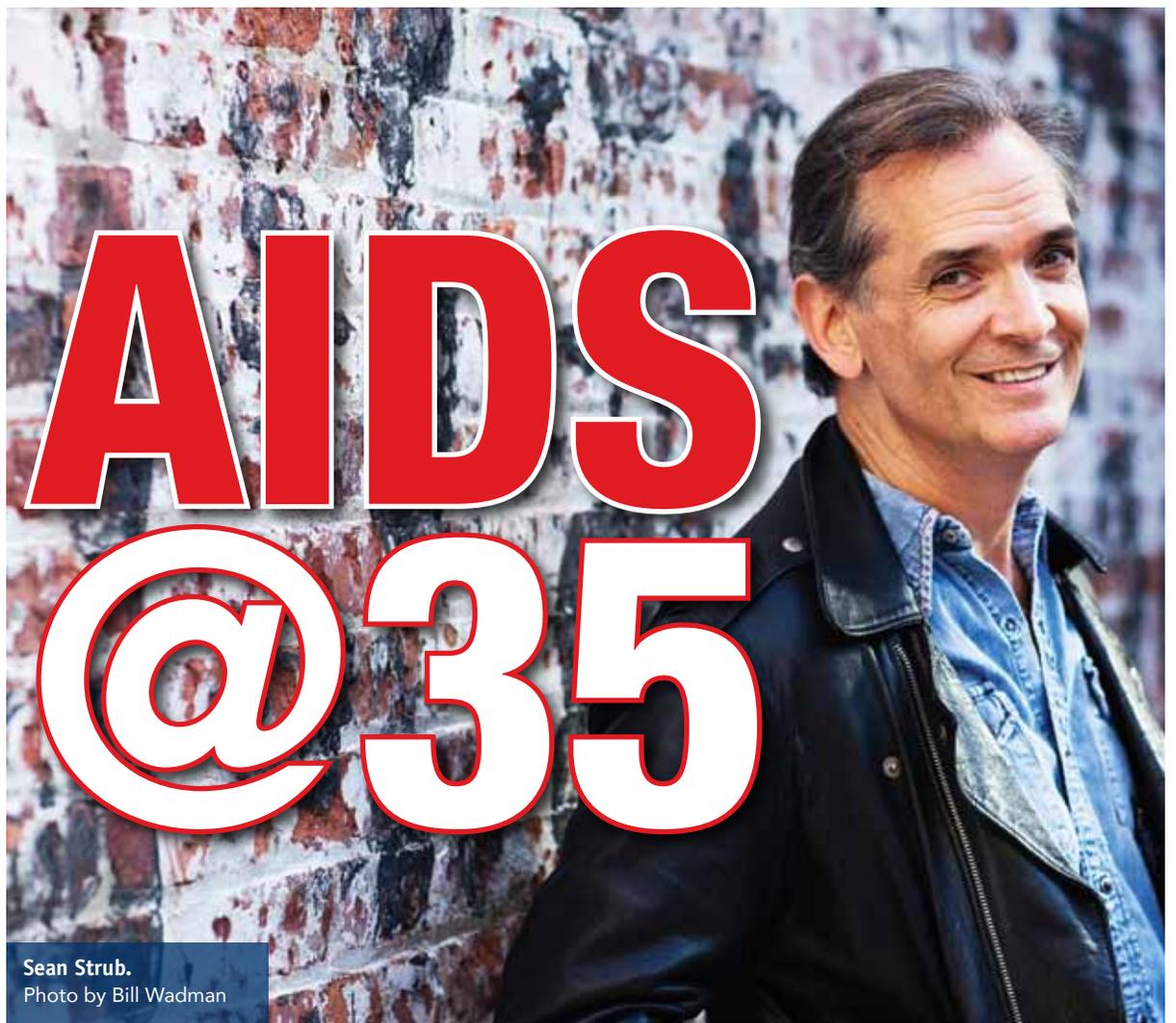




**CITIZEN JANE**  
 Jane Lynch is giving Chicago a song-and-dance.  
 Photo by Jake Bailey 23



Sean Strub.  
 Photo by Bill Wadman

# Sean Strub speaks about the HIV/AIDS crisis

BY MATT SIMONETTE

On June 5, 1981, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC, now the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) published in its Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) that there were five cases—all gay men in Los Angeles—of pneumocystis carinii pneumonia (PCP). Two of the men had died.

That report set the stage for the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the United States and around the world. In the 35 years since, about 71 million have been infected with HIV worldwide, while about 34 million have died from complications of the disease. Tens of thousands mobilized to call for significant action from politicians, health providers, drug companies and myriad stakeholders.

“Looking back on all we accomplished together is equal parts heartbreaking and uplifting,” said GMHC (Gay Men’s Health Crisis) CEO Kelsie Louie. “When we begged for help in the places that had the ability to provide assistance, the doors were closed because fear and hysteria ruled the day. Our response was simple; we will do it ourselves—and we did.”

Among those who mobilized was writer and activist Sean Strub. Strub, the founder of POZ Magazine, among other publications, was a longtime member of ACT UP New York and took part in a number of political and creative endeavors over the years. He was the first HIV-positive candidate to run for federal office, for example, and also produced the play *The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me* in the early 1990s. Strub was re-

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**SHU-JU ADA CHENG**  
 DePaul professor speaks out on racial, LGBT issues.  
 Photo from Cheng 6

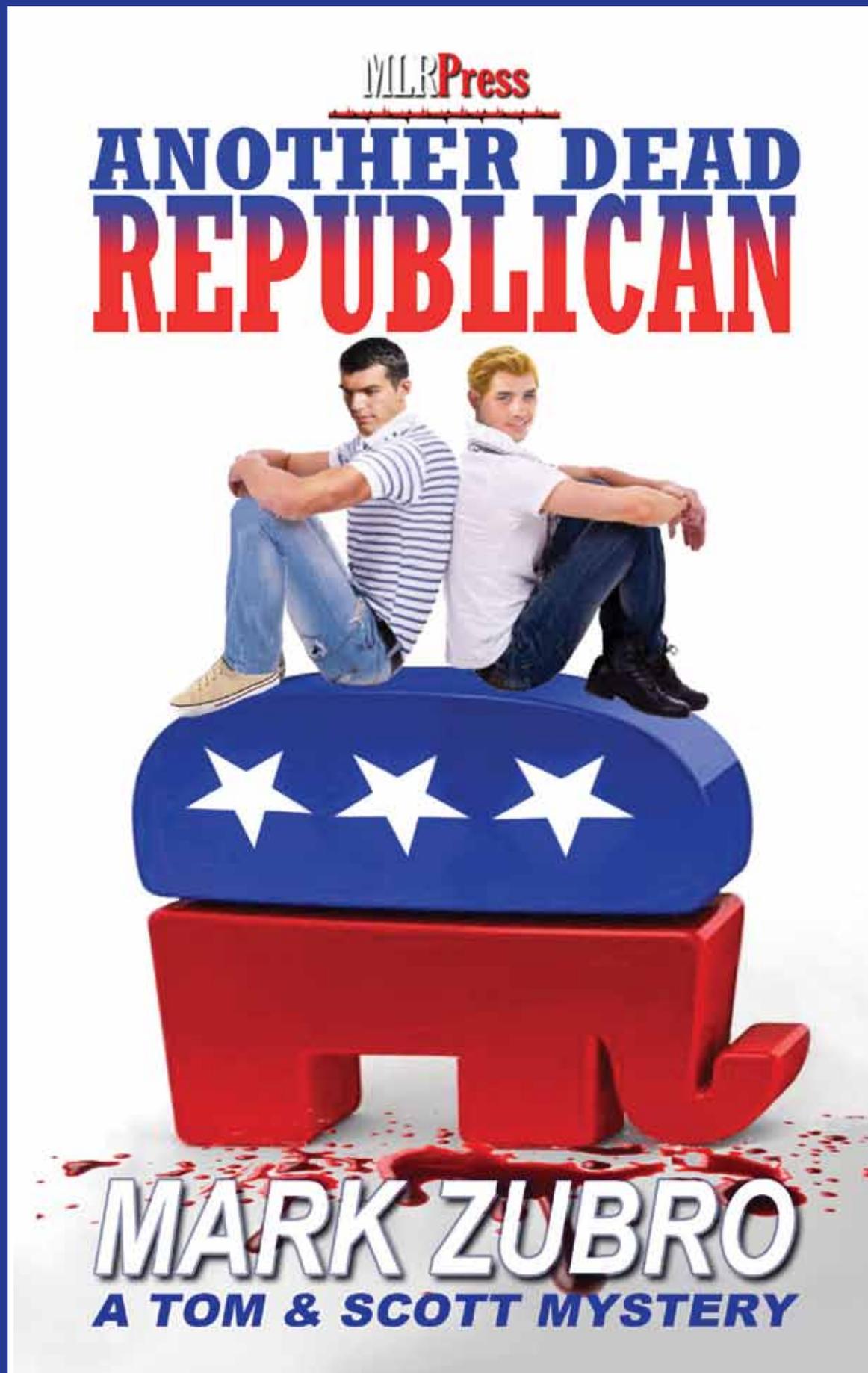


**OUT OF THE OFFICE**  
 Annual LGBT event kicks off Pride Month.  
 Photo of Gerardo Rodriguez and Kim Hunt by Gretchen Rachel Hammond 13



**SAMANTHA MONTGOMERY**  
 Bi singer is subject of movie *Presenting Princess Shaw*.  
 Photo from Magnolia Pictures 28

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### A VIEW TO A BRILL

Author Alida Brill (left) talks about her book *Dear Princess Grace, Dear Betty: The Memoir of A Romantic Feminist*.  
 PR photo

### BROTHERS IN ARMS



Australian brother act Atlas Genius talks about family and the singer "Molecules."  
 Photo by Jerry Nunn

### FIVE ALIVE

A local Vietnamese restaurant and Cheyenne Jackson's new CD are among Five Worth Finding.

### SIMPLY THE 'QUEST'

WCT reviews the book *All the Rage: A Quest*.

### THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Barbra Streisand, Sam Champion and Lin-Manuel Miranda.

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# New Equality Illinois CEO to launch listening tour

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Brian Johnson, who, on June 1, took the reins as the new CEO of Equality Illinois, said that he was attracted to the position for two reasons.

"I felt this incredible gratitude for the right to get married," he said. "I just got married three weeks ago. I felt incredibly grateful for the leaders that came before me and led the fight that gave us this incredible opportunity. But on top of that, I was getting incredibly frustrated with the number of people I'd hear say things like 'mission accomplished' in terms of social justice. Particularly, I remember reading that when the Empire State Pride Agenda closed. They said, 'Mission accomplished.'"

Johnson was announced as the replacement for outgoing CEO Bernard Cherkasov at the end of April. Although he's been in Chicago for about a year and a half, Johnson was previously active in education and politics, primar-



**Brian C. Johnson.**  
Photo courtesy of Equality Illinois

ily in California. He was executive director of Teach for America Los Angeles, then Larchmont Schools, a small public charter school network. He also ran for the California State Assembly in 2012, losing by only a handful of votes. He was most recently vice-president of regional impact for Leadership for Educational Impact, a nonprofit building leadership among Teach for America teachers.

"To me this work is about how issues of race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, schools and communities all can intersect. And personally, the opportunity for me to lead with my full identity as a gay man and as part of as part of an LGBTQ advocacy organization is exciting," he said.

His first order of business in the new job is a listening tour across the state, he said.

"I want to make sure that we are listening to people in the full diversity of our community," Johnson said. "But I also want to make sure that we have the door open to people in intersecting communities—young people, people of color, people in all income-streams. Finally, I just want to make sure that we are

talking to people across the entire state—that is important to us."

He added that the organization would soon be at work on its next strategic plan: "We really need to listen to our stakeholders and constituents, champions and allies. And I think, with me being new, it gives me the chance to go out and build relationships."

Getting input from the community, he said, was a skill he built up while running for office.

"That really forced me to understand what it meant to go out into the community and understand a community, to ask people, 'Where are you hurting? What are your fears?'" Johnson said. "That process will serve us well at Equality Illinois. When I was a candidate, I personally knocked on 4,000 doors and called 2,500 voters. That process of sitting down and listening to people, trying to truly understand their hopes and fears, will serve us well."

He added that he was distressed by the number of religious freedom bills coming down the pike in many states across the country. "We had the risk of people taking their foot off the gas [after marriage equality was settled], but there are so many other issues. If you are a transgendered youth, a low-income lesbian of color, or an elderly gay man relying on social services, marriage is great, but there are so many more fights that need to happen."

The next strategic will carry Equality Illinois up until about 2020, Johnson added, noting that many of the organization's future goals depend on what he and his colleagues hear on their tour in the weeks ahead.

"I do know that there are injustices that are going on across this state," he said. "It is worrying to me about the level of endangerment and stigmatization of transgender Illinoisans face. It concerns that we still have a gay panic defense as a permissible defense to violent crimes and murder. It concerns me that not all of our LGBT youth are fully safe and accepted at schools. It concerns me that we haven't fully made sure that all of our documentation, birth certificates and records aren't fully aligned to an individual's gender identity. These things concern me, but what issues boil to the top will depend on what people are saying on the ground."

## South Side has new LGBTQ+ drop-in

There is a new drop-in on Chicago's South Side.

POP, or People Organizing Progress, is now offering a weekly LGBTQ+ affirming drop-in program, open Thursdays 4-7 p.m. It is located in Hyde Park, on the corner of 55th Street and Lake Park Avenue, in suite 205 of the Deco Arts building.

In addition to serving hot meals at 5 p.m., there are HIV and STI testing, PrEP and linkage to care, resource counseling for housing, medical care, GED program, access to IDs, legal support, mental-health services, access to bus cards and personal items, and more.

For more information, visit <http://hive-elimination.uchicago.edu/> or email [rhill3@medicine.bsd.uchicago.edu](mailto:rhill3@medicine.bsd.uchicago.edu).

## GUEST COLUMN

BY TONI WEAVER



## PFLAG mom making a difference

*This column is by Toni Weaver, retiring president of the PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois, from her column in the group's Open Doors newsletter.*

Recommended reading: May 22 New York Times editorial "An Openly Gay Man Runs the Army."

Five years ago this would have been unimaginable. Don't Ask, Don't Tell had not yet been repealed. That breakthrough came on Sept. 20, 2011. Now, not only can gay, bisexual and lesbian people serve openly in the military (transgender people hopefully soon will be able to), but the Army itself is being led by a totally out gay man.

Remember the fear mongering. Straight guys wouldn't want to be billeted with a gay man; they might get sexually attacked. Straight guys didn't want gay guys leering at them as they showered or changed clothes. Somehow the unit would be weaker and less able to carry out its mission.

There was less fear of lesbians and therefore less uproar about them serving in the military. However, simply by virtue of their sexual orientation, they were still perceived to be a threat ... somehow. Likewise, there seems to be much less hullabaloo on transmen using bathrooms (Is the subtle message here to beware of cismen?).

I see parallels in today's battle over bathroom use. Fear mongering is still at work. Convince parents that their children are at risk if transgender people use the bathroom that matches their gender identity. We can't let "men" mingle with women in the rest room, the other side says. (It's too bad that we have an "us" and "them.")

If only the people who oppose allowing transgender people to use the bathroom that matches their interior sense of who they are could sit down, one-on-one, with a transgender person or in the case of a child, with the child's parents. If only these folks could be made to understand that a transgender person isn't going to go into a restroom and "flash" everyone else. Those body parts that are most in conflict with self-identity are going to be kept hidden, not put on display for all to see. Multiply this scenario many times over so that multiple stories are shared. Let each side talk over their fears, openly, honestly and respectfully. This is what is meant by education. Surely open dialogue would go a long way toward dispelling fear.

The argument, though, is taking on a subtle change. The focus now seems to be shifting to the possibility that cisgender men will don a dress in order to gain access to women's restrooms for the purpose of leering at or even attacking women and children, claiming a right to be there because they are transgender. Therefore, the solution as they see it is to bar all transgender people from using the bathroom of the gender with which they identify. Even if a person's genitals have been surgically refashioned, use DNA to protect the sanctity of the bathroom.

Could it happen? I suppose so. Anything's possible. Put a few drinks in some guy and dare him to do it, and I daresay he might. He claims to be transgender; how can the police or security guards prove that he isn't? (I'm assuming, ladies, that if we see any person in a bathroom doing anything else other than that for which bathrooms are designed, we're going to scream bloody murder ... or at least get on our cell phones and call 911.)

Maybe that's the answer right there. If any person is acting in a manner that makes others ill at ease, from staring to making inappropriate comments, from attempting to touch or trying to restrain a person, call for help, and back out of the restroom pronto. Let the perpetrator be arrested for disorderly conduct.

What about the children, people ask? How can they possibly defend themselves against restroom perverts? I've raised three boys. When they were little, I brought them into the women's restroom with me, or my spouse accompanied them. When they were older but not yet old enough to handle difficult situations, I was nearby, usually standing very close to the restroom entrance. We know there are bad people in the world, so we do whatever we can to protect them.

Restrooms are also very public spaces; people come and go all the time. Any person with malicious intent has to be aware that at any moment, the restroom door may open and someone will come in if there aren't already other people in there to begin with. It would be interesting to see if there are any statistics on crime committed in public restrooms.

This entire first part of the discussion focused on public restrooms in public spaces, but what about in schools? School policy after school policy requires that a student be socially transitioning, to be in the process of change so that the outward trappings match the inner identity (name, pronoun, clothing, hair style, etc.) Students who are transitioning are generally required to meet with school personnel who will help devise a plan for the transitioning process at school. In other words, a student doesn't suddenly show up at school one day declaring a different gender identity and expect the school to immediately comply with all requests. No, policies are being carefully crafted.

Ideally, every multiple-stall restroom would be replaced with single-occupant facilities, but until that day happens, let the folks who are afraid or uncomfortable use the private facilities. I think we should accommodate them; just don't legislate that transgender people must use them.

I, for one, am waiting for the day when transgender becomes such a non-issue that the editorial page of The New York Times lauds the appointment of an openly transgender person to the position of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Until then, let's continue working to move equality forward!

Toni Weaver, a member of PFLAG since 2002, is the president of the PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois, leader of PFLAG McHenry, and a former adviser to the McHenry County College Pride Club. She and her spouse of 46 years reside in McHenry. Weaver holds both a bachelors and a masters degree in theology from Marquette University.

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#RETHINKHIGHSCHOOL

# DePaul professor speaks out on school's racial issues

BY LIZ BAUDLER

As DePaul University comes under fire for hosting gay conservative speaker Milo Yiannopoulos on campus and how the administration subsequently handled the furor surrounding the event, questions about the school's racial climate have surfaced. Sociology professor Shu-Ju Ada Cheng has found herself an unexpected sideshow.

Cheng, who is resigning from DePaul effective at the end of the quarter, had posted a statement to DePaul's president, Fr. Dennis Holtschneider, on her personal Facebook page. Holtschneider responded to calls for a statement about Yiannopoulos by condemning not only the speaker, but also Black Lives Matter protesters who shut down the event. He went on to apologize to the DePaul College Republicans, who invited Yiannopoulos to campus.

In part, Cheng's statement reads: "Universities, like all institutions, are not neutral platforms. ... In time of political crisis, universities have the responsibility to take a moral stand. To believe that universities are simply neutral platforms for 'equal' exchanges of ideas, the so-called free speech rooted in the market ideology, is delusional. ... It is a hypocrisy to believe that one can promote diversity without tackling the racism that underlines all educational institutions.

"The incidents that took place during these past two days are just symptoms of the historical institutional racism embedded in this institution. ... Your handling of this case is shameful and embarrassing. It is a lack of moral courage in the guise of intellectual objectivity and positional neutrality. The lack of position is a position, and your chosen position is to reinforce the existing inequalities. Shame on you."

Her letter was picked up by conservative news sites such as the Daily Caller, and others like Breitbart.com soon followed. Cheng said reporters for those sites never talked to her to confirm any details of the story. (The Daily Caller emailed her but she did not initially respond.) Cheng said that they conflated the reasons for her resignation with her statement about Yiannopoulos.



Shu-Ju Ada Cheng.  
Photo by Ross Forman

"I actually did email back a few journalists, I said, no, I did not quit because of this. That was never the story. All the right-wing—no one talked to me," Cheng said.

However, Cheng said her resignation does have its roots in the same tension that the Yiannopoulos event seems to have exacerbated. "I wrote that letter from the position of an existing faculty of color. And I pointed out it's a symptom of a long pattern. There has been a history of faculty of color being denied tenure and leaving," Cheng said.

She described incidents of faculty members of color, including herself, being denied classes while white professors were assigned multiple

sections of the same course area. "You could schedule four graduate courses in criminology in one quarter and you can't schedule one gender class?," she asked. "And guess what? Who are these people who are teaching? These are all white men and white women. Including adjunct faculty members and people who don't have Ph.Ds." She said she emailed the department to point out the issue., stating, "I have been in this program for 14 years. I say, 'You just look at the facts. Who is benefiting from this? Who are the privileged?'"

Cheng also noted both incidents of microaggression (referring to the degradation of any socially marginalized group) and a lack of desire to engage with current sociological discourse from other faculty members.

"We were supposed to put up decorations on the wall with sociological terms," Cheng recalled. "So the idea is to come up with sociological terms that are relevant. Somebody suggested 50 to begin with. It was in the summer, the height of the Black Lives Matter movement. I say, 'I'm sorry, this is 2015. Let the terms reflect what's going on. How about let's add three terms at least? One is privilege, the other one is inequality.' A senior white woman wrote me individually to say, 'I don't like the term privilege, because 'privilege' is the same as 'right'." She told me she is writing an article arguing that using the term privilege is what she termed 'moralistic' and 'problematic.'"

Cheng said that she explained the meaning of privilege over email and offered to open the issue for public debate. At meetings geared toward rebuilding the department, the same woman refused to consider Cheng's perspectives.

"Our department is in chaos. Nobody wants to be the chair. People are leaving," Cheng said. "In that first meeting with the dean, the same senior faculty member said, 'I really don't want to talk about the past. Everything's good in our department.' I just finally let it all out with that senior white woman. I talked about the institutionalized racism in our department. I say, 'You know what hurts? That you can't even acknowledge when I'm telling you, pointing you to all these realities. That's what hurts.' By the end of that conversation, she simply said, 'Ada, I just don't agree with you.' I was sitting there with you for two hours talking about institutional racism. If you tell me, 'I disagree with you,' that means you reject my reality."

"This whole idea in academia, we're simply about agree and disagreement, that's very problematic," Cheng continued. "In that moment when you say, 'I disagree with you,' it's not just about disagreement—because when we disagree, the reality is still there."

The articles about Cheng's resignation have provoked widespread online harassment and hate mail, some of which she's quoted on Facebook and emailed to DePaul faculty. "I showed

you less than 1% of what I received. I feared for my own safety and had to check in [on social media] every two hours," Cheng wrote to her colleagues.

She also wrote back to the Daily Caller's reporter. "I said 'I'm getting hate mail. It's on you if something happens to me. You misinterpreted and you misrepresented [my letter] in terms of I say that universities should not be neutral platforms, when in fact, that's not what I'm arguing.' He said, 'Well, I posted the letter.' I said, 'How many people actually read the letter?' He said, 'It's you, you have the problem if you don't represent it correctly.' I said, 'No, If you read that letter carefully, you know what my premise is.' And the thing is, if you can't get that... That's why I'm getting all of these hate mails."

As Cheng wrote her colleagues, "Of course I am for freedom of speech. I grew up in an authoritarian regime in Taiwan. ... However, I am not going to stand for someone to spew hate speech in the name of education and learning."

Cheng is looking at the hate mail with both a critical and comedic eye. "You can go check Rate My Professor. I taught 15 years, I got 31 reviews. For the past few days, I got another 31 reviews," she said. "There are classes I've never taught. Just go look at some of the reviews. 'Fat dyke' is one of them. And it is so interesting to see ... xenophobia and racism, homophobia—all kind of linked together. 'Fat dyke' ... where does that even come from? I was, like, 'Wow, this just taught me about the America we live in today.' You tell me when you look at that all of these hateful emails, you tell me where do they belong? Are they free speech or are they just hate speech?"

Cheng also said other faculty members of color are getting hate mail. "I feel sorry for the students. If I'm getting these emails, my Black colleagues, Black students, what are they getting?" she said. She expressed uncertainty about how to go forward, particularly with her experience with the media so far.

"I was struggling with, how do I reclaim the narrative?" she said. "I ask people, 'Should I let it die down?' Some of them say, 'Let it die down,' in the sense that, if I continue, how much energy do I have? Am I ready to do this? Do I have enough support to do this? Do I want to do this? The inability of journalists to even appreciate the complexity of the issue: All they want to see is, 'Did you quit because of this?' There are so many other issues. They don't want to deal with the story about ... all of these emails. They want to deal with 'Did you actually quit for this?' That's my experience with everyone."

*Note:* At the time of the interview, Cheng had not heard from DePaul's administration: they reached out to her a few days later. Windy City Times' attempts to reach DePaul for comment were not returned.

## UNESCO report looks at anti-LGBT violence in education

UNESCO (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) has compiled "Out in the Open," a global report on education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.

Put together for the International Day of Action Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOT), the report reveals the nature, scope and impact of the violence, the status of education sector responses and recommendations for the way forward.

The report was released at an international education Ministers meeting hosted by UNESCO in Paris May 17-18, and it was the largest gathering at such a high level to take a look at homophobic and transphobic violence in education.

Among some of the impactful findings are:

—In some countries, 85 percent of LGBT students experience homophobic and transphobic violence in school;

—45 percent of transgender students drop out;

—In China, 59 percent of LGBT respondents to a survey said bullying had negatively affected their academic performance; and

—Homophobic violence also targets 33 percent of students who are wrongly perceived to be LGBT because they do not appear to conform to gender norms.

UNESCO recommends that the education sector's response should be rights-based, learner-centered and inclusive, and should take into account several factors, including age and gender.

"Out in the Open" is at [http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/report\\_shows\\_homophobic\\_and\\_transphobic\\_violence\\_in\\_education\\_to\\_be\\_a\\_global\\_problem/#.V1SKrCmL5Z](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/report_shows_homophobic_and_transphobic_violence_in_education_to_be_a_global_problem/#.V1SKrCmL5Z).

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# Hinde reflects as she prepares to exit Heartland Health

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Debbie Hinde, chief development officer for Heartland Health Outreach (HHO), remembers that people “were in fighting mode” in 1996, when she first went to work for Open Hand Chicago, the food-delivery organization for persons with HIV/AIDS that would, years later, merge into HHO.

“The sense of urgency around AIDS at that time was still extremely strong,” Hinde said. “There were still many people dying. The system wasn’t strong and they weren’t able to serve people in all corners of the city. Everybody was hoping for progress, but no one knew how much progress there was going to be, nor how fast it would come.”

Hinde will be leaving her position at the end of June. Her job was eliminated as the result of development and communications functions being combined at HHO’s central office.

In a statement to Windy City Times, Ed Stelton, executive director of HHO, said, “For the past 20 years, Debbie Hinde has played a criti-



**Debbie Hinde**  
Photo by Ed Negron

cal role in the evolution of the program, as its CEO from 1996 until 2011. Under her leadership, Open Hand Chicago merged with Community Response and the HIV Coalition to create a metropolitan, multi-service organization—Vital Bridges. In 2011, Vital Bridges merged into HHO, greatly expanding our HIV services. Debbie also has had great impact inside HHO, creating and implementing our strategic and annual planning process, expanding internal and external communications, building management capacity and more.”

Hinde said, “I’ve been here for 20 years so I’ve seen a lot of change, certainly in the services we’ve delivered but also in the needs of people with HIV. It’s kind of all for the good, because people are able to—for the most part—get good treatment so they can manage their disease, so they can move forward with their lives.”

When she took over as CEO at Open Hand Chicago in 1996, the organization was in deep financial trouble. “It was highly volunteer-driven with a small-but-mighty staff,” she recalled. “At that point, it was having some fairly serious financial problems that needed to be addressed quickly. But the heart of the organization, at its foundation, was really strong, as

was the community’s commitment to it.”

It took about a year to improve the organization’s fortunes, Hinde added. “It also took the good will of a lot of people and volunteers. We needed to raise more money, work with folks we owed money to, and put our house in order about what we were doing, what money we were spending and how many staff we had. Everybody rolled up their sleeves and got to it.”

Her current job was created for her at the time of the last merger. Hinde described her position as being two-pronged: “One side was fundraising, marketing and communications. The other was to help build the culture and infrastructure of Heartland Health Outreach—things like internal communications, staff

meetings, strategic and annual planning, and working with strategic leadership team to get beyond ‘day-to-day’ planning.”

She said she’s proud to have had a hand in a “really strong organization that could make and weather change. ... We went from being solely a food organization to merging two organizations in order to integrate services like case management, housing and mental health in one place at one time for participants. That merger went well. As we went on, it made sense to merge into something with health-care. And hence, the move to integrate with Heartland Health Outreach, which has HIV-specialty care.”

Hinde said she was not sure where she’d end up next, but assumed it would be with a non-profit, and hoped it would be one that addressed food and nutrition issues.

“Being able to participate in an organization that’s provided nearly 15 million meals and several hundred thousand hours of counseling is an honor,” she said. “People have worked hard to make that possible.”

## SAGE honoring Quigley, Affinity

On Friday, June 10, 5-8 p.m., the Chicago-based National Board Members of SAGE will host its annual SAGE & Friends reception at Wyndham Grant Hotel, 71 E. Wacker Dr.

This year, SAGE will honor U.S. Congressman Mike Quigley, co-chair of the Congressional LGBT Caucus, for his advocacy on behalf of LGBT rights and his support of issues impacting older individuals.

Also, SAGE will recognize Phyllis Johnson and Torlene “Toi” Williams for their pioneering Affinity Community Services’ Trailblazers, and for their grassroots advocacy on behalf of LGBT older adults in Chicago.

Visit [sageusa.org/chicago](http://sageusa.org/chicago) or email [jwaserman@sageusa.org](mailto:jwaserman@sageusa.org).



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- 6:00 pm Hey Jimmy
- 5:00 pm DJ Dan Luna

### SAT JUNE 11 11AM-10PM

**NORTH STAGE, Clark & Catalpa**

- 8:00 pm Catfight
- 6:00 pm Stache
- 4:00 pm Northside
- 3:30pm Chicago Spirit Brigade
- 2:00 pm The Yacht Rockets
- 12:00 pm Robbie Gold
- 11:00 am Chicago Gay Men's Chorus

**BALMORAL PRIDE STAGE, Clark & Balmoral**  
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- 8:30 pm The Hits with DJ Laura B
- 6:30 pm Retro Dance Party with DJ Laura B
- 4:30 pm Drag Show featuring Angel LeBare, Dida Ritz, Ruff N Stuff, Sheri Payne and Velicity Metropolis
- 2:30 pm MaryOke Unplugged hosted by Kevin Florian
- 12:00 pm Lucy Smith Trio

**SUMMERDALE STAGE, Clark & Summerdale**  
*And the Alamo Shoes Family Fun Area*

- 8:00 pm Nelson Street Revival
- 6:00 pm Chicago Samba
- 4:00 pm The Joans
- 2:00 pm Livewire
- 1:30 pm Dream Big Performing Arts Workshop
- 12:30 pm Jameson Loves Danger Pet Parade and Costume Contest
- 12:00 pm Mission Propelle: Girl Power Yoga
- 11:00 am The pH Comedy Theater presents Adventure Library

**CENTER STAGE, Clark & Berwyn**

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- 4:00 pm The Plutonians
- 2:00 pm Chi Town Soul
- 1:30 pm Chicago Spirit Brigade
- 12:00 pm Distant Brothers
- 11:00 am Lisa Roti

**SWEDISH STAGE, Clark & Foster**  
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- 8:00 pm ABBA Salute
- 6:00 pm Irene
- 4:00 pm Lynne Jordan and the Shivers
- 2:00 pm Hugh Too
- 1:05 pm Chicago Swedish Male Chorus
- 12:40 pm Nordic Folk Dancers
- 12:15 pm Merula
- 11:45 am Dancing Around the May Pole
- 11:30 am Opening Ceremony

1:00 pm Chicago Spirit Brigade  
11:00 pm Deliverance Singers - Gospel Brunch

**SWEDISH STAGE, Clark & Foster**  
*Sponsored by Swedish American Museum*

- 8:00 pm Mama Digdown's Brass Band
- 7:30 pm DJ C
- 6:00 pm Cowboy JukeBox
- 5:30 pm DJ C
- 4:00 pm New Invaders
- 2:00 pm Hodie Snitch
- 12:00 pm Peter Nordberg
- 11:00 am Nordland Band

### SUN JUNE 12 11AM-10PM

**NORTH STAGE, Clark & Catalpa**

- 8:00 pm 16 Candles
- 6:00 pm Rod Tuff Curis & The Bench Press
- 4:00 pm Thank You Ma'am
- 3:30 pm Chicago Spirit Brigade
- 2:00 pm Derek Fawcett
- 12:00 pm Al Rose
- 11:00 am Lakeside Pride Strayhorns Jazz Combo

**BALMORAL PRIDE STAGE, Clark & Balmoral**  
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- 8:00 pm "Let's Go Crazy" Prince Dance Party
- 4:00 pm Tea Dance with DJ Moose and the Funday Dancers
- 2:00 pm MaryOke Unplugged hosted by Kevin Florian and Apple Brown Betty
- 12:00 pm Mister E. Machine

**SUMMERDALE STAGE, Clark & Summerdale**  
*And the Alamo Shoes Family Fun Area*

- 8:00 pm Aphrodisiacs
- 6:00 pm Part-Time Lovers
- 4:00 pm Laura Doherty and the Heartbeats
- 3:30 pm Mission Propelle: Girl Power Yoga
- 2:30 pm Urban Pooch Training and Fitness Center
- Agility and Training Demo
- 2:00 pm Dream Big Performing Arts Workshop
- Dr. Cool & Pride
- 12:00 pm Andersonville Suzuki Academy
- 11:00 am The pH Comedy Theater presents Adventure Library

**CENTER STAGE, Clark & Berwyn**

- 8:00 pm Too White Crew
- 6:00 pm The Boy Band Night
- 4:00 pm Frisky Taylor
- 2:30 pm Bric-a-Brac
- 1:30 pm Bron Don

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# Uptown Target counterprotest strikes emotional chord

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

Claiming that national retailer Target's position of gender-identity inclusion for its customers and employees is "allowing biological men into women's restrooms," the Ohio-based religious hate group Faith2Action's planned a nationwide protest of Target stores June 4—an event they called "Don't Target Our Daughters."

Faith2Action founder and president Janet Porter called the event the "best opportunity to take back ground since Phil Robertson of Duck Dynasty took his stand."

On the same day and time that the action was planned, approximately 50 people encircled the entrance of an Uptown Target to ensure there was no ground for Porter and her anti-trans activists to take.

Organized by trans activists, the Gay Liberation Network and allies, the counterprotest was designed "to support Target and the trans community regardless of whether or not opponents of equal rights show up."

"It wasn't that long ago that I was out here protesting Target because they had made some anti-LGBT moves," iconic Chicago transgender activist June M. LaTrobe told Windy City Times. "They have come so far. For the broad trans community, a retail establishment supporting us is fantastic."

LaTrobe noted that, since Faith2Action had been closed-mouthed about the Target stores at which they intended to appear, the choice of the Uptown store for a counterprotest was a guess.

While no members of the religious group were present, those who had gathered to announce their support for Target's policies were just as vocal.

"There is a myth that after we won marriage equality first here in Illinois and then the United States that the struggle for LGBT freedom was over," Gay Liberation Network founder Andy Thayer said. "An attack on one of us is an attack on all of us. The other side never rests. After they lost marriage, the first thing that they saw as their wedge issue was bathrooms. They use it as an attack on all trans rights. We live in a country where trans people's unemployment and violence rates are way off the charts. The bathroom issue is a way to attack trans people for who they are."

While the marchers circled the front of the store chanting "thank you Target," passing motorists pressed on their horns and gave thumbs-up of solidarity.

However, not everyone was in agreement with them.

As LaTrobe took the bullhorn to praise Chicago as a "remarkably welcoming, accepting and protective environment," one woman furiously insisted that transgender people should have their own bathrooms.

Parroting the arguments of the far right, the woman maintained that pedophiles would take advantage of Target's policy.

"There have been more Republican politicians caught misbehaving in restrooms than anyone in the transgender community," LaTrobe insisted before arguing that segregating transgender



Pro-Target protesters Alexis Martinez, Andy Thayer and June Latrobe.

Photo by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

individuals was not so far removed from the Jim Crow laws that mandated separate facilities for the Black population.

"I'll take a transgender restroom the day after you take a Black one," she told the woman. LaTrobe's stance was roundly applauded.

"If you identify as or if someone thinks you are trans, you are 17 times more likely to suffer violence than someone who simply identifies as gay or lesbian," LaTrobe continued after the woman stormed off.

Thayer noted that people like her, supporters of presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump and others on the far right were using the transgender community as "scapegoats."

Activist Rick Garcia was on hand as well.

"The people who are targeting Target are the same ones who have called for boycotts of General Mill and Disney," he said. "How successful were they? Not at all. Target is on target with this issue."

"What we have seen today is that discrimination, bigotry and animosity towards those who are different is barely beneath the surface," he added. "You don't have to scratch too far to find it. But here we stand. Our heels are dug in. We've come too far to go back and we're going to continue to protect the gains we make and move forward so that each and every one of us is treated equitably and fairly. We are going to run the bigots out of town."

"I'm a Christian," transgender activist Alexis Martinez added. "There is nothing in any Bible I have ever read that says we have to hate to show our love of God. We are fighting against the idea that, because we are transgender, that makes us pedophiles. The reality of pedophilia is that 82 percent of it happens in the homes of family members. That's a reality that people don't want to face up to."

"We need to step up and stop listening to the people peddling that message," she concluded. "Stand up. Refuse to give up."

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## PASSAGES

# Richard Lamont Pope

Richard Lamont Pope, 85, long-time resident of Chicago, Illinois; native of Bear Lake, Utah; retired editor at Encyclopedia Britannica; and former English professor at Brigham Young University (BYU) and Wayne State University (WSU); passed away peacefully May 28. He was 85.

Pope was preceded in death by partner of 52 years, Richard Weisenseel, and was the loving father of Alan Lamont Pope; grandfather of Ashley Collette Pope; brother of Mardell Ray (the late Wanda), Stephen Dee (Caroline), and the late Laurel Jay (Sharon) Pope; son of the late Lamont and Fern Pope; and uncle, cousin, and friend of many.

He completed B.S. and M.S. degrees at BYU; fellowships at University of Chicago and WSU; Ph.D. course work at WSU. He taught English, composition, creative writing, literature and journalism at City University of New York (Baruch College of Business) and modern poetry at Donnell Library, New York City; guest-lectured at Northwestern University, Illinois; trained teachers at BYU laboratory schools; audited accreditation standards quality at University of London; and published articles in several British and U.S. magazines and newspapers.

He will be remembered as an educator, researcher, author and poet; creator and producer of countless articles and books; winner of prestigious writing competitions; a voracious reader known for his article "clipping service" personalized for friends and family members; avid supporter of the visual and performing arts; collector of books and artwork, world



Richard Lamont Pope.

traveler, lover of nature and children. He was an expert on Mormon history and theology; served a mission in London, England; and, at age 20, he became the youngest editor of Mil-

lennial Star, the church's longest continuously published periodical.

Pope was particularly supportive of Chicago's Newberry Library, Gilda's Club and Howard Brown Health Center; Sierra Club and Audubon Society.

Interment of cremated remains at Garden City Cemetery, Utah.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his name to Gilda's Club: [www.gildasclubchicago.org](http://www.gildasclubchicago.org), 312-464-9900.

Arrangements by Cremation Society of Illinois, 773-281-5058 or [www.cremation-society.com](http://www.cremation-society.com).

## Honduran activist murdered

Prominent Honduras LGBT-rights activist Rene Martinez has been murdered, according to a Washington Blade article that cites La Prensa.

On June 1, Martínez's family reported him missing after he left his home and got into someone's car. The family identified his body two days later at San Pedro Sula's morgue—and it was reported that Martinez, 40, had been strangled to death.

Martinez headed LGBT-rights group Comunidad Gay Sampedrana and was a member of the country's governing National Party. No one has been arrested.

Among many other accomplishments, Martinez participated in a leadership training in Honduras and Victory Fund & Institute's International LGBT Leadership Conference in 2015. In a Facebook post, the Victory Fund stated, "Victory is honored to work with courageous activists across the globe who put their lives on the line every day to achieve equality for all LGBTI people. Rest in power, Rene."

The Washington Blade article is at [WashingtonBlade.com/2016/06/04/prominent-lgbt-activist-murdered-in-honduras/](http://WashingtonBlade.com/2016/06/04/prominent-lgbt-activist-murdered-in-honduras/).

## Man sentenced in NYC fight

A New York City jury convicted Bayna Leheim El-Amin in a May 2015 attack on two gay men at Chelsea's Dallas BBQ.

El-Amin was convicted on all but one assault count for bashing Ethan Adams and Jonathan Snipes with a wooden chair on May 15, 2015. He was convicted of two counts of first-degree attempted assault and two counts of second-degree assault.

The scuffle happened after Snipes said he heard someone in El-Amin's direction calling him and Adams "f---ts." Video shows El-Amin—who said he was acting out of self-defense—stomping on Snipes's head and later throwing a wooden chair on top of the pair, knocking out Adams.

In an article by writer Waddie Grant of The G-List Society, El-Amin contended that he was being attacked, saying, "We noticed a disturbance some distance away from us. Two men [Snipes and his companion] were standing over their table fighting each other, and the fight threatened to spill over to the table of ladies that were closest to them."

"Moments later, it appeared that Mr. Snipes was going to leave the restaurant. But, by standing at the door, he directed his attention toward me, walked towards me and said, 'And YOU calling us ladies!' And, he struck me. He struck me in the head with an object. I'm not sure what it was, but it felt like a heavy blunt object—and it hurt."

On June 14, El-Amin is slated to be sentenced by Manhattan Supreme Court Justice Arlene Goldberg. He faces up to 15 years in jail on the top count.

The New York Daily News item is at <http://www.nydailynews.com>. The G-List article is at <http://www.glistsociety.com>.

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## FAMILIES OF CHOICE SERIES

# Anna DeShawn and Kaya Powell

BY JACQUELINE BOYD

Families of choice can provide increased connection, security and joy to the lives of LGBTQ people. Our in-depth look at families of choice across our communities continues this week with Anna DeShawn and Kaya Powell. Anna and Kaya, engaged to be married in 2017, are both active in a number of LGBTQ community organizations. In their first interview as a couple, Anna and Kaya share with Windy City Times their experiences of families of choice.

Interviewee names: Anna DeShawn, Kaya Powell

Ages: 32, 38 respectively

Relationship Status: Engaged

Neighborhood: Bronzeville

Activities :

—Anna: Owner and Operator of E3 Radio; <http://www.e3radio.org>

—Affinity Community Services Board Member; <http://affinity95.org/accontent>

—Kaya: Project Curve Appeal; <http://pink-citycorp.com/pink-city-corp/project-curve-appeal>.

—Kaya's Creations, Co-Owner Drinks By A Diva

**Windy City Times: What is your definition of family?**

Anna DeShawn: Family to me are persons who care and love you for exactly who you are. Using the word unconditional is a figment of our imagination, there's conditions on everybody's love to an extent, but it's people who you can absolutely depend on.

Kaya Powell: I concur, I feel like that is the same definition for me. It doesn't have to be your blood family. A person who is there when times are rough as well as when times are good, I would call that person family.

**WCT: By your definition of family, who is in that inner circle?**

KP: For me, that number is really really small, only a handful. They've been there when I need them, in my corner, pushing me to do better for myself. That number only consists of one blood related person.

AD: It's probably five or six people. I can trust them and if I need anything I know I can call them up and they'd be right here.

**WCT: Kaya, could you speak to why your inner circle is mostly family of choice?**

KP: I love my family, but I don't share as much with them. I share more with outside individuals because I know they are non-judgmental, don't say things that eventually get back to me. I know they will be there for me, more than my own family.

**WCT: What are the needs family of choice fulfill in your life?**

AD: For me, its 100-percent acceptance and no judgment. I have no doubt in my mind that my family of origin loves me, but at the same time they all have their own hangups about my sexuality. It doesn't play out in every scenario, but there is a boundary that I know exists. As I get older, I don't always feel like having a conversation, I just want to show up and have a good time and we all love each other for where we're at. With my friends there's nothing extra, other than just me showing up.

**WCT: In your family of origin are you sometimes the gay spokesperson?**

AD: Oh yeah, when I came out it was so funny, they meant well but I got two copies of Brokeback Mountain! [Hearty laughter] My sister gave me one and my aunt mailed one from Arizona, it was crazy but I know they were trying.

I equate it to being Black in a lot of ways; there's a certain understanding we have as people of color. When you are a person who

lives at the intersections of being Black, a woman and being queer, if people don't know how to deal with you on your levels, then you tend to be the spokesperson on any of those three identities. With my family of choice we don't need that, we all know what we are going through every day.

**WCT: Kaya, can you speak to the needs you have that are met by family of choice?**

KP: Family of choice accepts me for who I am, I don't have to explain anything. It was an eye opener for my blood family when I came out, even though there were other stud females in my family. I was femme and they didn't understand. I feel like I'm too old to have to explain what I like. I choose not to be around them because I don't want the stares, or looks, or whispers. With family of choice I don't have to deal with that, we accept each other as we are.

Turn to page 30



Anna DeShawn (left) and Kaya Powell.  
Photo courtesy of DeShawn

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# Legacy Wall at Center June 27-July 3

The Legacy Project has announced that its acclaimed "Legacy Wall" will make its debut on Chicago's iconic North Halsted Street with a week-long engagement at Center on Halsted, June 27-July 3.

The display will occupy the upper level "Library" space adjacent to the John Baran Hall, off the second floor Walgreens Reception Area. Overlooking Halsted Street, the Legacy Wall will be visible from the street through the floor-to-ceiling windows facing the award-winning "Legacy Walk" outdoor LGBT History Mu-

seum—which is also run by the Legacy Project.

The Legacy Wall (<https://vimeo.com/159206365>), a 24-foot long, eight-foot tall, and six-foot deep double-sided "serpentine island," features 125 individual biographical and photographic elements commemorating the contributions LGBT people have made to world history and culture.

The exhibit, which is international and multi-cultural in focus, spans 4,000 years of recorded history, covers more than 20 individual fields of contribution, and features people from every

walk of life. Each element on the Legacy Wall includes a Quick Response (QR) Code which, when scanned, brings the person to life with video and education resources to facilitate further exploration. It is the only traveling installation of its kind.

After a private preview last summer, the Legacy Wall made its public debut at the Illinois State Library in Springfield for LGBT History Month in October 2015. Since then it has been touring the State of Illinois. With eight completed stops so far on its calendar, mostly in Central Illinois, the Legacy Wall has been seen by more than 10,000 people—including two back-to-back installations at the recent Creating Change Conference at the Hilton Hotel and in the rotunda of the James R. Thompson State of Illinois Center downtown. The Legacy Project is currently negotiating the rest of the year's calendar while already planning to begin a national tour in 2017.

"Everywhere the Legacy Wall goes the response has been tremendous" said Victor Salvo, executive director and creator of the Legacy Project. "We had expected some people to be overwhelmed, but not the intensely emotional responses we have seen. Some people stay for hours on end. Some come back four and five times with friends and family. Some simply stand there and weep. It has been an eye-opening experience for everyone, especially the folks in Central Illinois who welcomed us with open arms. We are thrilled to finally be able to bring the Legacy Wall back to its home base since a tremendous amount of the planning and volunteer work required to build it took place at the Center on Halsted."

"June, national LGBT Pride Month, affords the perfect opportunity to honor our past in celebration of where we are headed," said Center on Halsted CEO Modesto "Tico" Valle. "Our collaboration with the Legacy Project to host

the Legacy Wall provides the chance to learn about LGBT history for individuals across the lifespan, from the young people to families and older adults who regularly use Center on Halsted."

The installation will be on display from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day throughout its viewing. Reservations are not required. It is free to the public.

For more information, visit [LegacyProjectChicago.com](http://LegacyProjectChicago.com).



People checking out the Legacy Wall at Creating Change this past January. Photo courtesy of Victor Salvo

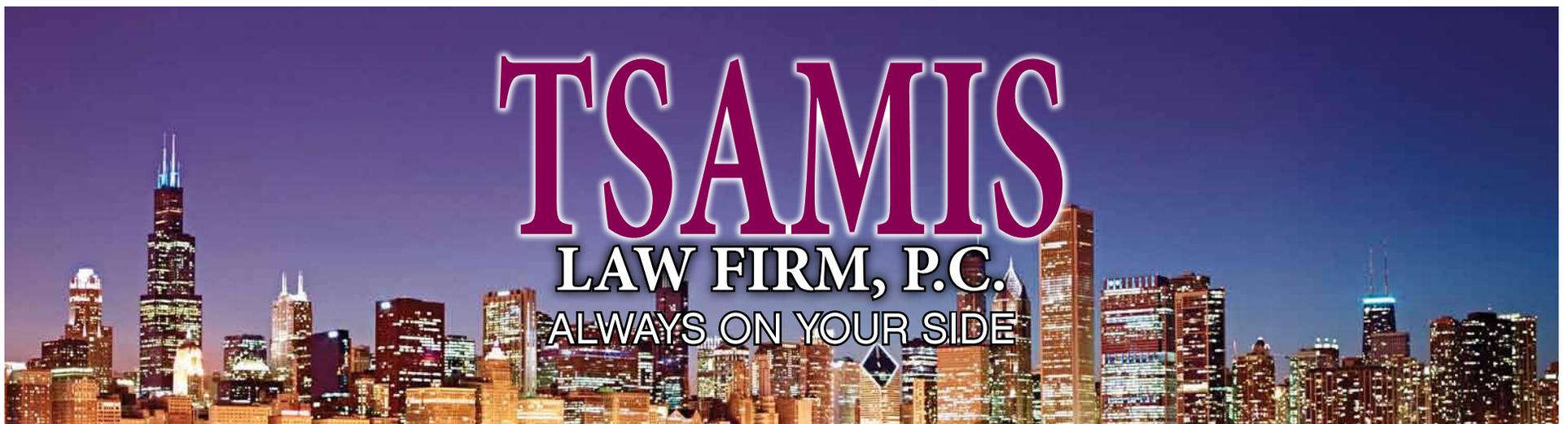
## Art Johnston to be honored June 8

LGBTQ-rights activist and Sidetrack co-owner Art Johnston is one of four individuals and one company who will be honored at Chicago History Museum's 22nd Annual Making History Awards on Wed., June 8, at the Four Seasons Hotel Chicago, 120 E. Delaware Pl.

The reception will be at 6 p.m., with the dinner and awards presentations at 7 p.m.

Johnston will receive the Jane Addams Making History Award for Distinction in Social Service. Other recipients include JPMorgan Chase (The Cyrus McCormick Making History Award for Historic Corporate Achievement), Frank M. Clark (The Marshall Field Making History Award for Distinction in Corporate Leadership & Innovation), Michael H. Moskow (The Harold Washington Making History Award for Distinction in Public Service) and Shirley W. Ryan (The Bertha Honoré Palmer Making History Award for Distinction in Civic Leadership).

To RSVP, email [GScalise@pjhchicago.com](mailto:GScalise@pjhchicago.com) or visit [pjhchicago.com/event/chicagohistory](http://pjhchicago.com/event/chicagohistory).



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# 'Out of the Office' kick-starts Pride Month

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

As it has for 15 years, Out of the Office heralded the beginning of Pride month in Chicago June 1.

The 2016 event drew more than 600 people who traded in the view from their desks at businesses across the city for the panorama offered by the luxurious Godfrey Hotel's rooftop patio of a downtown Chicago soaked in the setting sun of a perfect summer evening.

While enjoying a drink and a luscious selection of hors d'oeuvres, attendees at Out of the Office also helped two charities supported by this year's event—The Pride Action Tank (a project of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago) and the LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois.

For Andrew Hayes the unbound jubilation

that both surrounded him and drowned out his attempt to make a speech seemed impossible when he first created Out of the Office.

"Fifteen years ago, being a gay man who wore a suit every day, I had to go to gay bars where all the windows were blacked out," he told Windy City Times. "I wanted to come up with an event where I could leave my office and go downtown to a non-gay bar and be with my community to celebrate Pride."

This year's choice of charities was just as significant for Hayes.

"The Chamber of Commerce is really unifying LGBT-owned businesses together," he said. "When I think about all the work that the Pride Action Tank is doing for homeless youth, I remember that, by the grace of God, I was not a homeless youth. I very well could have been.

My parents had a difficult time dealing with my outing so they could have said 'leave and never come back. I was lucky they did not.'

Hayes added that he expected the event to raise between three and five thousand dollars.

The money will be divided between the two organizations.

"It's a little bit of cash that allows them to do something that they had not planned on doing," he said with a smile.

"We are doing tremendous work with the help of community around LGBT youth homelessness, issues related to LGBT seniors and also issues related to the transgender community," Pride Action Tank Executive Director Kim Hunt told the crowd.

She encouraged them to join in the efforts of the organization's Chicago Restroom Access Project (CRAP) which will be providing testimony at a June 8 Chicago City Council Human Relations Committee public hearing to remove a requirement that patrons show a government-issued ID in order to access public accommodations. The hearing is 10 a.m.-1 p.m. in the City



Event founder Andrew Hayes with Phyllis Jones.

Photo by Gretchen Rachel Hammond. See more photos online



Sandi Robinson of The Godfrey (right) addresses the crowd. Photo by Tracy Baim

Council chambers.

"Our community cannot wait for solutions from the outside, we have to do this work from the inside," Hunt added.

LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois Executive Director Gerardo Rodriguez noted that this was a 20th anniversary year for the only organization of its kind in the state.

"This is a banner year for us," he said before inviting the audience to the Chamber's upcoming Nov. 17 anniversary gala.

Godfrey Hotel senior events manager Sandi Robinson said that Out of the Office was near and dear to her heart. This is the third year the Godfrey has served as the event's venue.

For more information about the Pride Action Tank, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/Pride-ActionTank>. For information about the LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois, visit <http://lgbtcc.com>.

More photos are at [WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

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## AIDS @ 35 from cover

sponsible for convincing playwright Tennessee Williams to sign the first fundraising letter for the Human Rights Campaign Fund (now HRC).

He has long been critical of the evolution of HIV/AIDS activism, especially of the movement from protest action to what he has called a “benefactor-victim” paradigm of fundraising. Strub now lives in Pennsylvania, and focuses his activism work on laws that criminalize HIV transmission. He runs an inn along with his partner and was recently elected mayor of the town of Milford.

As part of our AIDS @ 35 series, Windy City Times interviewed Strub via email.

**Windy City Times: Give a comment about being elected mayor of Milford and what it means to you. Also, can you briefly summarize the process of how the mayor is selected there?**

Sean Strub: Milford is a small village—about 1,100 residents—but it is the county seat for Pike County, Pennsylvania, and the “front door” to this northeast Pennsylvania, Upper Delaware River Valley region. We are governed by an elected seven-member borough council and a mayor; our mayor recently resigned and the council had the responsibility to fill the vacancy. Several council members asked if I would put my name in and I did and was appointed to fill the rest of the unexpired term. I’ll serve through 2017 unless I run for the office in November 2017.

The mayor’s most important responsibility is to oversee the police department, but I also am the tiebreaker for the council and have ceremonial functions. Today, I was the ribbon-cutter at the opening of our farmer’s market and tomorrow [Memorial Day], I’ll be marching with the Vietnam Veterans of America.

Small towns like Milford, all over the country, have been devastated by the last 40 years of state and federal policies that have prioritized Wall Street over Main Street. Big-box retail, in

particular, has been devastating, but also the dramatic erosion of the middle class, degradation of our public schools and other factors have forced many small towns to struggle to maintain their quality of life. That’s what interests me about serving as mayor, to see if we can find ways to maintain or improve our quality of life, protect the economic viability of our central business district and have the most local unit of government play a constructive role in addressing addiction, homelessness, underemployment and other challenges in our region.

I didn’t aspire to be mayor of a tiny town—the last time I ran for office it was an unsuccessful bid for the U.S. Congress—but I am looking forward to the challenges it presents and experimenting to find strategies that work for Milford.

**WCT: What accounts for your interest in politics?**

Strub: I grew up in Iowa City in the 1960s and early ‘70s, where I was immersed in anti-war activism, the women’s movement and, to a lesser extent, the civil-rights movement. I never knew a time as a young person when politics did not interest me or when I did not feel that it was my responsibility to be informed and participate in whatever ways I could. Perhaps some of that drive comes from the sense of being an outsider, growing up gay. I’ve also wondered if being bullied while young might translate into developing a greater capacity for empathy that translates into political action. I see that in others and suspect it has played a role in my interest in social-justice work. And, of course, the epidemic largely has defined my adult life and that work, particularly around criminalization of the most vulnerable populations—particularly people living with HIV—continues to be the most satisfying part of my work.

**WCT: What does this new post mean for your activism?**

Strub: I wish that every national “policy leader” and all the VIPs and big donors and

executive directors also had the experience of working at the neighborhood or community level, trying to integrate the values we espouse into the practical day-to-day mechanics of local governance. Twenty years ago, when Xavier [Morales, Strub’s partner] and I mostly left the city for life in a rural area that is very conservative culturally, I didn’t anticipate how much I would learn and grow from getting to know people I would never have known otherwise. It’s given me a better understanding of the rage driving the support for [Donald] Trump and a perspective on how national progressive political discourse can sound elitist or even irrelevant to people on the ground trying to salvage a kid from a dangerous home environment, or improve a school system, or deliver services without further taxing people who are already barely getting by.

**WCT: How do you think the nation’s understanding of HIV/AIDS has evolved in the 35 years since the disease really came to the spotlight?**

Strub: The country went from seeing people with AIDS through the lens of their likely death, one that could be horrific and probably would happen soon, through now seeing people through the likelihood of our survival. And surviving longer means, to much of society, that we are around longer to infect others, so we become defined as viral vectors, potential infectors, an inherently dangerous population that needs to be tracked down, tested, listed, identified, reported, followed and, in many cases, criminalized.

The LGBT community, at one time, accepted the epidemic as a collective responsibility; today they are mostly (but not entirely) gone from the epidemic. I don’t think it is a coincidence that the institutional LGBT community’s abandonment of the epidemic has roughly paralleled the epidemic becoming more about the very young, women and people of color. HIV-related stigma today is worse than it has ever been, in my opinion, and some of the worst offenders are gay men themselves. This was something I never could have imagined years ago. But then I couldn’t imagine even surviving, either.

**WCT: Do you think we will or can ever have an era of engaged and ramped-up HIV/AIDS activism as in the late ‘80s and early ‘90s? You’ve said that the gay community was more effective when it was more of an “outsider.” Is it possible to recapture that energy? Is it necessary?**

Strub: We desperately need that energy, but we need it as part of an intersectional movement that simultaneously addresses racism, misogyny, homophobia, economic injustice, drug and sex work policy and penal system reform. The initial AIDS activism was to a large extent a type of identity politics (survival-driven, to be sure, but still based around identity) and for most gay white men, AIDS was a singular challenge. Their skin color and gender provided a lot of privilege and that privilege was in many cases leveraged in effective ways, but in a narrow way.

I want to see more AIDS activism—or HIV activism—but I want to see it in partnership and as part of a broader campaign for justice in the country. We need to be fighting for people who are unjustly incarcerated, for people of color, for people living in poverty just as hard as we fight for people with HIV. I am hopeful that we are, as a community, more sophisticated than we were years ago. That isn’t to diminish the work years ago, when it was also for many of us driven by an effort to survive, but our work today can’t exist in isolation to the extent it did for most of us in the late ‘80s and early ‘90s.

We’ll never treat our way out of the epidemic. And we can’t effectively combat stigma until we focus on empowering the stigmatized and understand stigma as something that isn’t just about having HIV, or being a racial minority, or having a criminal record; stigma is a way of seeing the world for many and we need to change that on a fundamental level. But we do so not by focusing on the stigmatizers, but by

focusing on the stigmatized.

**WCT: Do you think we will make strides in “decriminalizing” HIV-transmission, which has been the focus of much of your activism?**

Strub: Seven or eight years ago, when I began to focus so intensely on HIV criminalization reform, many (including those who were sympathetic) told me it was a lost cause and we would never make much progress. Today we have a robust and rapidly growing movement—

### SIDEBAR

## President Obama’s statement on the 35th anniversary of HIV/AIDS

On June 5, 1981, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published a report on what would later be understood as the first documented cases of AIDS. The past 35 years tell a story that bends from uncertainty, fear, and loss toward resilience, innovation, and hope.

We’ve learned that stigma and silence don’t just fuel ignorance, they foster transmission and give life to a plague. We’ve seen that testing, treatment, education, and acceptance can not only save and extend lives, but fight the discrimination that halted progress for too long. And we’ve reaffirmed that most American of ideas - that ordinary citizens can speak out, band ourselves together like a breathtaking quilt, and change the course of our communities and our nation for the better.

Over these 35 years, American ingenuity and leadership has shaped the world’s response to this crisis. From the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program to the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), we’ve saved millions of lives at home and around the world. My administration implemented our nation’s first comprehensive National HIV/AIDS Strategy, and we’ve updated it through 2020.

We’ve invested in research and evidence-based practices that have given us revolutionary tools like treatment as prevention and pre-exposure prophylaxis. We’ve made critical investments to help eliminate waiting lists for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program. We’ve continued efforts to support the promise of a vaccine. And the Affordable Care Act has resulted in millions of individuals gaining affordable, high-quality health coverage—all without denial for pre-existing conditions like HIV.

While there is more work to do—the economically disadvantaged; gay and bisexual men, especially those who are young and Black; women of color; and transgender women all continue to face huge disparities—I’m confident that if we build upon the steps we’ve taken, we can finish the job.

Nearly five years ago, I said that an AIDS-free generation is within reach, and today, the global community is committed to ending this epidemic by 2030. This will take American leadership, smart investments, and a commitment to ensure that all communities are heard and included as we move forward.

So today, let’s call the names. Let’s remember those we lost too soon. And let’s rededicate ourselves to ending this epidemic once and for all.

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one that is increasingly arm-in-arm with those fighting racism and the carceral society, advocating for sex work and drug policy change, and both Iowa and Colorado have changed their statutes.

Efforts are underway in at least another 20 states—all in various stages—but we are seeing the fruit of those organizing efforts in the new voices being heard, alliances being created and our success in stopping virtually every measure introduced in the last six years that would have further criminalized people living with HIV. Our second national HIV is Not a Crime conference, this year co-produced with

**people at very high risk for HIV take a medication daily to lower their chances of getting infected.]**

Strub: My criticism hasn't been about PrEP per se. I've long advocated its availability to those who will not or cannot use condoms. My criticism has been on promoting it widely as a public health intervention, especially when that is done at the expense of other prevention strategies. My prediction about PrEP remains the same, which is that it is likely to follow a trajectory similar to what has happened with unwanted pregnancies in the last 15 years. They have dropped dramatically among white

easy answers, especially if they come in a pill or are a product someone is marketing.

**WCT: What do we have to do in order to preserve the stories and accounts of HIV/AIDS when collective memory has become, for many reasons (internet, etc.) ephemeral?**

Strub: I urge people to write their stories, record them, videotape them, because as time passes there are fewer and fewer of us who were around on the frontlines, from the beginning. It is important that we leave a record of what we witnessed and experienced. As people age and die, more private collections

What I think is the most important missing piece are the stories of "average" people; those men and women who were never quoted, aren't famous, didn't build careers within the epidemic, but whose lives were turned upside down and changed in profound ways by the epidemic. I'm not disparaging those who are well-known or found careers in the epidemic—I'm one of them—but there won't be any problem getting our stories told. I traveled to more than 80 events in 27 states promoting my book, *Body Counts*. In almost every city, from Kalamazoo to Shreveport, from Cedar Rapids to Spokane, I met people—men and women, HIV-positive

# AIDS @35



## ACTING UP AND FIGHTING BACK

These photos are from ACT UP Chicago protests in the late 1980s, downtown Chicago. The AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power launched in New York in 1987 and soon loosely affiliated ACT UP groups launched in cities around the world, including Chicago. Photos by Lisa Howe-Ebright

the Positive Women's Network, was held mid-May at the University of Alabama/Huntsville and we had nearly 300 attendees, almost twice as many as at the first conference held in 2014 at Grinnell College. So, yeah, we've made many strides and there are many more to come. Stay tuned.

**WCT: You have been critical of PrEP in the past. More people are using it now; have your thoughts about PrEP changed at all? [Pre-exposure prophylaxis (or PrEP) is when**

and affluent women and risen significantly among women of color and those living in poverty. PrEP will reduce HIV transmission among some groups, mostly those of relative privilege, and we'll see continued increase in transmission rates amongst the most disadvantaged. You can't focus mostly or just on biomedicalization of HIV prevention or unwanted pregnancies. The reasons behind them are more complex and need more complex interventions than a pill. But we live in a society that likes

of contemporaneous documents will emerge and I think, in time, the story of the epidemic through the '80s and '90s may be seen quite differently than how it has been fixed in popular culture today. There were heroes, to be sure, but there were also villains, including within our own community and, in time, they may be held to account. But for the truth to be told, we all have to tell our own stories and get them documented so they are available for the research and analysis years from now.

and HIV-negative—who had amazing stories from those early days in their communities. Their stories are what we are at risk of losing and that would be a terrible shame. I encourage HIV service providers, local historical museums and others to commission oral histories—maybe hire young people with HIV to conduct the interviews—to get those stories documented.

**For HIV/AIDS statistics, see <http://www.who.int/gho/hiv/en/>.**

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# viewpoints



**Rev. Irene  
MONROE**

## UMC's inhospitality toward its LGBTQs

The United Methodist Church is in the need of prayer—and one that emphasizes full inclusion of all its parishioners.

At the recent General Conference in Portland, the struggle to move the church's moral compass against its anti-LGBTQ policies was courageously demonstrated when more than 100 United Methodist Church (UMC) ministers and faith leaders came out to their churches—with Rev. Jay Williams of Union United Methodist Church in Boston's South End as one of them.

While these ministers and faith leaders undoubtedly moved the hearts of many the church's policies remain unmoved.

In 2016, to still be fighting for LGBTQ full inclusion puts the church in question rather than its LGBTQ parishioners.

And the UMC's history of struggle on this issue clearly illustrates the defiant will for LGBTQ inclusion.

For example, in 2013, the Rev. Frank Schaefer, pastor at Zion United Methodist Church of Iona in Pennsylvania, was forced to stand trial for officiating his son's 2007 same-sex nuptials.

"I love him so much and didn't want to deny him that joy. I had to follow my heart," Schaefer told the New York Daily News.

The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the Methodist Church, however, wanted to drill

home to Schaefer and his allies that he—irrespective of familial love or Christian belief—blatantly and willfully violated the church's law book, the Book of Discipline, prohibiting same-sex marriages.

Sadly, little has changed in the UMC on this issue since the well-publicized trial of Rev. Jimmy Creech in Nebraska. In 1998 the Judicial Council of the United Methodist Church ruled that Creech, a heterosexual ally, violated church law by blessing the union of two lesbians. Following the Judicial Council's ruling, Creech's contract as pastor of the First United Methodist Church in Omaha was terminated. The following year, Creech was in the hot seat again for blessing the Holy Union of two gay men.

For these acts of ecclesiastical disobedience, that the jury felt was of biblical proportions, Creech was defrocked and lost his ministerial credentials.

When asked by The Advocate that year why he continued to marry same-sex couples while knowing the church's position, Creech rightly stated the following: "A cultural prejudice ... has been institutionalized in the church. The position of the church is wrong, it's unjust. It's discriminatory. It isolates a part of our population, part of the brothers and sisters of the human family. It denies their humanity, considers their own humanity to be somewhat unnatural or immoral or sinful."

However, the UMC's exclusionary language and practices toward LGBTQ people will not stop those of us who feel called to ministry. If anything, it confirms our calling that much more.

While it is clear that the UMC is not in lockstep with the changing societal tide toward LGBTQ acceptance, it is also not in lockstep with its own more progressive arm of "reconciling and inclusive" congregations.

Union United Methodist Church (UUMC), a predominantly African-American congregation located in Boston's South End—once the epicenter of the city's LGBTQ community—is one of them. And it is the one institution least expected to be lauded among LGBTQ people of African descent because of the Black Church's notorious history of homophobia. But UUMC is a movement, and with its pastor's recently coming out it's an example of full inclusion as a welcoming church body.

Since June 2011, more than 100 Methodist ministers in New England have pledged to marry LGBTQ couples in defiance of the denomination's ban on same-sex unions. Approximately one out of nine Methodist clerics signed a statement pledging to open their churches to LGBTQ couples that stated, "We repent that it has taken us so long to act. ... We realize that our church's discriminatory policies tarnish the witness of the church to the world, and we are [complicit]."

Knowing where Methodist clerics in New England stand on same-sex marriages, Schaefer officiated his son's nuptials here in Massachusetts.

The public trials of Creech and Schaefer were disciplinary acts to evoke fear among our allies. While UMC's ultimate objective is to reinforce ecclesiastical norms, this recent public act of discrimination by the General Conference not only feeds into the existing climate of religious intolerance in this society, but it also has LGBTQs constantly questioning their self-worth and relationship with the church.

However, as LGBTQ people we must know that religious intolerance and spiritual abuse are antithetical to the social gospel of inclusion, and that all people have the same sacred worth—even if the United Methodist Church doesn't practice it.

# letters

By George

Dear Editor:

During this Pride Month, I want to encourage everyone to visit the Center on Halsted's second floor art gallery to see a photographic exhibit by George Reisch.

Reisch has developed these prints with a master's hand, generating rich and deep blacks and vibrant whites that bring vitality to this exhibit in ways that could not be achieved with digital printing. His dedication to this older technology and craft pays handsomely in the quality of the prints he produces, with sharp

edges and sumptuous curves creating a deceptive appearance of simplicity in his subject matter. George's photographic eye is lyrical and sophisticated, juxtaposing images and reflections that leave the viewer pondering exactly what they are seeing.

The collection has identifiable threads of imagery that run through it, causing pieces to reference one another, and yet is broad in scope. Both the visual variety and his focus on detail keep the eye and the viewer engaged. Across the collection, there is a cogency and coherence that compels one to move from print to print, drawn by the invitation to a dialogue Reisch has created between the work and viewer. There are many "double takes" as light and

shadow evoke multiple possibilities, and you will pause to ask yourself exactly what it is that you are viewing.

The temptation will be to walk from one end of this linear exhibit to the other, but don't be surprised to find yourself captured by this work in ways that will take you back again to look at what you think you have already seen. This show runs through this Pride Month of June—a great month to drop by the Center. Kudos to the Center and to the curator for an excellent show and to Mr. Reisch for an outstanding premiere exhibition.

Sincerely,  
Bill Gordon  
Mundelein

# WINDY CITY TIMES

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# WINDY CITY TIMES

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26

LUXBAR.



25

Monday drag at Jackhammer.



## Crosses to bear

20

The Conjuring 2 is one of several upcoming big-screen movies.

### DANCIN' FEATS

## Chicago Tap Theatre marks Pride with glam-rock spectacular

BY LAUREN WARNECKE

In 2010, Chicago Tap Theatre (CTT) mounted its spring season closer at the 984-seat Athenaeum Theatre for the second time, surprising audiences with a 20-minute Queen extravaganza complete with chorus and marching band. The "Tap Out Loud" closing number was meant as a small tribute for artistic director Mark Yonally's late brother, who loved operatic rock and infused Yonally's childhood with the sounds of Bonnie Tyler and Freddy Mercury.

Coinciding with Pride weekend, the seasoned tappers at CTT are revisiting the suite of seven songs performed years ago, but this time will be bigger, better and totally fabulous. In what has now become "We Will Tap You: A Tap Dance Celebration to the Music of Queen," showing June 25 at the Athenaeum Theatre, Yonally and CTT music director Kurt Schweitz take on their most ambitious project to date.

We Will Tap You features up to 120 performers with guests galore, including choreographers Rich Ashworth and Kirsten Uttich, aerial tapping in Collaboration with C5's Jeremy Plummer, guest emcee Mattrick Swayze, live music by a seven-piece band with vocals from Alien Queen and The David Bowie Variety Hour's Nick Davio and the Chicago Gay Men's Chorus, Lake-side Pride Freedom Marching Band and the Chicago Spirit Brigade.

In an interview with Windy City Times, Yonally reflects on the 2010 iteration of his glam-rock spectacle. "It was an early attempt to do something on that big of a scale," he said. "We learned a lot, like how when you have a marching band on stage with tap dancers, you can't hear tap dancing! So this year, we are going to be much savvier."

"I like things that are over the top and absurd," said Yonally. Imagine 16 tap dancers,

some hanging from the ceiling, surrounded by a 50-piece marching band, 30 singers belting "Galileo, Figaro," 20 brigade complete with rifles and Mattrick Swayze paraded about the stage like Esther Williams—and that becomes the understatement of the year. "It will feel, I think, like a real spectacle," he said. "I want people to feel surprised and delighted!"

As one of few smaller dance companies with

an established season of performances, CTT's big spring show has always coincided with Pride Month. Yonally observed a gap in Pride Month offerings, with no large-scale performance celebrating pride despite a number of established LGBT performing-arts organizations in town. "Everyone is always so booked preparing for the parade," he said, but Yonally put out a bunch of calls asking performers and organizations to take part, and practically everyone agreed to take part. "A city as great as Chicago, with such a rich history in the LGBT community, should have a spectacle," Yonally said. "We've always had a presence in the LGBT community. It's been a community I've taken strength from. So, if CTT can be the catalyst to bring these organizations together, it's an honor to do it."

Once the glitter falls and the spectacle ends, the hope is that "We Will Tap You" will have created cross-promotion opportunities outside the Pride Parade for some of the city's longest-

standing LGBT organizations, and hopefully will have inspired some new tap fans, too.

Patrons of CTT will notice a number of changes next season, including a date swap of the company's annual story-based show. After years at UIC's theater, CTT's holiday show "Tidings of Tap" is moving north for a one-nighter Sunday, Dec. 18, at North Shore Center for the Performing Arts. Back by popular demand, next season will also feature a revival of "Changes: A Science Fiction Tap Opera to the Music of David Bowie," and a sit-down dinner gala Friday, Oct. 14, honoring Broadway legend Ben Vereen as the first recipient of the Achievement in Storytelling through Movement award.

**"We Will Tap You: A Tap Dance Celebration to the Music of Queen" will take place Saturday, June 25, at the Athenaeum Theatre, 2936 N. Southport Ave. Tickets are \$23-35; visit [AthenaeumTheatre.org](http://AthenaeumTheatre.org) or call 773-935-6875.**



From left: Chicago Tap Theatre dancers Kirsten Uttich, Mark Yonally and Jen Yonally. Photo by Josh Hawkins

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## THEATER REVIEW

**Out of the Blue**

Playwright: Vladimir Zaytsey;

Translation: Tatyana Khaikin and Robert Duffy

At: Organic Theater Company at Greenhouse Theater Center, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave.

Tickets: 773-404-7336 or

OrganicTheater.org; \$20-\$30

Runs through: July 10

(in repertory with *The Good Doctor*)

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

You've got to admire the bravery of Russian playwright Vladimir Zaytsey for penning the 2015 gay drama *Out of the Blue*. In its U.S. debut courtesy of Organic Theater Company, *Out of the Blue* does a defiant job in challenging draconian anti-gay Russian laws and attitudes.

That said, *Out of the Blue* is probably more interestingly viewed sociologically by American audiences as a piece of foreign protest art rather than fully being a universal coming-of-age story. Not all of the humor translates, and the piece could do with some judicious cutting to its running time.

But *Out of the Blue* clearly aims to change a lot of minds on the issue of homosexuality, and often it functions more on the level of a series of direct-address character lectures than a tragic drama.

*Out of the Blue* actually begins with plenty of humor as the protagonist "Boy" (an endearing William Burdin) shares his awkward first-time teenage dating exploits with his Soviet music-loving classmate, Vika (a quirky Amy Powell). But once the Boy meets up with the handsome athlete Andrey (a cocky Adam Zaininger) on a school trip away from home, he realizes his true same-sex attractions.



From left: Bryan Wakefield, Laura Sturm and Will Burdin in *Out of the Blue*.

Photo by John Jennings

Where *Out of the Blue* veers toward drama is when the Boy reveals his homosexuality to his sparring parents as a spur-of-the-moment method of preventing them from splitting up. The militaristic Papa (Bryan Wakefield) is outraged, while the confused Mama (Laura Sturm) turns to her mother (Julanne Sullivan as the Babushka) and her own bizarre ideas to turn the Boy straight.

Director Alexander Gelman stages *Out of the Blue* fairly sparsely where everything swirls

around the main set piece of a bed. You can read that to be a symbolic choice, though it's also expedient for the hopscotching scenes of different locales and dream sequences. The actors playing the younger characters seem to have more to chew on theatrically, since the motivations of the grownups tend to be basically angry and angst-filled.

The ending is also fairly ambiguous, leaving things for audiences to decipher whether or not the events really occurred or if it was just another dream sequence. But that ambiguity

looks like it had to be built into the play, just as a lot of angry and biased views against homosexuality are also expressed toward the end.

With its U.S. debut of *Out of the Blue*, Organic Theater shares a vital piece of theater that hopefully will have an effect in changing hearts and minds in Russia. And it is best not to become complacent that things are all that fine here in the United States, since much of the anti-gay Russian bile spilled in *Out of the Blue* is also still spewed in this country, too.

## THEATER REVIEW

**Soups, Stews, and Casseroles: 1976**

Playwright: Rebecca Gilman

At: The Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn

Tickets: 312-443-3800;

GoodmanTheatre.org; \$10-\$40

Runs through: June 19

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Sometimes a play is missing just one speech or emotional beat, and that's the case with *Soups, Stews, and Casseroles: 1976*, set in Wisconsin 40 years ago.

Playwright Rebecca Gilman quickly puts her protagonist between a rock and a hard place. Kim (Cliff Chamberlain) is a 17-year veteran of the local food-processing plant. When it's sold,

Kim unexpectedly is promoted thanks to the new manager and his wife, Elaine, who rent the house next door to Kim and his wife, Kat (Cora Vander Broek). Kim's success, however, comes at the expense of other union workers as the new owners modernize.

Of course, the play's about much more than labor and management. It's about a way of life, friendships and social status. Blue collar Kim and Kat were high school sweethearts who married when Kat became pregnant, forcing Kim into the food factory job at 19. They have a solid life, with a 17-year-old daughter, but now Kim might lose his job. He bemoans the irony of being "scared to death of losing something you never wanted in the first place." Instead, Kim rises from labor to management, and a corporate job soon beckons providing a salary that would allow Kim and Kat to pay debts, upgrade their car and send daughter Kelly (Lindsay Stock) to college.

The new manager is unseen, but Elaine (Angela Reed) carefully guides Kat and Kim towards the middle class, introducing them to chardonnay, offering wardrobe advice and bringing Kat to a local women's club to which Kat never has been invited. Elaine is gracious and charming but is an agent-provocateur nonetheless, urging the move up the social ladder.

On the other side are octogenarian friend JoAnne (Ann Whitney), representing hometown values, and early-20s Kyle (Ty Olwin), who heads the union local. There's one more crucial factor: Kim expected to inherit the family dairy farm but it went to his brother instead, which Kim resents. Clash is inevitable.

Director Robert Falls—Gilman's longtime artistic partner—understands when to apply a concept to a play and when to disappear into the play, and he skillfully disappears with this naturalistic drama. The characters are sure, believable and vibrant on Kevin Depinet's glory of

a 1970s paneled kitchen set, with almond and avocado appliances. Jenny Mannis's costumes, especially for Elaine, also provide clever social comment.

So what's missing? Kim passionately defends his promotion and upward mobility, but has no equivalent passion about the farm values which nurtured him, or the farm's emotional meaning to him. Because that piece is missing, the play's precipitous conclusion rings false. The play's two opposing philosophies are clear upon reflection, but one receives far more weight and flash than the other, and the balance needs to be better.

## CRITICS' PICKS



**Death of a Streetcar Named Virginia Woolf**, Writers Theatre, Glencoe, through July 31. Tim Ryder and Tim Sniffen's comic mashup of great theater dramas by the likes of Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, Edward Albee and Thornton Wilder is a laugh riot. SCM

**Haymarket, The Anarchists Songbook**, Underscore Theatre at The Edge, through June 12. This new musical's lilting score channels 19th-century instruments and styles in its compelling account of Chicago's iconic 1886 Haymarket Bombing and ensuing injustices. JA

**The Producers**, Mercury Theater Chicago, through June 26. Go and laugh your head off at director L. Walter Sterns' masterful stage reduction of Mel Brooks' mammoth 2001 Broadway musical hit. SCM

**Tug of War**, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, through June 12. This dazzling mash-up of Edward III, Henry V and Henry VI focuses on England's long, fruitless wars to conquer France, yet stages none of the famous battle scenes, and you needn't follow the story. JA

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

## THEATER REVIEW

**Constellations**

Playwright: Nick Payne

At: Steppenwolf Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted St.

Tickets: 312-335-1650 or

Steppenwolf.org; \$20-\$89

Runs through: July 3

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

It may only last 80 minutes, but British playwright Nick Payne sure does pack in plenty in his thoughtful and heartbreaking 2012 drama *Constellations*. Now making a strong Chicago debut in Steppenwolf's Upstairs Theatre, *Constellations* wows because it rapidly fires on so many neurological synapses.

At its basic level, *Constellations* is a two-hander about a modern British couple consisting of a theoretical physicist named Marianne (Jessie Fisher) and a professional beekeeper named Roland (Jon Michael Hill). But with these two, Payne constructs an ex-

pansive universe of randomness (and a lot of comic relief) from parallel-world possibilities via speedy repetition and variations.

Payne provides an inordinate amount of second-guessing to how things could have or might have been between Roland and Marianne based upon a number of factors. These could range from whether one chooses to laugh at a ribald joke or how busy she might be at work on a particular day.

But crucially, the audience comes to care for these initially mismatched people who fall in (and out) of love. Alas, a debilitating and hard-wired illness is foreshadowed and eventually revealed, forcing both Marianne and Roland to consider a panoply of tough choices in how to cope with it.

Now Hill and Fisher truly get a dramatic workout respectively performing Roland and Marianne. Because the snappy script contains so many repeated lines, *Constellations* must have been a nightmare to memorize. But the two play off each other compellingly and keep each other crucially on track. They also add plenty of layers, especially when you question

whether the characters are being truthful or saying outright lies to each other.

Under the assured direction of Jonathan Berry, Hill and Fisher both illuminate the many complexities of *Constellations*. But crucially, all three delve into the emotions that either bursts out in gales or lies hidden depending upon each individual dramatic beat.

Set designer Joe Schermoly creates a basic playing area that is highly suggestive of an abstracted sliced section of a brain. And with the aid of lighting designer Heather Gilbert, clusters of oversized ropes suggest nerves that electrically glow for racing thoughts or bodily impulses.

As involving as Marianne and Roland's life-and-death love story is in *Constellations*, Payne's drama also has the potential to prod audiences to contemplate their own existence and relationships that may have formed just as much by chance or randomness. *Constellations* is a heady and challenging work, but thankfully the cast and crew at Steppenwolf are more than up to the task of illustrating all its glorious intricacies and variables.



From left: Ann James and Ben Chang in *Caught*. Photo by Jonathan L. Green

**THEATER REVIEW**

**Caught**

**Playwright:** Christopher Chen  
**At:** Sideshow Theatre Company at Victory Gardens Richard Christiansen Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.  
**Tickets:** 773-871-3000 or Sideshowtheatre.org; \$20-\$30  
**Runs through:** July 3

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Playwright Christopher Chen is having a field day playing with notions of truth in a succession of theatrical contexts and arguments about cultural appropriation in *Caught*. And clearly the cast members of Sideshow Theatre Company's Chicago premiere, under the "gotcha" direction of Seth Bockley, look like they're

enjoying Chen's assuredness in messing with the minds of audiences.

*Caught* begins as a lecture in a modern art museum as an exiled Chinese conceptual artist named Lin Bo (Ben Chang) relates how he devised an "imaginary protest" to commemorate Beijing's 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre. Once the censorious Communist regime traces this all back to Lin Bo, his lecture then delves into his frightening time in a squalid prison.

But then *Caught* shifts to Lin Bo being questioned about the veracity of his prison story in the offices of *The New Yorker*. Journalist Joyce (Ann James) and her nosy editor, Bob (Bob Kruse), are in a conniption because so many details of Lin Bo's story appear to be lifted from other sources.

Even more questions into notions of "truth" and "interpretation" come to the fore with Wang Min (Helen Young), another Chinese con-

ceptual artist who goes on the attack by bringing up journalistic and literary scandals. She specifically name checks the controversies involving the public radio program *This American Life* and how it gave a platform for performance artist Mike Daisey's monologue *The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs*.

Now all the ideas that Chen explores in *Caught* would be a dream to communications professors who need powerful teaching examples for topics like semantics and interpretation. But as a theatrical work, *Caught* comes off more like an indulgent play of flashy ideas that ape Pirandello rather than developing a dramatic arc where you come to care about any of the characters' plights.

At the very least, Bockley and his cast relish the twists and turns of Chen's script. They

certainly wring plenty of comedy out of Chen's smug and smarty-pants material.

Sideshow's *Caught* is also visually rich on-stage, particularly set designer Kurtis Boetcher who provides an ample gallery space to showcase the eye-catching work of "gallerist" Paul Hopkin and "featured visual artist" Larry Lee. The play's many shifts in tone are also illuminated well in the work of lighting designer Claire Chrzan (she particularly creates a kaleidoscope of color for the tower constructed of Chinese take-out boxes).

Chen's *Caught* delights in pointing out how truths are merely constructs based upon an individual's interpretation. And while that's all good and true in Sideshow's fine production, just be aware that the show is more engaging for your head than your heart.



**SPOTLIGHT**

If you previously missed the collaboration between the comics of *The Second City* and the modern dancers of Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, then make sure to get your tickets now for **The Art of Falling**. See how the dance world intersects with those who specialize in improvisational and sketch comedy in this critically acclaimed show. *The Art of Falling* returns to the Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph St., through Sunday, June 19. Tickets are \$30 to \$109; call 312-334-7777 or visit [www.harristheaterchicago.org](http://www.harristheaterchicago.org) or [www.hubbardstreetdance.com](http://www.hubbardstreetdance.com) for more information.

Caption: Carisa Barreca, left, and Tim Mason in Hubbard Street Dance Chicago + *The Second City's The Art of Falling*. Photo by Todd Rosenberg



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# KNIGHT at the movies

BY RICHARD KNIGHT, JR.

## ...Princess Shaw; Out of Iraq; Those People

### The Princess of YouTube

There are Cinderella stories and then there's the saga of Princess Shaw—a Cinderella story that breaks the mold.

If the tale of a 37-year-old bisexual Black woman toiling as a caregiver for the elderly in New Orleans (and barely scraping by) with dreams of musical stardom—and achieving those dreams—seems improbable (and it is), it's also a little more familiar, thanks to other musical sensations who haven't quite fit the mold. Susan Boyle's zoom to stardom immediately comes to mind.

But the difference between Boyle's story and Shaw's (whose real name is Samantha Montgomery), as documented in Ido Haar's charming film **Presenting Princess Shaw**, is that with the latter we get the build-up to the "Star Is Born" moment, making it that much more compelling when it finally arrives at the midway point in the film.

By then, we are completely invested in Montgomery's story, thanks in no small part to her magnetic personality. Haar's camera follows her as she goes about life—working by day, waiting patiently for her turn at an open talent by night, uploading yet another of her original videos to YouTube, auditioning for *The Voice*, spending time with her on again/off again girlfriend Olivia and dealing with the economic stresses of everyday life—trying to keep the lights on, the car running, trying to earn enough to pay the rent. Always, the music just pours out of Montgomery, buoyed by her relentless optimism in the face of so many daunting challenges.

Meanwhile, in Tel Aviv, an elusive musician known to the world as Kutiman through his YouTube mash-ups is working on crafting a new piece built around one of Montgomery's songs and utilizing her *a capella* vocals. Just at the moment when Montgomery is at her lowest ebb, Kutiman uploads his mashup. The following day, Haar's camera captures the moment when Princess Shaw hears it and reads the positive reactions from her new fans as they are pouring in. It's a genuinely moving scene that builds as the gobsmacked Montgomery next finds herself

Btoo (left) and Nayyef in *Out of Iraq*.  
PR photo



in Israel meeting Kutiman and performing with him onstage. Kutiman himself—calm and serene, his eyes sparking when he begins to create at the computer—is a fascinating camera presence, too.

Although Haar's film pushes the boundaries of documentary, we're not quite sure why or how the filmmaker came to film Montgomery and the timeline is a bit fuzzy. But that's a small quibble with such a well-loved staple of the movies as its theme and such an endearing, warm personality as its subject.

[*Editor's note:* An interview with Montgomery is on page 28 of this issue.]

### Forbidden gay love

The LOGO network has built its reputation on the success of RuPaul's *Drag Race*, which has led to a number of spinoffs that can only be described as fabulous and frivolous. I'm particularly enamored—no surprise—of its camp movie show *Cocktails & Classics*, in which comic actor Michael Urie (*TV's Ugly Betty*) hosts a group of friends to sit around and watch everything from *Valley of the Dolls* to *All About Eve* with him. (Hey LOGO! I'm waiting for my guest star invitation!)

Now the network is taking a serious turn with *Global Ally*, a newly launched, year-long social campaign. Sharing stories of queer activists around the world, in an effort to change attitudes, is just one goal of the campaign. **Out of Iraq**, which LOGO will begin airing Monday, June 13, is an inspired choice to focus on the plight of our queer sisters and brothers around

the world.

Co-directed by Oscar winning documentary filmmaker Eva Orner (*Taxi to the Dark Side*) and Chris McKim and produced by LOGO staples Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato, the film is a searing indictment of the horrific conditions for Our People in bloodthirsty Iraq. Although same-sex relationships have been decriminalized, queers are often subjected to multiple forms of abuse—including murder.

The film follows the plight of a darling gay Iraqi couple—Nayyef (a translator) and Btoo (a soldier)—who are separated when Nayyef is granted asylum to the United States before Btoo. Working with a gay human-rights activist in San Francisco, where Nayyef settles, the film tracks the years—yes, years—that go by as Btoo struggles to overcome red tape and be rejoined with his love. At every step of the way his life is in danger—first of being killed at any point in Iraq and later, after resettling in Lebanon, of being sent back to face certain death—often at the hands of everyday citizens. Communicating via Skype and cellphone, the couple struggle to keep their spirits aloft as they work to resolve all the red tape in bringing Nayyef and Btoo back together.

Out of Iraq is both an infuriating and emotionally compelling experience that needs to be seen. Bravo, LOGO! [www.globalally.org](http://www.globalally.org)

### WASP gay love

The plot of **Those People** is thus: On Manhattan's gilded Upper East Side, a young painter, Charlie, finds the man of his dreams in an older pianist who travels the globe.

If only Charlie weren't already secretly in love with his own manipulative best friend, Sebastian, whose family is embroiled in a Bernie Madoff-sized financial scandal, things mightn't be so complicated. The course of true love—especially for these twentysomething rich WASPs living it up in Manhattan—isn't bound to run smoothly. And in the wake of Sebastian's notoriety, Charlie and their tight-knit group of friends must confront the new realities of adulthood.

If writer-director Joey Kuhn's sophisticated, diverting, gorgeously filmed debut feature seems at times like a gay imitation of the films of Whit Stillman—which it does—that is meant as a huge compliment. *Those People* was a popular favorite at last year's Reeling Film Festival and comes to VOD and DVD from Wolfe Video on June 14.

### Upcoming movie calendar

Highlights from films (listed chronologically) opening in Chicago, June 10 and 17 (some descriptions come from studio press materials).

**The Conjuring 2** (June 10)—Those wacky

ghost hunters Ed and Lorraine (Patrick Wilson and Vera Farmiga) are back for round two. This time, the deadly serious duo head to London to help a single mom with four children rid their lodgings of unwanted paranormal baddies. The first round was long on atmosphere and truly frightened; here's hoping that lightning (of the ectoplasmic variety) strikes twice.

**Presenting Princess Shaw** (June 10)—See details above.

**Out of Iraq** (June 13)—See details above.

**Finding Dory** (June 17)—In this long-anticipated sequel to Disney's undersea animated megahit *Finding Nemo*, Ellen DeGeneres returns to voice the beloved, daffy fish with the memory issues as she embarks on a journey to reunite with her mother (voiced by Diane Keaton) and father (voiced by Eugene Levy). If rumors are correct, the film will feature a lesbian couple.

**De Palma** (June 17)—Brian De Palma, the director who graphically combined sex and death on the screen; Hitchcock's most ambitious successor; and the filmmaker behind *Carrie*, *Dressed to Kill*, *Body Double*, *The Untouchables* and more, is profiled in this long-overdue documentary.

**Genius** (June 17)—This is the long-gestating screen adaptation of out writer A. Scott Berg's award winning biography detailing the "romantic friendship" between legendary editor Max Perkins (Colin Firth) and Southern writer Thomas Wolfe (Jude Law). Out screenwriter John Logan wrote the script; Nicole Kidman, Guy Pearce, Dominic West and Laura Linney co-star.

## Jerusalem troupe in Chicago June 18

A Wider Bridge—the LGBTQ advocacy group that aims to build connections between the Israeli and North American LGBTQ communities—announced the U.S. tour of c.a.t.a.m.o.n., a Jerusalem dance group.

Arthur Slepian, executive director of Wider Bridge, said in a statement, "Through arts and culture that challenge the boundaries of religion, race, gender, and sexuality, these young artists are cultivating a new and hopeful environment of pluralism, diversity and understanding in a city that has seen much tension and division."

The troupe will stop in Chicago on Saturday, June 18, at Canvas, 2313 W. North Ave., at 6:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$15-\$18; visit <http://bit.ly/1NtzEm9>.

## New Nick Jonas CD out June 10

Recording artist/actor Nick Jonas will release his newest album, *Last Year Was Complicated*, on Friday, June 10, on Safehouse/Island Records.

Among the 12 tunes are "Close" (with Tove Lo), "Chainsaw," "Champagne Problems," "Unhinged" and "Bacon" (with Ty Dolla \$ign).

In addition, Jonas will kick off the co-headline Honda Civic Tour: Future Now with Safehouse Records partner Demi Lovato on Friday, June 24, in Sunrise, Florida. Recently, Jonas and Lovato made news when they announced the cancellation of shows in North Carolina in response to the state's recent anti-LGBT law HB2.

To read a recent interview with Jonas, visit <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/MUSIC-Nick-Jonas-NC-law-new-CD-and-getting-personal/55125.html>.

## 'RuPaul's Drag Race' has 'Battles' on tour

"RuPaul's Drag Race Battle of the Seasons: 2016 Extravaganza Tour" will take place on 66 dates. Locally, an event will take place Friday, June 10, at the Riviera Theatre, 4746 N. Racine Ave., at 8:30 p.m.

The "Battle of the Seasons" tour, now in its third consecutive year of growth, will again be hosted by series judge Michelle Visage and includes an all-star cast of past winners, finalist and fan favorites from each season, including: Adore Delano, Alaska Thunderfuck, BenDeLaCreme, Courtney Act, Ginger Minj, Ivy Winters, Jinkx Monsoon, Katya, Manila Luzon, Miss Fame, Pandora Boxx, Phi Phi O'hara, Sharon Needles and Violet Chachki, to name a few.

Tickets are \$37.50-\$299.50; see [RuPaulBOTS.com](http://RuPaulBOTS.com).

# Monica Raymund named Pride Parade marshal

Television and stage actor Monica Raymund is scheduled to be grand marshal of this year's Chicago 47th Annual Pride Parade on Sunday, June 26.

She came out publicly two years ago. She



Monica Raymund.

considers herself a "proud member of the the LGBTQ communities."

Raymund stars as Gabriela Dawson in NBC's show Chicago Fire, which is filmed here in Chicago. A graduate of the Juilliard School, she starred for three seasons on the Fox drama Lie To Me. Other notable credits include features Happy Baby and Arbitrage as well as a recurring role on The Good Wife. Also, she starred in the musical Like Water for Chocolate (Sundance Theatre Lab) and Boleros for the Disenchanted (Huntington Theatre).

She is a founding member of The Mechanical Theatre Group and currently serves on the board of The Performing Arts Project. Previously, she's been part of the faculty of the Broadway Theatre Project, co-head of the communications department at the Heifetz Institute and producer on the Broadway production The Velocity of Autumn.

Raymund is the founder and president of SISU Theatrical Productions, is a director for the upcoming campaign The Hidden Tears Project and is also on the board of MOGUL, an online news aggregator and publishing platform for women.

Lastly, along with several community event organizers, she held a fundraiser this past winter for Project Fierce, a South Side collective that helps LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness.

She will be riding in a vehicle near the front of the parade procession.

Regarding the parade—as announced last December, at the request of the City—the event will have fewer entries this year, with 160 (down from 215 last year).

For more information about the Pride Parade or other June Pride Month events, visit ChicagoPrideCalendar.org.

## Midsommarfest June 10-12

Midsommarfest will return for its 51st edition June 10-12 in Chicago's Andersonville.

There will be five performance stages; several blocks of food and drink as well as various vendors; and family-friendly activities. A \$10 donation is asked at the gate; donations go toward innovative programming and initiatives connected with Andersonville.

Music highlights are as follows:

—Friday, June 10 (5-10 p.m.)

North Stage at Catalpa—5500 N. Clark St.  
5 p.m. DJ Dan Luna | 6 p.m. Hey Jimmy | 8 p.m. 16 Candles

—Saturday, June 11 (11 a.m.—10 p.m.)

North Stage at Catalpa—5500 N. Clark St.  
11 a.m. Chicago Gay Men's Chorus | 12 p.m. Robbie Gold | 2 p.m. The Yacht Rockets | 3:30-4 p.m. Chicago Spirit Brigade | 4 p.m. Northside | 6 p.m. Stache | 8 p.m. Catfight

Center Stage @ Berwyn 5300 N. Clark Street  
11 a.m. Lisa Roti | 12 p.m. Distant Brothers | 1:30 p.m. Chicago Spirit Brigade | 2 p.m. Chi Town Soul | 4 p.m. Plutonians | 6 p.m. Run Forrest | 8 p.m. 7th Heaven

Summerdale Stage @ Summerdale 5350 N. Clark St.

Also the Alamo Shoes Family Fun Area  
11 a.m. The pH Comedy Theater presents Adventure Library | 12 p.m. Mission Propelle: Girl Power Yoga | 12:30 p.m. Jameson Loves Danger Pet Parade and Costume Contest | 1:30 p.m. Dream Big Performing Arts Workshop | 2 p.m. Livewire | 4 p.m. The Joans | 6 p.m. Chicago Samba | 8 p.m. Nelson Street Revival

Balmoral Pride Stage @ Balmoral West of Clark St.

Presented by Replay/Elixir and Hamburger Mary's/Mary's Attic

12 p.m. Lucy Smith Trio | 2:30 p.m. MaryOke Unplugged hosted by Kevin Florian | 4:30 p.m. Drag Show featuring Angel LeBare, Dida Ritz, Ruff N Stuff, Sheri Payne, and Velocity Metropolis | 6:30 p.m. Retro Dance Party with DJ Laura B | 8:30 p.m. The Hits with DJ Laura B

—Sunday, June 12 (11 a.m.-10 p.m.)

North Stage at Catalpa—5500 N. Clark St.  
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Center Stage @ Berwyn 5300 N. Clark St.  
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## Leather Archives to mark 25 years in September

Leather Archives & Museum is preparing to celebrate its work of preserving leather/fetish/BDSM/kink history this fall, when the museum will host its 25th-anniversary weekend on Sept. 16-18.

Plans for the weekend include numerous receptions, educational programming, a walking tour, a banquet dinner, after-parties and, of course, tours of the museum itself.

Started in 1991 by Chuck Renslow, the Leather Archives & Museum was originally located at 5007 N. Clark St. The museum later moved to 6418 N. Greenview Ave. in 1999, where it has operated ever since.

Early-bird weekend registrations are \$160 (through June 7) and \$200 thereafter, with VIP packages available for \$300. Special discounted packages for \$100 are available for those 21 to 29 years of age at the time of the anniversary weekend.

Visit [LeatherArchives.org/anniversary/](http://LeatherArchives.org/anniversary/).

## EXPO Chicago galleries announced

EXPO Chicago, The International Exposition of Contemporary & Modern Art, announced the list of premier galleries that will exhibit Sept. 22-25 at Navy Pier's Festival Hall, 600 E. Grand Ave.

In its significant fifth year, the expo—under the leadership of President and Director Tony Karman—announced the 2016 exhibitor list of 145 leading galleries representing 23 countries and 52 cities from around the world.

A few of the Chicago galleries slated to take part include Corbett vs. Dempsey, Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Kavi Gupta, Carrie Secrist Gallery and Zolla/Lieberman Gallery.

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

## Bianca del Rio in Chicago Oct. 9

Bianca Del Rio (aka Roy Haylock) is launching the North American leg of her latest global standup tour.

Del Rio will be at Chicago's The Vic on Sunday, Oct. 9.

Bianca's last standup act, "Rolodex of Hate," toured the world with sold out shows for over a year before being ordered as an original streaming TV special by Vimeo and later, purchased for cable by Logo TV.

Tickets for the "Not Today Satan" tour are on sale at [TheBiancaDelRio.com](http://TheBiancaDelRio.com).

Jane Lynch.  
Photo by Jake Bailey



# Jane Lynch: Bringing her song-and-dance to Chicago

BY SARAH TOCE

Impeccable performer Jane Lynch is bringing her shtick to Chicago Friday-Saturday, June 17-18 at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, 20 N. Upper Wacker Dr. The Windy City is one of the 14 U.S. city tour stops during her new summer cabaret show, See Jane Sing. Other cities on the stop include Seattle, Dallas and Nashville.

The musical undertaking is a departure for the actress, talk-show host and comedienne.

"Never done it before. Excited as heck," she said. "I love these folks I work with and I'm thrilled at the prospect of doing this show with

them night after night all across America."

She has developed a worry worth noting, however.

"I find I'm spending way too much time thinking about how I'm gonna pack all I need in a carry-on," she said. "I do not like to check luggage."

Not your typical Broadway narrative, Lynch, accompanied by a five-piece band, builds the evening around her musical chops and comedic wit and charm. Joining her on stage for a portion of the show are special guests Kate Flannery of The Office, who plays Lynch's mischievous vocal partner and Tim Davis, Glee's

former vocal arranger.

During the live performance, the Emmy and Golden Globe winner takes audiences on a musical journey through a world of songs from Broadway to cabaret with new takes on "If Wishes Were Rainbows," "Mr. Monotony" and "Far From the Home I Love." New to this tour is Lynch's epic take on Nicki Minaj's "Anaconda" and a medley of songs that made her cry as a child, including "Puff the Magic Dragon."

Lynch has long held a secret desire to perform "Anaconda."

"Picture, if you will, three middle-aged pasty white folks with limited movement skills and oodles of undeserved confidence," Lynch said.

"Buckle your seat belts."

Lynch first cut her theatrical teeth at The Second City, Steppenwolf Theatre and in many church basements all over the greater Chicago area. In addition to hosting Hollywood Game Night, Jane's recent film and television credits include A.C.O.D., Three Stooges, Wreck-It Ralph, Julie & Julia, Shrek Forever After, The Post Grad Survival Guide, Paul and Brownie Masters, Glee, and Angel from Hell.

Lynch came about the concept of See Jane Sing on somewhat of a whim.

"I was invited by 54 Below, a cabaret space in New York City, to perform 'my show.' I didn't

Turn to page 31

## WEDDINGS

### Wiesmore-Roberts

Christina Wiesmore (right in photo) and Heather Roberts were married May 28 in a rooftop ceremony at Lacuna Artist Lofts in Chicago. A reception in the Reverie Gallery immediately followed the beautiful skyline ceremony and featured entertainment by local band Catfight.

Wiesmore, a leader in the Chicago LGBTQ community, is co-founder of the popular women's pride event Back Lot Bash and also serves as a member of the board of the Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association.

Roberts, who moved to Chicago three years ago, serves as legal counsel to Motorola Mobility and is a board member of StartOut Chicago and leader of the LGBT@Moto employee resource group.

The ceremony was officiated by Amie Klujian, Christina's business partner and close friend of both brides. Bridesmaids on Christina's side were Patricia Fukuda, Lisa Almaguer, Emily Hoskins and Monica Howe-Morin. Heather's bridesmaids were Courtney Van-Lonkhuyzen, Angela Daley Tideman, Chloe Willstrom and Trisha VanMeter.

Photo by Michelle Lytle Photography.



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Carisa Barreca of The Second City with Hubbard Street Dancer Jeffrey Duffy. Photo by Todd Rosenberg.



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# DANCING ABOUT ARCHITECTURE

BY MARC 'MOOSE' MODER



## We're SO into songs of summer

Sweetest Day, Record Store Day, Small Business Saturday and the Summer Movie splurge are all made-up events produced by industries to get you to spend money. While all seem silly at first, after as much pummeling, we all eventually buy into them, somehow making them legit. Much like the UK's "Christmas #1," documented in the legendary Love Actually, we seemed to have been conned/coerced into believing "The Summer Single" is a thing. In the past five years or so, debate arises annually in radio and print music press over what will be the song that best defines summer with hopes of being iconic. Past examples include "California Girls" by Katy Perry, Carly Rae Jepsen's "Call Me Maybe" or LMFAO's "Party Rock Anthem." All are cemented into our noggins as summer jams that will be spun at every wedding until long after you're gone, which means ongoing cash for labels and artists. 2016's crop—with many pop stars going sultrier and down-tempo—seems a bit shallow, but not without its charms.

A song doesn't have to be released in summer—or even spring—to be a song of the summer. "Uptown Funk" by Bruno Mars and Mark Ronson came out in November 2014, but stayed in the top 10 for a staggering 31 weeks, finally dropping below 10 in July 2015. So it's not an impossibility that DNCE's "Cake By the Ocean," released in November of last year, and to radio in January, could do it. Try to get through a day where his ode to getting

ass at sea isn't misplayed on the Food Network or Today Show in reference to cake or oceans. It's still ubiquitous and in the Top 20, right above Jonas Brother Nick's "Close" (with Tove Lo), which, while a bit too sexy, also has legs.

When it hit the web a few weeks ago, Justin Timberlake's "Can't Stop The Feeling" lit up the world and was crowned immediately, but now, languishing at #3, the song already feels overly simplistic and tired, if you ask the general population. Blocking JT from the top of the singles chart is Panda's "Designer" (every summer has one oddball hip hop/reggae novelty that shouldn't be taken seriously: Harlem Shake; Cheerleader; etc.) and Drake's



"One Dance." While not as catchy as "Hotline Bling," "One Dance" is undeniably great and catchy. I wouldn't say no to this one, or to Drake in a bath towel at my front door, right ladies?!

But my pick for the summer is Ariana Grande's single (that's not even a single, per se), "Into You." With the dull "Dangerous Woman" still being worked for radio, the far catchier "Into You" has been making the rounds as her second offering off the new album, with a super sexy concept video in tow. If you'd asked me a month ago about what was the ladies' best bet, I'd have said the "Work From Home" earworm by Fifth Harmony or Britney's new (now delayed) new single. "Work From Home" can't hold up to the pop hooks of "Into You" and Britney pushed her single back until summer itself, so that's out. That leaves one pony-tailed Disney brat to take the summer song crown. We're so, so into it.



### JACKHAMMER

Open wide for the "Best Worst Drag Show," every Monday night at ridiculous-o'clock.

Photos by Kirk Williamson



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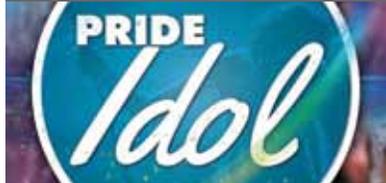




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OUR WEEKLY PICKS TO PLAN YOUR NIGHTLIFE CALENDAR

**Pride Idol semifinal**



Wed., June 8, 8-10 pm  
The Glenwood,  
6962 N. Glenwood Ave.

It's a sing-off to decide who moves on to the finals. Contestants include James Sims III, Stacey Lee Spears, Aaron Smith, Paul G. Miller, Zachary Kropp, Andrew J. Leonard and Owen Maggio.

**Come Play with Team Touche**



Fri., June 10, 10 pm  
Touche,  
6412 N. Clark St.

Live jockstrap auction at midnight. Chinese raffle, Jell-O shots, drink specials and more. \$5 select Smirnoff flavored vodka vocktails (100% donated to Team Fund). Proceeds benefit Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN)/Ride For AIDS Chicago (RFAC).

**The Joans at Midsommarfest 2016**



Sat., June 11, 4-5:30 pm  
Summerdale stage,  
Summerdale Ave. and Clark St.

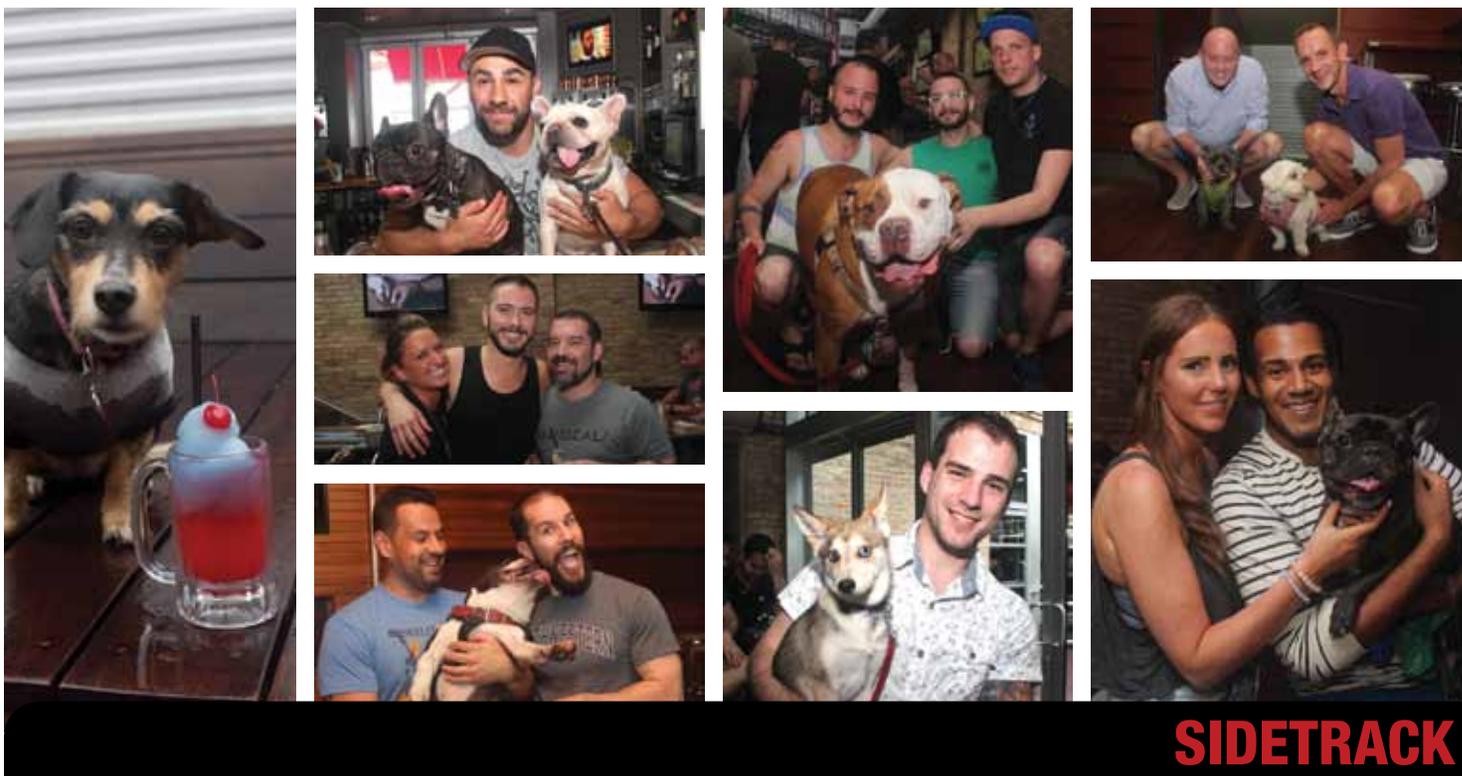
Chicago's own Joan Crawford-themed punk band returns to get you "Mad at the Dirt." Rock out to classics and new tracks during the annual Midsommarfest outdoor street festival, a gem of Andersonville's summer season schedule.

**Tat Tuesday SoundSessions: Feli's Going-Away**



Tue., June 14, 7 pm  
Replay,  
3439 N. Halsted St.

Organized Grime's weekly ink party wished "Bon Voyage" to Feli Marvel with Brain X. Sargis and special host DiDa Ritz.



**SIDETRACK**

Woof! No, really. Sidetrack ushers in the Dog Days of summer, June 4. Wag your tails at the next Dog Day Saturday, July 9. Photos by Jed Dulanias

**the DISH**  
Weekly Dining Guide in  
WINDY CITY TIMES

**SAVOR**  
**Doodle's Doughnuts; LUXBAR**

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Creativity is the name of the game at **Doodle's Doughnuts** (1419 N. Wells St.; DoodlesDoughnuts.com), which earns its name for at least three reasons.

First, there's a long chalkboard table that diners can use various pieces of chalk (supplied) to write or draw items. Second (and more deliciously), people can purchase the special Doodle Doughnut—a vanilla-topped delicacy on which people can use various flavored piping (for an additional charge) and draw their own designs.

As for said doughnuts, overall, they're quite decadent. Some of the flavors include double chocolate cake, cinnamon twist, old-fashioned glazed, pink lemonade and maple bacon. There are also gluten-free items, including double chocolate orange and blueberry lemon.

By the way, Doodle's also sells bacon by the slice—because Chicagoans can never have too much bacon. They come in candied, smoky and honey sriracha versions.

Oh, and what's the final reason the place earns its name? "Doodle" is the nickname of owner Dana Lanier, a lifelong baker.



**Doodle's Doughnuts.**  
Above photo from Facebook page  
Below photo by David Turner



**LUXBAR beats the heat**

LUXBAR (18 E. Bellevue Pl.; Luxbar.com), situated in Chicago's Gold Coast, is a great spot for people-watching—and is also a pretty cool spot for summer dining and drinking.

I was fortunate enough to take in some of LUXBAR's recently unveiled summer fare on a gorgeous day. Sitting outside, I sipped on a dangerously delicious drink called I Think I Can Beat Mike Tyson. (The bartender is apparently a fan of '80s songs; besides this one, by DJ Jazzy Jeff and The Fresh Prince, there are Purple Rain and Thriller.)



**Halibut crudo at LUXBAR.**  
Photo by Andrew Davis

Chef Jose Sosa's items are pretty tasty, too. The halibut crudo was incredibly refreshing, as was the crustacean-stuffed lobster roll. In addition, I thoroughly enjoyed the steak salad—and the peanut butter trifle was positively sinful. (Don't worry, though: LUXBAR still has favorites like buttermilk fried chicken and the Snickers pie.)

**Note:** LUXBAR is also offering a new rosé cart that beverage director Lawrence Kobesky selected. All wines are priced at \$10/glass and \$40/bottle.



**ROGERS PARK SOCIAL**

Rogers Park Socialites relaxing after a job well done. Photos by Jed Dulanias



# BILLY Masters

"I like to think of myself as more than a head of hair or a set of looks. It's demeaning. Yes, in some ways you could argue I've been employed for a look I have. But there's a sexism that happens towards men. At some point during photo shoots when I'm asked to strip down, I felt that. If I felt I was being employed just for my looks, I'd stop acting." —**Kit Harington** from Game of Thrones. While he never got naked on "Thrones," he's making up for it in London's West End with Dr. Faustus—and you can see what he's been hiding on BillyMasters.com.

The sad saga of **Richard Simmons** continues. Days ago, Simmons' housekeeper noted that her boss was "acting strangely." She called 911 to report "bizarre behavior," and paramedics were dispatched from the LA Fire Department. They determined he should be brought to the hospital for further evaluation. Reportedly, he was released the next day and returned home. Shortly thereafter, a string of posts appeared on his Twitter account regarding disjointed subjects like the killing of gorilla Harambe or the release of some new emojis. Stay tuned...

The story of Christian rocker **Trey Pearson** is an interesting one. He's the lead singer of the Columbus-based band Everyday Sunday, which he founded in 1997. He's also married to a woman and has two kids. But he always felt something wasn't right. And as time went on, less and less was right. His relationship with his wife was strained and a proposed tour with his band was abruptly cancelled. Trey tried to make ends meet by driving for Uber. During one of his trips, he met a writer and just began telling his story. That's how it all started. "I never wanted to be gay. I was scared of what God would think and what all of these people I loved would think about me," he wrote in his coming out letter. As a result of his revelation, he's getting a flurry of attention—and a gig! Everyday Sunday will be headlining Columbus Pride on Friday, June 17.

**Bette Midler** is doing her due diligence in preparing the role of Dolly Levi. While she has watched virtually every filmed performance of Hello, Dolly at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, she also went to the horse's mouth by visiting **Carol Channing**. Now, THAT'S how you do your research. The fact that Channing won the Tony for "Dolly" over Streisand in Funny Girl, only to have Babs snap up the film version of "Dolly" adds to the circuitous nature of life in the theater (to say nothing of Bette doing her remake of Gypsy 23 years ago).

**Streisand** has just been added to the list of presenters for the upcoming Tony Awards. I'm sure the fact that she has a tour and CD coming out is just happenstance. What surprised me is that this will be Streisand's first appearance at the awards since she won her Tony in 1970. I'm sure many you are wondering what on Earth did Babs do to win a Tony Award in 1970. She's only done two shows on Broadway—I Can Get It For You Wholesale in 1962 and Funny Girl in 1964. And she lost both of those Tonys. In 1970, the Tony committee came up with some fakakta award called "Star of the Decade"—an award never given out before or since. They probably did it to ensure Barbra would show up. Maybe they're giving her something else this year—"Star of the Century!"

One production that didn't get many Tony nods was Disaster: The Musical. While that disappointment led to its premature shuttering, it meant that **Seth Rudetsky** would be available to per-



Game of Thrones' Kit Harington is showing another side of himself, Billy says.

form in Provincetown this summer. He will be returning for his sixth year at the PTown Art House for a season filled with fabulous folk from the world of Broadway. Seth is hosting concerts with **Vanessa Williams, Megan Hilty, Judy Kuhn, Matthew Morrison, Gavin Creel, Audra McDonald** and **Will Swenson**. The Art House will also present people like **Steve Grand, Judy Gold, Marilyn Maye, Jinkx Monsoon**, and our pals **Varla Jean Merman** and **Well-Strung**. You can get all the specific dates and deets at PTownArtHouse.com.

It was just announced that more than 100 props from the film Dirty Grandpa are being auctioned. When the film came out, we were flooded with photos of **Zac Efron** in that bumblebee jock strap (and a few inches of what was underneath popped up on BillyMasters.com). So we were intrigued when we saw Lot #99: Jason Kelly's Stunt Hornet Jock Strap (Jason Kelly was the name of Zac's character). Here is how the item is described: "A wardrobe tag reading 'Stunt Jason w/Hornet' is included. The item shows minor wear and dirt stains from storage after filming, but remains in good condition." You know what that means? With scientific technology advancing, you might be able to get some DNA out of those stains and grow your very own Zac Efron—or, at the very least, his stunt double! Either way, count me in!

**Nyle DiMarco** is reading my column. Either that or it's just a coincidence that he suddenly addressed his romantic status days after I wrote about it. Whatever the reason, he wants the world to know he is "VERY single." He's also still sexually fluid, which means he's opening the door (so to speak) for both guys and dolls. But, he's not in any hurry: "A relationship is not a priority of mine but, you know, I'm hoping soon enough!" You know what that means? He wants to have sex with as many people as possible. And good for him!

Our "Ask Billy" question comes from Cody in New Mexico: "You haven't mentioned HAWT Broadway star **Nick Adams** in a while. What is he up to? And does he have a boyfriend?"

Last weekend, Nick performed a special Pride concert with the Boston Gay Men's Chorus. (He went to school at the Boston Conservatory of Music.) Next up is a San Francisco show at Feinstein's at The Nikko on June 10-11. As to his romantic status, he is in a relationship with Kyle Brown, who he met during his time in Priscilla. (Kyle was in the ensemble.) When Nick was cast in the national tour of Wicked as Fiyero, Kyle was his understudy. Kyle is currently in An American in Paris and, it must be said, gives Nick a run for his money in the physique department—as you'll see from the photos on BillyMasters.com.

When the understudy has snagged the leading man (to say nothing of his part), it's definitely time to end yet another column. Between news about the Tonys and Provincetown, it's clear that summer is around the corner. Of course, it's always hot on [www.BillyMasters.com](http://www.BillyMasters.com), the site that knows no season. If you have a question for me, send it along to [Billy@BillyMasters.com](mailto:Billy@BillyMasters.com), and I promise to get back to you before we get our hands on Zac's stinger! So, until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.

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Presenting Princess Shaw's Samantha Montgomery.  
Photo courtesy of Magnolia Pictures

## MOVIES

# Presenting Samantha Montgomery



BY RICHARD KNIGHT JR.

Samantha Montgomery's (aka Princess Shaw's) rise from obscurity to YouTube sensation and budding musical star is tracked in Ido Haar's documentary film **Presenting Princess Shaw** (in theaters Friday, June 10, and available VOD). Thanks in no small part to Montgomery's

effervescent, can-do personality and her extraordinary musical gifts, the film is sensation-ally entertaining.

The documentary follows Montgomery toiling away in relative obscurity, working as a caregiver for the elderly in New Orleans while uploading videos of her original songs to YouTube and struggling to make ends meet while on the

other end of the world in Tel Aviv, mix master Kutiman is editing together clips of Montgomery's acapella singing with musical backing, taken from a variety of other clips and his own assembled musicians. When the finished product is uploaded to YouTube it becomes an instant sensation and the Star Is Born moment is captured by Haar's camera as Montgomery sees the video for the first time. It's a tremendously moving moment in this very endearing film.

The bisexual Montgomery, who is seen on camera with her on-again/off-again girlfriend Olivia (and who she says inspired many of the songs featured in the film), discussed Presenting Princess Shaw.

**Windy City Times: I especially love how the music just pours out of you. I'm guessing that in a life filled with challenges, music has been the one constant good thing—something familiar to many creative artists, certainly those from the queer community. Would you agree with that, Samantha?**

Samantha Montgomery: Music pulls together everyone in life, so, yes—I would absolutely say that. It goes across generations and has always been my friend.

**WCT: Who were your musical influences growing up?**

SM: Elton John, Billie Holiday, the Bee Gees, Cat Stevens, Hall & Oates, Seals & Croft. I love John Legend—I want to sing with him—and I like Queen [as well as] Kings of Leon. I like a real variety not just music that people think I should like.

**WCT: Very cool. Now, onto the film, tell me about how the filming came about. There you were, working as a caregiver in New Orleans, uploading your songs to YouTube—and, then, what happened?**

SM: A friend of Kutiman's [the film's director, Ido Haar] saw one of my videos and contacted me through Facebook and said he was working on a documentary about YouTube and [asked if I'd] like to be involved. Of course I would like to be involved! You don't get many opportunities like this in life so I was like, "sure!" He came from Israel to talk to me.

Now you never know who is who and what's what so when I came to meet him at the hotel lobby [in New Orleans], I was cautious. But when we sat down and talked I felt he was open and honest and I wanted to be as open and honest as he was. From that point he followed me to open-mic night and then he just kept coming back and forth, going to see other singers, too. It wasn't just me at first. Eventually, he narrowed it down to me.

**WCT: And you had no idea that Kutiman was working on these mixes of your songs at the same time?**

SM: No. I had no idea.

**WCT: How long was he filming you? It seems like he filmed you for quite a while.**

SM: A little more than a year—closer to two years, I think.

**WCT: That may be why one of the most affecting moments of the film is that moment when you see the Kutiman's music video of your song and the wonderful response to it. There's been such a build up to it—[and it's]**

**very powerful. Can you talk about that moment, Samantha?**

SM: It's like I'm home. That's what that moment was like, "I am home." It's like I belong here at last. I was born with a mic in my hand and now I've come home. It's like a wonderful feeling. I feel so comfortable on the stage and so at home, it's fantastic.

**WCT: It shows.**

SC: Thank you, sugar! [Laughs]

**WCT: You mentioned when we talked earlier that seeing the scene with Olivia, your on again/off again girlfriend who inspired many of your songs, is rather bittersweet. Can you talk a little bit about Olivia?**

SM: We are kinda like distant friends—she has her own life; I have my own life. People want you to hold on to stuff; they want you to hold on to certain people but everybody has their own journey in life, and she's on her journey and I'm on mine. The downfall of our relationship wasn't just her and it wasn't just me—it was both of us. We talk occasionally but we're kinda living our own lives now. That's okay. Everybody's not the best friends when they break up. It's just how it is.

**WCT: And I understand you have a new relationship—a boyfriend now. Is he inspiring you to sing some new tunes?**

SM: Yes, for sure! [Laughs]

**WCT: Where does your resilience, your optimism come from, Samantha? That is one of the most endearing, lovely things that comes through in the film. Your personality, your life force is so tremendously vivid. Where does that come from? Is that from your mother?**

SM: No...

**WCT: Is that just you?**

SM: Yes, that's just me. You know, it's learning that life is precious and not wanting to be a victim all your life. Be yourself, be who you are. I decided a long time ago that I was going to live my truth; that I was not going to let anybody in the way of my truth. I just decided to stay in that place.

**WCT: Can you bring us up to date on the career? You're working on something else with Kutiman, right?**

SM: Yes; we're making a whole album and he's producing the whole thing. I'm just so excited about it and I can't wait for people to hear it but stuff like that takes time. It will be released soon—I will let everyone know when—but right now I think there's just one track coming out. Right now I'm focused on the movie. I'm looking for a manager—my own pit bull [laughs] who will be in my corner day and night.

**WCT: Have things eased up for you a bit, financially?**

SM: Yeah; I have somebody that's helping me now and we have each other's back and I didn't have that before. I'm mostly doing good—spiritually, mentally, I'm whole. I'm a work in progress but I'm better than I was.

**WCT: Still feeling the music every day?**

SM: Of course! I have a million songs that I want to work on with Kutiman.

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



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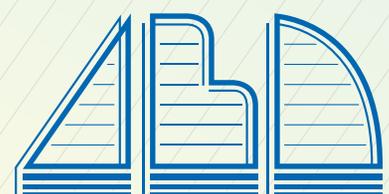
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## Friday, June 10

**51st Andersonville Midsommarfest** Five stages, unique vendors, kids' activities, food and drink. Local shops and restaurants welcome the warm season with specials and sales, and dance troupes, DJs, and cutting-edge plus longtime favorite bands keep the party going. \$10 donation at the gate 5:00pm - 8:00pm Clark Street from Foster to Catalpa, Chicago. Through June 12. <http://andersonville.org>

**SAGE & Friends Chicago reception** Chicago-based National Board Members of SAGE will host their annual SAGE & Friends reception in a fun event showcasing SAGE's national and mid-west work. Honoring Congressman Mike Quigley, Co-Chair of the Congressional LGBT Caucus, for his advocacy on behalf of LGBT rights and strong presence as a vibrant and engaged supporter of issues impacting older Americans. Also recognizing Phyllis Johnson and Toi Williams for their pioneering Affinity Community Services' Trailblazers, and for their grassroots advocacy on behalf of LGBT older adults in Chicago. 5:30pm - 7:30pm Wyndham Grand Hotel 71 E. Wacker Dr. Chicago <http://sageusa.org>

**Queer Genre Fiction** Discussion of Black Blade Blues by J. A. Pitts. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Gerber Hart Library and Archives 6500 N Clark St Chicago <https://www.facebook.com/events/1106377176052034/>

**Opening Doors Benefit** Celebration of women's journeys out of homelessness with Deborah's Place, Chicago's oldest and largest provider of supportive housing for women experiencing homelessness 7:00pm - 11:00pm Venue One 1034 W. Randolph St., Chicago Tickets: <http://www.deborahsplace.org>

## Saturday, June 11

**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>

**Printers Row Lit Fest** Ana Castillo at the Grace Place Auditorium 10:00 am. Charlie Jane Anders at Center Stage Sunday 12:30 pm. Gerrard Conley at Shedd Room, Blake Hotel, Sunday 12:15 pm. Hundreds of other authors and booksellers. 10:00am , <http://printersrowlitfest.org/participant/1731.html>

**The Chicago Alternative Comics Expo [CAKE]** Weekend-long celebration of independent comics, inspired by Chicago's rich legacy as home to many of underground and alternative comics' most talented artists- past, present and future. Featuring comics for sale, workshops, exhibitions, panel discussions and more. Through June 12 11:00am - 6:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.cakechicago.com/>

**Artemis Singers presents "Voices of Joyful Rebellion" Pride Concert/Dance** Chicago's lesbian feminist chorus, will perform songs about rebellion. Dance with live DJ immediately follows concert 7:00pm Broadway United Methodist Church 3338 N Broadway Chicago <http://artemisrebellakeview.bpt.me/>

**Motherstruck!** Staceyann Chin's epic personal journey opens 12-play series of solo performances. Through July 17. 7:30pm Greenhouse Theater Center 2257 N. Lincoln Ave. Chicago 773-404-7336 Tickets: <http://greenhousetheater.org/>

**Dyke Delicious** Season 13 Finale - The Secrets. 7:00pm Chicago Filmmakers 5243 N Clark Chicago <https://www.facebook.com/Dyke-Delicious-at-Chicago-Filmmakers-186685918586/>

facebook.com/Dyke-Delicious-at-Chicago-Filmmakers-186685918586/

## Sunday, June 12

**aChurch4Me Sunday Worship Service** A place to find peace, comfort and always needed prayer. 11:00am AChurch4Me MCC, 7366 N Clark St, Chicago <http://www.achurch4me.org>

**Affinity Community Services Proud Parents Picnic** Family-friendly fun. You bring the food, Affinity will bring the fun. Arts and crafts, field games and other fun. 11:00am - 3:00pm Burnham Park, Picnic Grove #7, Oakwood Blvd. Exit off Lakeshore Drive (39th st./Pershing Road)

## Monday, June 13

**Queer Kings and Queens - Edward II** Queer activist/filmmaker Derek Jarman's poetic and highly erotic biography of England's gay king. Tilda Swinton's breakthrough movie. 6:00pm Chicago Public Library, Beazian Branch, 1226 W. Ainslie St., Chicago <http://www.queerfilmsociety.org/pages/events.html>

## Tuesday, June 14

**Sappho's Salon** Co-curated by Eileen Tull and Liz Baudler. A monthly performance salon, featuring expressions of queerness, gender, and feminism. Doors open 7:00 pm. 7:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

## Thursday, June 16

**Back Lot Bash: Comedy Night** Featuring Gena Yashere. Doors open 6:00 pm. 6:00pm The Laugh Factory Chicago 3175 N Broadway Chicago <http://www.backlotbashchicago.com/> Tickets: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2551132>

## Wed., June 8

**Trans Ice Cream Social** For those who identify under the umbrella of gender diversity, the Center's first-ever Trans Community Ice Cream Social, to be held on the Richard M. Daly Roof Terrace. Meet one another, learn more about Center on Halsted's programming, and meet Vanessa Sheridan, Director of Transgender Relations and Community Engagement. All ages and gender identities welcome. Free event. 6:00pm - 8:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=12167> Tickets: <https://community.centeronhalsted.org/TCICS>

**Book Reading and Signing** Exoneree Diaries: The Fight for Innocence, Independence, and Identity by Alison Flowers 7:30pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

## Thursday, June 9

**LGBT Christians Meetup Group Senior Connection** If you identify as "senior" looking for other LGBT seniors in the community, this is a group who gathers for lunch each month to meet new people, offer support, and connect with social and service agencies as needed. Hosted by Seniors and for Seniors, no need to prove age, just show us and enjoy the food and conversation. 1:00pm - 2:30pm AChurch4Me MCC, 7366 N Clark St, Chicago [http://www.meetup.com/gaychristians-194/events/230915833/?\\_af=event&\\_af\\_eid=230915833&https=off](http://www.meetup.com/gaychristians-194/events/230915833/?_af=event&_af_eid=230915833&https=off)



## 'SOMMAR' TIME June 10-12

Andersonville Midsommarfest will be on Clark Street from Foster to Catalpa Avenue.

Photo from 2015 by Paul Hirsch

**New Town Writers' Workshop** Please bring copies of your work so that other writers and listeners may follow along. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Gerber Hart Library and Archives 6500 N Clark St Chicago

**Book Reading and Signing** We Were Feminists Once by Andi Zeisler. 7:30pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

**Chi-Town Squares** Mainstream/Plus Workshop with Arlene Kaspik. It's the first MS/Plus workshop of the summer, so be sure to support these workshops and retain those skills. In the downstairs dining room. [info@chitownsquares.org](mailto:info@chitownsquares.org)

## 'AFT 20: A Celebration' June 17 at Center

About Face Theatre (AFT) will kick off Pride Weekend with "AFT 20: A Celebration" on Friday, June 17, at 6 p.m. at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St.

Attendees will see hosts Eileen Dordek and Heather Schmucker, AFT Founders Kyle Hall\* and Eric Rosen, Artistic Director emeritus Bonnie Metzgar, current Artistic Director Andrew Volkoff and director Scott Ferguson for performances from hit AFT shows such as Dreamboy, Pulp, Xena Live!, Undone, The Homosexuals and Brahman/i. About Face Youth Theatre will also be present.

Past and current performers scheduled to appear include Jenny Avery, Scott Duff, Patricia Kane, Elizabeth Laidlaw, Amy Matheny, Fawzia Mirza, Kyla Norton, Loretta Rezos, cin salach, Benjamin Sprunger, Paul Oakley Stovall, Dana Tretta and more.

Tickets, which include performance and hors d'oeuvres with a cash bar available, are \$50; visit [AboutFaceTheatre.com](http://AboutFaceTheatre.com).



Amy Matheny and Elizabeth Laidlaw in Xena: Live!. Photo courtesy of About Face Theatre

## FAMILIES from page 11

**WCT: Is everyone of your family of choice LGBTQ-identified?**

AD: Yes, pretty much. And all around the same age, and people of color. There's some older folks because of Kaya, you know. *[Both laugh.]*

KP: I could say [there are] some infants! *[Laughs continue]*

**WCT: How have you created family of choice as a couple?**

KP: We were introduced by a mutual friend, Brandee, who has since become my family, and her wife Dionne is Anna's buddy. We came together with a few other individuals around the same time. I find that interesting. We recently met someone who is a stud lesbian in the lifestyle and she has become our nephew.

AD: I know it's rare for it to unfold that way with Brandee and Dionne. I work with Brandee on the radio and she's my radio wife, we've been doing that since before Kaya and I. At a very basic level, it's a true blessing everyone gets along. E3 Radio is my passion, so it would be difficult if it hadn't worked out that way.

**WCT: What attracted you to each other?**

AD: She had her own life. I could never have someone who is just waiting at home for me, it causes animosity and jealousy. She had her own friends, and life. We were able to bring those together and it's awesome. It's been surprising, but that's how I knew it was right.

KP: Yep!

**WCT: Do you have any advice for LGBTQ people who want to create families of choice?**

AD: I don't think it can be fake in any way;

you have to find your people. So if you love sports, join a team; if you love music, go to shows; if you are spiritual, find a spiritual community. It has to come out of shared interest.

KP: And it takes a long time, because you have to watch the ways people show up for you—how they treat you and if they are there.

AD: Shared interest, a sense of humor and time.

*Interviews are conducted by guest Jacqueline Boyd, owner of The Care Plan, believed to be the country's first LGBTQ-centered healthcare management company. The Care Plan can be reached at 630-479-0083 or [www.the-care-plan.com](http://www.the-care-plan.com).*

## Shakespeare gala raises \$1.4 million

Chicago Shakespeare Theater (CST) celebrated the global impact of Shakespeare with GALA 2016 at the theater's home on Navy Pier on the 400th anniversary of his death in April and raised a record-breaking \$1.4 million that will benefit the Tony-winning theater's Chicago Shakespeare in Urban Classrooms and Communities initiatives.

The initiatives include Team Shakespeare education programs and the free citywide Chicago Shakespeare in the Parks tour.

Five hundred attendees from Chicago's civic and cultural community came together to toast Shakespeare's legacy and enjoy a one-night-only performance featuring Tony and Olivier Award winner Alan Cumming, followed by an Aon Fireworks display over the city skyline.



**LYNCH from page 23**

have one, but I accepted anyway and came up with one," she recalled. "I started choosing some fun music and worked on it while hiking Nichols Canyon in L.A. Then Kate Flannery, my pal of decades and Meredith the drunk from The Office, agreed to join me. I got myself a kick ass five-piece band and grabbed Tim Davis, the Glee vocal arranger/crooner, and we took it on the damn road."

Ballsy, brassy, no-nonsense: it's what we've come to know and love about Lynch. Her characters in Glee and Angel from Hell depict the star in a certain, how shall we say, unflattering light. Lynch said she could relate to these adversarial traits in her own life.

"Yes, I do identify with those traits in real life," she said. "And of course, when challenged, I am their opposite: a nonsensical and cowardly, unimaginative and whiny apologist."

If she could've given Sue Sylvester one line of advice throughout her tenure playing her, it would have been to "chillax, sister. Get back into your heart and call a truce with the world. That's two lines. You asked for one. I took a liberty," she said.

Chillaxing might not be all that easy anymore for the busy beaver. Lynch currently juggles her film career with Hollywood Game Night and, now, this cabaret show. How does she manage to do it?

"The scheduling just works," she offered. "I don't know how! The less I try to control anything the better. I leave it to the gods. We are so excited to start this monster June tour that will go from Seattle to Dallas to the Kennedy Center to The Lyric Opera House of Chicago and points in between."

Tickets for Lynch's shows at the Lyric Opera of Chicago are available online at [LyricOpera.org/JaneLynch](http://LyricOpera.org/JaneLynch), by calling 312-332-2244 or visiting Lyric's box office.

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