story that I was hearing." Goode went on to

explain that young LGBT people have more agency, but still face feelings of alienation and isolation despite increased visibility of gay people in society.

"The piece is about more than that—more than the struggle of queer people—but it's definitely in there," said Goode. He spoke with female identifying college students who have grave concerns over their sexual safety and heightened anxiety about the realities of sexual assault and other crimes toward cys and transgender women on college campuses. "I spoke with highly educated, world-travelled women really feeling unsafe crossing the street," said Goode, saying that women felt continually "under the gaze," and several had been victims of sexual aggression or assault.

By speaking with these young people, Goode, who came of age during the 1960s and '70s, had forgotten what it felt like to feel unsure about the future. "Something important to them was friends—a sense of community. They find safety within a network of friends," he said, which perhaps contributed to their willingness to talk. By sharing their experiences, a long distance support network is woven into the fabric of Hush. Though the stories' owners are anonymous, the "who" is less important than the "what."

Most of the things Goode heard weren't surprising. The prevalence of sexual aggression toward women, the alienation and feelings of isolation among LGBT people are, sadly, supported by statistics. What surprised him was that, when asked, people were very forthcoming. Goode felt that these individuals wanted to share their stories in order to be of some assistance to others; having had few role models with whom they could identify, they perhaps saw and opportunity to be useful to someone who might be having a similar experience. These stories are not secrets because the people who own them are unwilling to tell, but because nobody had bothered to ask until now.

In addition to text, acting and dancing, Hush features a live Foley artist, which enhances the action onstage through exaggerated sound effects, particularly in the characters' most vulnerable moments. "These are the stories that we don't tell," said Goode, "about areas of our lives that we don't feel comfortable discussing. I wanted to break that apart. The moments that people are revealing those stories are super amplified." It creates a surrealist atmosphere, and brings moments of levity to heavy topics.

Part of Goode's investigation, rooted in times of struggle, is tied to how individuals cope and thrive despite serious challenges. Hush is the artistic extension of this investigation, and a companion community initiative titled The Resilience Project follows Hush on its nationwide tour. Where Hush's main focus is LGBT young adults, The Resilience Project allows other marginalized groups to tell their stories as well.

Recently, Goode's focus for The Resilience Project is working with combat war veterans dealing with post traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, physical disability, etc., and/or their immediate family members. Goode creates a safe space for these individuals to physicalize their stories through movement, song and gestures to create an artistic expression performed for an audience. Each participant in the workshop gets a free ticket to Hush, combining very different communities in an artistic exchange.

"I didn't want to trivialize these very important stories. Movement adds a visceral quality, urgency, reality to the words, and allows them to experience their stories in a different way," said Goode, who has no formal training in psychology or dance therapy. "This process had a lot to teach me, because we all need to learn resilience. That's the way I focus the project." Many workshop participants have never seen a dance performance; likewise, many dance-goers have varying levels of exposure to this type of community engagement. "Audience members who are not in those communities [involved in the Resilience Project] come to it with different expectations. They leave different—the experience of those people is profound."

**Joe Goode Performance Group presents "Hush" at the Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago, 1306 S. Michigan Ave., on March 10-12. All performances are at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$30; call 312-369-8330 or visit [colum.edu/dancecenterpresents](http://colum.edu/dancecenterpresents). The theater is accessible to people with disabilities.**

## Group to honor Sutton Foster, Brian D'Arcy James

Chicago's Sarah Siddons Society recently announced that Sutton Foster and Brian D'Arcy James will receive the group's annual Actor of the Year Award Monday, May 16, at Northwestern University's Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, 50 Arts Circle Dr., Evanston.

Foster (TV's *Younger*) has starred in many Broadway hits, including *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Little Women*, *Young Frankenstein*, *Shrek* and *The Drowsy Chaperone*. James is currently in Broadway's *Something Rotten*, and has been in *Titanic*, *Sweet Smell Of Success*, *The Apple Tree* and *Shrek* (opposite Foster as Fiona).

The Sarah Siddons Society has honored actors such as Bette Davis, Patti LuPone, Julie Andrews and E. Faye Butler.

Benefit tickets are \$100 (with student tickets \$25); visit [www.sarahsiddonssociety.org](http://www.sarahsiddonssociety.org), or call 847-467-4000 or stop by the ticket office at the southeast entrance of Pick-Staiger Concert Hall.

Joe Goode.



## THEATER REVIEW

**Heathers:  
The Musical**

**Book, Music & Lyrics:** Kevin Murphy & Laurence O'Keefe  
**At:** Kokandy Productions at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave.  
**Tickets:** 773-975-8150;  
[www.kokandyproductions.com](http://www.kokandyproductions.com); \$38  
**Runs through:** April 24

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Kokandy Productions looks to have a hit with *Heathers: The Musical*. Many performances are already sold out for the Chicago premiere of the 2014 off-Broadway adaptation of the cult 1988 teenage film comedy that starred Winona Rider and Christian Slater.

Musical adapters Kevin Murphy (*Reefer Madness*) and Laurence O'Keefe (*Bat Boy*) have sharply tapped into the dark high school satire of *Heathers*. For many a teenager growing up in the 1980s, *Heathers* must have been an extreme wish fulfillment fantasy where the cool-kid bullies get bumped off—though not without the moral repercussions and deadly violence that unfortunately feels timely today.

Murphy and O'Keefe's 1980s-styled pop-rock score dovetails nicely into the heightened emotions of the show's vicious teenagers and their ever-clueless teachers and parents—particularly in a tastelessly funny production number like "I Love my Dead Gay Son" or the touchingly reflective anthem "Seventeen."

Yet the whole enterprise can't entirely shake the whiff of being yet another unnecessary screen-to-stage adaptation—especially when Murphy and O'Keefe's work feels constrained to the plot mechanics of Daniel Waters' original

**Heathers: The Musical.**  
 Photo by Emily Schwartz



*Heathers* screenplay.

Yet that probably won't matter to die-hard fans of the film who will delight to see their favorite bitchy and moody characters in the flesh. It also helps immensely that *Heathers* director James Beaudry has assembled such a vocally strong and comically adept ensemble that more than delivers the goods. They all also dance up a storm to Sawyer Smith's gyrating choreography in costume designer Bob Kuhn's comical 1980s fashions.

Courtney Mack stars as Veronica Sawyer, a complex senior whose forging skills with hall passes helps her to infiltrate the popular power

clique known as "The Heathers" (Jacquelyne Jones in red, Haley Jane Shafer in green and Rochelle Therrien in yellow). Yet the *Heathers* turn on Veronica when she calls out their nasty bullying of their unfashionable classmate, Martha Dunstock (Teresa LaGamba).

Veronica finds love and solace with the trench coat-clad loner J.D. (Chris Ballou), who bravely fights off the jock bullies of Ram Sweeney (Denzel Tsopnang) and Kurt Kelly (Garrett Lutz). Yet J.D. isn't all he initially seems to be, much to Veronica's later guilt and horror as she's haunted by the ghosts of her former adversaries.

The camp quotient of *Heathers: The Musical* goes off the charts many times, particularly when Veronica Garza shows off her comic and belting skills as the emotional touchy-feely teacher Pauline Fleming. But as the other various adults, Diego Colon and Casey Hayes have a harder time of wringing out the comedy of their sketchy characters.

*Heathers: The Musical* unquestionably bursts with talent in its energetic Chicago premiere. And despite a few quibbles, it should be unapologetically campy catnip for the original film's legion of fans.

## THEATER REVIEW

**A Phase**

**Playwright:** Elise Spoerlein  
**At:** Broken Nose Theatre at Den Theatre, 1333 N. Milwaukee Ave.  
**Tickets:** [www.brokenosetheatre.com](http://www.brokenosetheatre.com);  
**Pay-what-you-can admission**  
**Runs through:** March 26

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Elise Spoerlein's world-premiere comic-drama *A Phase*, for Broken Nose Theatre, is both thoughtfully entertaining and frustratingly stingy. It offers insights into casual sex among twentysomething heterosexual Chicagoans, although the brevity of *A Phase* (running just over an hour) makes it feel more like an un-

finished draft or a TV-series pilot rather than a standalone drama.

Spoerlein not only provides the dialogue, she also stars in *A Phase* as the morose leading lady named Sam. It's a solid performance for a character who is more reactionary to her very vivid co-stars rather than being a take-charge type of person.

*A Phase* shines a brief light into Sam's first months of her move from the suburbs to Chicago. Recently been dumped by her first boyfriend and high school sweetheart of six years (an unseen Connor), Sam is still grieving the relationship that she thought for certain would result in marriage.

Following a comical move-in scene that teems with exposition and energy from Sam's ever-cheery Mom (a very fun and motivational Shariba Rivers), Sam gets back into the dat-

ing world. *A Phase* then becomes a rotation of scenes involving Sam's navigation of adjusting to big city life as a newbie journalist while she meets up with a series of men in her grubby North Side apartment.

The banter that Spoerlein provides for her male characters certainly rings true with plenty of amusing narcissism and bluntness, especially from the likes of the pot-smoking woodworker Jeff (Dennis Bisto) and Sam's noncommittal photographer co-worker, Emilio (Dago Soto). Also spot-on is the roundabout nervous discussions with Zack (David Weiss) who had a hidden high-school crush on Sam, plus the hook-up negotiations involving Gabe (Andrew Cutler), a random guy picked up at the gym.

Spoerlein haltingly reveals character emotions and nuance just fine, especially as you

see Sam struggle with notions of physical desire versus the kind of intertwined love and intimacy she previously experienced with her ex-boyfriend. Also of great help to the play are director Spenser Davis and David Weiss, who artfully create hilarious multimedia clips that cross-cut Chicago location footage with snarky smartphone texts and Internet searches.

Sam's revelations in *A Phase* are so internalized that they don't fully register unless one takes a moment to reflect. In one sense this makes *A Phase* daring since there isn't an explicit happy resolution, but it also feels unsatisfactorily finished by the time of the halting conclusion. You also can't help but question whether Spoerlein's decision to appear in her own play took vital time away from her further fleshing out the text which tantalizingly contains so much promise.

## THEATER REVIEW

**Rolling**

**Playwright:** Calamity West  
**At:** Jackalope Theatre at Broadway Armory Park, 5917 N. Broadway  
**Tickets:** [www.jackalopetheatre.org](http://www.jackalopetheatre.org);  
 \$15-\$20  
**Runs through:** April 2

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Plays don't puzzle me very often, but *Rolling* stumped me. That it's female-centric and concerns three generations of women is clear, but that's all. My female viewing companion—a bright, 20-year old, pro-Bernie collegian—also was stumped, and a stumped audience isn't usually a satisfied one.

*Rolling* is not as its publicity proclaims, the story of an established journalist accused of fraud over her ground-breaking story about campus sexual assault; a plot which would have sprung directly from recent headlines. Yes, the central character, Valerie, is a journalist who secretly returns home to escape media fallout after fraud accusations; but Calamity West's script is so skimpy with story exposi-

tion that we never learn the precise details of Valerie's story or the accusations, or why Valerie stays home for months. It doesn't really matter because *Rolling* definitely is not about journalism, sexual assault or fraud. Rather, it's entirely about female family dynamics.

Even so, the plot is skimpy—although with a helluva lot of character exposition about Valerie (Dana Black), her mother Janet (Ann James), her younger sister Molly (Abby Pierce) and odd family friend Danny (Pat Whalen), a would-be journalist who's left his wife and child but isn't a romantic partner of either sister. The women are highly competitive, the hectoring mother always is proclaiming her honesty, Valerie shifts between sharp offense and prickly defensiveness and Molly bounces between them. Janet loathes her unseen mother, but Janet is so bile-tongued I suspect Granny's a sweetheart.

The minimal story comes in bits and pieces, with playwright Calamity West planting numerous seeds that produce no fruit. Early in Act I Molly importantly has her own condo, but in Act II she's living with Mom without explanation. Dad works the nightshift and is discussed, but never seen. He has no function, so why mention him at all? Act II begins



**Rolling.**  
 Photo by Joel Maisonet

with someone having died, but we aren't told who for 15 minutes. It's Granny, whose death liberates Janet but has no influence on the play's outcome. Molly and Danny are alcoholics, a point made several times, but yet another point with no impact on the outcome. At close, Valerie and Molly reach personal resolution (although I don't know what divides them) and Valerie leaves to fight for her good name.

West gives *Rolling* plenty of realistic style—

withering remarks, loaded lines, acerbic humor—but it illuminates character alone. The four actors give appealing, dry-but-edgy ultra-naturalistic performances under director Nate Silver, with especially sly delivery from James. Even Joanna Iwanicka's scenic design, a traditional box set, is effectively realistic (atypical for Jackalope). *Rolling* establishes its characters well, but without sufficient story I don't care. *Rolling* either is too minimal or too subtle for me.

## THEATER REVIEW

**Midnight Cowboy**

Playwright: Chris Hainsworth, from James Leo Herlihy's novel

At: Lifeline Theatre, 6912 N. Glenwood Ave.

Tickets: 773-761-4477;

www.lifelinetheatre.com; \$40

Runs through: April 10

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

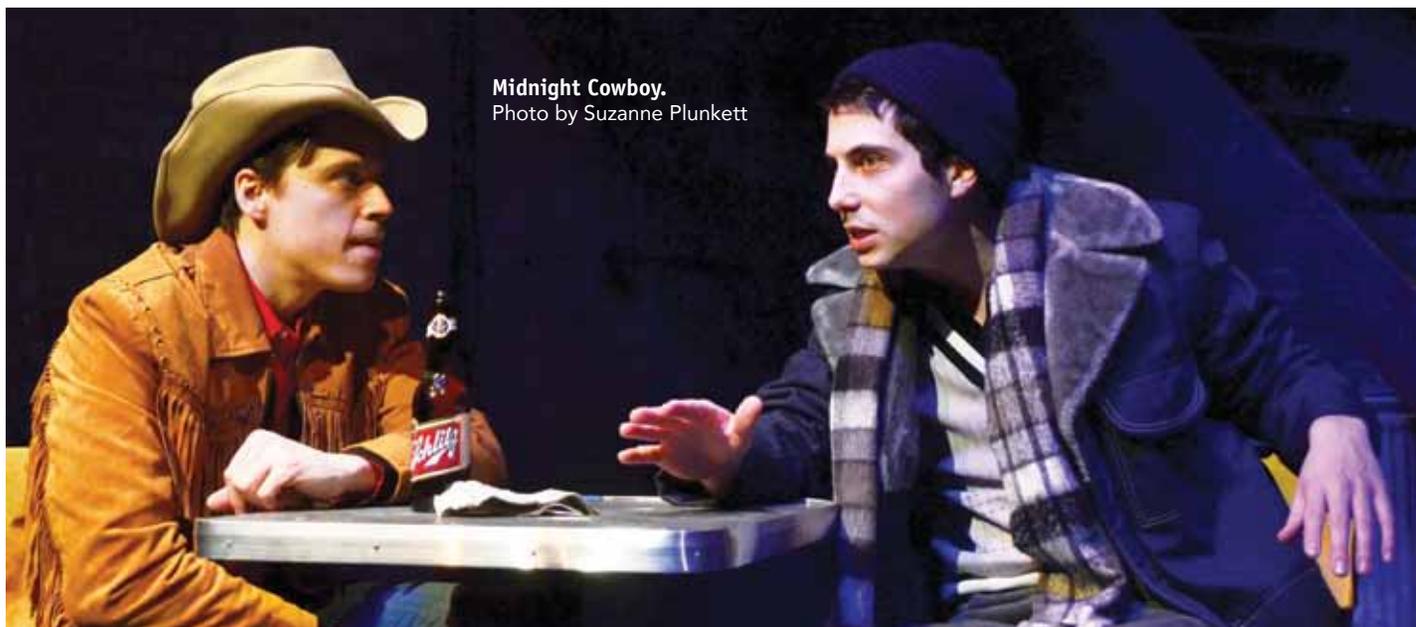
A theater must be crazy or courageous to tackle *Midnight Cowboy*, since the 1969 film is an all-time great. Fortunately, Lifeline is courageous and not foolhardy in its solid rendering of the familiar work, with material from the 1965 novel not included in the film.

For starters, the central roles are strongly cast. Zach Livingston, as Joe Buck, combines a tender baby face with the body of a kouros. Adam Marcantonio's hunched-over Ratso Rizzo looks dirty and untouchable thanks in part to Rachel Sypniewski's costume, which makes Marcantonio appear scrawny. Jack Miggins is sniggering and dangerous as Perry, the gay dom who teaches Joe that sex is power. "Take what you want, Joe," Perry says shortly before beating and raping the bigger, stronger pseudo-cowboy. "This is what you want, Joe. Don't ever forget that," Perry tells him.

Joe's relationship with Perry isn't in the film and is an important addition to this stage version, although some of the novel's sexual material still is left out. Joe's persona has been influenced by tawdry and exploitive sexual episodes, beginning in his mid-teen years, which have left him heterosexual but essentially passive and available as trade. Hardly conscious of who or what he is—other than believing he's a great lover/stud—Joe steps outside himself only when he and Ratso become a couple (although non-sexual). Only then can Joe take what he wants, in a horrific act of violence, to benefit Rizzo.

Joe and Ratso sometimes parallel Lenny and George in Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* with their dreams, interdependence and exploitation. Joe also evokes Eugene O'Neill's Yank, the anti-hero of *The Hairy Ape* (currently in an astonishing production at Oracle Theatre), a strong, uneducated, naïve man who's helpless outside his natural environment (coincidentally New York City being the reality-check for both).

Director Christopher M. Walsh's fluid staging utilizes Joe Schermoly's unit set, which places the action via illuminated signs—bar, cafe,



Midnight Cowboy.  
Photo by Suzanne Plunkett

movie marquee, etc. Chris Hainsworth's pithy adaptation avoids narration and is all action, retaining the novel's ironic Biblical injunctions (newcomer Gregory Madden is bible-thumping pimp O'Daniel). However, by spending more time on Joe's pre-New York backstory, it doesn't develop the Joe-Ratso relationship as deeply as

the film, which I missed. Rather, this staging rises or falls on sympathy for Joe, the not-very-bright, uncultured, emotionally damaged man-child with a heart of gold, who realizes his failure even as a stud. Ultimately, it won me over. Ratso is lucky; he dies. The tragedy is Joe's—a beautiful, utterly alone, wounded animal who

must go on, somehow. The emotional story is about Joe Buck; the intellectual story is about sexual exploitation, which continues today in myriad ways and places, making *Midnight Cowboy* contemporary and ageless.

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**American Buffalo**, Mary-Arrchie Theatre Company at Angel Island, extended through March 20. With the wrecking ball only months away, this 30-year-old Chicago theater company returns to its roots for one last all-star stand. MSB

**Far from Heaven**, Porchlight Music Theatre, through March 13. A musical version of the film about a 1957 suburban housewife who pushes envelopes when her sitcom-perfect life melts down. The emotions are true and the lush, jazz-infused score is beautifully sung and staged. JA

**The Flick**, Steppenwolf Theatre, through May 8. Annie Baker's Pulitzer Prize-winning drama is a slow-burn study of movie theater employees whose love of cinema contrasts to the tedium of their dead-end jobs. SCM

**Twelfth Night**, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, through March 13. Tricks! Gags! Music! Pizza! Even some Shakespeare! Almost everyone knows this play, so London's Filter Theatre offers a stripped-down, bare-bones, 90-minute clown version that cuts characters and most of the text but retains all the high spirits.

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

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## NUNN ON ONE: THEATER

# Kelli Simpkins on gun violence in 'Cocked'

BY JERRY NUNN

Actress Kelli Simpkins continues to make realistic portrayals of people we know in our lives. She broke out as a creator and performer with The Laramie Project, for which she earned an Emmy nomination for ensemble writing.

In Chicago, she has worked with such prestigious theater companies such as Timeline, Goodman, Steppenwolf and About Face.

Her film work includes A League of Their Own and Chasing Amy; TV spots include Empire and Law & Order: Criminal Intent.

Simpkins plays a lesbian living with her partner in a new theater production called *Cocked*, at Victory Gardens.

**Windy City Times:** Hi, Kelli. I just saw *Cocked* and wondered if that dog barking in the background drove you crazy while performing.

**Kelli Simpkins:** I have a dog living just across the way from me so the dog part really hits home for me. I am a dog lover and non-violent human being, but I have had fantasies that are pushing the boundaries of violence with that particular dog.

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**WT**  
WRITERS  
THEATRE



Kelli Simpkins (left) and Patrese D. McClain in *Cocked*.

Photo by Michael Courier

When this all started happening in tech I couldn't believe it. I know people that have come to the show saying they would not be able to handle the dog until they realize it is a point of the plot.

**WCT:** Talk about your high-strung character, Taylor.

KS: Taylor is a corporate lawyer. She is in a relationship with a journalist and lives in Andersonville. She is tightly wound, very strong and in control. Sarah Gubbins, the playwright, and I talked about how lonely she is, wishing someone could take over her responsibilities.

Into the mix walks her brother who is none of these things. There is the beginning of Taylor's unraveling but she doesn't know it until about halfway through the play. She gets on her heels in the second half of the play. She wants to fix things but can't find the solution.

**WCT:** The audience must think she is too hard on her brother at first.

KS: Until they realize that she was right all along. No one will listen to her, Jerry! [Both laugh.] If they did, there would be no play.

**WCT:** True. So did you know the writer of the play, Sarah Gubbins, before this?

KS: She is one of my nearest and dearest friends. I knew her before I moved to Chicago, while I was in New York. This is the third play I have done with her. We work really well together. It is rare in this business to work over and over again, particularly from a writer and actor perspective. She writes certain things about me for my wheelhouse and I understand certain things about her writing.

It was a thrill to be in the room with her and Joanie Schultz, the director. We had all done a show called *The Kid Thing* together in 2011. Sarah moved away after that to LA and has not been back until *Cocked*, so it was lovely to have her back and work on this piece.

**WCT:** Was the part of Taylor written for you?

KS: I know she wrote *The Kid Thing* for me but [I'm] not sure about this one. When she writes a lesbian-identified character, I know I am one of the people she has in mind. We did the first reading of this piece in my dining room two years ago. There have been a ton of changes with this script as we workshoped it up until its premiere.

**WCT:** How do you feel about this being set in Andersonville with [you] actually living there yourself?

KS: I think it is great, particularly with what is happening in the city of Chicago. It feels very geographically segregated. Some people think these things don't happen on the North

Side. I think this part of town has an imbedded false sense of safety. I think it is important to have it set in that neighborhood because it makes us question who we are.

**WCT:** How is working with this cast?

KS: It has been great and this is a challenging piece. Mike Tepeli and Patrese D. McClain are both so talented. They have been game to everything and this is one of those plays that you have to be open to anything. It is an exhausting play to do—even though it is only 90 minutes—so you have to have three very solid people that you can immensely trust. I totally feel that with Mike and Patrese. We have a great time together on stage.

**WCT:** Any knowledge of the play going on after this run?

KS: I don't know of any plans but it is the first part in a trilogy about guns. Gun violence is a huge conversation we are having worldwide so I would like to see the show travel.

Sarah's TV career is really taking off, with a new series on Amazon with Jill Soloway, so who knows when part two will happen.

**WCT:** How is your Tectonic Theatre Project coming along?

KS: I just did *Spill* at Timeline, then went right into *Cocked* so I have finally had time to meet up with our group about this. We are trying to meet up once a week and we have done three interviews so far. We are very excited and have a lot more interviews to do. It takes a really long time to figure out what this play is. It will take time to transcribe 50 to 100 interviews to write this piece. It is epic in nature and has to do with queer youth, elderly LGBTQ people, and that history in Chicago. It has already been a huge lesson to me and I have met so many incredible people.

I am going into another play in three weeks so there is not enough hours in the day for everything...

**WCT:** What is your next show?

KS: It is a show at About Face Theatre. Bonnie Metzgar is directing. I worked with her on *Pony* before, and I admire her as an artist. This is the first time About Face is doing a show written by The Five Lesbian Brothers and is called *The Secretaries*. It will be incredible with an all-female cast. We are playing multiple characters and it is a lesbian-centered drama and comedy. I am super-thrilled to be involved in it!

*Cocked* is at Victory Gardens Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave., thru March 13; visit [VictoryGardens.org](http://VictoryGardens.org) or call 773-871-3000.

# Dylan, Ross, Staples at Ravinia this summer

Bob Dylan (performing with Mavis Staples), Diana Ross, Tony Bennett, Paul Simon, Bryan Ferry, Seal, Patti LaBelle, Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, the Alice Cooper/Joe Perry/Johnny Depp supergroup Hollywood Vampires, and Duran Duran and Chic (led by Nile Rodgers) are among the acts slated to perform at Ravinia this summer.

Below are a few dates of slated acts:  
 —June 9: Barenaked Ladies, OMD and Howard Jones  
 —June 12: Frankie Valli & the Four Seasons



Mavis Staples.  
Photo by Matt Ellis

- June 18: Paul Simon
  - June 23: Patti LaBelle with The Commodores
  - June 24: Bob Dylan with Mavis Staples
  - July 1: Indigo Girls with Shawn Mullins
  - July 8: Duran Duran with Chic featuring Nile Rodgers
  - July 10: Phillip Phillips with Matt Nathanson
  - July 11: Ladysmith Black Mambazo with Sweet Honey in the Rock
  - July 17: Hollywood Vampires
  - July 27: Diana Ross
  - July 31: Buddy Guy with Jeff Beck
  - Aug. 6: Bryan Ferry
  - Aug. 11: War and Los Lonely Boys
  - Aug. 12: Joshua Bell and Chris Botti
  - Aug. 13: Tony Bennett's 90th-birthday celebration
  - Aug. 14-15: Don Henley
  - Aug. 21: Tchaikovsky Spectacular with Itzhak Perlman
  - Aug. 26-27: Train and Andy Grammer
  - Aug. 28: Seal
  - Sept. 3: Bonnie Raitt
  - Sept. 7-8: Chiara String Quartet
- See [Ravinia.org](http://Ravinia.org).

## Ailey troupe in town through March 13

The Auditorium Theatre's annual Chicago presentation of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater will take place through March 13. Segments on the program include "Awakening," Robert Battle's first world premiere since becoming artistic director; Ronald K. Brown's world premiere, "Open Door"; Rennie Harris' "Exodus"; Paul Taylor's "Piazzolla Caldera," set in a smoky tango club; Robert Battle's "No Longer Silent"; three productions Alvin Ailey created himself—"Cry," "Love Songs" and "Blues Suite"; and "Revelations." Ticket prices start at \$33 and can be purchased online at [AuditoriumTheatre.org](http://AuditoriumTheatre.org), by phone at 312-341-2300 or in person at the Auditorium Theatre box office, 50 E. Congress Pkwy.

## SPOTLIGHT



A young journalist named Rose gets swept up into an Occupy-style protest movement in Alena Smith's new play **The New Sincerity**, now receiving its Chicago premiere courtesy of Theater Wit. Find out if she can navigate a maelstrom of politics, ambition and love in this modern-day comedy. **The New Sincerity** continues through Sunday, April 17, at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave. Tickets are \$12-\$36; call 773-975-8150 or visit [www.theaterwit.org](http://www.theaterwit.org). Photo by Charles Osgood

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—Chicago Tribune

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# American Theater Company transitions to new artistic director

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

The Chicago-based American Theater Company (ATC) asks a question that is complex, multifaceted and provides as much fodder for the imagination as the country: What does it mean to be an American?

On Feb. 18, ATC announced the successor to its visionary artistic director PJ Paparelli, who passed away in May 2015.

As he returns to Chicago to step into that role, director and choreographer Will Davis will not only import into ATC's future a lifelong, ingrained passion for the art of theater alongside a catalogue of groundbreaking audience, critical and award-winning successes nationwide but a significant expansion of the organization's open-ended question.

There are those who would consider a transgender male in a position of artistic leadership to be groundbreaking but, as Davis tackles what it means to be an American, he ushers in a day when the value of trans and gender nonconforming people in the arts and the world at large will be equally assessed through their ability and contributions to it—the norm rather than the exception.

As one of Davis' early role models—choreographer Martha Graham—once noted, "No artist is ahead of his time. He is his time; it is just that others are behind the times."

Certainly Davis' own achievements in time past, present and future must not be defined by identity rather his consummate skill to make theater—one honed from the moment he could walk.

Born and raised in Santa Cruz, California, Davis discovered the unlimited power of expression contained within the human body throughout a childhood shaped by movement and audacious innovation.

"My mother started taking me to dance classes and ballet until I was 13," he told *Windy City Times*. "My godmother, Stephanie Golino, was a playwright, director and a choreographer and she would put together these amazing shows that she'd adapted from stories like *Pinocchio* and *Huck Finn*."

In 2012, Santa Cruz Sentinel journalist Wallace Baine wrote "If you were around in 1991 to see Stephanie Golino's production of *Pinocchio* and Carlo Collodi, you've certainly never forgotten it."

Davis never did.

"They were immersive, specific and massive spectacles," he said. "As a child it was my first exposure to the culture of making theater—the collaboration, of making something out of nothing. It was a huge part of how I started to understand my aesthetic and style."

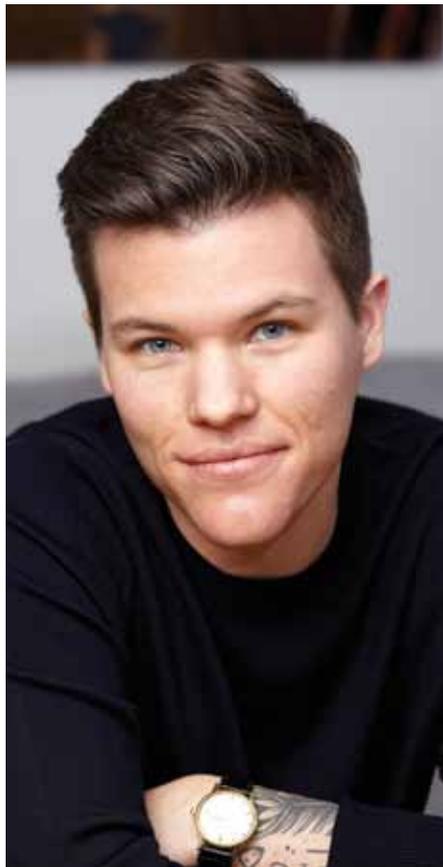
At the time, he also understood that ballet was not a good fit.

"Ballet is a highly gendered form," he said. "Although I had only the most nascent sense of what was going on in my own experience of gender, I did have a full, clear sense that there was something that didn't belong, that wasn't fitting, that I wasn't getting any traction with as a ballerina."

Instead, and throughout high school, Davis thought of himself more as an actor. He described his peer theatre kids as "an island of misfit toys, but when I found those people, I found a total lifeline. They were a very important group of friends for me at that time in my life."

In his senior year, Davis directed his first show—*The Diviners*, by Jim Leonard Jr.

"The experience of discovering in the moment what the job description is of a director is something that sticks with me," he recalled.



Will Davis.  
PR photo

"Working out who was going where and what it was going to look like was less important than trying to figure out the container of the world. What do I want the audience to feel? I was interpreting a set of facts via art and figuring out how all that coalesces and becomes a play. It was totally profound and a powerful and creative space for me."

Nevertheless, when he began to pursue his BFA at DePaul University, Davis had designs on a life as part of the on-stage population of the world in which audiences were spending their evenings rather than its unseen architect.

DePaul had other plans.

"I started as an acting major and DePaul would cut a certain number of students in the program," he recalled. "After my sophomore year, I got this form letter in the mail which said that, according to a committee, I didn't have any professional potential to be an actor. It is, to date, one of the most powerful things that has ever been said to me. In that moment, I had to ask myself, 'Do I believe these people? Do I forge ahead or is this a fork in the road?' These are questions we have to ask ourselves a lot."

Yet Davis views failure as an opportunity to be profoundly creative. "It's on us to see it that way," he said. "Places of rejection where you know for sure that something is not working are spaces where you can ask, What will work? What will feel right? Where do you want to move? We try to avoid rejection but when we do that, we lose the chance to make positive decisions for our lives."

For Davis, it is a philosophy that applied not only to the life of the artist but the transgender experience.

"If I were to worry or take to heart the number of times that people mess up my pronouns or whisper to each other when I walk into a restaurant and let that rejection rule me, I would not get out of bed," he asserted. "It's my job to have a different world view, to be forward thinking, to be exactly who I am and let the discomfort be other people's job to hold."

Davis decided to remain at DePaul as a theater-studies major under the instruction of accomplished director Lisa Portes.

"Being in the room with her and listening to the way she was talking about harnessing elements of time, space and the body was something that clicked with me," Davis said. "For the first time I knew what to do. That said, I wasn't out and I can't overstate this kind of Christmas Carol sense of watching the world through a pane of glass and feeling untethered, disconnected and sad. At that point, I thought it was just the human condition. When I found directing through Lisa, some tiny light turned on in my heart and I had a sense that this was the world that belonged to me."

His mastery of that world gave audiences at venues including New York Theatre Workshop, Clubbed Thumb, the New Museum, the Olney Theatre Center, the Alliance Theatre, the Playwright's Realm, the Fusebox Festival, New Harmony Project, the Orchard Project, the Ground Floor Residency at Berkeley Rep, Performance Studies International at Stanford University, and the Kennedy Center a rare key to unlock the unfamiliar in what has become a Davis trademark—the fusion of limitless physicality and raw emotion.

In reviewing the Olney Theatre Center's 2014 production of Andrew Hinderaker's *Colossal* (for which Davis took home a Helen Hayes Award), *The Washington Post* said "the beauty of bodies in motion provides *Colossal* with an aesthetic power that informs the entire evening."

"Time, space and the body are what makes text a piece of theater," Davis said. "I believe in the dramaturgy of the body. In any play of mine, you should be able to turn down the volume of the spoken work and know exactly what is going on."

The discovery of that dramaturgy is where Davis has found a belonging in which he is totally immersed. "Rehearsal is the place where I am my best, most grounded, present and creative self," he said. "It is the place where I have the most union between my heart, my head and my body. It is a sacred space."

Audiences entering the intimate space of the ATC under Davis' leadership should expect to gaze upon the child of that union—one that will shatter preconception.

"I will open us up to what new work for the American theater will look like," Davis said. "What is on that list is that the play is having a conversation with its form. It cherishes and lifts up the theater. In terms of projects I will direct, I only say 'yes' to those where, in some place in the work, something is impossible. I want to see pieces that have new proposals for what the theater is for."

Davis has a whole other rubric for queer bodies and transgender characters on stage.

"We're not going to the zoo," he said. "As the audience, we are not coming to observe some rare and exotic thing. On stage, when the trans character is the most naked or is the one that goes the most crazy, I don't think that's helpful. I don't think we are doing the right thing by our audiences by continuing to feed them that information. What I do want them to know is that trans women of color are the people who are the most dead, who are the most in jail because of our unequal laws and the lack of visibility for crimes perpetrated against trans people. Some trans people experience homelessness because they don't have equal access to resources and support, we need to open up those conversations."

No matter what the play is that spurs dialogue, if it has a transgender character, Davis is determined that a transgender artist will bring the role to life.

"In the cultural and political moment we live in, there's an issue of representation here that needs to be addressed," he said. "If you're going to write a role for a trans person then you need a trans person to perform it."

Davis has taken the experiences of his own life and merged it seamlessly into the theater no matter what the obstacles thrown up in front of him. Indeed, he admits an "impish glee" when he looks back on DePaul's opinion-

by-committee of his professional potential.

But that is how theater is lived and performed.

As his godmother said in the Santa Cruz Sentinel's interview about *Pinocchio* and Carlo Collodi "we show how the story could have really taken another direction and how in your own life, there are these characters all around you that can be transformed into a work of art."

For more information about the ATC, visit [ATCweb.org](http://ATCweb.org).

## Out at CHM's 'Standing Up' March 10

Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark St., will host the next program in its Out at CHM series, "Standing Up: From Punch Line to Spotlight," on Thursday, March 10, at 6:30 p.m. (In addition, a reception with refreshments and appetizers will start at 5:30 p.m.)

While views have progressed, LGBTQ people still serve as the punch line for jokes across the comedic spectrum. Writer Jason Heidemann moderates a panel that includes Andy Eninger, head of the writing program at Second City; comedy club owner Mary Lindsey; and performer, scholar and author E. Patrick Johnson for a discussion on the history and struggle of queerness in Chicago's comedy scene, as well who has been at the forefront of humorous performances and roles.

This program also will showcase the comedic talents of the panelists and gay sketch-comedy troupe GayCo.

Admission is \$20 (\$15 for members and students); visit <http://chicagohistory.org/planavisit/upcomingevents/out-at-chm>.

## Internat'l Women's Day Dance March 12

The LGBTQ Giving Council of Chicago Foundation for Women (CFW) is hosting the 2nd Annual International Women's Day Dance on Saturday, March 12, 7 p.m.-12 a.m., at the National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture, 3015 W Division St.

Reviving this Chicago tradition last year, the LGBTQ Giving Council successfully brought together folks from across the city to celebrate queer and trans\* women, and raise dollars for the LGBTQ communities.

The LGBTQ Giving Council was the first affinity group in Chicago formed to provide grants to organizations and programs that serve LGBTQ communities. Since 2008, the Giving Council has awarded more than \$95,000 in grants to 12 organizations and programs including Youth Empowerment Performance Project (YEPP), a safe space for queer youth experiencing homelessness to explore their history and address their struggles; and Affinity Community Services, a social-justice organization working on behalf of black LGBTQ communities. The LGBTQ Giving Council provides grants through its Lavender Fund.

"We are thrilled to renew the tradition of the International Women's Day Dance! The Dance has become the Giving Council's biggest fundraiser," said Kim Hunt, Giving Council member. "Come party with us and support groups that are doing great work with and on behalf of queer and trans women!" To purchase tickets or become a sponsor see [www.cfw.org/events/](http://www.cfw.org/events/).

CFW is a grantmaking organization dedicated to increasing resources and opportunities for women and girls in the greater Chicago area. To support our philanthropy, the Foundation promotes increased investment in women and girls, raises awareness about their issues and potential, and develops them as leaders and philanthropists.

## BOOK REVIEW

# Charity & Sylvia: A Same-Sex Marriage in Early America

by Rachel Hope Cleves  
\$29.95; Oxford University  
Press; 267 pages

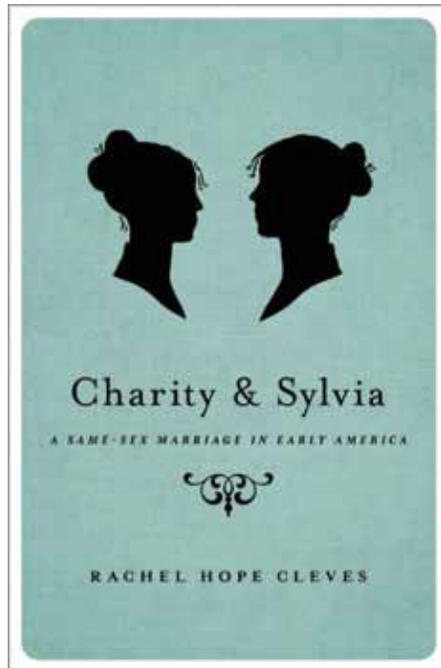
BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Sometimes, you wonder how Grandma coped. For most (if not all) of her life, she lived without computer or cell phone. She made meals for her family without a microwave, sewed her own clothing, and enjoyed each of the four channels she got on her small-screen TV.

So how did she do it? Conveniences aside, was her life really all that different from yours? Or, as in the book *Charity & Sylvia*, by Rachel Hope Cleves, is everything old now new again?

Born in the midst of the American Revolution, Charity Bryant was destined from the outset to have an interesting life: she was a sickly infant birthed by a sickly mother who died days after Charity entered the world. Before she passed, though, Silence Bryant christened the baby after her spinster-sister, an act that may have “pointed [Charity] to a model of womanhood that differed significantly from her [mother’s].”

Somewhat coddled by her elder siblings but detested by her stepmother, Charity grew with a “passion for making friends with other young women...” At this time, intimate “romantic relationships” among same-sex friends was



lightly encouraged by parents and carefully watched—at least until the couple “gave reasons for concern.”

And Charity wholeheartedly offered exactly that. She was “the cause of tensions in a

number of communities” and, since she was a “mannish”-looking teacher of young women, was the victim of “vicious gossip” that kept her on the move. Girls, you see, had only recently been allowed an education, and their schools had reputations for an “erotic atmosphere.”

It didn't help that Charity was a bit of a female rake, and left a string of broken hearts in the wake of her escapes. A renowned poet, and she and her amours filled stacks of letters with romance and steam, love and longing, though Charity seemed to want to remain footloose. She “believed in marriage, just not for herself.”

But then, in 1807, while on the run from yet another sullied reputation, Charity left Massachusetts and moved to Vermont. There, she met Sylvia Drake, a relative of her hosts, and there was a “spark...”

Okay, so I have to admit that, with its teeny-tiny print and erudite look, I was expecting *Charity & Sylvia* to be dry as a dead creek bed. I'm likewise happy to admit I was dead wrong.

Starting with the birth of the woman on whom author Cleves focuses most, this book opens with a slice of life during the Revolutionary War. We then move back and forth in narrative, but Cleves never lets us forget the time and space that her subjects inhabited, the social mores, the historical aspects, nor the seemingly inconsistent attitudes toward romance and sex that our forebears held and that which we've been led to believe they had. I found that deeply fascinating and highly entertaining.

I think that if you're a fan of history (LGBT or otherwise), this is something you'll relish. With chaste retelling and its abundant details, *Charity & Sylvia* is your grandmother's book—and yours, too.

Want more? Look for *Queer America*, by Vicki L. Eaklor; or *A Queer History of the United States*, by Michael Bronski.

## Local actress to play Trump's 'daughter'

Lesbian Chicago-based actress/writer Fawzia Mirza is slated to play Ayesha Ali Trump, a character she portrays in a forthcoming Internet mockumentary series about presidential hopeful Donald Trump's theoretical Muslim daughter, according to NBC Chicago.

In a tweet, Ayesha posted, “I am not a part of the #RepublicanParty the #DemocratParty, or the #TeaParty—I AM PART OF THE CHAI PARTY <http://www.facebook.com/ayeshatrup>.”

Mirza, who is Muslim, decided to start the project after Trump's statements on Muslims failed to attract the kind of reaction she was expecting.

The article is at <http://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/muslim-actress-play-illegitimate-muslim-trump-daughter-web-series-n531246>.

## South African film screening March 12

Sistah Sinema-Chicago will present a screening of the film *While You Weren't Looking* Saturday, March 12, at 2 p.m. at Gallery 400, 400 S. Peoria St.

This feature, produced by The Out In Africa Gay & Lesbian Film Festival, takes a look at South Africa through the lives and experiences of a cross-section of Cape Town queer individuals.

Admission is \$10. The film trailer is at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3v\\_E75-T2M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3v_E75-T2M).



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**ÁNGEL RODRÍGUEZ** PIANO

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Quare Square founder  
M Shelly Conner.  
Photo by Omar  
"Brother O" Gadling

## Quare Square focuses on queer artists of color

BY MELISSA WASSERMAN

Quare Square Collective, Inc. gives the spotlight to Chicago's queer-identified artists of color.

Chicago native M Shelly Conner, Ph.D., is a multidisciplinary, multigenre writer and scholar—and the founder and executive director of Quare Square, which she calls "a labor of love." In addition, she has a novel she is exploring publishing options for, has a comedy Web series in development with OpenTV and is pitching different types of journals for her essays. Her writing talent extends to writing a travel blog on Tumblr called "Dapper Vista" that is aimed toward dapper queer women, like herself. For that project she has been traveling domestically and internationally and visiting social spaces with an interest in what it looks like and what it means to be a dapper queer woman of color in these different spaces and locations.

Also, she has done academic work and presents at academic conferences. Last year she taught at Loyola University.

"I was looking for support being a queer woman of color and also an academic and an artist," said Conner. "I just didn't find a lot of places out there. It was creating a space for people like me that we don't often see and a resource especially on the South Side of Chicago because most of the time when you think LGBTQ, everything is located on the North Side. So we do, artists of color, pack up and we haul ourselves to the North Side time and time again to support events and organizations and we don't really see that same level of support coming across to the other side of the city. I wanted to be able to be a part of that solution by building a bridge between the two communities that are very much divided by race."

Quare Square began in May 2013 as a monthly open-mic event for queer women of color and allies. POW-WOW, Inc. (Performers or Writers- Women on Women's Issues), Conner said, is the group's "literary foremother." "POW-WOW hosted weekly open mic nights on Chicago's South Side, specifically for Black lesbians and their allies until 2012. Quare Square differs with its openness to all queer-identified LGBTQ people of color and all artists, including visual artists, culinary artists, singers, dancers, actors and filmmakers.

"It left a hole in the community, particularly on the South Side," Conner said about the end of POW-WOW's open mics. "So, I started the open mics [for Quare Square] and then I just realized there was so much more work and support that the community needed, particularly for queer artists of color, largely located on the predominantly Black South Side of Chicago. So, I decided to make it into a non-profit that provided more programming and services and networking for that community."

Quare Square's mission statement, as stated on its website, is to be "an artists collective

that seeks to support LGBTQ artists of color in the Midwest by facilitating collaborative works; marketing and advertising; and publication and performances."

Quare Square does open its open mics every second Tuesday night of the month at Jeffery Pub, 7041 S. Jeffery Blvd. The group also co-presents Street Dreamers open mic every first and third Tuesday of the month at the pub. Conner described the open mics as friendly, welcoming and interactive.

The organization also offers Sistah Sinema, a bimonthly screening of films by or about queer women of color. Quare Square delivers Sistah Sinema in partnership with UIC's Gender and Sexuality Center and Gallery 400. The event is held at Gallery 400, located at 400 S. Peoria St.

"Initially, the idea was to have a network of queer artists of color to serve as a support system for them, but also a place where people knew where to go and look if you really wanted to have a more inclusive representation and events and things like that," said Conner.

Currently, Quare Square is a small non-profit organization with four board members, four leadership roles including Conner and a total membership of less than 20. Conner said the priority for 2016 is to gain more interest. She added they are actively seeking new members, tech savvy interns, program/event sponsorships and donations.

"We're looking to increase our membership and increase our partnerships with other organizations and venues, so we can do more programming," said Conner. "We'd like to be able to host writing workshops and retreats for our members and other members of the community at large and one of the personal projects I would be really interested in doing some fundraising because I would really like to provide scholarships to our members who have been accepted to present or attend arts conferences. That's what's in the works."

Conner added her biggest dream for Quare Square is that it someday resembles Cave Canem, a non-profit organization for Black poets.

"It's just this cadre of black poets, so I would like Quare Square to be similar to that; to be able to host writing retreats like they do, boast a really great membership like they have and also be able to command a certain amount of respect and interest from the arts community at large," said Conner. "That's my vision for Quare Square, to be that type of organization that people are submitting membership applications to all the time and then we're also able to make good on the level of support that I'd like to be able to provide our members with. One of the other things I'd like to be able to do is have an annual collaborative project for our members."

For more information about Quare Square Collective, Inc., visit [www.quare2collective.org](http://www.quare2collective.org).

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James Vincent Meredith and Anthony J. Jilka, photos by Jeff Schatzkin

## Siskel Oscars event raises \$57,000

The Gene Siskel Film Center (GSFC) of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's (SAIC) Feb. 28 Academy Awards viewing event, at 164 N. State St., raised more than \$57,000 for the GSFC's diverse programming.

Among other happenings, hosts Tommy Walton (SAIC Fashion Design Department, MasterChef) and Kate Pankoke (Project Runway, Elaya Vaughn Bridal by Kate Pankoke) welcomed guests to the red carpet. In addition, the event welcomed the inaugural VIP lounge.

Also, local figures Ronit Bezalet, Melissa Sage Fadim, Terry Hesser, Christine List, Shahari Moore, Ines Sommer and Kartemquin Films (celebrating its 50th anniversary) were honored for their contributions in film.

**Note:** This event was not sponsored by or affiliated with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

## PFP's LezPlay unveils developments

Pride Films and Plays' (PFP's) LezPlay Program, led by PFP Artistic Associate Amber Snyder and company member Carolyn Reynolds, announced plans for a full year of LezPlay programming in 2016.

—For the first time, PFP will sell an L Pass allowing admittance to two world-premiere productions: Raggedy And, running March 10-April 10, 2016 at Rivendell Theater, and Resolution, running Oct. 10-Nov. 10, also at Rivendell.

—Submissions for the 2016 LezPlay Contest are now being accepted. The contest seeks stories for stage and screen with lesbian characters or themes, written by women-identified writers. (The entry fee is \$15 if the script is received by March 31.) See <https://filmfreeway.com/festival/LezPlay>.

# CHM presenting 'Style' spring festival

The Chicago Humanities Festival has presented the full line-up for its inaugural spring festival, "Style." The title does not simply relate to fashion, according to a press release: "Style governs where writers break a line, how activists present and represent a movement, how we dance to the records, and which we spin over and over and over."

There will be more than 20 events April 28-

May 1.

Style presenters range from Alicia Garza, one of the co-founders of #BlackLivesMatter, to fashion's Iris Apfel, and a number of First Lady Michelle Obama's fashion designers, including Isabel and Ruben Toledo, Maria Pinto and Rachel Roy. Pulitzer Prize winner Robin Givhan and inclusive retail and disability advocate Liz Jackson will also be presenting.



Mary-Louise Parker.  
Photo by Jerry Nunn

Others who will be at the festival include Huffington Post co-founder and editor-in-chief Arianna Huffington, writer Karl Ove Knausgaard, actress Mary-Louise Parker. Sunday, May 1, will feature three National Book Award winners: Robin Coste Lewis, winner of the 2015 poetry prize for the collection *Voyage of the Sable Venus*; James McBride, winner of the 2014 prize in fiction, now with a new biography of James Brown, *Kill 'em and Leave*; and Andrew Solomon, winner of the 2001 prize for nonfiction who latest book is *Far and Away*.

The full line-up for Style, the first Spring festival from the Chicago Humanities Festival, is available at [chicagohumanities.org/style](http://chicagohumanities.org/style).

## Pride Films names contest finalists

Four new LGBTQ+ plays and one musical have emerged as finalists in Pride Films and Plays' 2016 Great Gay Play and Musical Contest.

They come from writers across the United States, and were selected by a reading team from across the country.

The finalists are:

- All-American Boy, by Donald Gecewicz
- Another Horatio Alger Story, by Jason Jacobs

- Spectacular Brown, by Brian Pracht
- TBD (To Be Determined), by Paul Elliott
- A Woman Onstage, book and lyrics by Stephen deGhelder, music by Brad Simmons

Those five scripts will be performed as enhanced staged readings at the Center on Halsted's Hoover-Leppen, 3656 N. Halsted St., on April 22-24. A performance schedule and slate of directors will be announced soon.

Tickets for the event are pay-what-you-can (\$10 suggested); visit [www.pridefilmsandplays.com](http://www.pridefilmsandplays.com) or 800-737-0984.

## Mr. Leather64TEN to be held March 11-13

Leather-goods retailer Leather64TEN will host a weekend of events to promote its search for the man to be crowned Mr. Leather64TEN 2016.

The weekend (March 11-13) will include various events such as a raffle (with beneficiaries Center on Halsted and Leather Archives & Museum), a stage contest (a qualifying contest for IML 2016, with \$5,000+ in prizes), parties and more.

All events will take place at either Leather64TEN, 6410 N. Clark St., or Jackhammer, 6406 N. Clark St.

See [MrLeather64TEN2016.com](http://MrLeather64TEN2016.com).

## Flower & Garden Show in March

To celebrate Chicago, the Chicago Flower & Garden Show, presented by Mariano's, has a full slate of garden builders creating plans to develop gorgeous gardens interpreting "CHICAGO IS," the show's 2016 theme.

The Chicago Flower & Garden Show will take place March 12-20 at Navy Pier, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year.

Among the show's offerings in 2016 will be "Mariano's Garden," an extension of the horticulture featured daily in Chicago-area Mariano's stores; Brookfield Zoo's garden, with topiary displays; and the Chicago Sculpture Exhibit, which will feature large-scale artwork from local artists.

There will also be tulip and hyacinth gardens, and expanded Kids Activity Garden, and "Aquascape," among other items.

Visit [ChicagoFlower.com](http://ChicagoFlower.com).

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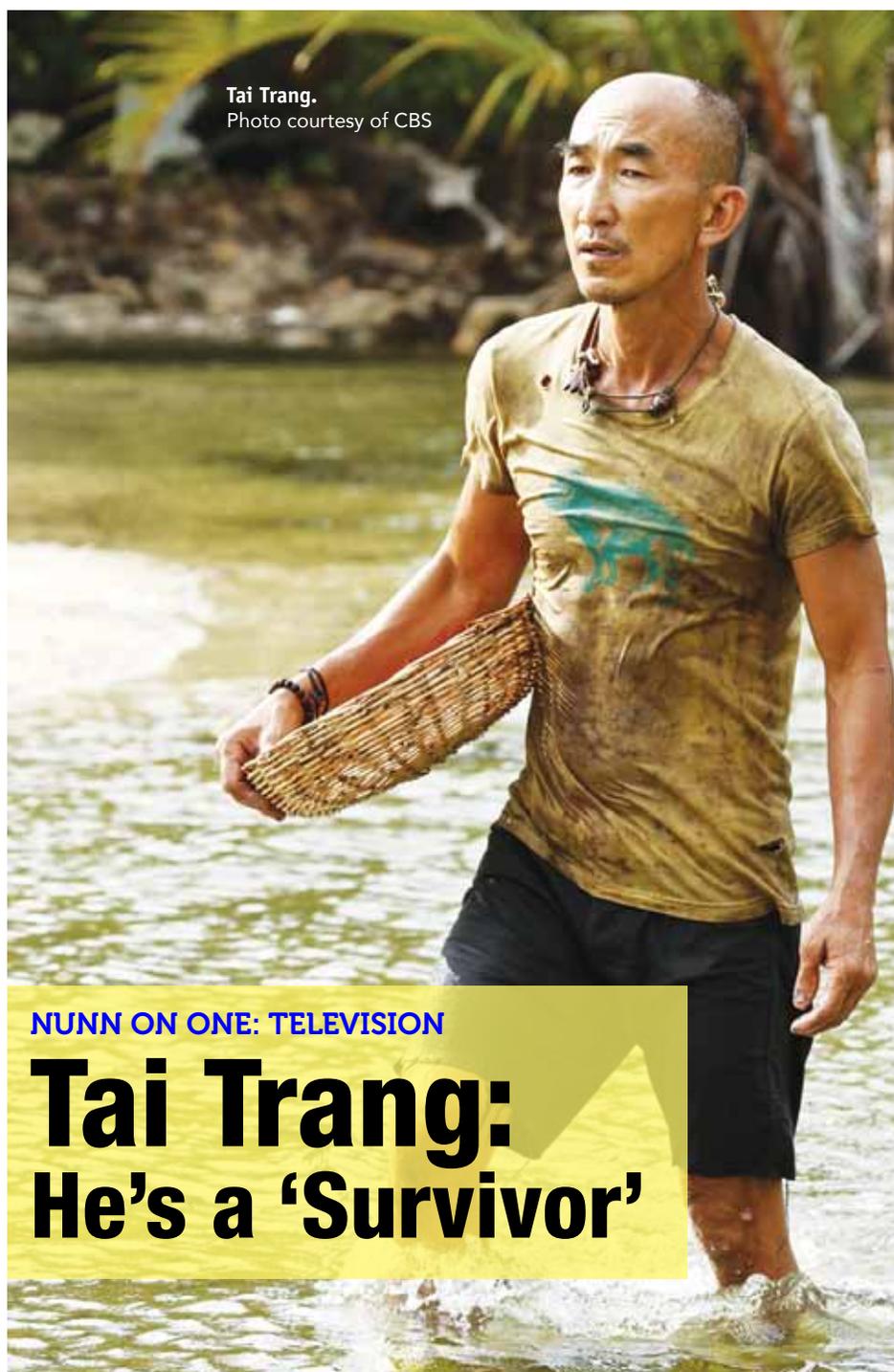
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Tai Trang.  
Photo courtesy of CBS

NUNN ON ONE: TELEVISION

## Tai Trang: He's a 'Survivor'

BY JERRY NUNN

The hit television reality show *Survivor* premiered for U.S. audiences back in 1997. It became a cultural phenomenon and an instant hit, while surviving for 32 seasons now.

This season, *Survivor: Kaoh Rong* is set in Cambodia, where there are three tribes of beauty, brains and brawn.

Hailing from San Francisco, 51-year-old Tai Trang was picked for the beauty tribe. He's participated in the AIDS Life Cycle ride for the past 13 years and raised more than \$75,000 for the LA LGBT Center and San Francisco AIDS Foundation.

This gentle soul responded to some questions from *Windy City Times* about *Survivor*.

**Windy City Times:** Hi, Tai! Start off by describing surviving in the open ocean and your journey to the United States.

Tai Trang: I was born and raised during the war years in Vietnam, I even have a scar from the Tet offensive—[a] bomb shrapnel scar on my head to prove it!

Not funny, but funny that many of my childhood and war memories are the same. In 1979, we escaped the communists by boat and floating on the open sea for 11 days without food and barely any water. There were 262 people cramped onto a little fishing boat. There was this poor woman who got so seasick she kept throwing up on me for the first five days. We floated for eight days total and then we landed on an oil drilling island. The next day the oil company said they will tow our boat to a refugee camp but then they cut the rope when we were out of their territory.

The day after that, my 84-year-old grandma died and we floated in the ocean for another three more days. After landing on a non-inhabited Indonesian island with this near-death or-

deal, we were all grateful for not running into any of the Thai pirates.

We spent a year in Indonesian refugee camp, then ended up in California when I was 15. My life started afresh at an American high school without a word of English. Seven years later, I graduated college and even spent a year living and studying in Florence, Italy. By the way, I learned most of my English from flipping burgers at the Der Weinerschnitzel only six months after being fresh of the boat arriving to America.

America is the land of opportunity and I am so fortunate and lucky to be here. I work hard. I always go after what I want and never take anything for granted.

**WCT: What is your daily life like now, as a gardener?**

TT: I am lucky to work as a gardener for the city and Port of San Francisco. I take care of many city parks along the water front. I climb trees, mow grass, take care of plants and pick up lots of garbage. Why do people litter when the trash can is just a few feet away?

I am happy to be outdoors and see the bay water every day. I have daily encounters with beautifully dressed workers as well as many homeless people using the park. Homelessness is a big and complicated problem to solve. I have gotten complaints but, unless the homeless folks are creating nuisance and threatening the public, they are the citizens of the city and have the right to use the park the same as any one else.

**WCT: Being a beekeeper, have you ever been stung?**

TT: Yes; I have been stung hundreds of times over my 10 years of beekeeping. I rarely get stung anymore, but it still really hurts each time. My body has developed immunity and I do not get a reaction or swollen anymore. Even

at the beginning, I never wore a veil or gloves for fearing of crushing bees.

I am just more comfortable working with my bare hands. I can tell by the way they sound and body language when the bees get upset. I do always have a smoker ready to relax them just in case. I am a pretty high-energy person but when I work with the bees, my whole demeanor somehow changes and I become very relaxed and calm. Bees will feel your tense emotion and react accordingly.

**WCT: What was your journey to being cast on *Survivor*?**

TT: Mark Philpot, my boyfriend, and I applied for *The Amazing Race* in summer 2014. We got noticed but did not make it to the semifinal round.

CBS casting producers for both *Survivor* and *Amazing Race* invited me to send in a tape for *Survivor*. It's funny; at first, I told them let me think about it, and then said "yes" the next day. I am a big fan and know I would be good and really enjoy the physical aspect but was terrified of the much tougher social aspect of the show.

**WCT: Do you still want to be on *The Amazing Race*?**

TT: Yes; we still hope to sometime in the near future. Can you help to get us on?

**WCT: No, but I can help spread the word. Doesn't your personality play into this game as well?**

TT: Yes, but I am too trusting and had reservations whether I can be good at manipulating and betraying. Being the middle child of 11 siblings, I can be the peace maker.

I have people skills and can get along with pretty much anybody. I am small, trustworthy, and non-threatening. I know I can get away with a lot. I am competitive in my own way and believe that the good guy can win *Survivor*.

**WCT: How did you come out of the closet?**

TT: I actually never came out to the family or any relative. They must know by now by watching. I hope they are not shocked when I am announcing I am gay and trying to kiss a straight guy on national television! [Laughs]

Mark and I are completely out in public, work and with all our friends. We have been together for over 10 years now and my mom never asks so I don't tell but, of course, they know. It's an Asian thing. If we don't speak it out loud, then we don't have to address it.

Luckily, my mom already has enough grandchildren so I don't have to worry about carrying on the Trang family name.

I am kind of private and shy when it comes to sharing my personal relationships, anyway. Mark is welcome to all our family functions.

My mom really likes Mark and always ask for his nursing advice and sends food home for him. That is how she shows her acceptance of our relationship.

**WCT: How hard was it leaving Mark at home?**

TT: Leaving Mark for two months without contact was a bit hard, but not as bad as it was for him. Most of the time I am so busy having fun on the show and distracted with challenges, but I do sometimes long for the comfort of him holding me so I can relax and feel safe.

It's *Survivor* and I can never let my guard down and trust any cast completely. Mark and I are so grateful to have a group of amazing gay friends that we call our "family," for support. Some of my best friends are my exes!

**WCT: Your bromance with *Big Brother* past contestant Caleb Reynolds seemed like such a sweet moment.**

TT: Ah, Caleb—so very sweet and such a good sport. I teased and flirted with Caleb a little bit to see how far I could push things. I wondered if actual lips touching would cross his line?

Caleb and I are coming from such different backgrounds. I was worried how we would get along at first—his being Christian with bible verse tattoos on his body, the Southern country-boy attitude versus mine being Asian, gay and an older generation.

**WCT: Did the *Life Cycle* challenges help**

**you prepare for the physicality of *Survivor*?**

TT: Yes. I was living outdoors and sleeping on the hard ground for a whole week. I built endurance and leg strength by sitting on a little bike seat paddling up and down mountains in the California coast for total of 545 miles. It all took some mental intelligence and great patience.

**WCT: You seemed surprised to be on the *Beauty Tribe* but do you see now why you were on there?**

TT: [Laughs] Yes, I am still wondering. I would rather think I fit better in the potpourri tribe. I still laugh when am thinking about being a beauty. Maybe Jeff Probst thinks it's inner beauty, but we all have inner beauty. I believe everyone is nice and do nice things for people they know. You just have to know where to look or be patient to let it come out.

**WCT: You have brought attention to being respectful of our environment on a show where it is survival. Is it possible to have respect for the environment and survive in harsh conditions?**

TT: Being respectful to the environment is a necessity to the survival of our human race. We have to take care of our home, the Earth or else it would not be able support or habitable to the near future generations.

Nature is happily getting along well with our human interference.

**WCT: You currently have an idol. Is it more important to be likable or have the safety of an idol?**

TT: Likability is such an interesting trait to have. Everyone want to hang out, have fun, and be likable but then it's a dangerous thing also because no one want to bring them to the final worrying they will gain the jury votes.

Having the idol or letting people think you have the idol is very powerful. It can save you more than just one tribal, that is if you are smart and can play it strategically.

**WCT: Are you surprised how well you are doing at the challenges?**

TT: No, I am 51 but feel like I am in my thirties. I can do pretty much any thing the youngsters can and I think I am better at it, too. I am physically fit with great endurance. I can swim, solve puzzles and have great balance. I run too, will brag that I have completed over 25 marathons. I even came in first and second, in 2007 and 2005, at the Nike Women's Race for my age group in the men's division.

**WCT: If you won a million dollars, what would you spend it on?**

TT: I would buy a little gentle farm with some land on the rolling hills of Northern California—hopefully, by the sea. I would have various [hooved] animals for milk and cheesemaking, lots of chickens and bees, plus an exotic fruit tree orchard and, of course, a little pond with a rowboat.

That is my fantasy of retirement. I have a romantic idea of going back to basics and living off the land. We are currently in California and I can probably only afford a little shed right now.

A million dollars goes along way in Cambodia and South East Asia, but you have to wait and see how long I survive.

**WCT: What did you learn from being on *Survivor*?**

TT: I think when we are stripped down to basic needs for survival, even though it's for a game and million dollars, we can't change our true nature and can't hide from who we really are. Nothing is staged or produced, *Survivor* is real, including all the good and bad that you see on TV.

**WCT: When are you coming to visit your fans in Chicago?**

TT: Do I have fans? How many? I would love to come visit. I heard you guys have great restaurants, art museums, and it's a place where all the women are strong and the men are pretty.

Doesn't Darnell Hamilton from this season live in Chicago? Please say "hi" to him for me!

**Survivor: Kaoh Rong battles it out Wednesdays at 7 p.m. central on CBS. Past episodes can be found at [www.cbs.com](http://www.cbs.com).**



weekly nightlife section in



@MOSPHERE

After five years, the final DIVA, Sun., March 6.  
Photos by Jerry Nunn



**SIDETRACK**

Matt Alber performs for The Legacy Project.  
Photos by Kirk Williamson

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## THE SOFO TAP

Chicago welcomes the girls of RuPaul's Drag Race: Season 8.  
Photos by Kirk Williamson

# the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in  
WINDY CITY TIMES

### SAVOR

## Oyster Bah

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Be warned: **Oyster Bah** (1962 N. Halsted St.; OysterBah.com) is a bit deceptive.

I was even thrown off by the restaurant's name—a take on the East Coast pronunciation of "bar" as well as a shortened version of "bar on Halsted." (At least, that's what the bartender told me, and he seemed pretty trustworthy.)

However, this is no Long John Silver's. In fact, Oyster Bah has some of the best seafood I've tasted in Chicago in quite some time.

The decor is about what one might expect in a seafood spot—lots of wood as well as boat and crustacean motifs. There's even a cozy Crab Cellar that's for smaller parties.

Given its name, it follows that one of the culinary specialties is—cha-ching!—oysters. It's a testament to this place that this diner (who's not the biggest fan of shellfish, whether they're oysters, clams or mussels) absolutely loved the broiled oysters, which come with smoked bacon and casino butter.

After that, it was a succession of succulent dishes. Ordering the New England stuffies (quahogs,



Interior and Maine lobster roll at Oyster Bah.  
Photos by Anjali Pinto

celery and chorizo) should be considered mandatory, and the smoked trout dip is tasty without coming across as fishy. The shrimp and grits features lobster-tomato gravy (a little gravy goes a long way)—but it's the Maine lobster roll that should be considered a masterpiece, with the right proportions of lobster, celery and mayo.

Being from the East Coast myself, I'm quite the crab-cake snob—which is why I'm pleased to say that Oyster Bah's crab cakes almost took me back home. (A few other restaurants could learn not to use so much filler.) Even the roasted broccoli (with garlic, chili and parmesan) is a delight. By the way, there are also two desserts—including coconut cake—that bear ordering to go if you're too full while you're there.

Be sure to check out this spot; you will not be disappointed. Already, the three-month-old restaurant has proven to be popular, as even inclement weather couldn't keep daters and families away on a recent night.



## MARY'S ATTIC

Don't be green with envy over these shots from the Green Tea in A-ville party, Sun., March 6.  
Photos by Jerry Nunn

# nightspots the big TO-DO

OUR WEEKLY PICKS TO PLAN  
YOUR NIGHTLIFE CALENDAR



### Fabitat: Freakshow

Wed., March 9, 10 pm  
Double Door's Door No. 3,  
1551 N. Damen Ave.

A freaky big top ball with hair-raising performances from burlesque's Ray Gunn, femme fatale Gigi DeLuxe, sword swallower Sally Marvel, queens Joan Waters, Curlene Ribbon and Lucy Stooile.



### Latrice Royale: Here's To Life!

Sat., March 12, 9 pm  
Park West,  
322 W. Armitage Ave.

See RuPaul's Drag Race favorite Latrice Royale in this one-woman show promoting her debut CD. Tickets available at [www.etix.com](http://www.etix.com) or by calling 800-514-3849.



### All Things St. Beyonce

Wed., March 16, 9 pm  
Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St.

A special St. Pat's edition of the monthly Beyonce party, with videos, concert footage, comedy and showtune clips. Performances by DiDa Ritz. Beyonce dance-off contest with host Dixie Lynn Cartwright.



"If you're a cupcake maker and someone wants a cupcake, make them a cupcake. Let's not have a big lawsuit or argument over all this stuff—move on."—**John Kasich** refers to people like bakers who feel their religious rights are infringed upon by providing refreshments for same-sex weddings or serving gay people. Finally, a Republican who isn't insane.

There are plenty of parties around the country where gay people get together and celebrate any number of things. But there is only one Winter Party. Sponsored by the LGBTQ Task Force in Miami, this six-day event features cocktail parties, pool parties, dance parties, art shows and beach parties. Last year, the festivities brought in more than \$1 million for grassroots community organizations. Unofficially, I'm told that they have exceeded last year's record-breaking amount. Congrats to everyone involved. Check out TaskForce.org for more info.

This year's Academy Awards brought in the lowest ratings since 2008. Well, you can't blame **Chris Rock** or even the show itself. Simply put, people didn't even bother to tune in. Why? Because the general public wasn't invested in the films nominated. And while there was one acting award at the 30-minute mark, it took two more hours before something else happened of any interest. So when people talk about what could be cut, I could have trimmed those two hours to a few minutes. And why, oh why, would a show that typically runs long, start on the East Coast at 8:30 p.m. on a Sunday? Start it at 8 p.m. Start it at 7 p.m. But, for the love of God, get it done by 11.

While I filed my report after the ceremony, a few things happened at the parties that warrant mention. At **Elton John's** soiree, the incorrigible **Carson Kressley** (now described as a stylist) was all over ABC7 reporter **Elex Michaelson**—who defines the word "dashing." Elex tweeted a photo with Carson being ... well, Carson and called him "hilarious!" I've been called hilarious. You know what that means? "I'll never sleep with you." Carson tweeted back "It's called flirting Elex!"

Then there's **Sam Smith**. It's been downhill ever since he had the statuette in his hand. First, Sam misquoted **Sir Ian McKellen**, talking about how no openly gay man has ever won an Oscar. I corrected him shortly thereafter. Then Sir Ian tweeted, "I'd said no openly gay actor had received #Oscars—that doesn't detract from #sam-smithworld achievement. Congratulations to him @ all others!" Talk about handling it in a classy way.

Of course, there's **Dustin Lance Black's** way. He immediately took to Twitter and posted a link to his 2009 acceptance speech and added, "Hey @SamSmithWorld, if you have no idea who I am, it may be time to stop texting my fiancé." Most people took this as catty and bitchy. I mean, you've got an Oscar, you've got money, you're engaged to a hot guy half your age—why not let it go? I'd certainly take the high road (although I'd be wondering what Sam Smith is doing with **Tom Daley's** phone number). Following the backlash, DLB said he meant his tweet to be taken humorously. Because, if there's one thing we know about Lance—aside from his lack of condom use when receiving anal sex—it's that he's a LAUGH RIOT! He's the next Lucy! Whenever I go into a Dustin Lance Black movie, I know I'm gonna laugh so hard, I may pee!

While **Eddie Redmayne** was much-applauded for his work in *The Danish Girl* ("These are good



Sam Smith has had a rough ride since the Oscars, Billy says. Instagram photo

danish, girl!"), he spent the day before the Oscars visiting the LGBT Center's Youth Center in Hollywood and met with some 70 queer, homeless youth and fed them breakfast—courtesy of Focus Features, the distributor of *The Danish Girl*. (I hope they served danish.) He also filmed a moving PSA urging people to donate and help save the lives of at-risk youth. You check out all the great work The Center does on its website, LALGBTCenter.org.

Brace yourself—it's time for another installment of *Fayewatch*. As I already told you, **Miss Dunaway** emerged from her crypt for the Vanity Fair Oscar Viewing Party. Why she's never at the Oscars themselves is one of those unsolved mysteries, but maybe this bon mot will explain that. Days after the Academy Awards, a friend saw her in the produce section of a popular West Hollywood supermarket. This is no surprise—celebrities need groceries, too. Our spy noticed that La Dunaway was wearing what he described as "plastic surgical gloves." (On BillyMasters.com, I'll show you why Faye has her hands covered up.) Then he noticed that Faye was talking to the tomatoes. Yes, TALKING! He tried to eavesdrop, but Faye gave him a dirty look and he scuttled off. One can only imagine what the tomatoes said back!

**Zac Efron** was in Miami this weekend filming the big-screen version of *Baywatch* (playing the David Charvet role). If you thought he was hot before ... well, words just fail me. Happily, the photos on BillyMasters.com is worth a thousand words—at least!

Our "Ask Billy" question came from a friend who saw me on Facebook. But I'm gonna answer it like any other query. Steve from Los Angeles asks: "Are you just being good? Or are you keeping those nude pics of Gus Kenworthy's boyfriend, **Matthew Wilkas**, for a later date?"

First, let's identify the players. Gus Kenworthy is a 24-year-old Olympic skier. His previous boyfriend was photographer Robin MacDonald (age 30). His current boyfriend is 38-year-old actor Matthew Wilkas. And on New Year's Eve, he was heavily flirting with Anderson Cooper, who I believe is in his mid-70s. (OK, he's only 48—and looks damn good for any age.) Since I point out ages when someone's dating a much younger fella, it's only fair to do the same when it's reversed. Rumor has it, the nudes of Matthew Wilkas were snagged from his Grindr account, which is now deactivated since he's no longer single. There are a lot of photos. They are most definitely him. They are most definitely impressive. And they can most definitely be seen on BillyMasters.com.

When we're exposing a skier's beau, it's all downhill and definitely time to end yet another column. With the Oscars over, it's time to get back to business and check out [www.BillyMasters.com](http://www.BillyMasters.com), the site that always goes for the gold. If you have a question, send it along to me at [Billy@BillyMasters.com](mailto:Billy@BillyMasters.com), and I promise to get back to you before Sam Smith fits a whole foot in his mouth! So, until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.

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## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## Wed., March 9

**Black Lives Matter: Our Girls Matter A conference in honor of National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day** Free conference on HIV vulnerability among Black cis and trans women. National and Chicago-area health experts, providers and prevention specialists explore community engagement and mobilization. Speakers Dr. Lisa Henry-Reid (Chair, Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine), Dazon Dixon Diallo (SisterLove Inc.) and Michelle Hoersch (Office of Women's Health). RSVP online. 9:00am - 3:00pm West Point Missionary Baptist Church, 3566 S Cottage Grove Ave., Chicago Tickets: <http://events.aidschicago.org/site/Calendar?id=101781&view=Detail>

**#PrEP4Love LIVE presents FORMATION** An evening dedicated to all of the #carefreeblackgirls in Chicago and beyond. Help #ContractHeat and #TransmitLove as we honor National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day and Women's History Month with #PrEP4Love and Project Elevate, two new cutting edge HIV and STI awareness campaigns in Chicago. Live performances, raffle prizes, photo booth, food and more. Free. Childcare on site. RSVP online. 6:00pm - 9:00pm West Point Missionary Baptist Church, 3566 S Cottage Grove Ave., Chicago Tickets: <https://www.facebook.com/events/122193661503653/>

**Book Reading and Signing: Teaching and Learning on the Verge: Democratic Education in Action** By Shanti Elliott. Based on 20 years of teaching experience and research in schools across the country, demonstrates how educators can integrate civic engagement, multicultural literacy, and leadership into their classrooms and programs. 7:30pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com/book/9780807756416>



## DAYS OF OUR 'LIVES' Wed., March 9

Dr. Lisa Henry-Reid is among those speaking at the Our Girls Matter conference. Photo by Carrie Maxwell

## Thursday, March 10

**Standing Up: From Punchline to Spotlight** Writer Jason Heidemann moderates a panel that includes Andy Eninger, head of the Writing Program at Second City, and comedy club owner Mary Lindsey for a discussion on the history and struggle of queerness in Chicago's comedy scene. Cost: \$20, \$15 members and students. 5:30pm - 7:30pm Chicago History Museum 1601 N Clark Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=11031>

**Bi\* Discussion Group** Chicago Bisexual / Queer Community meeting every other Thursday to chat about community, upcoming bisexual events, bisexual concerns. 7:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago

**New Town Writers Workshop** Participants are asked to bring copies of their writing so that listener can follow the texts. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Gerber Hart Library and Archives 6500 N Clark St. <http://www.gerberhart.org>

**Raggedy And benefit night for Illinois Safe Schools Project** Fast-paced ultramodern comedy of manners. When the perfect poet is needed for the impending inauguration of America's first female president, Ondi Rivers, a trans woman, is selected. Another will take place March 11 to benefit The Legacy Walk. 7:30pm Rivendell Theatre 5779 North Ridge Ave.; 800-737-0984

## Friday, March 11

**Weeks of "The Danish Girl" Einer Morgans Wegener and Gerda Wegener** The artist whose life story was featured in the movie and her wife. 6:00pm Woman Made Gallery 685 N. Milwaukee Ave. Chicago 312-738-0400 <http://www.womanmade.org>

**Mr. Leather 64 Ten contest weekend** Are you the next Mr. Leather 64 Ten? \$15/\$20 6:00pm Jackhammer 6406 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.leather64ten.com/Tickets>: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2503774>

**Queer Genre Fiction Discussion Group** A discussion of Kindred by Octavia E. Butler. Free. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Gerber Hart Library and Archives 6500 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.gerberhart.org/events/bookgroups#genre-fiction>

## Saturday, March 12

**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 St., <http://dbsa-glbtc-chicago.com>

**44th Annual Antique American Glass and Pottery Show and Sale** Presented by the 20-30-40 Glass Society of Illinois. \$8 per person for both days (incl. March 13). For more information email JSANTIQUES@aol.com. 10:00am - 5:00am Concord Plaza Midwest Conference Center, 401 West Lake St., Northlake <http://20-30-40glasssoci>

ety.org

**Fundraising brunch for Traffick Free** In honor of International women's Day and to raise funds to open a drop-in-center in Chicago for victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation. \$40. 10:00am - 1:00pm Inspiration Kitchen, 3504 W. Lake St., Chicago Tickets: <http://traffickfree.org/events>

**Sistah Sinema Chicago screening While You Weren't Looking** This feature, produced by The Out In Africa Gay & Lesbian Film Festival, takes a look at South Africa through the lives and experiences of a cross section of Cape Town queers. \$10. at door 2:00pm Gallery 400, 400 S. Peoria St., Chicago [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3v\\_E75-T2M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3v_E75-T2M)

**2nd Annual International Women's Day Dance** Hosted by LBTQ Giving Council of Chicago Foundation for Women. 7:00pm - 12:00am National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture 3015 W. Division St. Tickets: <http://www.cfw.org/?event=2nd-annual-international-womens-day-dance>

**Cardiknox with Carly Rae Jepsen** Cardiknox, L.A. dance music duo composed of Lonnie Angle and Thomas Dutton 8:00pm Metro Chicago 3730 N Clark Chicago <http://www.cardiknox.com>

## Sunday, March 13

**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>

**Clarence Darrow annual commemorative wreath-tossing and symposium** A tribute on the anniversary of Darrow's death. Hanke Gratteau, director of the Cook County Sheriff's Justice Institute. will speak on Cook County Jail: Then and Now, The Impact of Poverty and Racism 10:00am - 12:00am Wreaththrowing east of Clarence Darrow Bridge, Jackson Park, symposium in Rosenwald Room, Museum of Science and Industry 773-387-2394 <http://www.darrowbridge.org>

**Der Rosenkavalier** Delectably bittersweet romantic comedy, sublimely beautiful music, plus love triangles and double-cross-

dressings!. 1:00pm Lyric Opera Civic Opera House 20 N.Wacker Dr. Chicago 312-827-5600 Tickets: <http://lyricopera.org/rosenkavalier>.

**Mending the Sisterhood & Ending Women's Bullying**, by Susan Skog Skog spent 16 months interviewing women about their experiences with woman vs. woman bullying in settings ranging from the workplace to parenting groups. Reading and signing. 4:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

## Monday, March 14

**Bernie Sanders Support Event** The evening before the Illinois Primary, social networking, Caribbean buffet, live painting by Chicago-based rapper and graffiti artist DMNOLOGY, musical guests The Get Up with the Get Downs, Gizzae Reggae Band, Awdazcate & Pugs Atomz, Cojack and Shadow Master MC. \$30; \$25 for those with proof of voter registration or commitment to volunteer. 21+ 6:00pm The Wild Hare 2610 N Halsted, Chicago

## Tuesday, March 15

**Women's Book Group** Led by Women & Children First co-founder Linda Bubon. Meets on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm. 7:30pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com/womens>

## Wed., March 16

**Chicago Foundation for Women 2016 Impact Awards** The 2016 Impact Awards celebrates five Chicago-area women and men for their dedication to increasing resources and opportunities for women and girls in the Chicago area. 6:00pm - 8:00pm Venue SIX10, Spertus Institute, 610 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago Tickets: <http://www.cfw.org/?event=2016-impact-awards>

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Tom Branson's chauffeur uniform from Downton Abbey.

### 'Downton' exhibit extended thru May 29

The Richard H. Driehaus Museum, 40 E. Erie St., will exhibit "Dressing Downton: Changing Fashion for Changing Times" through May 29.

May 8 had been the original end date.

The exhibit features more than 35 costumes from the popular British television series Downton Abbey. The show is filming its sixth and final season.

The award-winning costumes are produced by renowned London costume house Cosprop Ltd. Many use original fabrics and embellishments from the early 20th century, while others are re-created from old photographs, paintings, patterns, and magazine pictures.

Due to the anticipated popularity of the exhibition, Driehaus visitors will be required to purchase advance tickets online or by phone. Tickets are available for purchase, at [DriehausMuseum.org](http://DriehausMuseum.org) or 312-482-8933, ext. 21.



Martha Levinson's coat from Downton Abbey.



The physique competition from Gay Games 9 in Cleveland in 2014.  
Photo by Lynn Lynch

## Gay Games ends merger talks

On Feb. 28—following seven years of continuing negotiations—the Federation of Gay Games' (FGG's) board of directors voted to end further discussions with the Gay & Lesbian International Sport Association (GLISA) to consider creating a new unified organization to present a singular quadrennial global LGBT+ sports, culture and human-rights event.

The FGG released a statement on [GayGames.org](http://GayGames.org), signed by co-presidents Joanie Evans of London and Kurt Dahl of Chicago.

In part, the letter says, "We could not justify the major investment required to launch a new organization now. Doing so would require valuable financial and human resources that could better be spent helping Gay Games 10: Paris 2018 be the best Gay Games ever."

However, FGG said it remains open to working with GLISA.

Gay Games 10 will take place in Paris on Aug. 4-12, 2018. Registration opens later this year. Further information can be found at <https://www.paris2018.com/>.

GLISA will oversee its North America OutGames in St. Louis this May, a World OutGames in Miami in 2017 and another North America OutGames in 2020. See [www.glisa.org/outgames/world-outgames/](http://www.glisa.org/outgames/world-outgames/).

## 'Carmina Burana' March 19

WCPA's (Windy City Performing Arts') Windy City Gay Chorus and Windy City Treble Quire will perform composer Carl Orff's operatic classic Carmina Burana on Sat, March 19, at 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. at First United Methodist Church at The Chicago Temple, 77 W. Washington St.

Admission is \$18 (general admission)-\$30 (VIP) in advance, and \$10 (students/children)-\$20 at the door.

Tickets are available now at <http://wcpacarmineburana.brownpapertickets.org>.



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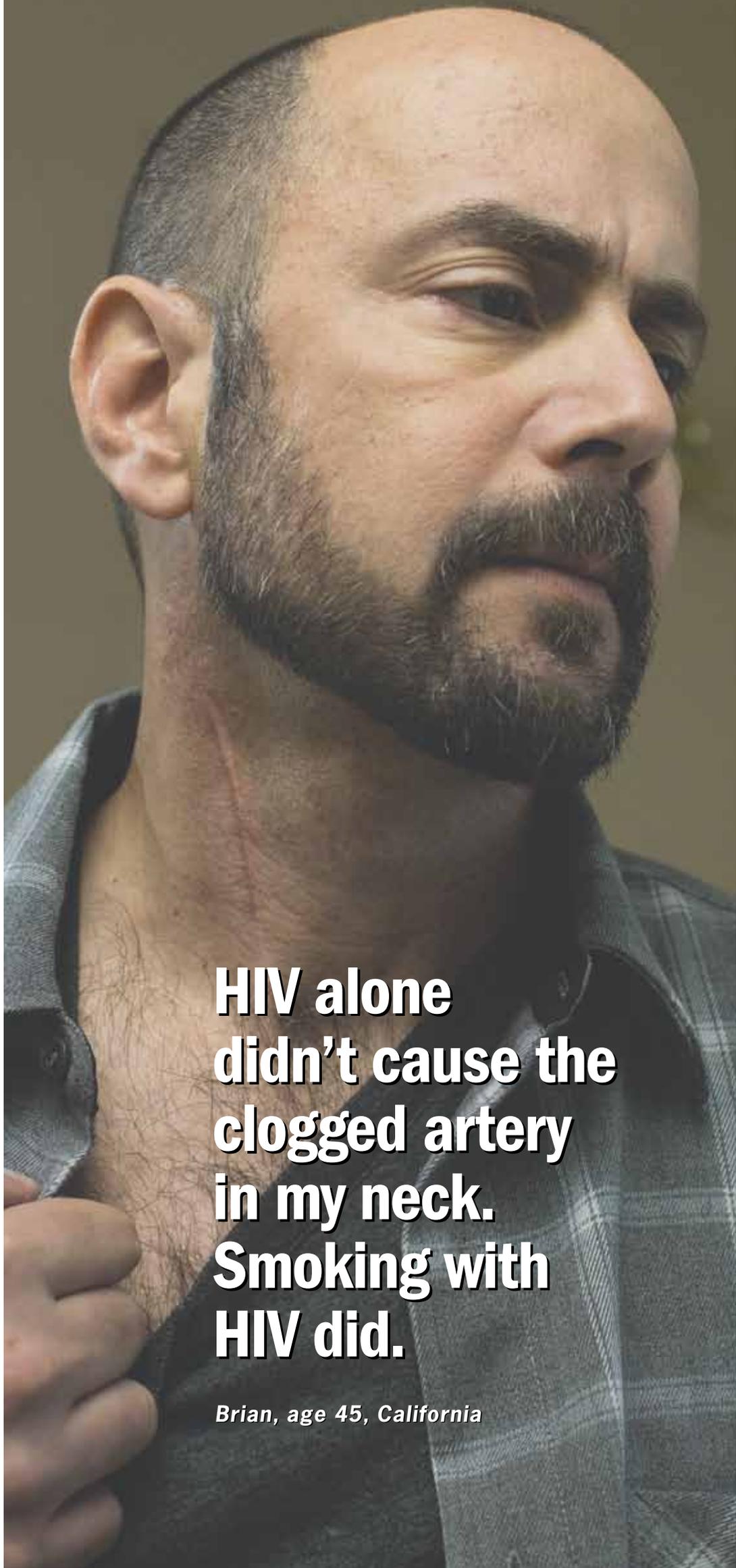
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