

# WINDY CITY TIMES

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

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## MARTIN ENRIGHT

**Businessman dies.**

Martin Enright (left) and George Brophy at their wedding.  
Photo courtesy of Brophy

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## HEART OF VALLAS

**Family supports trans daughter.**

Photo of Dean, Jamie and Renee Vallas by Liz Baudler

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# PAS DE DEUX

Kevin Shannon and Craig D. Black Jr.  
Photo by Adam Opris

## Same-sex couple dances for Hubbard Street



# 'BLKS' POWER

**Aziza Barnes is the force behind BLKS**

PAGE 19

Aziza Barnes.  
Photo by Juli Del Prete



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Former Hubbard Street Dancer Jason Hortin in *A Picture of You Falling* by Crystal Pite.

## WELCOME, DR. BRIAN ROSETT!

Dr. Brian Rosett is excited to come home to Chicago to join Shifrin Plastic Surgery. An accomplished surgeon, Dr. Rosett has performed thousands of cases and has a proven track record of helping patients realize their best vision of themselves.

His return to the Midwest comes after an advanced fellowship in Los Angeles, where he worked with some of the very best surgeons in Beverly Hills. There, he also subsequently trained with one of the most regarded facial plastic surgeons in the United States, honing his aesthetic surgical skill and brings many of the field's newest techniques back to the Midwest.

During his plastic surgery training at the University of Illinois-Chicago, Dr. Rosett performed nearly twice the number of cases required by the American Board of Plastic Surgery, affording him a broad range of operating competency in the realms of both aesthetic and

reconstructive surgery.

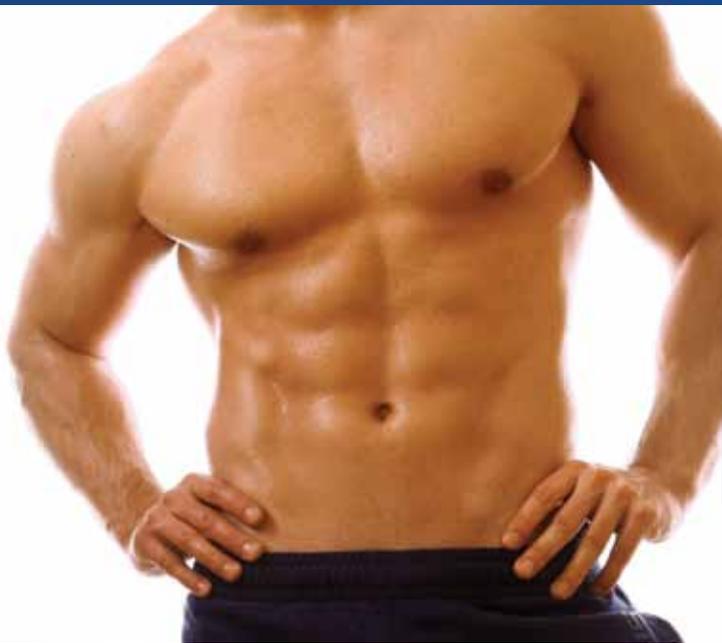
Additionally, his medical background includes five years of general surgery residency at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit and medical school at Rush University in Chicago. Having grown up in the Windy City, he brings an earnest Midwestern sensibility to both the office and the operating room.

At the center of his medical philosophy is the belief that strong communication leads to the best outcomes. From consultation all the way through post-operative recovery you can expect Dr. Rosett to be engaged and easily accessible for any questions or concerns.

His patients often remark that his kindness and demeanor helped ease the stress and fear that can sometimes come with surgery. Dr. Rosett's hope for every patient is a surgical success that boosts their self-esteem allowing them to live more confident and fulfilling lives.



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## O, CANADA

A new Canada Goose store (left) in Chicago is among the items listed in a holiday edition of Five Worth Finding.  
Photo by Andrew Davis

## KIT SUIT



## LOUD AND PROUD

Suicide-prevention organization Live Out Loud recently held a fashion show.

## THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Missy Elliott, Boy George and the show Mindhunter.

plus  
**DAILY BREAKING NEWS**

WCT talks with EastEnders actor Kit Williamson.  
PR photo

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# CDPH: New HIV cases in 'monumental decline' but disparities remain

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) released new HIV/AIDS-related statistics on Dec. 1. The numbers show that there were 839 new HIV cases in 2016, which the agency said is the fewest number of new cases in 15 years and represent a 55 percent overall decrease in new cases since 2001.



Dr. Julie Morita.

Photo courtesy of the City of Chicago

In her introduction to the report, CDPH Commissioner Julie Morita attributed what she called a "monumental decline" to three factors: increased use of medication treating individuals who have HIV; increased use of medications that prevent new infections; and increased outreach to educate people in the community about such resources.

CDPH partnered with community advocates in 2017 to launch its Getting to Zero campaign, which would in effect eliminate all new infections in the city by 2027. Morita detailed the effort in her letter.

"First, we will increase the number of people living with HIV who are virally suppressed," she said. "Currently, just under half of Chicagoans living with HIV have achieved viral suppression. Second, we will increase the number of HIV-vulnerable people who successfully use PrEP. Currently, approximately only 10 percent of people who can benefit from PrEP are using it. By increasing both viral suppression and PrEP use by 20 percent in the next 10 years, we will end the HIV epidemic within our lifetime."

Persons whose HIV is virally suppressed have virtually no likelihood of infecting their sexual partners. Non-infected individuals taking PrEP—pre-exposure prophylaxis, usually available as the oral medication Truvada—have little chance of becoming infected; the medication has been shown to be over 90 percent effective in preventing infection.

But the report points to disparities that still concern CDPH officials and advocates. "Gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men, particularly Black and Latinx men, bear a disproportionate burden of HIV," Morita noted. "Among women, Black women represented nearly 81 percent of new HIV diagnoses in 2016."

According to the report, about 23,824 Chicagoans had been diagnosed with HIV through 2015 and were living with HIV in 2016. Furthermore, the highest rates of new HIV infection diagnoses in 2016 were for individuals residing in Douglas, Edgewater, Grand Boulevard, Kenwood, North Lawndale, Rogers Park, Washington Park, West Garfield Park, and Uptown. The highest rates of persons living with HIV were in Edgewater, Rogers Park, and Uptown.

The complete report is at [https://www.cityof-chicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/cdph/HIV\\_STI/HIV\\_STISurveillanceReport2016\\_12012017.pdf](https://www.cityof-chicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/cdph/HIV_STI/HIV_STISurveillanceReport2016_12012017.pdf).

## Forum to discuss LGBTQs, Israel and Palestine

Gay Liberation Network will host a forum entitled "No LGBTQ Cover for Israeli Repression of Palestinians" Saturday, Dec. 9, 2 p.m., at the Uptown branch of the Chicago Public Library, 929 W. Buena Ave. The forum is in response to events at the Dyke March, SlutWalk and the 2016 National LGBT Task Force conference in Chicago.

Speakers will include Senan Shaqdeh, a Palestinian activist and coordinator of the Coalition for Justice in Palestine; Scout Bratt, an activist with Jewish Voice for Peace; Alexis Martinez, a longtime Chicago LGBTQ activist and member of the Chicago Dyke March Collective; and Samer, a community organizer and co-host of the Olive Oil and Time, a podcast by Palestinians.

For information, email [LGBTliberation@aol.com](mailto:LGBTliberation@aol.com).

# Coming to a vending machine near you: Activewear

BY BRONSON PETTITT

What's the first thing that comes to your mind when you think about vending machines?

Guilty-pleasure snacks filled with high-fructose corn syrup, artificial flavors, sodium and saturated fat? They're convenience and instant gratification at their best.

But a local Chicago company is putting a spin on vending machines and offering a more healthful alternative: activewear.

Arnab Majumbar and James Stewart, a married couple based in Chicago who are also business partners, launched VendMyT in October. They've installed vending machines at two malls—Landmark Century Mall in Lake View and Block 37 Mall downtown—with 55-inch interactive touchscreens. Users can browse through the startup's line of men's and women's activewear, called Made of Chicago.

The idea emerged on a cold day last year, when Majumbar and Stewart arrived at the gym and realized they forgot to pack their shorts. They thought, "If only there were a convenient way to buy workout clothes without having to go back home or all the way to a fitness store."

Buying clothes in vending machines, Stewart said, "is not common [in the United States]. In Japan, you can buy everything from food and umbrellas to ties ... in a vending machine, but that's not very common in the United States right now."

"While people are used to buying clothing online, it's seems odd to buy it in a vending machine, even though it's very similar and offers instant gratification," Stewart added.

So Stewart, with his background in business administration, and Majumbar, with his experience working as a fashion designer, took a city-sponsored certification program in vendor development, worked with engineers and patternmakers and launched their line of Chicago-inspired activewear.

"Chicago doesn't have a lot of its own clothing lines, so we're trying to pay homage to the city," Majumbar said. "A lot of people here wear activewear all the time—they wear it to the coffee shop, when they're out grocery shopping, and [we wanted] to have a Chicago brand that's really our own."

Majumbar, who designed the line, said the garments are of high-quality, sweat-wicking material that can stretch in four directions. Chicago skyscrapers influenced the fabric, cuts, lines, shapes and even some of the colors (such as tower black), Majumbar said.

"The city is often portrayed as war-torn. When I moved here as an immigrant, I never felt that way," said Majumbar, who hails from India. "I felt that Chicago was really clean and new, the buildings are awesome, it has all four seasons, winter can be cold, but life goes on."

While their clothing line is Chicago-inspired and -designed, the items are assembled in China and India, which Majumbar said was the most viable option for now.



Above: A few VendMyT items. Below: Co-founders James Stewart and Arnab Majumbar. Photos courtesy of Stewart



The lack of textile manufacturers in the Chicago area presented a challenge, and while there are some in Los Angeles, the production costs would've meant they'd have to sell their garments for much more than the \$25 to \$50 price points, Majumbar said.

Getting their clothes made locally would require up to \$750,000 in investments, he said.

"Hopefully, we'll be able to raise that kind of money so that we can be a completely Chicago-manufactured, -designed and -retailed product, but we don't have the capital to produce here," Majumbar said.

For now, Stewart and Majumbar plan to expand the number of machines and locations. In November, they started selling their activewear in Galleria Mall in Andersonville, and their items are also available on Amazon.

"I think there's lots of potential in the hotel market and gyms," Stewart said, "and universities—college students tend to be more willing to be experimental and try something different."

Since launching, customers have been happy with the garments, Stewart said.

"The reception on our products has been wonderful," he said. "We've had no returns—we've only had positive feedback from friends and customers who've bought the products on the machines or Amazon."

Majumbar added one of the challenges of selling from a vending machine is that customers can't touch the garments or try them on, but he said their company has made it easy to return the products if customers are dissatisfied. However, their clothing line is offered for sale at a traditional store—the Andersonville Galleria.

"One benefit is that it's new and it's a novelty, and people would be willing to try something different," along with the location and convenience of a traditional vending machine, Stewart said.



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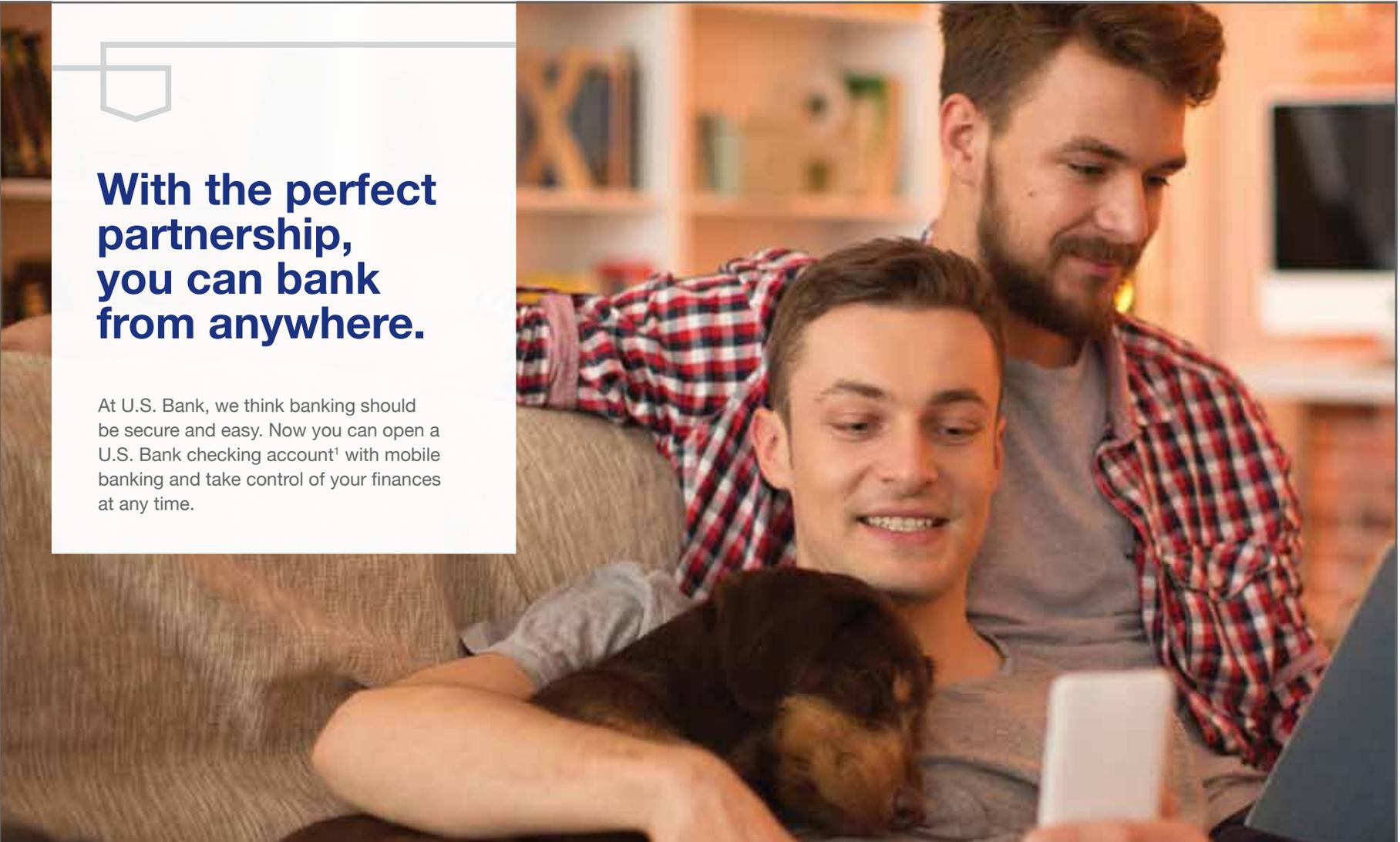


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## PASSAGES

# Community leader/ retired business owner Martin Enright dies

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Martin “Marty” Enright died Nov. 29 of pancreatic cancer. He was 85.

At the time of his death, he was living in Tallahassee, Florida, with his longtime (since 1975) husband George Brophy. They were married Jan. 6, 2015—the day Florida legalized same-sex marriages. Their wedding was featured in the local paper, the Tallahassee Democrat, and a number of other media outlets.

Enright was born June 20, 1932, in Chicago near O’Hare Airport, and was raised in the Cook County village of Harwood Heights. He attended Lane Tech High School prior to embarking on a career as an electrician, just like his father. Enright started an apprenticeship with Electrical Union Local 134 in his later teen years.

Shortly thereafter, he was drafted by the Navy to serve in the Korean War in the Seabee Reserves, preparing the terrain for military usage and later doing regular maintenance work on the bases where he was stationed (Midway Islands and the Philippines).

Following the war, Enright started an electrical contracting business, Evanston Electric, in Chicago with his older brother Dennis. They ran the business together for about 10 years until Marty decided to strike out on his own for the next 20-plus years.

Enright and Brophy opened the iconic western casual-themed Buddies’ Restaurant & Bar in 1988 on Clark Street in Lake View; they continued running the establishment until they sold the business in 2004.

Over the years, Buddies’ supported many organizations, including Equality Illinois, Heartland Alliance’s Vital Bridges Food Program, Center on Halsted, Howard Brown Health, Dining Out for Life, Great Lakes Bears, the Illinois Gay Rodeo Association, LesBiGay Radio and Chicago’s LGBT Hall of Fame as well as sponsored numerous men’s and women’s LGB softball teams.

In 1999, Genre magazine selected Buddies’ as one of the nation’s top 10 gayest restaurants; in 2003, the spot was inducted into Chicago’s LGBT Hall of Fame for its many contributions to the community.

Prior to meeting and falling in love with Brophy, Enright was married to wife Mickey for about 20 years. They had six children (one of whom was adopted) together and lived in Chicago and,

later, Florida. When the divorce was finalized, Enright moved back to the Chicago area, where he met and fell in love with Brophy. He stayed until his retirement.

The couple got involved with Equality Florida soon after moving to the state to continue the fight for LGBTQ rights there.

In addition to Brophy, Enright is survived by his children (Dierdre Edwards, Mary Fish, Martin Enright Jr., Michael Enright and William “Billy” Enright), sister Rosemary Gartska, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, countless nieces and nephews, his Great Danes Lollipop and Skyy, and his chosen family. He was preceded in death by son Joseph Enright as well as siblings Winston Enright, Katherine Kelliher, Maury Enright, MaryAnn Harris, William Enright and Dennis.

“The one thing I know about Marty, after loving him for 42 years, was he was a true gentleman—and gentlemen know when it is time to leave,” said Brophy. “He may be gone, but he will never be forgotten by me and everyone else who loved him.”

“As a gay man, when he was younger, Uncle Marty had to live two lives: the one society forced on him and the one that he ultimately owned,” said his niece Laura Enright. “Yet, his memoir is titled *The Best of Two Lives*. He relished the joy in them both. And when able to live openly, he did so full throttle, honoring who he was and his community. He faced adversity in his life, not just due to his sexuality, yet he took situations and people as they came. No judgment. Whenever I was with him, I felt effervescent. I am so proud of how he lived his life. Always a smile on his face and in his voice.”

“If Marty connected with you he made the effort to remain part of your life no matter the physical distance and that was the case with the two of us,” said longtime friend and Buddies’ employee Greg Boreham. “When I moved to Chicago, I got the job at Buddies’ and because Marty and George welcomed me with open arms I decided to make the city my home. We happened to move to Florida—me in Naples and them in Tallahassee—within a year of each other so we were able to see each other on a regular basis. He was also friends with my mom and came over to her house to play poker when he visited us. I will miss him and his down-to-earth, salt-of-the-earth genuine candor about people and the world around him.”

“I met Marty in the winter of 1996 through our



**Martin Enright (left) and George Brophy.**  
Photo courtesy of Brophy

dogs, but the funny thing is neither of us knew each other was gay for a long time,” said longtime friend Mimi Chryssikos. “Then one day in the neighborhood we ran into each other. Marty was with George and I was with my then very butch lover Olga so the cat was out of the bag. Marty shared wonderful stories about his life, including his time in the Korean War and how he felt about George. We also shared our tragedies, including the death of his adopted son.

“He was a wonderful, caring, well-rounded, good-hearted, wise human being who helped me with my business ventures, in the romance department and with parenting questions. There was a little joke between the two of us. I lost my father at an early age, and since I could not visit his grave I had a picture and candle to remember him that one friend called the dead zone. Marty used to say ‘I do not want my picture over there, not yet.’ Well you finally made it to the dead zone Marty. I will be sending you kisses from here to heaven my buddy.”

“I am honored and blessed to have known Marty,” said longtime friend and Buddies’ employee Alicia Gellineau. “I will never forget his kindness. He will truly be missed and always be remembered.”

“Marty, along with his husband George, was an active, positive force in our community, particularly through their restaurant/bar, Buddies’, which became a community institution,” said

Sidetrack co-owner Art Johnston. “Organizations knew that Marty, George and their staff were always generous in lending their spaces and helping provide food and other supplies to community groups.”

Memorial services are pending. Brophy has requested that, in lieu of flowers, donations should be sent to Covenant Hospice and Leon County Humane Society (both in Tallahassee, Florida) in Enright’s memory.

## Affinity has new board president, members

Anna DeShawn has been named the new board president of the group Affinity Community Services, succeeding Ebonie Davis.

New board members include Aisha N. Davis, Esq., a fellow at Loevy & Loevy; and Jessica Peters, a nonprofit and political development consultant;

Affinity Community Services is a social-justice organization that works with and on behalf of Black LGBTQ communities, queer youth and allies. Imani Rupert-Gordon is the executive director.

See [Affinity95.org](http://Affinity95.org).



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- Comes from a tree sustainably harvested in the Amazon Rainforest

### What is Mytesi?

Mytesi is a prescription medicine that helps relieve symptoms of diarrhea not caused by an infection (noninfectious) in adults living with HIV/AIDS on antiretroviral therapy (ART).

### Important Safety Information

Mytesi is not approved to treat infectious diarrhea (diarrhea caused by bacteria, a virus, or a parasite). Before starting you on Mytesi, your healthcare provider will first be sure that you do not have infectious diarrhea. Otherwise, there is a risk you would not receive the right medicine and your infection could get worse. In clinical studies, the most common side effects that occurred more often than with placebo were upper respiratory tract (sinus, nose, and throat) infection (5.7%), bronchitis (3.9%), cough (3.5%), flatulence (3.1%), and increased bilirubin (3.1%).

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### IMPORTANT PATIENT INFORMATION

This is only a summary. See complete Prescribing Information at [Mytesi.com](http://Mytesi.com) or by calling 1-844-722-8256. This does not take the place of talking with your doctor about your medical condition or treatment.

#### What Is Mytesi?

Mytesi is a prescription medicine used to improve symptoms of noninfectious diarrhea (diarrhea not caused by a bacterial, viral, or parasitic infection) in adults living with HIV/AIDS on ART.

**Do Not Take Mytesi** if you have diarrhea caused by an infection. Before you start Mytesi, your doctor and you should make sure your diarrhea is not caused by an infection (such as bacteria, virus, or parasite).

#### Possible Side Effects of Mytesi Include:

- Upper respiratory tract infection (sinus, nose, and throat infection)
- Bronchitis (swelling in the tubes that carry air to and from your lungs)
- Cough
- Flatulence (gas)
- Increased bilirubin (a waste product when red blood cells break down)

For a full list of side effects, please talk to your doctor. Tell your doctor if you have any side effect that bothers you or does not go away.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch) or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

#### Should I Take Mytesi If I Am:

##### Pregnant or Planning to Become Pregnant?

- Studies in animals show that Mytesi could harm an unborn baby or affect the ability to become pregnant
- There are no studies in pregnant women taking Mytesi
- This drug should only be used during pregnancy if clearly needed

##### A Nursing Mother?

- It is not known whether Mytesi is passed through human breast milk
- If you are nursing, you should tell your doctor before starting Mytesi
- Your doctor will help you to decide whether to stop nursing or to stop taking Mytesi

##### Under 18 or Over 65 Years of Age?

- Mytesi has not been studied in children under 18 years of age
- Mytesi studies did not include many people over the age of 65. So it is not clear if this age group will respond differently. Talk to your doctor to find out if Mytesi is right for you

#### What Should I Know About Taking Mytesi With Other Medicines?

If you are taking any prescription or over-the-counter medicine, herbal supplements, or vitamins, tell your doctor before starting Mytesi.

#### What If I Have More Questions About Mytesi?

For more information, please see the full Prescribing Information at [Mytesi.com](http://Mytesi.com) or speak to your doctor or pharmacist.

To report side effects or make a product complaint or for additional information, call 1-844-722-8256.



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Mytesi comes from the *Croton lechleri* tree harvested in South America.

Please see complete Prescribing Information at [Mytesi.com](http://Mytesi.com).

# LGBTs among leaders at HealthConnect One

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Community health and early parenting non-profit organization HealthConnect One features a culturally diverse staff, the majority of whom are women, that includes both longtime advocates RoiAnn Phillips, a lesbian who is also a mother, and Gilberto “Gil” Zamora, who is gay.

Although HealthConnect One is not an LGBTQ-focused agency, both Phillips and Zamora are working to incorporate the LGBTQ community’s concerns within the structure of everything the organization does.

Phillips was recently named communications director, for which her primary role is to set and implement branding and content strategies. She previously worked as the organization’s communications manager (since 2011) where she implemented those strategies. Phillips said both roles are rewarding, however, she enjoys the challenges that being a director brings to her work.

When asked to describe HealthConnect One to outsiders Phillips said, “The organization facilitates community-led change to build equitable support for families during pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding and early parenting. We engage community leaders on the ground ... and work with them to assess their community’s strengths.

“We play the role of consultant and facilitator, drawing on our experience in [more than] 50 communities over 30 years to help them determine how they might leverage those strengths to support their families. This might include developing a community health worker program, training hospital personnel, working to ban formula from the care packages hospitals give to new moms, organizing to get people of color at decision-making tables or gathering information on breastfeeding and/or birth practices to influence policymakers.”

Phillips previously worked at Lambda Legal as an outreach associate; she designed and supported marriage equality and student safety advocacy efforts in the Midwest among other duties. She left Lambda Legal to adopt her now-13-year-old daughter.

“For a good couple of years, my little girl and I spent our time at the library, park, pool, music class, etc., but then my partner at the time moved from a corporate job into real estate and I needed a part-time job while she got her business going,” said Phillips. “A contact through my work with Lambda Legal recommended HealthConnect One.”

Phillips has another 26-year-old daughter, who also recently became a mother, through a marriage that ended last year. Both her large extended family—a result of her parents’ divorce and remarriages—and close-knit chosen family have made Phillips’ notion of family more fluid, she said.

Since coming to HealthConnect One, Phillips has made small strides in highlighting LGBTQ parents and their perspectives into the work they do, including inviting presenters to speak about

the needs of LGBTQ families, offering resources for further education and action and making herself available as a behind-the-scenes resource with almost every straight colleague coming to her for advice when community partners, clients and family members come out to them as LGBTQ.

“As a white lesbian working in an organization that serves and engages with predominantly people of color communities, including faith communities—which in my experience have not always been kind to LGBTQ people—this has been the hardest nut for me to crack,” said Phillips. “I am first coming from a position of white privilege, and it is important for me to own that before I suggest anything that looks like my own agenda ... and sometimes, I get stalled there.

“I do also support the work and storytelling on LGBTQ families by our partner organizations, and I am thrilled to say that over time, my colleagues have really taken on the shifts in language to be more gender-inclusive.”

Phillips said her next goal is to mount a storytelling campaign that specifically highlights LGBTQ families.

One of the major initiatives Phillips coordinated was the national Birth, Breastfeeding and Beyond Conference a number of years ago.

In addition to her other duties, Phillips has also mentored Zamora in a variety of capacities, including as a writer and nonprofit professional.

“She has taught me to listen and appreciate the difficult moments in this profession, and in my personal life, as opportunities for growth,” said Zamora. “She always deals with hard moments with a sincere question, ‘what can I learn from this?’ Her patience and humanity, above all, inspire me. She also has a deep understanding that people come from a various experiences and she never places people in boxes.

“I have tried hard to emulate the way she asks questions, how she draws out the narratives that really connect our agency’s broad work towards racial and social equity back to the human experience of it all.”

Zamora’s role as development manager is focused on fundraising and creating new ways for people to understand the work HealthConnect One does and the challenges communities across the country face.

“My favorite part of development is seeing the light bulb go off when a person realizes the impact of the work,” said Zamora. “Those people become our strongest advocates.”

Both Phillips and Zamora are from California and made their way to Chicago for different reasons.

Phillips grew up in Santa Clara and graduated from Santa Clara University with a BA in theater arts. She moved to Chicago to explore and for the first year worked and lived with five other people as a Claretian Volunteer on the Southeast Side of the city. Over time, Chicago became her home and she has lived here ever since.

In addition to her nonprofit work, Phillips has also done spoken-word poetry for the past



Left: Gil Zamora. Right: RoiAnn Phillips.

Photos by Leah Stern

24 years. Her best long-term gig was with her saxophone-playing friend Camille Rocha, who now lives in Austin, Texas. Phillips explained that they performed for three years at nonprofit fundraisers, street festivals and other locales and were always well-received.

Zamora grew up in the Compton area of Southern California and began his nonprofit career with AmeriCorps at 17. He moved to the Bay Area and this opportunity connected him to various immigrant communities and spurred on his advocacy for early childhood education.

“I worked in the Mission District with Jumpstart while attending San Francisco State University and later in Far East Oakland, directing a family literacy program for the City of Oakland,” said Zamora. “I moved to Chicago to pursue my MFA at Roosevelt University. I am currently working on my Masters in Nonprofit Administration.”

In addition to his work at HealthConnect One, Zamora supports organizations standing up for issues important to vulnerable communities, especially immigrants and women’s health since they are under constant attack by right-wing conservatives.

“The work that ACLU and Planned Parenthood are doing is vital,” said Zamora. “I am also incredibly inspired by the amazing work my trans siblings are doing to fight for their human rights, their dignity and for their voices to be heard.”

Phillips, Zamora and the rest of the HealthConnect One team will be launching the Birth Equity Leadership Academy for community leaders nationwide to gather and share their talents, skills,

resources, challenges, ideas and creativity in service to birth equity,

“From Dec. 5-7, we hosted an orientation for about 30 faculty members and, in March, the Academy will launch with approximately 100 participants,” said Phillips.

See <https://www.healthconnectone.org/> for more information.

## Trans professor wins Title VII case

A jury out of the Western District of Oklahoma ruled in favor of Rachel Tudor, a transgender woman who faced discrimination in her job as professor at Southeastern Oklahoma State University. She was awarded \$1.1 million.

The landmark case was one of the first times in the United States that a jury has considered a case of anti-transgender employment discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination based on sex.

Tudor filed her suit against the university in 2015, stating that she was denied a promotion for a tenured position of associate professor because she is a transgender woman.

Attorneys Ezra Young, Brittany M. Novotny and Marie Eisela Galindo brought forth the case, *Tudor v. Southeastern Oklahoma State University*.

# O.School aims to teach women about pleasure

BY SARI STAVER

Backed with \$800,000 in Silicon Valley venture capital, a queer woman from Oakland is launching a national online platform focused on pleasure education for women and gender diverse people.

On Nov. 3, technology entrepreneur Andrea Barrica, 27, launched her latest startup, O.School (<https://www.o.school/>), with five daily livestreams of sex education for college-aged and older adults. The programming will happen between 4 and 9 p.m. Pacific Time daily, where viewers will have the chance to chat with experts and share their personal experiences.

Initially a free service, among the first topics scheduled are masturbation, why pleasure is important, how to unlearn cultural and religious shame around pleasure, and having an open mind around sexual preferences.

The school will accept donations from participants and, eventually, will add a membership component for certain programs.

Barrica said the school will offer courses, led by instructors from around the country, to help participants unlearn elements of problematic sex education they may have previously encountered. Classes will focus on issues specifically facing queer people and people of color, addressing sexual trauma, and celebrating female sexuality



**O.School founder Andrea Barrica.**  
Photo by Sari Staver

and pleasure, she said.

The new venture is co-sponsored by the Center for Sex and Culture, headed by Carol Queen, a well-known sex educator, and Good Vibrations, a San Francisco-based business that sells sex toys and other erotic products.

Barrica first became interested in starting this venture after she left InDinero, an accounting company she helped found, and became a venture partner at 500 Startups, a global venture capital seed fund.

"Growing up, I didn't have access to sex education and when I started asking other women about their educational experiences, she said, learned that most felt the same.

"As a nation, we don't even offer the most heteronormative education," let alone material that is focused on gender diverse people, she said in a telephone interview with the Bay Area Reporter.

The company now has six employees and more than 20 instructors who will teach the classes, Barrica said.

## Illinois HIV Care Connect has new content

To encourage people living with HIV to follow treatment as prevention care regimens, Illinois HIV Care Connect introduced new text and video content on its website for World AIDS Day (Dec. 1).

People living with HIV are encouraged to review the new content and take the brief Treatment as Prevention Quiz (at <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/3831929/e2e3bf668ff7>). The content and quiz help people living with HIV to understand how HIV treatment prevents them from transmitting HIV to others. Illinois HIV Care Connect is promoting the

Treatment as Prevention Quiz using text, graphics and videos on the Illinois HIV Care Connect website ([hivcareconnect.com](http://hivcareconnect.com)) as well as on its Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Google+, Pinterest, and Instagram social-media platforms.

## Youth criminalization symposium Dec. 7

"Gender & Justice: The Criminalization of Youth in Cook County"—a symposium that addresses the criminalization of girls & LGBTQ/NIA youth in Cook County—will take place Thursday, Dec. 7, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at 225 E. Chicago Ave.

This is a symposium focusing on advocacy & community solutions centering the experiences of girls & LGBTQI/GNC youth in Cook County. Gender & Justice will feature advocates such as

Liz Alexander, Anna Buckingham, Sherida Morrison and Colette Payne, in partnership with Cook County State's Attorney Kim Foxx and Strengthening Chicago's Youth.

Sista Afya LLC and Women's Justice Initiative are sponsoring the event.

More information is at <https://www.facebook.com/events/1914880015444226/>; to register, visit <http://bit.ly/GenderSymposium>.

## Juniper founder receives women's business award

Dr. Margo Jacquot, founder and director of The Juniper Center, received a Gold Stevie Award in the 14th annual Stevie Awards for Women in

Business.

The Stevie Awards for Women in Business are the world's top honors for female entrepreneurs, executives, employees and the organizations they run. There were more than 1,500 nominations from 25 nations and territories.

Per a press release, one judge said of Jacquot, "She is tackling some of the most 'hot' topics of our current events, including LGBTQ and brain science, while delivering critical services to her clientele. Her thought leadership around inclusion is relevant and important in today's climate."

The Juniper Center is one of the largest women-owned counseling and therapy practices, with 25 therapists providing service in five Chicagoland locations in areas involving relationship therapy; issues involving sexuality and gender; and other topics.



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# AFC unveils its 16th annual World of Chocolate

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Over 1,000 guests headed for Revel Fulton Market for AIDS Foundation of Chicago's (AFC) 16th annual World of Chocolate celebration on Dec. 1.

About 19 confectioners, restaurants and other businesses took part in the annual competition and celebration that usually marks an enjoyable closing to local World AIDS Day observations and remembrances; World AIDS Day is also marked on Dec. 1.

Among the treats guests sampled were gourmet chocolate cigars from Fred's restaurant, located in Barney's New York Chicago; chocolate-spiked eggnog and red velvet crinkle cookies from Vanille Patisserie; a chocolate "Marquis" rolled in tablea—Phillipine chocolate—powder from ZED451; and Wow Bao's chocolate-filled bao, which have become a World of Chocolate staple. Two confectioners attempted chocolate-filled—and seafood-free—sushi.

Competition winners included People's Choice award, London House; Best Sweet, Cindy's in Chicago Athletic Association Hotel; Best Savory, London House; Best Sculpture, Sofitel; Best Libation, Freds at Barneys New York Chicago; Best Small Business, CH Distillery; and Best Large Business, Radisson BLU.

"What a better way to celebrate the progress made toward getting to zero new HIV infections in Illinois than with gourmet chocolate on World AIDS Day," said John Peller, AFC's president and CEO, in a Dec. 2 statement. "That being said, the fight isn't over. AFC's advocates are proud to fight for health equity the other 364 days of the year and work with people across the state to shape our Getting to Zero campaign."

The Getting to Zero campaign, developed by AFC and a coalition of community partners, utilizes infection-prevention and -treatment strategies aimed at eliminating new HIV infections locally.



Photos by Kat Fitzgerald (www.MysticImagesPhotography.com). See many more online at [www.WindyCityTimes.com](http://www.WindyCityTimes.com)





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# Continuing excellence: Sandee Kastrul and IC Stars

BY LIZ BAUDLER

In the north part of the Loop, 20 people will commit to being in an office space from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday, for four months, forming a cohort ready to absorb the latest the tech world has to offer.

By the end of their time at IC Stars, they will have amassed 1,000 hours of IT training—what a visiting industry professional called the equivalent of a master's in IT—while being paid a small stipend to solve a current technological program for an actual corporation. CEOs want to hang out with them and interrogate them about their developing skills. These individuals come from all sorts of backgrounds generally considered underserved: all of the members of this current cohort are people of color.

IC Stars has been around since 1999, and is renowned for its longevity as much as for its rigor and consistently high-quality graduates. “We might not serve a large number of people, but the depth of service that we’re able to provide is unique,” said development associate Thom Arnold.

With a master's in social work, Arnold has a specific perspective on nonprofit work. “Having worked directly with people in social services settings, I knew that there's a lot that you can do, but if you're not having that holistic vision and aiming for that holistic impact, it can be frustrating. It can be piecemeal rather than actually aiding someone to realize their own potential.”

Sandee Kastrul, IC Stars' founder, says that the program's rigor is influenced by her experiences. “My background is education and I firsthand know how we lower the bar for folks,” she said. “I believe with every fiber in my being that you got to raise the bar every day, and the best lessons we learn are the ones that were hard fought.”

Kastrul's background is both in diversity training and acting, experience she used to craft IC Stars.

“The creative process is the same thing as the development process is the same thing as the lean start up,” Kastrul said. There's lots of different words and terms for it, but at its center, it's about understanding who we are and the power of transformation.”

It may seem odd to connect an underserved population to technology careers—after all, many come in with wildly varying tech knowl-

edge. But both Arnold and Kastrul see it as oddly perfect.

“If you know the coding and you know how to make a project happen or you know how to solve a problem in technology, that's really what matters,” explained Arnold. “It's being able to do that and work well with a team. And the tech community, they want to be progressive and they want to be on what's new and best for people.”

“I love technology because it's creative,” Kastrul said. “It really doesn't matter what you look like, and that there's all this beautiful process and systems thinking that's embedded in it. At the end of the day, technology's about solving problems and building solutions.”

Kastrul's plan has never been focused solely on just educating one individual. “Just teach people technology and have them go get good jobs—you could go to DeVry,” she said. “To me what was really compelling about it was solutioning. Sure, get folks great jobs, teach technology, shift from being consumers to makers, all that good stuff, but then at the end of the day, how do we take that back to the community and use that as a mean to solve these problems that our communities face?”

Kastrul wants her trainees to have the tools to solve their community's often grandiose problems. “Just as important as the technology training is to figure out how we're going to architect our community leadership, starting with the question of, can you lead where you don't live, and what community do you claim? Does it claim you? And what does it mean to claim each other?” she said.

The last question is something that she particularly thinks about when it comes to the many-segmented LGBTQ community, which Kastrul describes as “a rainbow within a rainbow.”

“I think the thing that I'm really passionate about when it comes to LGBTQ issues is poverty,” Kastrul said. “I've devoted my life to working on poverty. I think that is really what can unify us in really powerful ways. What if we all claimed each other and we all stood up for each other and we all worked on poverty?”

Kastrul's intersectional identity—she's gay, Black and Jewish—has taught her why being adaptable is important.

“I'm moving between groups and communities and cultures in ways that sometimes people don't expect,” she explained. She ties that flexibility to



IC Stars Founder Sandee Kastrul in her office. Photo by Liz Baudler

the idea of thinking about how one claims community, but also to how adversity might teach resilience.

“The more we've walked that path of adversity, the more we've had to adapt to different environments, deal with different people,” Kastrul said. Adaptation, she believes, is the hallmark of the best software engineers.

“If people have done things for you, you've never had to build up resiliency, everything is sort of designed for you, you never learn how to use that muscle or how to adapt, or how to really empathize and listen and figure out what somebody else needs,” she said. “That is an absolute transferable skill if we're talking about a global economy. It's not going to be everything run by the good old boy's club. Moreover, if you're building things for customers that you don't know, you're going to build crappy stuff, and so as software engineers it's critical that you can imagine the end user from an authentic place.”

Resilience is something that IC Stars' thorough application process—current interns say they had to write 7-8 essays and do a group interview to be considered—is designed to reveal. Yet the program is also creating a safe environment for its participants to repeatedly fail and bounce back.

“Every business class right now is teaching a lesson on how to fail fast, and failure is so good,” said Kastrul. “Well, look: If you're coming from a vulnerable community, failure means certain death. There's all kinds of reasons why we are very risk averse when we come from communities that are vulnerable, and so it's really critical to create a safe space to actually examine these things, examine who we are, what makes up our perspective on the world.”

IC Stars emerged at a time when diversity of thought was becoming essential to corporations. “We would hear this mantra like ‘We need people who can think out of the box,’” Kastrul said. And with a nearly 20-year-run, the program too has changed.

“The poetic irony here is that we're teaching change agency and we too have to adapt,” Kastrul said. “But on a real practical level, I think what I've learned is the art of transformation is for everybody.”

High Tea, at 4-5 p.m. each workday, is both a necessary break for the interns and a chance for industry leaders and potential employers to advise and connect with the cohort. Both sides feel it goes beyond mere networking.

“The truth is that our folks are the transformers,” said Kastrul. “I think a lot of people come in thinking, ‘we're gonna hang with the youth’ and then they leave saying, ‘wow, they ask better questions than my management team’.”

While the program does tend to skew younger, there's no longer an age limit, and Arnold wants to do more outreach to the LGBTQ community.

“Anyone who's overcome adversity of any kind is a candidate,” he said. “The adversity of family, society, whatever those barriers might be. Being a person who can speak to that as a part of your story, and how you've been able to drive your own success is, I think, vital. I think anyone who's in the LGBTQ community can speak to that.”

At least two members of the current cohort identify as LGBTQ: both are also Black women. Aalivia Taylor was job-searching on Craigslist when she saw an ad for free IT training. Taylor, whose background is music and who taught herself audio engineering, stopped by the IC info session, and found more than a just a better job.

“I just left the info session really inspired to do something else with my life,” said Taylor, who, halfway through the program, is considering a career in music data analysis.

Felecia Wilkins got here after nannying for an IC Stars alumna, and feels like the program's focus on soft skills has changed her the most. She said she's gone from being a class-clown to desiring leadership.

“It helps you unleash a certain kind of power within yourself that you didn't know you had,” Wilkins said.

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# JB Pritzker hosts LGBTQ event in Boystown

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Democratic gubernatorial candidate J.B. Pritzker hosted an LGBTQ community meet-and-greet Nov. 29 at Sidetrack.

Illinois House Assistant Majority Leader Greg Harris announced his endorsement of Pritzker at the event. Pritzker has also received endorse-

the community. Fridi explained the importance of the 2018 elections in terms of progressive causes since many groups, including the LGBTQ community, are getting attacked daily by the Executive Branch in Washington D.C. She introduced Sidetrack Co-owner and Equality Illinois Co-founder Art Johnston and thanked him for his years of work to ensure that LGBTQ Illinoisans are pro-



J.B. Pritzker (left) and Illinois state Rep. Greg Harris at Pritzker's LGBTQ event.

Photo by Taylor Glascock

ments from Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White, Illinois Comptroller Susana Mendoza, Illinois Treasurer Mike Frerichs, Rep. Luis Gutierrez, the Illinois AFL-CIO and more than 20 other unions.

Community activist/The Morten Group President Mary Morten spoke about Pritzker's support of progressive causes, including LGBTQ equality, ahead of an LGBTQ-focused video featuring a gay couple who have known Pritzker and his wife Mary Kathryn "M.K." for years.

TRUST Collective-Chicago member and former Board Chair of Equality Illinois Dalila Fridi noted that 2018 will mark the first time she will be voting for a governor (she recently became a U.S. citizen) and urged attendees to support Pritzker due to his long-time record as an ally to

tected under the law from discrimination on all fronts.

"I am thrilled that we finally have a reason to be hopeful about the future of our state," said Johnston. "I do not say this lightly because I have been doing this for a long time."

Johnston spoke about Harris' record of achievements on behalf of the LGBTQ community. He noted Harris' predecessor Larry McKeon (the first openly gay member of the Illinois General Assembly) and the support the Pritzkers provided during the early years when McKeon and others were fighting for LGBTQ inclusive laws in Illinois.

Harris noted that it is easy to find friends when things are going well but real friends are the ones who offer support when things are not going well. He said he has known Pritzker for 20

years and throughout that time Pritzker and his family have been unsung LGBTQ allies even when it was unpopular to do so. Harris explained that it was Pritzker's influence that secured the last two votes for marriage equality. He spoke about Pritzker's support of early childhood education, reforming the criminal justice system, NARAL, the Muslim community when the first ban was put in place by the Trump Administration (he went to O'Hare Airport to show his support), condemning genocide in countries worldwide and countless other progressive causes. Harris said his endorsement of Pritzker was due to his proven track record of success on many fronts.

Pritzker praised Harris for the work he has done on the legislative front to advance everyone's civil rights. He noted openly gay suburban state Rep. Sam Yingling's (who was in the room) is also supporting his campaign. Pritzker spoke about his mother's influence leading him to become an LGBTQ activist because it was a part of the fabric of their home while he was growing up.

"The fact that my wife and I hosted a gay wedding (that was featured on the video played at the event) at our home 20 years ago before it was legally [available for same-sex couples] was because they are our friends, nothing more or less," said Pritzker. "If you have friends and they are in love and want to get married they should be able to get married."

Pritzker called out Gov. Bruce Rauner for his silence when the white nationalists marched in Charlottesville, Virginia and said it should not even be a question that every elected official should denounce hateful acts when they occur. He said the state needs to fully fund HIV preven-

tion services, resources to help LGBTQ homeless youth, train law enforcement to respect transgender people, address bullying in schools and many other social justice issues. Pritzker reminded the packed room that when Rauner was running for governor in 2014 he said he would have vetoed the marriage equality bill.

He explained that if elected he would involve the LGBTQ community as a partner to get things done. Pritzker said he feels an obligation to get big things done and that is what he promised the crowd he would do as governor.

## 'LGBTQ Care Fair' on Dec. 16

Affinity Community Services, in partnership with The Care Plan, LLC is hosting the 2nd Annual LGBTQ Care Fair on Saturday, Dec. 16, 12-4 p.m., at Affinity, 2850 S. Wabash Ave.

This fair is aimed to provide resources and education specifically catering to the needs of LGBTQ older adults. The free event will begin with a luncheon, with workshops and tabling to follow. Workshops will focus on Medicare and Medicaid coverage, advanced directives, care planning and aging as an LGBTQ person. A video with highlights from last year's event is at <http://the-care-plan.com/lgbtq-care-fair-video/>.

RSVP at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2nd-annual-lgbtq-care-fair-tickets-40192506870>.

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# Another trans student sues Palatine district

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A transgender student has sued a northwest suburban school district, alleging her school has made it difficult to access public accommodations facilities.

The lawsuit was filed Nov. 30 in Cook County Circuit Court against Palatine-based Township District 211, which was at the center of controversy a few years ago when another transgender student filed a similar suit and the case became the focus of litigation, federal intervention and media attention as controversies about public accommodations-access and transgender persons began to ignite.

The Nov. 30 lawsuit alleges that Nova Maday, an 18-year-old transgender student at Palatine High School, has been prohibited from using the girls' locker room to change before and after gym class. Maday was instructed to either change in either a separate, locked changing room or the school nurse's office. That arrangement has resulted in Maday frequently being late for class; she maintains that she spends an inordinate amount of her time trying to find someone to help her access the changing facilities.

"It was almost impossible to get into these separate facilities, change and get to class on time," said Maday in a statement from ACLU of Illinois, whose lawyers are among those representing her in the suit. "This would make the P.E. teacher upset and I'd feel more anxious and isolated. But more importantly having to dress separately from the other girls was pretty devastating to me because it felt like the school was telling



**John Knight.**  
Photo courtesy of ACLU of Illinois

me I'm not really a girl or that there is something wrong with me."

A transgender student alleged similar discrimination some years back, leading to the school endangering its federal funding under Title IX rules when the Obama administration's Department of Education (DOE) became involved. Many community members objected to the eventual DOE settlement, and parents of some students sued to keep the school's changing and washroom facilities' access determined by gender assigned at birth. The community's state representative also filed an anti-transgender "bathroom bill" in response to the situation; that legislation quickly failed.

Although District 211 settled the case with the first student, they never implemented a district-wide policy change, said Maday.

"I just want to be treated like every other girl in our school," she added. "Even after the school

district agreed to allow another transgender student to use the locker rooms in her school, they have resisted and made things harder for me. I just want to be able to get dressed for P.E. class without having to jump through a bunch of hoops."

"It is clear that this school district still discriminates against students who are transgender," said John Knight, LGBTQ Project director at ACLU of Illinois. "Nova should be able to use the appropriate locker room and take P.E. like other students, without imposing restrictions on her that no other student is required to follow.

"We want this district's policies to be fair for all students, so that no student is separated from her peers or labeled as different because they are transgender."

## Organizers prepare for gubernatorial LGBT debate

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Democratic candidates looking to unseat Republican incumbent Gov. Bruce Rauner in the 2018 gubernatorial contest will gather Wed., Dec. 6, for a debate focused on LGBT-related issues.

Among the candidates in attendance will be businessmen J.B. Pritzker and Christopher Kennedy and state Sen. Daniel Biss. The forum is organized by Equality Illinois as well as ALMA Chicago, Affinity Community Services, Pride Action Tank and BTAN Chicago, among other organizations.

"We thought there should be a dialogue around what a governor should look like around LGBT issues," said Anthony Galloway, Equality Illinois' director of civic engagement. "We wanted people to be physically engaged in the governor's race."

Galloway added that it was important for organizers not just to get the LGBT community's questions before the candidates, but also to demonstrate "the power and strength of the LGBT community here in the state of Illinois. We know that if we show up in numbers, it demonstrates power."

Moderators include Equality Illinois CEO Brian Johnson, Pride Action Tank Executive Director Kim Hunt, Affinity Community Services Executive Director Imani Rupert-Gordon and ALMA Board Vice President Kenny Martin-Ocasio. Galloway said preliminary questions would focus mainly on issues relating to health care, education, criminal justice and social justice. Other questions are meanwhile being accepted from the public.

The candidates will be asked to return next year for a debate against the Republican nominee in the general election should they win on the Democratic ticket in March, Galloway added. Rauner seems favored to win the March GOP nomination at this point; anti-LGBT state

Sen. Jeanne Ives has announced that she'll be challenging him for his post, however.

"We need people to show up," Galloway said. "Having a turnout is critical. It is incumbent on us as a community to show up. I always like to quote former Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill: 'All politics are local.' Politics being what they are at the national level, we want to make sure that we have strong LGBT policies and friendly policy-makers."

The forum takes place Wed., Dec. 6, at Second Presbyterian Church, 1936 S. Michigan Ave. Seating begins at 5 p.m., and the presentation begins at 6 p.m. A meet & greet with the candidates begins at 7:45 p.m.

Register to attend at <http://tinyurl.com/LGBTQForum>. Advance questions can be submitted to <http://tinyurl.com/LGBTQ-Forum-Question>.

## Lipinski foe—and mom of trans child—to host LGBT event

Marie Newman, a first-time candidate for U.S. Congress in the 3rd Congressional District of Illinois, will be hosting a fundraiser at Sidetrack Thursday, Dec. 7, at 5:30 p.m. This event will help her continue to oppose Democratic U.S. Rep. Dan Lipinski, the anti-LGBT incumbent.

Lipinski was one of the few Democrats to support a constitutional amendment to define marriage as a union of "one man and one woman" and voted against the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which aimed to ban discrimination against LGBT+ employees.

In contrast, Newman has a trans daughter and developed an anti-bullying non-profit. She is a strong supporter of marriage equality, vows to support ENDA and said she will not stand for employers discriminating against the LGBT+ community under the guise of "religious liberty."

The event is open to all. Tickets can be purchased online at [tinyurl.com/MNFCSidetrack](http://tinyurl.com/MNFCSidetrack). More information on Newman can be found at [MarieNewmanForCongress.com](http://MarieNewmanForCongress.com).

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# Jamie's journey: Vallas family supports transgender daughter

BY LIZ BAUDLER

Jamie Vallas is nearly 21 and finally feels as if she's who she was supposed to be all along. She was a kid who wore her sister's old ballet clothes, who would find wigs and put bath towels over her short hair, who never wanted Halloween to end. She remembers being 14, presenting then as a boy, and taking a selfie in her sister's bedroom.

"I have a big smile on my face as I'm holding up an iPad and I'm wearing my sister's bridal prom dress. And I just see how happy I look and it felt right," she said.

Although she'd had her name picked out since seventh grade, Jamie began to transition in high school. She remembered not being very patient at first with people who wouldn't accept her new-found identity.

"Ever since I transitioned I was very like, 'this is who I am, accept me or you are not in my life.' I was very forceful," she said. "My parents taught me about more patience."

And the Vallas' story is notable for the sheer amount of family support Jamie has received. "I was born into a very family-oriented environment, and family's there for each other," Jamie explained.

At first, like many parents, the Vallases weren't sure if this was what Jamie truly wanted. "We all thought it was more of a phase, because I tend to go through a lot of phases in my life," Jamie recalled. "And we weren't sure if this was the true decision I wanted to make, because it's life-changing, going through surgery."

"We didn't know where it was going. Then when Jamie decided, this is where the research had to come in," Renee Vallas, Jamie's mom, remembered.

It was easier for both parents to accept Jamie once they realized her identity had a biological basis, though Renee remembers how gradually her feelings evolved.

"It was very difficult on us as parents because I had to mourn Luke in order to accept Jamie," she said. "It's not easy. It takes time and then finally something hit me, and then I realized, this isn't my life. This is her life."

Dean Vallas, Jamie's father, had always felt protective of his child. Even now, he says, "my job with Jamie is to keep her safe." Seeing Jamie's feminine tendencies, his impulse was to put her in a smaller school to protect her from bullying. Years later, this presented a new challenge: she was the first trans student in her school's history. Both Jamie and her father recall her younger brother, Evan, getting in trouble for talking back to a homophobic teacher.

"He was getting made fun of on the side, I could tell," Jamie said about Evan. "I now see it.

I didn't at the time, I was like, 'well, you should love me no matter what.' We were very standoffish with each other, we didn't say anything to each other for a long period of time."

But the siblings are close once again, and the rest of the family echoes Evan's support: Jamie's 90-year-old grandfather sometimes can't remember his son's name, but he always uses the right pronouns. Another interesting family connection is that Jamie is the niece of Paul Vallas, former CEO of Chicago Public Schools, former candidate for lieutenant governor of Illinois, and Dean's brother. Dean managed Paul's 2002 campaign for governor: Paul lost to Rod Blagojevich in the primary.

"I'm going to be like that offensive lineman, to make holes for the family," Dean said. "It's really difficult for someone to push back against me. So my family was quick to embrace because of that, because I manage things in the family."

An unlikely but incredibly important source of support was the Greek Orthodox church. When Dean called his local priest to ask for advice about his transitioning child, the priest asked, "Oh, you mean Jamie?" He had already seen the new name on Facebook. He then found a Greek Orthodox prayer written for "Modification of Gender" and sent it to the family. It draws parallels between Biblical figures who have changed their names and someone assuming a new identity. Dean credited this acceptance to his church's lack of papal control, letting individual priests and parishioners be more liberal and experimental.

Renee found Jamie a LGBTQ youth group in Naperville. "They were so warm and embracing, she couldn't wait to go every Tuesday," she said. "And they educated you."

"You saw what other people were going through," Jamie recalled. "You could relate to them. You could have conversations with them and they wouldn't look at you as like an oddity to the world."

Jamie's role models are trans model Carmen Carrera and her own sister, whose style, feminist values and work ethic impressed her.

"Carmen Carrera [is] this beautiful Colombian transgender model," Jamie explained. "She inspired me to want to work on my beauty, work on my appearance as a lady. That was my fantasy of a woman—a drop-dead beautiful woman. Nice figure, melodious voice. She blew me away. But my sister internally had that fire, like, I want to be known as a woman, I'm strong, I want to be taken seriously in this room and I want to be successful and do my own thing, and work hard."

Jamie, too, aspires to be a role model for others, and already has been among her parents' friends. "When my ultra-conservative, Fox tele-



Dean, Jamie and Renee Vallas.

Photo by Liz Baudler

prompter-reading neighbor is all in with Jamie, we celebrate it and why, because they get to know her. That's the key," Dean said.

"The ones that don't [embrace her], it's not part of our life," Renee added.

"I want to present myself as a loving role model," Jamie said. "When people see the word transgender, I don't want them to think about it's all about being a girl and her looks. I want it to be that when people look at transgender, they see how I am. I'm nice, I'm outgoing, I'm positive, I'm fun, I'm optimistic, I'm bright, I'm generous, kind, caring, loving and I treat other people the way they want to be treated. So you see that I'm just this person. ... I'm just like everybody else. It's not all about the looks and the body, it's what lies inside, too."

Whether it's the sheer amount of documents they needed to alter or preparation for her recently completed medical transition, her parents have understood that there's been more obstacles in Jamie's way than there might be for a cis girl her age.

"When your focus has been since you're self-aware is on trying to be a woman, how do you focus on the rest of your life?" Dean explained.

"I can see her growing into herself," Renee said. "It is a long process, it is a big step. It changes your life, and it changes your family's life. But for the better."

"It was very time-consuming. My entire life's

focus was wanting the body that I've always wanted," Jamie explained. But she has some ideas about what her future might look like, "I like to connect with other people. It's a skill of mine. I like to communicate. I want to get out of the suburbs. I want to meet people older than me who have their life figured out, I want positive role models."

She still feels she will always be connected to her past. "I've always been this person, I've never really changed," she said. "I grow, I mature. My physique and looks changed, and yes, I changed my body that I came in, but my heart and my personality and who I was was always still there. I'm that boy who lived next door who came and swam in your swimming pool when I was younger. It's still me. I'm proud to own that I used to be Luke, and I still am Luke deep inside. And I'm happy."

Yet embracing her identity may be the key to her future success. "I was hesitant to go on this interview because I've always wanted to be a woman, and I've always wanted to live my life as a normal woman, and not just a public figure as the trans person," Jamie said. "But I've also wanted to help, and put myself out there and tell my story. I feel really blessed to be given this life. Yes, I'm transgender, but also the support I have is incredible. I've had everything I've wanted with myself and life. I've always had my family. I'm finally able to shine and be who I want to be."

## ELECTIONS 2018

# Ramirez-Rosa to run for congressman's seat

BY MATT SIMONETTE

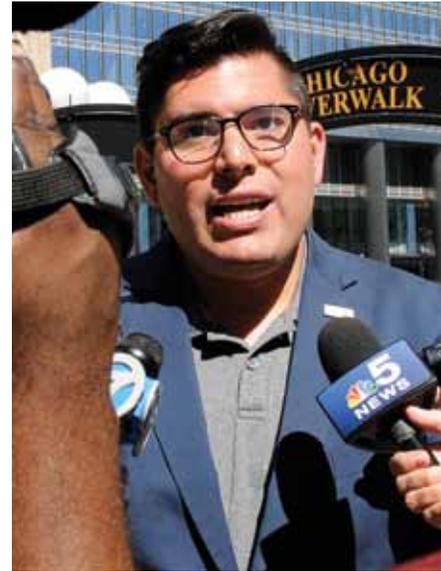
Openly gay Ald. Carlos Ramirez-Rosa (35th Ward) said in a Nov. 28 statement that he would begin circulating petitions to run for Congress should U.S. Rep. Luis Gutierrez (D-4) announce that he would not be running in the upcoming election.

Such an announcement did indeed come from Gutierrez the afternoon of Nov. 28. At a press conference, the veteran Congressman, who's been serving since 1993, said he would be stepping down to channel his energies into helping immigration-rights causes as well as efforts to rebuild Puerto Rico. Gutierrez further endorsed Cook County Commissioner Jesus "Chuy" Garcia as his replacement.

But Ramirez-Rosa said he's ready to throw his hat in the ring as well.

"Since the rumor [of Gutierrez stepping down] began circulating, I have heard from so many supporters in the 4th District asking me to run for Congress," Ramirez-Rosa said. "I'm humbled by their encouragement to seek the nomination. If Congressman Gutierrez is retiring, I will begin circulating nominating petitions tonight.

"I am ready to take our fight for working families to President Trump's doorstep. As Congressman, I will vigorously oppose President Trump's regime, and fight for the progressive policies that will uplift the 4th District's working families, including medicare for all, free college tuition, stopping deportations and a \$15 living wage."



Ald. Carlos Ramirez-Rosa.

Photo by Hal Baim

Ramirez-Rosa's announcement comes a short time after he and gubernatorial candidate state Sen. Daniel Biss (D-Evanston) announced that the Chicago alderman would run as lieutenant governor alongside Biss in 2018. But those plans were later scrapped after comments Ramirez-Rosa made in support of Boycott, Divest and Sanction (BDS) strategies surfaced. Biss then named state Rep. Litesa Wallace (D-Rockford) as a running mate.

Ramirez-Rosa, formerly a community organizer, has been representing the 35th Ward since 2015. Besides being a member of the City Council's LGBT Caucus, he also has voted consistently as part of the Council's Progressive Reform Caucus. At one time Ramirez-Rosa, who is now the youngest person on the City Council, served as a congressional aide to Gutierrez.

*In addition to Ramirez-Rosa and Cook County Commissioner Jesus Garcia, other candidates who have filed in the race are openly gay 15th Ward Ald. Raymond Lopez and La Casa Norte Executive Director Sol Flores.*

## El praises Task Force appointment

Illinois Senate Republican Leader Bill Brady (R-Bloomington) recently announced 12 people who will serve on the newly created Senate Task Force on Sexual Discrimination and Harassment Awareness and Prevention.

Among the members is Dr. Kathleen Robbins, associated with Equality Illinois (EI). The organization issued a press release praising the choice of Robbins.

Equality Illinois CEO Brian C. Johnson said, "We thank Leader Brady for appointing Kathleen and for ensuring an inclusive discussion of the impact of sexual harassment, assault, and discrimination in Illinois. [I]t is essential that the voices of LGBTQ people, especially transgender individuals, be included in these discussion and deliberations."

## 'Getting to Zero' town halls Dec. 13, 16

Over the next year, the Getting to Zero project will be engaging communities across Illinois to gather ideas and write a plan to eliminate the HIV epidemic in the state.

To that end, town halls will take place Wed., Dec. 13, 6-8 p.m., at Malcolm X College, 1900 W. Jackson Blvd., Room 1108, Hall A; and in Park Forest on Saturday, Dec. 16, 2-4 p.m., at Aunt Martha's, 440 Forest Blvd.

RSVP to the Dec. 13 event at [http://events.aidschicago.org/site/Survey?ACTION\\_REQUIRED=URI\\_ACTION\\_USER\\_REQUESTS&SURVEY\\_ID=6691](http://events.aidschicago.org/site/Survey?ACTION_REQUIRED=URI_ACTION_USER_REQUESTS&SURVEY_ID=6691). RSVP to the Dec. 16 town hall at [http://events.aidschicago.org/site/Survey?ACTION\\_REQUIRED=URI\\_ACTION\\_USER\\_REQUESTS&SURVEY\\_ID=6692](http://events.aidschicago.org/site/Survey?ACTION_REQUIRED=URI_ACTION_USER_REQUESTS&SURVEY_ID=6692).

Transportation and childcare assistance are

available upon request; contact Sara Semelka at [ssemelka@aidschicago.org](mailto:ssemelka@aidschicago.org). To learn more about Getting to Zero, visit [AIDSChicago.org/gtz](http://AIDSChicago.org/gtz).

## Women's March announces affiliation

Women's March Chicago's Jan. 20, 2018 "March to the Polls" announced its affiliation with March On, a national organization of women's marches and progressive organizations.

According to a press release, "The move is intended to amplify the group's local actions in its focus on motivating women and their allies to get to the polls for the 2018 election. Similar actions are being planned by other women's march organizers around the world, furthering the alignment and power of the movement."

March On will launch some strategic initiatives in the next year that Chicago organizers believe

will be useful in organizing around common goals as women prepare to cast their ballots in 2018. For more information and to participate, volunteer or donate, visit [WeAreMarchOn.org](http://WeAreMarchOn.org).

## Marketplace enrollment Dec. 11

Howard Brown Health and Boystown spot Sidetrack will present "Don't Be Late: Healthcare Marketplace Enrollment Fair" on Monday, Dec. 11, 3-7 p.m., at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St.

People have until Friday, Dec. 15, to enroll or change current healthcare insurance plans on the Illinois Marketplace.

Answers to common insurance-marketplace questions are at [HowardBrown.org/affordablecare](http://HowardBrown.org/affordablecare).

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Jan. 19, 2018

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## viewpoints



## My Black lesbian body is a target for police brutality

The reality of unarmed African-American women—LBTQ, gender nonconforming and straight—being beaten, profiled, sexually violated and murdered by law enforcement officials with alarming regularity is too often ignored, especially with the focus of police brutality on our males.

Like so many African-American women, Sandra Bland's death in 2015, resulting from police brutality was not new news. The national attention it received was, however.

Recently, Northeastern University conducted a panel to discuss the topic titled "Invisible No More: Black Women and Police Violence" that looked at criminalization of African-American women, Indigenous women, and women of color like Two-Spirit, Latinx, Asian, Arab and Middle Eastern women, to name a few, and mass incarceration and police violence that sometimes resulted with deadly consequences.

The panel of experts included:

—Andrea Ritchie is an African-American lesbian and a police misconduct attorney and organizer. She's the author of *Invisible No More: Racial Profiling and Police Brutality Against Women of Color* that has recently come out, and the co-author of *Say Her Name: Resisting Police Violence Against Black Women as well as Queer (In)Justice: The Criminalization of LGBT People in the United States*.

—Simone John is a Boston-based poet, educator and facilitator. She's the author of *Testify*, her first full-length book of poems about African-Americans impacted by state-sanctioned violence.

—Monica James is a Black trans woman activist. She is the national organizer for *Black and Pink*, and a collective member of *Transformative Justice Law Project*. Because of maltreatment in jail, in 2014 James became a delegate to testify before the *Committee Against Torture (CAT)* at Geneva Switzerland. Her work towards the advancement of trans justice, transformative justice, and prison abolition has made her national spokeswoman.

Robyn Maynard is a Black feminist author, grassroots community organizer and independent scholar based in Montreal. She's the author of *Policing Black Lives: State Violence in Canada from Slavery to the Present*.

The panel discussed the context around the historical and present-day patterns and paradigms of policing and punishment that stems from centuries of colonialism, slavery, segregation, and immigration. The over-policing of women of color is due to gang violence, the war on drugs, war on terrorism, Islamophobia, poverty, sex trade, domestic violence



**Monica James.**

Photo from Windy City Times archives

and mental health, to name a few.

Transmisogyny and racism put transgender women of color, in particular, at a high risk of police violence. Less than half of trans women of color report discriminatory policing such as "stop and frisk" and "walking while trans." Trans women of color who have participated in underground economies have experienced excessive police violence—i.e., 34 percent of Latinx and 53 percent of Blacks.

For example, in 2007 James was subjected to excessive police violence. She was viciously attacked by an off-duty police officer in Chicago, arrested, and charged with attempted murder for defending herself. While in prison, James, like many trans women, was misgendered by correctional officers and inmates, sexually assaulted repeatedly and denied access to gender-affirming healthcare.

Shockingly, too, gender-based forms of police violence, such as sexual assault, are wildly pervasive, gravely ignored and deliberately underreported. While the nation learned of the rapes of more than a dozen African-American women at the hand of now-convicted Oklahoma City police officer Daniel Holtzclaw, most incidents like this one enjoy impunity.

The reason many sexual assaults go unaccounted for is that half of the 35 top 50 police departments in the United States have no policies prohibiting police sexual violence against the public. According to a 2016 investigation by the *Buffalo News*, a police officer, on average, is caught in the act of sexual misconduct every five days. Ritchie stated, "Those are just the ones who are caught, representing, by all accounts, just the tip of the iceberg of this perva-

sive yet invisible form of police violence."

For example, to avoid being assaulted during "stop-and-frisk" many women of color have been forced into sexual acts to stave off arrest. Too often an officer will "turn off the microphone on his body camera and later claim it malfunctioned, and then lie about the gender of drivers he pulled over to cover up the numbers of women he targeted," Ritchie stated.

Bland has come "to stand for every Black woman who has ever changed lanes without using a turn signal or expressed frustration at getting a traffic ticket."

However, the perceptions and stereotypes of African-American women—combative, mouthy, not deferential enough and "angry Black woman"—can sadly turn into deadly action as we see with Bland. Bland's crime is what's depicted as "contempt of cop." She wasn't obsequious or subservient enough when the officer asked her to extinguish her cigarette. And for something as minor as a traffic signal violation, the incident escalated out of control. But when the dominant culture doesn't see and hear African-American voices about our pains, fears, vulnerabilities our humanity is distorted and made invisible through a prism of racist and sexist stereotypes. So, too, is our suffering.

The campaign "Say Her Name" addresses the lack of reporting, documenting, and accounting for the violations and death of African-American women and girls at the hand of law enforcement officials.

Every day when my spouse or I leave home, I pray we return to each other.

# WINDY CITY TIMES

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# WINDY CITY TIMES

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## Rosie outlook

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Rosie Roche is one of the performers in *The Buttcracker: A Nutcracker Burlesque*.

Photo by Eve Studnicka

### SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

# Partying away in 'BLKS'

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Poet-playwright Aziza Barnes was inspired to write the play *BLKS* as a reaction to two very different experiences. The unflinching comedy focusing on young and queer African-Americans receives a world-premiere production this week at Steppenwolf Theatre Company.

Barnes spent a semester studying in Ghana while attending New York University. Instead receiving a welcoming embrace in Africa, Barnes was prodded to reconsider life back in America.

"It is a very specific thing to be a queer, black American person, and a lot of those things in that description are not exactly welcome or understood in Ghana," Barnes said. "In that space, I really felt that, 'Oh, shit. My voice and the things that I have to say and the things my friends have to say are so nuanced and specific.' I would take for granted the small havens that we build by living in New York and being queer and black and artists."

Barnes also wrote *BLKS* as a response to the first season of Lena Dunham's *Girls*. One of the major criticisms of the HBO series was its paucity of racially diverse characters.

"[Dunham's] lens on Brooklyn and the world is just so 'white lady,'" Barnes said. "Weirdly, it gave me this permission to talk about the shit that I feel and I know—not to expect anything from her, but to expect everything from myself. It's interesting the things that you can pull from."

*BLKS* focuses on a day in the life of four African-American women in their 20s living in New

York City. The character of Olivia (Nora Carroll) receives some very bad news early on, but her response is quell her troubles by spending her time hanging out and partying with her friends like June (Leea Ayers), Imani (Celeste Cooper) and Ry (Danielle Davis).

"We have such a misconception of what a queer black day is or can be," Barnes said. "It is absurd and loud, full of jokes and you're laughing to keep from all of the other feelings you're having at your disposal. And that the world continues to infringe upon your day."

In *BLKS*, Barnes structured the work to just focus on one day in the lives of the play's characters, which includes Steppenwolf Ensemble member Namir Smallwood playing an assortment of male roles and actress Kelly O'Sullivan as "That Bitch on the Couch."

"If you're really present and alive and in the moment, in the course of a day you could really end up completely different," Barnes said. "Not a different character, but in the way you see the world if you're actually paying attention."

Barnes says it's a dream come true to have a world premiere play at Steppenwolf. Barnes is also glad that director Natakai Garrett, co-artistic director of BLANK THE DOG PRODUCTIONS, is staging *BLKS* in her Steppenwolf debut, too.

Yet *BLKS* isn't the only thing Barnes is involved with for Steppenwolf. Barnes is curating a *BLKS* Salon Series of four shows as part of Steppenwolf's relatively new LookOut programming.

"[*BLKS*] is a play about and in many ways for young queer people of color, and so it felt like a



Aziza Barnes.

Photo courtesy of Steppenwolf

great opportunity to engage some of the artistic community in Chicago and their audiences," said Lookout producer Greta Honold.

"I worked with Aziza to come up with four evenings of work that really spans genre and I think they're going to be a dynamic compliment to the story Aziza is telling with *BLKS*," said Honold, emphasizing that it was Barnes who asked to use the 80-seat 1700 Theatre as an ancillary and more intimate venue for the *Salon Series*.

"I feel really moved every day and I think it's really exciting and validating. I always thought

that the way that I spoke and my friends spoke was worth something and worth a space like Steppenwolf," Barnes said. "To feel this embrace and level of trust with the work and the stories being told—I sappy cry about it a lot. It's an abundance of joy. I feel very humbled and honored and giddy."

The world premiere of Aziza Barnes' *BLKS* plays from Thursday, Dec. 7, through Sunday, Jan. 28, in the Upstairs Theatre of Steppenwolf Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted St. Previews run through Sunday, Dec. 19, with an official press opening Wed., Dec. 20. Tickets are \$20-\$89.

Each event in the *BLKS* Salon series plays in Steppenwolf's 1700 Theatre at 1700 N. Halsted St.

An Intentional Turn Up with Slo 'Mo Party features resident performer Darling Shear, DJ Audio Jack and more at 8 p.m. Thursday, Dec.

14. B.A.P.S. Comedy presents an evening of sketches and improvisation in the show *Curlz, 'Fros & Braids* at 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 16.

The Poetry Gods featuring Eve L. Ewing, Jon Sands and Jose Olivarez is at 7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 17. A *BLKS* Poetry Salon curated by Barnes is 8 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 19.

Each *BLKS* Salon Series event is \$5, or \$15 for all four. For more information on all performances, call 312-335-1650 or visit [Steppenwolf.org](http://Steppenwolf.org).

## What is TRUVADA for PrEP?

TRUVADA for PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) is a prescription medicine that is used together with safer sex practices to help reduce the risk of getting HIV-1 through sex. This use is only for HIV-negative adults who are at high risk of getting HIV-1. To help determine your risk of getting HIV-1, talk openly with your healthcare provider about your sexual health.

Ask your healthcare provider if you have questions about how to prevent getting HIV. Always practice safer sex and use condoms to lower the chance of sexual contact with body fluids. Never reuse or share needles or other items that have body fluids on them.

## IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

### What is the most important information I should know about TRUVADA for PrEP?

#### Before taking TRUVADA for PrEP:

- ◆ **You must be HIV-negative before you start taking TRUVADA for PrEP.** You must get tested to make sure that you do not already have HIV-1. Do not take TRUVADA to reduce the risk of getting HIV-1 unless you are confirmed to be HIV-negative.
- ◆ **Many HIV-1 tests can miss HIV-1 infection in a person who has recently become infected.** If you have flu-like symptoms, you could have recently become infected with HIV-1. Tell your healthcare provider if you had a flu-like illness within the last month before starting or at any time while taking TRUVADA for PrEP. Symptoms of new HIV-1 infection include tiredness, fever, joint or muscle aches, headache, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, rash, night sweats, and/or enlarged lymph nodes in the neck or groin.

#### While taking TRUVADA for PrEP:

- ◆ **You must continue to use safer sex practices. Just taking TRUVADA for PrEP may not keep you from getting HIV-1.**
- ◆ **You must stay HIV-negative to keep taking TRUVADA for PrEP:**
  - ◆ Get tested for HIV-1 at least every 3 months.
  - ◆ If you think you were exposed to HIV-1, tell your healthcare provider right away.
- ◆ **To further help reduce your risk of getting HIV-1:**
  - ◆ Know your HIV status and the HIV status of your partners.
  - ◆ Get tested for other sexually transmitted infections. Other infections make it easier for HIV to infect you.
  - ◆ Get information and support to help reduce risky sexual behavior, such as having fewer sex partners.
  - ◆ Do not miss any doses of TRUVADA. Missing doses may increase your risk of getting HIV-1 infection.
- ◆ **If you do become HIV-1 positive, you need more medicine than TRUVADA alone to treat HIV-1.** TRUVADA by itself is not a complete treatment for HIV-1. If you have HIV-1 and take only TRUVADA, your HIV-1 may become harder to treat over time.

#### TRUVADA can cause serious side effects:

- ◆ **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** TRUVADA is not approved to treat HBV. If you have HBV and stop taking TRUVADA, your HBV may suddenly get worse. Do not stop taking TRUVADA without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to monitor your health.

### Who should not take TRUVADA for PrEP?

#### Do not take TRUVADA for PrEP if you:

- ◆ **Already have HIV-1 infection or if you do not know your HIV-1 status.** If you are HIV-1 positive, you need to take other medicines with TRUVADA to treat HIV-1. TRUVADA by itself is not a complete treatment for HIV-1. If you have HIV-1 and take only TRUVADA, your HIV-1 may become harder to treat over time.
- ◆ **Also take** certain medicines to treat hepatitis B infection.

### What are the other possible side effects of TRUVADA for PrEP?

#### Serious side effects of TRUVADA may also include:

- ◆ **Kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider may do blood tests to check your kidneys before and during treatment with TRUVADA. If you develop kidney problems, your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking TRUVADA.
- ◆ **Too much lactic acid in your blood** (lactic acidosis), which is a serious but rare medical emergency that can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get these symptoms: weakness or being more tired than usual, unusual muscle pain, being short of breath or fast breathing, stomach pain with nausea and vomiting, cold or blue hands and feet, feel dizzy or lightheaded, or a fast or abnormal heartbeat.
- ◆ **Severe liver problems,** which in rare cases can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get these symptoms: skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow, dark "tea-colored" urine, light-colored stools, loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, or stomach-area pain.
- ◆ **Bone problems,** including bone pain, softening, or thinning, which may lead to fractures. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your bones.

**Common side effects** in people taking TRUVADA for PrEP are stomach-area (abdomen) pain, headache, and decreased weight. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or do not go away.

### What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking TRUVADA for PrEP?

- ◆ **All your health problems.** Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have or have had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis.
- ◆ **If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.** It is not known if TRUVADA can harm your unborn baby. If you become pregnant while taking TRUVADA for PrEP, talk to your healthcare provider to decide if you should keep taking TRUVADA.
- ◆ **If you are breastfeeding** (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. If you become HIV-positive, HIV can be passed to the baby in breast milk.
- ◆ **All the medicines you take,** including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. TRUVADA may interact with other medicines. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.
- ◆ **If you take certain other medicines** with TRUVADA, your healthcare provider may need to check you more often or change your dose. These medicines include certain medicines to treat hepatitis C (HCV) infection.

**You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.FDA.gov/medwatch](http://www.FDA.gov/medwatch), or call 1-800-FDA-1088.**

**Please see Important Facts about TRUVADA for PrEP including important warnings on the following page.**

# I'm courageous, not careless.

I know who I am. And I make choices that fit my life.

TRUVADA for PrEP™ is a once-daily prescription medicine that can help reduce the risk of getting HIV-1 when taken every day and used together with safer sex practices.

- ◆ TRUVADA for PrEP is only for adults who are at high risk of getting HIV through sex.
- ◆ You must be HIV-negative before you start taking TRUVADA for PrEP.

Ask your doctor about your risk of getting HIV-1 infection and if TRUVADA for PrEP may be right for you.

GILEAD

Learn more at [truvada.com](http://truvada.com)

 **Truvada**<sup>®</sup>  
emtricitabine 200 mg / tenofovir  
disoproxil fumarate 300 mg tablets  
for **PrEP** pre-exposure prophylaxis



(tru-VAH-dah)

## MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT TRUVADA FOR PrEP

### Before starting TRUVADA for PrEP:

- **You must be HIV-1 negative.** You must get tested to make sure that you do not already have HIV-1. Do not take TRUVADA for PrEP to reduce the risk of getting HIV-1 unless you are confirmed to be HIV-1 negative.
- **Many HIV-1 tests can miss HIV-1 infection in a person who has recently become infected.** Symptoms of new HIV-1 infection include flu-like symptoms, tiredness, fever, joint or muscle aches, headache, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, rash, night sweats, and/or enlarged lymph nodes in the neck or groin. Tell your healthcare provider if you have had a flu-like illness within the last month before starting TRUVADA for PrEP.

### While taking TRUVADA for PrEP:

- **You must continue to use safer sex practices. Just taking TRUVADA for PrEP may not keep you from getting HIV-1.**
- **You must stay HIV-negative to keep taking TRUVADA for PrEP.** Get tested for HIV-1 at least every 3 months while taking TRUVADA for PrEP. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you think you were exposed to HIV-1 or have a flu-like illness while taking TRUVADA for PrEP.
- **If you do become HIV-1 positive, you need more medicine than TRUVADA alone to treat HIV-1.** If you have HIV-1 and take only TRUVADA, your HIV-1 may become harder to treat over time.
- See the “How To Further Reduce Your Risk” section for more information.

### TRUVADA may cause serious side effects, including:

- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** TRUVADA is not approved to treat HBV. If you have HBV, your HBV may suddenly get worse if you stop taking TRUVADA. Do not stop taking TRUVADA without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to check your health regularly for several months.

## ABOUT TRUVADA FOR PrEP

TRUVADA for PrEP is a prescription medicine used together with safer sex practices to help reduce the risk of getting HIV-1 through sex. This use is only for HIV-negative adults who are at high risk of getting HIV-1.

- To help determine your risk of getting HIV-1, talk openly with your healthcare provider about your sexual health.

### Do NOT take TRUVADA for PrEP if you:

- **Already have HIV-1 infection or if you do not know your HIV-1 status.**
- Take certain medicines to treat hepatitis B infection.

## HOW TO TAKE TRUVADA FOR PrEP

- **Take 1 tablet once a day, every day,** not just when you think you have been exposed to HIV-1.
- Do not miss any doses. Missing doses may increase your risk of getting HIV-1 infection.
- Use TRUVADA for PrEP together with condoms and safer sex practices.
- Get tested for HIV-1 at least every 3 months. You must stay HIV-negative to keep taking TRUVADA for PrEP.

## IMPORTANT FACTS

This is only a brief summary of important information about taking TRUVADA for PrEP™ (pre-exposure prophylaxis) to help reduce the risk of getting HIV-1 infection. This does not replace talking to your healthcare provider about your medicine.

## POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF TRUVADA FOR PrEP

### TRUVADA can cause serious side effects, including:

- Those in the “Most Important Information About TRUVADA for PrEP” section.
- New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.
- Too much lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis), which is a serious but rare medical emergency that can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get these symptoms: weakness or being more tired than usual, unusual muscle pain, being short of breath or fast breathing, stomach pain with nausea and vomiting, cold or blue hands and feet, feel dizzy or lightheaded, or a fast or abnormal heartbeat.
- Severe liver problems, which in rare cases can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get these symptoms: skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow, dark “tea-colored” urine, light-colored stools, loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, or stomach-area pain.
- Bone problems.

**Common side effects** in people taking TRUVADA for PrEP include stomach-area (abdomen) pain, headache, and decreased weight.

These are not all the possible side effects of TRUVADA. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any new symptoms while taking TRUVADA for PrEP.

**Your healthcare provider will need to do tests to monitor your health before and during treatment with TRUVADA for PrEP.**

## BEFORE TAKING TRUVADA FOR PrEP

### Tell your healthcare provider if you:

- Have or have had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis.
- Have any other medical conditions.
- Are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.
- Are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. If you become HIV-positive, HIV can pass to the baby in breast milk.

### Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take:

- Keep a list that includes all prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements, and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist.
- Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist about medicines that should not be taken with TRUVADA for PrEP.

## HOW TO FURTHER REDUCE YOUR RISK

- Know your HIV status and the HIV status of your partners.
- Get tested for other sexually transmitted infections. Other infections make it easier for HIV to infect you.
- Get information and support to help reduce risky sexual behavior, such as having fewer sex partners.
- Do not share needles or personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them.

## GET MORE INFORMATION

- This is only a brief summary of important information about TRUVADA for PrEP. Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist to learn more, including how to prevent HIV infection.
- Go to [start.truvada.com](http://start.truvada.com) or call 1-800-GILEAD-5
- If you need help paying for your medicine, visit [start.truvada.com](http://start.truvada.com) for program information.



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Version date: April 2017

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## THEATER REVIEW

**A Dickens Carol**

Playwright: Ned Crowley

At: Oak Park Festival Theatre at the

Madison Street Theatre,

1010 Madison St., Oak Park

Tickets: \$30

Runs through: Dec. 24

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

"Dickens was dead, to begin with," proclaims the conductor employed by London's South Eastern Railway—and yes, you heard that correctly.

It's said that drowning victims see their lives flash before their eyes, so when, at 9:39 p.m. on Christmas Eve in 1842, a faulty bridge-crossing signal sends the train plummeting into the icy depths of the Kent River and pinning Charles Dickens beneath a steel grate, his concussion triggers a series of disturbing visions. At least it does in Ned Crowley's re-imagining of the famous



**Kevin  
Theis in  
A Dickens  
Carol.**

Photo by  
Cole  
Simon

story that our celebrated passenger is not yet aware that he will write.

The Dickens we meet, you see, has been chafing under the demands of his readers and publishers to write more cozies like *Pickwick Papers*. As a result, the author who once championed social reforms to ease the plight of the poor has withdrawn, Scrooge-like, into his work, to the exclusion of his wife and family. Having banished his

fellow travelers from his first-class compartment, our acerbic wordsmith now finds himself facing an ignoble end, but for the intervention of his early muse, William Shakespeare, and the guidance of three spirits who confront him with the personal experiences making him the man he is today—a tour that encompasses such Victorian horrors as child-labor, debtors prisons, Bedlam, and infants afflicted with crippling diseases.

Even a "classic" fable, once its copyright expires, becomes fair game for literary embellishment. What distinguishes Crowley's narrative from the usual makeovers promulgated by Caroler-wannabes is the scholarly acumen reflected in its composition—industry forging a parallel universe described in language conflating that of the familiar tale with the events providing the inspiration therefor. For example, Dickens is fond of saying "Poppycock!" but upon hearing someone utter "Humbug," declares that he will adopt it for the misanthropic protagonist of his upcoming novella.

There are abundant chuckles to be mined from Crowley's cheeky sleight-of-diction, but while director Kevin Theis makes no attempt to stifle them, neither does he allow them to escalate into guffaws. The cast and technical team assembled for this world premiere production likewise walk the line between parody and homage with never a misstep to manufacture a fantasy brimming with both the comfort of recognition and the joy of discovery.

## THEATER REVIEW

**The Nutcracker:  
A Nutcracker  
Burlesque**

Playwright: Music by Peter Ilyich

Tchaikovsky, choreography by Darling Shear

At: Tom Boi Theatricals at Uptown

Underground, 4707 N. Broadway

Tickets: \$25-\$30

Runs through: Dec. 20

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The Nutcracker has figured in the repertoire of family-friendly Yuletide-season relics ever since

its premiere in 1892. The boldness of Tom Boi Theatricals gender-fluid casting can thus be said to represent a significant break from gilded-age protocol, as does its staging at the speakeasy-district Uptown Underground Cabaret. Oh, and if that isn't enough to alert holiday playgoers not to arrive expecting toe-shoes-and-tutus, the word "burlesque" appended to its title should provide sufficient warning.

As aficionados of the now-closed Gorilla Tango and Inconvenience's Fly Honey series can attest, though, this generic appellation doesn't necessarily herald an evening devoted to tawdry-bawdy-bump-and-grind. Indeed, Burlycue first-timers may be surprised at how closely the scenario of this hour-long vaudeville, choreographed by Darling Shear, adheres to the ballet's

fanciful E.T.A. Hoffman text, even to encompassing classical adagios and Sugar Plum pas seuls, albeit performed in feathery mules sporting four-inch heels.

We meet our young heroine at a Christmas party, where Drosselmeyer, the company magician, presents her with the gift of a wooden nutcracker in the shape of a uniformed hussar. Its recipient is disappointed, initially, but upon nibbling on a fragment of her soldier boy's candy cane, she is transported, Alice-in-Wonderland style, to the fantasy Land of Sweets. After assisting the now life-sized cavalryman in vanquishing an army of rats and freeing the monarch of the realm, the courageous defenders are rewarded with an entertainment featuring an array of dancers, each representing a confection indigenous to the

mythical kingdom.

The fun isn't only in the florid spectacle invoked by the scrumptious costumes—a tea-cup brassiere, for example, or a crinoline petticoat lit from underneath like a lampshade—but also in the jazz arrangements of Tchaikovsky's familiar melodies, gleaned from legends like Duke Ellington, Billy Strayhorn and Glen Miller. Fans are employed by a Snowflake chorus displaying a diversity of physiques, while show-stopping solo turns include Emma Glitterbomb's sleekly acrobatic Vodka striptease, Gaea Lady's Hot Chocolate turn with flaming hoops and Kamrah's supple Coffee belly-dance-with-scimitar. The results make for imagery high-calorie, but curiously innocent—qualities befitting a terpsichorean art form once likened to similarly wholesome cheesecake.

## THEATER REVIEW

**Puff: Believe  
It or Not**

Playwright: Eugene Scribe,

translated by Ranjit Bolt

At: Remy Bumpo Theatre at

The Greenhouse, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave.

Tickets: 773-404-7336;

RemyBumpo.org; \$42.50-\$52.50

Runs through: Jan. 7, 2018

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

You've driven 500 miles to meet someone. When your car breaks down, the very person you've come to meet magically stops to help you.

Your twin brother, MIA in Afghanistan for 10 years, suddenly appears and wants his old job and girlfriend back—but they're yours now.

A date, innocently carved on a tree in childhood, proves you're older than your wicked cousin and, therefore, true heir to the family fortune, so you can marry your dreamboat.

Such improbabilities were the meat-and-potatoes of 19th-century popular theater, endlessly

recycled in clockwork plots revolving around dark secrets, lost or stolen documents, the threat of ruin, coincidence, a long-lost relative, etc. Eventually these conventions grew so hoary that Oscar Wilde satirized them in *The Importance of Being Earnest* (say, the coincidence of best friends Algernon and John being long-lost brothers).

Even so, in masterful hands such mechanical plots could be invested with wit, style and a whiff of social satire, and no one was a greater master than prolific French playwright Eugene Scribe (1791-1861), who authored or co-authored 400 works for theater, opera and ballet. He didn't invent the conventions—Shakespeare used them 200 years earlier and they weren't new then—but he perfected them as no one before or since, and he gave the form its name: the well-made play (*piece bien faite*).

This production of *Puff: Believe It Or Not* is a rare chance to see a Scribe play, perhaps one of his wittiest. As directed by Nick Sandys, the rapid plot twists and turns both hold water and also amuse. It's a handsome production, too, especially Rachel Lambert's rich (even gaudy) costumes. Admittedly, the characters are shallow so that any psychological truth is coinci-

dental—emotions are as mechanical as the plot—but that doesn't prevent *Puff* from being fun.

It takes place in mid-19th century Paris and concerns the stock market, authorship, plagiarism, public reputation, social standing and money. It ends with the lovers united, having overcome barriers of selfish financial interest, false pride, blatant self-promotion and that outmoded commodity called honor. The title refers to publicity—puffery—based on exaggerations, half-truths and outright lies which dominated French society then as it dominates our own society today. The play's wise, unflappable father figure (David Darlow) explains such lies "are for the greater good of society and the capitalist system," creating "a market in falsehood which no one believes and everyone uses to his own advantage." Sounds pretty modern, eh?

Besides Darlow, the fine ensemble cast features Christopher Sheard as a self-serving Count, Kelsey Brennan as his female equal and Netta Walker and Joshua Moaney as the handsome lovers among others.

*Puff* is a rare opportunity and a good show.

## CRITICS' PICKS

**The Book of Will**, Northlight Theatre, Skokie, through Dec. 17. Playwright Lauren Gunderson has fun dramatizing the difficulties along the way to get book published in this solid Midwest premiere overseen by director Jessica Thebus. SCM

**I Saw My Neighbor on the Train and I Didn't Even Smile**, Redtwist Theatre, through Dec. 18. Absent external circumstances of tragic proportions, the family depicted in Suzanne Heathcote's play have only themselves to blame for their pain—and each other to rely on for their salvation as well. MSB

**Marie Christine**, BoHo at Theater Wit through Dec. 10. The tragedy of Medea, retold as the tale of a beautiful Creole voodoo adept, who loves well but not wisely, in Michael John LaChiusa's musically complex, rich jazz opera. High musical values, handsome leads and powerful voices make this one to see. JA

**Wedding Band: A Love/Hate Story in Black and White**, The Artistic Home, through Dec. 17. Over half a century ago, African-American playwright Alice Childress protested laws forbidding interracial lovers to marry, injustice portrayed with undiluted conviction in 2017 by the Artistic Home ensemble. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

## THEATER REVIEW

**Altered Boy**

Written and Starring: Garrett Allain

Directed by: Jeff Bouthiette

Music Direction: Robbie Ellis

At: The Buena at Pride Arts Center, 4147 N. Broadway

Tickets: PrideFilmsandPlays.com: \$25

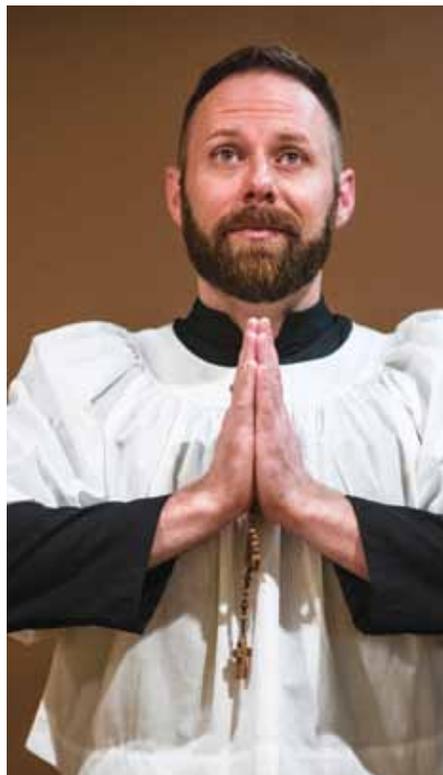
Runs through: Dec. 30

BY ERIC KARAS

Garrett Allain stars in his autobiographical one-man show *Altered Boy*, at the Pride Arts Center. The show dodges and weaves through his coming of age as a gay man in Louisiana and the Catholic Church.

Garrett has a strong sense of the things that made him who is today. He explores the racist, sexist and anti-LGBT messages he received along with the pro wrestlers that he lusted after to his eventual coming out. He also has no problem making fun of his ego as an actor and performer, which seems incredibly honest.

To keep things interesting in a one-man show—not always an easy feat—Garrett is all over the stage and even embodies several characters, from a cheesy Christian New Age evangelist to a female receptionist at a religious switchboard. He also does some subtle acting and body movements to



**Altered Boy's Garrett Allain.**  
Photo by Paul Goyette

## SPOTLIGHT

Singer/songwriter Larry Todd Cousineau returns to perform **Songs from My Holiday Closet**. The musical revue features Cousineau's funny and touching "HoliGay" songs, performed by the author and other guests. *Songs from My Holiday Closet* plays 8:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 12, at Uptown Underground, 4707 N. Broadway. Tickets are \$20 and \$25; visit [UptownUnderground.net](http://UptownUnderground.net).



Caption: Larry Todd Cousineau in last year's edition of *Songs from my Holiday Closet* at Uptown Underground in Chicago. Photo by Rick Aiello

separate three different characters in a thrupple relationship. He literally jumps into the audience several times.

There are clever ways of presenting this information from songs to characters to confession. The lack of a linear storytelling is a strength of this piece but at the end it's part of the weakness. The very last segment, about his current sexual attraction, is hilarious and in your face; however, the show ends feeling unfocused. It needs a stronger button on the end of the piece to pull it together. The audience is confused about the show being over.

The other issue is the title of this show. It suggests this show will be about being a gay Catholic and/or might even be about sexual abuse. It is partially about the former and not about the latter at all. Being a Catholic is a big part of his story but it seems the show is really about growing up in the South (with its specific culture) and coming out of the closet. Selling it as something about being Catholic is probably limiting the audience, and is misleading.

However, overall, there are laughs, things to relate to, some clever storytelling and an enthusiastic actor/comedian.

## BOOK REVIEW

**Transitioning Together**

By Wenn and Beatrice Lawson

\$19.95; Jessica Kingsley

Publishers; 214 pages

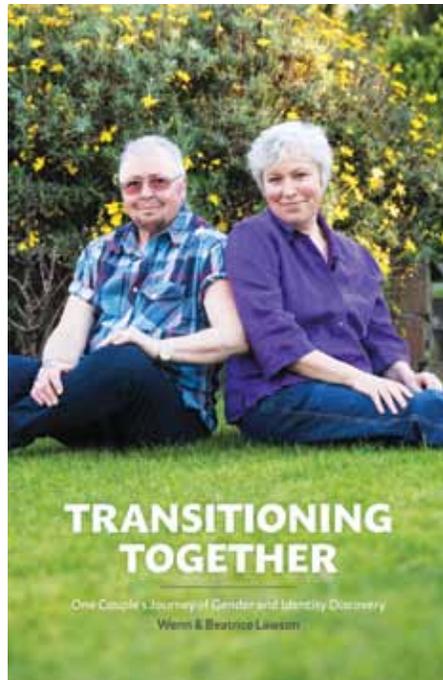
REVIEW BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Your hair is grayer than it was back then.

You've both packed on pounds here and there, too. A few wrinkles surround your smiles, but that's okay—you're not fresh-faced kids anymore. You've aged, you've softened and, in the new book *Transitioning Together*, by Wenn and Beatrice Lawson, you've changed quite a bit.

Long before they met, Wendy and Beatrice had a lot in common: both came from families of similar sizes. Both had fathers that "didn't have a head for figures" and mothers who ran the family businesses. Wendy and Beatrice are both on the autism spectrum. The main difference: Wendy was a married woman.

They met one afternoon when Wendy, her husband, and their four children were living in the home of a "well-to-do" family that had just hired an au pair. The shy young woman didn't speak English and Wendy didn't speak Swiss German, but when Wendy was asked to help the girl to settle in, Beatrice proved to be a quick study. She easily learned a new language and she and Wendy forged a close friendship.



Both seemed only a little surprised when that friendship turned into love.

Wendy, who'd had health issues most of her life, never considered falling in love with another woman, but it felt right. Beatrice had an inkling that she was a lesbian but she shunned the word, afraid that it would "be an embarrassment" to her family. Even so, she settled into a relationship

which was tender, and fragile from the start.

Wendy and her family moved from England to Australia as her abusive marriage was crumbling. Beatrice was unable to make the move with her beloved, due to Australia's immigration laws. They ultimately figured out a way to be together physically; once Wendy's divorce was final, they knew they'd be together legally as well.

But even after their wedding, Wendy wasn't happy. Never comfortable in her body, she felt sure that something was missing, so she sought her "tribe" before understanding that she needed to transition to become the man he'd always known he was.

And that was something Beatrice wasn't sure she could handle...

From its very beginning, *Transitioning Together* is a tough read.

There's a lot of preliminary to wade through to get to the start of the actual story here, and then there's a lot of confusing set-up that identifies authors Lawson by their relative ages, rather than by name. While it's helpful, later, to have a change in font to delineate who is weighing in, you might continue to be baffled by the semi-linear nature of what is mostly Mr. Lawson's version.

Yes, tenacious readers who can bear with this dual memoir will get a double-edged peek at the emotional process of transitioning for both partners, through the added, unique perspectives of autism and age.

That's worth the patience—if you have it.

Indeed, this book could be more for professionals than for anyone else; general audiences may

enjoy *Transitioning Together*, but only by a hair.

Want more? Look for *Transition: The Story of How I Became a Man*, by Chaz Bono; or *Both Sides Now: One Man's Journey Through Womanhood*, by Dhillion Khosla.

**Artemisia accepting submissions for next year**

Artemisia is now accepting submissions from playwrights who are represented by an agent or reside in the greater Chicago area to be considered for Fall Festival 2018.

The annual fall festival features six female-driven plays presented as staged readings from which the audience chooses Artemisia's world-premiere productions. There is no fee to submit and complete submission guidelines can be found at [ArtemisiaTheatre.org](http://ArtemisiaTheatre.org). The deadline to receive submissions is Dec. 15, 2017.

Interested persons can submit a professional resume, a one-page synopsis of the play, the first 10 pages of the play and the play's production history as a PDF attachment to [playsubs@artemisiatheatre.org](mailto:playsubs@artemisiatheatre.org) with "Fall Festival Submission" in the subject line. Please allow 12 weeks for the submission to be processed.

# Families of Chicago banquet Dec. 10

Families of Chicago (FOC) will host its second annual FOC Banquet Sunday, Dec. 10, an invitation-only affair at Ida Noyes Hall at the University of Chicago, 1212 E. 59th St.

FOC is an organization whose mission statement is “to provide support, guidance and development for members of FOC as they navigate and persevere through the obstacles of life that come along with being a member of the young LGBTQ community of Chicago.”

Like gay houses, gay/queer families comprise primarily Black LGBTQ young adults from across the city. Each family consists of individuals with diverse identities including: gay men, trans men, trans women, femme and butch. Most families have an Overall Mother or Overall Father, responsible for providing a range of supports (e.g., emotional, instrumental, informational) for their families.

More than 100 guests are expected to fill the Cloister Club in Ida Noyes at 5-9 p.m. for a night meant to celebrate the city's young Black LGBTQ community. This year's theme, “Dance Fusion,” will feature a dance competition between 10 of Chicago's Black queer families. Also, the event will feature a red carpet, and an array of special performances and appearances by well-known performers within the Chicago LGBTQ scene, including Bionca Black (Carter Family), with additional performances and surprise special guests

still to be announced. Halle Kardashian (founder of the Kardashian family) will be interviewing guests and performers on the red carpet.

This year's banquet has been planned and organized by the FOC Banquet Planning Committee. The committee includes Overall Mothers and Fathers, a handful of University of Chicago staff and students, and an FOC intern, who has played a critical role in helping to coordinate and organize the event. As a growing organization affiliated with the University of Chicago, FOC has been able to provide a one-year internship through the University of Chicago Medicine for one individual involved in the family scene.

Last year's inaugural “Save Our Scene” FOC banquet, a semi-formal affair, emphasized a return to its original values—that being to provide a safe space of community, support, and fellowship for diverse young LGBTQ people in Chicago, especially young Black queer people. In continuing to emphasize these goals, this year's event will again be informed by the same values, but will primarily serve as a venue for showcasing the continued contributions that young Black LGBTQ and queer folks make to the city of Chicago's rich legacy of ballroom culture, queer families and queer performance—reinforcing the importance of developing kinship, community, and family, for young Black queer folks throughout the city.

## ‘How Hansel Became Gretel’ Dec. 7-10

On Dec. 7-10, tap dancers of jorsTAP Chicago will take the stage at Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art, 756 N. Milwaukee Ave., to premiere “Hansel and Gretel: How Hansel Became Hansel.”

“jorsTAP Chicago is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that was established in 2012 to disrupt the preconceived notions of tap dance,” according to a press release.

“Art helps people open their minds to possibility beyond what they have experienced in their lives,” Artistic Director Kendra Jorstad said. “The combination of an old-school folk tale with transgender identity issues showcases this story in an accessible, enjoyable way to families.”

Tickets are \$20 (free for those 18 and younger on Saturday and Sunday); visit [Art.org/jors-tap-chicago-performance-hansel-and-gretel-how-hansel-became-hansel](http://Art.org/jors-tap-chicago-performance-hansel-and-gretel-how-hansel-became-hansel). For more about the company, see [jorsTAPchicago.org](http://jorsTAPchicago.org).

## ‘WeFest’ at Pride Arts Center on Dec. 11

WeFest (formerly SheFest and LezFest)—Pride Arts Center's semi-annual celebration of Chicago's queer female, non-binary and trans artists that is being presented in partnership with the



**Tamale Sepp.**

Photo courtesy of WeFest

Center on Halsted—will take place Monday, Dec. 11, at the Pride Arts Center, 4139 N. Broadway.

It will begin with a music salon at 6:30-7:30 p.m., continue with a variety show at 7:30-9 p.m. (ASL interpreted) and conclude with a dance party with live music beginning at 9 p.m.

Performers to be featured will include Terri Hudson, Ada Cheng, Emma Fondell, Delia Kropp, Tamale Sepp, Lihi Epstein, Niki Gee, The Chanels, Rebecca Beuchel, North Rory Homeward, Lyla Whedbee, Cassidy Hill, Supernova, Khloe Janel and Cruel Valentine.

Admission is \$10-\$15; visit [bit.ly/2yiCnSr](http://bit.ly/2yiCnSr).

The Nutcracker

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Kevin Shannon (left)  
and Craig D. Black Jr.  
Photo by Adam Opris



DANCE

## Love and marriage: Hubbard Street couple dance together

BY JOANNA FURNANS

The story goes that Glenn Edgerton, the artistic director of Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, and Tom Mossbrucker, the artistic director of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, have been best friends since they danced together at the Joffrey Ballet. So when the Aspen Santa Fe Ballet toured to Chicago in 2013, Edgerton threw a party for the company and invited the Hubbard Street dancers to attend. This was the “meet cute” of Kevin Shannon, a dancer with Hubbard Street, and Craig D. Black Jr., a dancer with Aspen Santa Fe Ballet at the time.

At first, Shannon was weary of entering a long-distance relationship so it took some persistence on Black's part and the help of their mutual friends to finally get the two dating.

Fast-forward four years and the couple is celebrating their first wedding anniversary. And to make a sweet story even sweeter, this fall Black permanently relocated to Chicago to join his husband as a company member with Hubbard Street Dance.

The two spoke with the Windy City Times about living together, dancing together and this weekend's Hubbard Street performances dedicated to the choreography of Crystal Pite.

**Windy City Times: So, how's it been working in the same company together?**

Kevin Shannon: You know, I've been in the company for 11 seasons and Craig just joined in September. We were both a little nervous about it but it's been great. ... I think that's been a surprise for me because I thought it might be more difficult than that. I thought there might be

some tension working together but it hasn't been that way at all. We've never been a competitive couple. And the two of us are really very different dancers. It's been really nice.

Craig D. Black Jr.: Yeah, it's a little different from being in a classical company with rankings where your partner could be a principal dancer and you could be a core member. We don't have to deal with that sort of thing. Everybody's dancing together all the time. And we all have different parts and we are all involved in the process.

KS: For me, it's been great to have a support system. If I'm having a bad day, he understands why. If something went wrong at work or we're exhausted, we get to just go home and be together and have an understanding of that.

CDBJ: To have each other there, to cook dinner together or go out to eat and just leave it for the day if that's what's needed. ... The support system of actually being with each other has been a nice change.

**WCT: Are you dancing in the same pieces for this upcoming performance?**

KS: Right now, we are working on three pieces for the Crystal Pite program and in one of them, a duet called A Picture of You Falling, Craig is dancing and I'm actually the cover for that duet. I'm understudying the “new guy.” [Laughs]. It's fun to see dancers come in and take on new work. And to have it be your husband, to watch somebody you love grow into a work and to watch the process. ... It's pretty amazing.

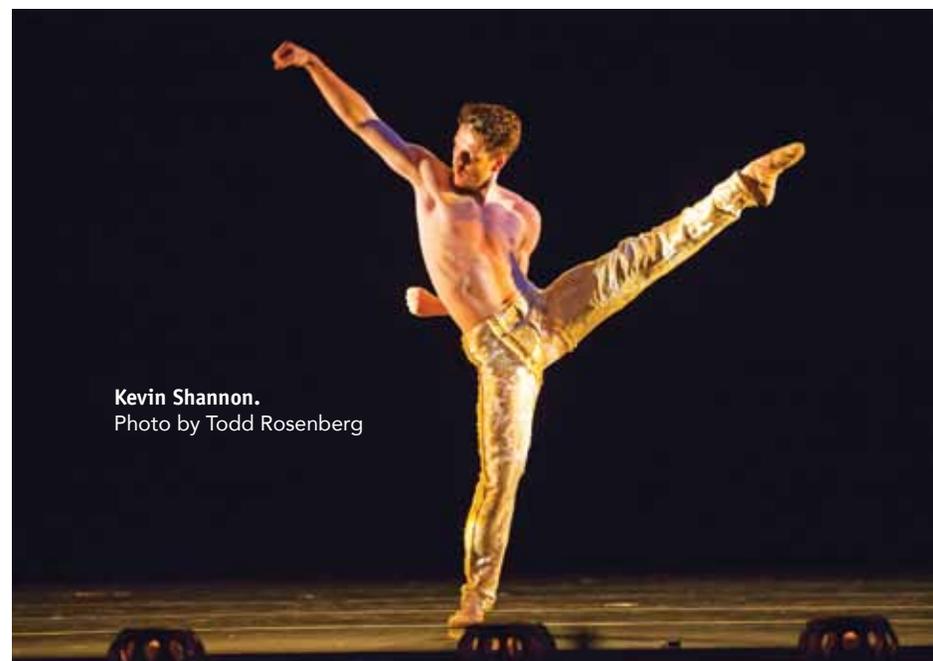
CDBJ: The other great thing is that when we do share parts, we are both very different dancers from each other. It's cool to see how we interpret the same role differently.

**WCT: How would you describe your differences?**

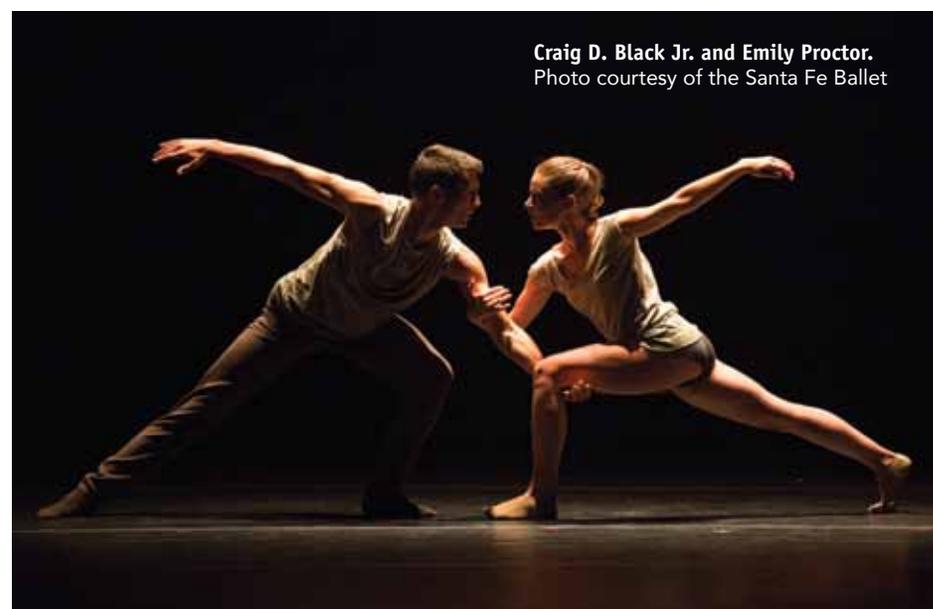
KS: Craig is much longer than I am so I would say that his movement is, um, more fluid in some ways.

CDBJ: Yeah, I'm more fluid and you know my former company was a little more classical so I'm a bit more upright.

Turn to page 38



Kevin Shannon.  
Photo by Todd Rosenberg



Craig D. Black Jr. and Emily Proctor.  
Photo courtesy of the Santa Fe Ballet

## BOOKS

# John-Manuel Andriote a force for resilience in 'Stonewall Strong'

BY SARAH TOCE

Award-winning Washington, D.C., health journalist/author John-Manuel Andriote returned to his roots in southeastern Connecticut 10 years ago and began recalculating his life, purpose, relationships and place in the world, as one tends to do from time to time—except Andriote had a unique path to maneuver.

"I have bad news on the HIV test," the doctor told Andriote in 2006.

And just like that, the 25-year veteran reporter on HIV/AIDS was suddenly the subject of his own Washington Post article.

*Stonewall Strong: Gay Men's Heroic Fight for Resilience, Good Health, and a Strong Community* holds close a theme in resiliency, as evidenced throughout the book's 426 pages.

"The catalyst for this book was trying to figure out what it is that makes a person resilient," Andriote said. "At what point did I become resilient? That the question that motivated me, as well as my HIV diagnosis that's going on 12 years this fall."

Andriote began to reflect on the circumstances that ultimately got him infected with HIV, but more importantly, the reasons behind why he felt resilient enough to come out on top and kick the diagnosis and live a healthy, happy, fulfilling life.

"Very honestly, I feel exposed," Andriote shared. "I'm pretty private about a lot of things, especially my sex life. So, to put out there in the open my journal entries about past relationships with men that never seemed to work out and teasing out the patterns that never really worked is scary for me. But what did I learn along the way? I think it's important to make clear that people learn to be resilient. You aren't just born resilient."

Andriote said the key to embodying resilience is "the story that we tell ourselves. It really comes down to the meaning that we attach to our suffering and other experiences."

The word "suffering" has been associated with drama in the gay community, so Andriote was even hesitant to verbalize it, but if the shoe fits.

"If we tell ourselves that 'my alcoholic father was abusive because I was a bad person and not a loveable person,' that results in feeling a certain way about ourselves," he said. "But if we tell ourselves, 'Geez, I really deserve better than that,' that's a more resilient position."

In addition to his own stories of love, loss, success/failure, and heartbreak, Andriote takes the opportunity in "Stonewall Strong" to meticulously weave together hand-selected stories from about 100 men and women. The narrative is simultaneously inviting, inclusive, reflective, and inspiring.

"I've been thinking about the 'meaning' of



John-Manuel Andriote.  
PR photo

HIV for 30 years—since I began writing about it," Andriote shared. "It's a reason why I never hesitated to write about it or do what I could because I never thought that HIV meant that someone was a 'bad person,' 'immoral' or 'deserved it.' It never meant that to me. It meant that we lived in a dangerous physical world where there are dangers at every turn. One of them is a deadly microbe."

This multifaceted book invites readers on a journey through Andriote's life—starting from scratch in a lower middle-class abusive household to the trials and triumphs of learning to respect oneself in relationships—sexual and otherwise. While the main focus is Andriote's response to the AIDS epidemic before and after diagnosis, it's certainly not the only reason to pick up the book.

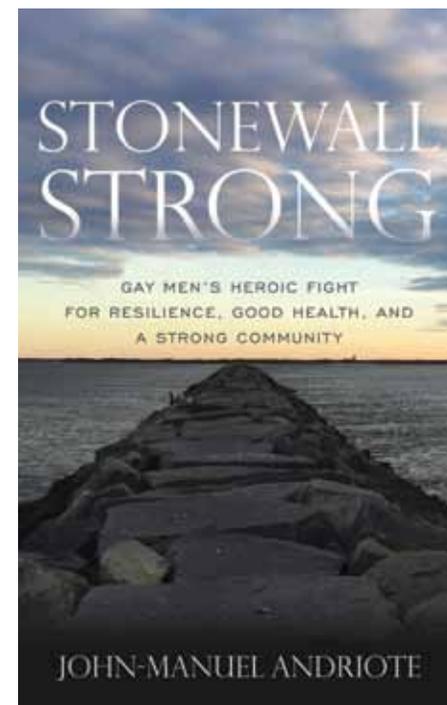
"From the beginning of my diagnosis, I was determined that I wasn't going to let HIV own or define me," he said. "I don't want to be reduced to this one thing about me. Especially something that is so highly stigmatized. I rejected the stigma from the beginning, even before my own diagnosis."

Andriote added, "I'm not a person with HIV, I'm John. That's who I still want to be. John is many things: he's a gay man with Greek ancestry; he's from Norwich. We all have many identities. Now, 12 years later, I feel this even more strongly."

There's a local connection here, too. Andriote obtained his master's degree in 1985 at Northwestern University (and he lived in Chicago's Boystown area because Evanston felt "too suburban" to him). His first published piece on the AIDS epidemic was in *Windy City Times* in the spring of 1986. The title "Coping with Grief in the Time of AIDS" was his first-ever article on the subject that would ultimately forecast his career—and his life. Later, in 1986, he moved to Washington, D.C., and repurposed the article for a cover story for *Washington City Paper* called "The Survivors."

Andriote is, without a doubt, surviving with purpose, presence and punctuality in his mission to share the art of resiliency with the world through his story—one deeply personal sentiment line at a time.

**Stonewall Strong: Gay Men's Heroic Fight for Resilience, Good Health, and a Strong Community** is available via [StonewallStrong.com](http://StonewallStrong.com).



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## MOVIES

# In good 'Shape': Richard Jenkins on his latest film

BY LAWRENCE FERBER

Director Guillermo del Toro's *The Shape of Water* is a loving, emotional, witty and sometimes gory homage to old Hollywood creature features and romance with its 1962-set tale of a mute cleaning woman, Elisa (Sally Hawkins), who falls in love with a Creature from the Black Lagoon-like monster (played by Doug Jones, *Star Trek: Discovery's* alien Science Officer Saru).

One of the film's pivotal supporting characters is Giles, Elisa's closeted gay friend and neighbor, played by veteran character actor Richard Jenkins—who, along with her laboratory co-worker/friend Zelda (Octavia Spencer), helps Elisa smuggle out and hide the creature so it can't be killed by sociopathic suburban government lackey Richard Strickland (Michael Shannon at his most villainous).

Although Giles is the first explicitly LGBT character in one of del Toro's films, Jenkins, 70, perhaps best known as Six Feet Under's Nathaniel Fisher, played Josh Brolin's uptight boyfriend—and partner in law enforcement—in 1996's hysterical *Flirting With Disaster*. Jenkins' prolific career also saw him portray real-life AIDS specialist Dr. Marcus Conant in 1993's *And the Band Played On*, while other highlights include 2014 miniseries *Olive Kitteridge* and 2003's gay coming-of-age drama *The Mudge Boy*. By phone, the good-humored and humble Jenkins talked being gay in the 1960s, Giles and onscreen male romance

**Windy City Times: Let's get something out of the way. In *The Shape of Water*, Giles wears a toupee and is ashamed of being bald, and in del Toro's FX series *The Strain* they made Corey Stoll wear a toupee. Does del Toro hate on bald people or what?**

Richard Jenkins: He hates them. He told me that immediately. Actually, he made me wear a hat on the set. *[Laughs]* "I don't like to see that, put the hat on whenever you're talking to me."

**WCT: I'm hoping del Toro's next film will have a bald and proud character. Did you keep Giles' toupee?**

RJ: No. It looks like a bird's nest on my head. It was intentionally not a good toupee!

**WCT: What do you feel Giles' being gay brings or adds to the film?**

RJ: It's 1962. Elisa is mute, Giles is gay, Zelda is African-American; these are invisible people in 1962. This whole film, if you want to go back to that time, it was not so great unless you were a straight white man, and that's what Guillermo was saying. In fact, Michael Shannon's character doesn't suspect these people of taking this creature because he says when questioning them, "Why am I talking to shit-cleaners?" These were

all invisible people.

**WCT: Would Shannon's character get a job in the Trump administration today?**

*[Laughs]* Secretary of Defense.

**WCT: During one key scene, Giles flirts with a handsome young waiter in a diner. Was it a tough or fun scene to shoot?**

RJ: It's one of the first things I shot, maybe on the second day I was there. It was 1962. It was a tough time to be gay. Yeah, it was a lot of fun [because] you don't want to be found out, how far can you go, but to give the guy a hint you were interested. Actually, [most interesting part was] to pretend like I wanted to eat those pies. It was like eating your foot.

**WCT: I understand that a gay man you knew, Howard London, was one of the people you thought of when playing Giles. Tell me about him.**

RJ: He was an actor, and always concerned with other people. He wasn't afraid to be gay at a time it was a little scarier, and I always think of his generosity and thoughtfulness and fact he was an amazing beautiful man. He never forgot our children's birthdays or important days.

He was a selfless man who lived alone. He had lots of friends, and nurtured them. That's how I felt my relationship was with Sally in the beginning. And he loved movie musicals. When he died [in the early 2000s], his ex-partner called us up and said Howard wanted you to have his record collection, which was from the 1930s-60s. A lot of showtunes and movie musicals. My wife and I went out and bought a turntable and we play Howard's music every night. Incredible gifts.

**WCT: Did you and Josh Brolin stay in touch after *Flirting With Disaster*?**

RJ: Yes. He'll give a call sometimes, or I'll call him. Last time I ran into Josh was at the Berlin Film Festival two years ago. He was there with a Coen brothers movie. I adore Josh, a wonderful guy.

**WCT: Do you think your characters would still be together? I'd love a follow-up.**

RJ: Yeah, I do. I just don't know. ... Did Josh's character become less like he was, or did mine become less like I was? So less conflict between them!

**WCT: How was shooting with Doug Jones on "Water?" He's been in a lot of del Toro's films and always under a ton of special-effects makeup.**

RJ: I was brutal with him. I'd say, "Doug, how hard can it be to sit in that suit for 12 hours?" He's basically entombed, buried alive in that thing—holes just for his eyes and his mouth, and sometimes they put the eye things in when they shoot, so he can't even see. He has such a good



Richard Jenkins and Sally Hawkins in *The Shape of Water*.

Photo by Kerry Hayes

spirit about him. He keeps going. I asked him, how long does it take in makeup? He said it only takes three hours. Only?? Are you kidding me?

**WCT: Have you been offered a job where you'd have to wear a lot of prosthetics?**

RJ: I have turned them down. The question is "How long in the makeup chair? Oh, about three hours." I don't think I'm available.

**WCT: Is there any big movie franchise you'd love to be a part of?**

RJ: No. I don't think that way. I learned my lesson when I wanted so badly to be in the Coen brothers' movie *Fargo*. I read for it three times—the William H. Macy part. I was really upset I didn't get the part, and then I saw Macy in it and went, "Oh, OK, I get it now." I wouldn't have cast me, either. You learn fast that there's always a reason you're not in one thing or the other.

**WCT: That said, let's play casting agent and you get to choose who plays your man crush in a gay love story. Who would it be?**

RJ: I have no idea. You cast it and I'll be in it.

**WCT: Armie Hammer? He's playing gay a lot lately.**

RJ: Armie Hammer wouldn't go for me! He can do better than that!

**WCT: Patrick Stewart?**

RJ: Him, too! Isn't he, like, a sir? And me?

**WCT: Gary Oldman?**

RJ: They want somebody younger. Not me! It wouldn't work. I can see problems already that you don't see!

**WCT: OK—so they're out of your league. We'll have to go back to Josh Brolin then.**

RJ: Yeah.

**The Shape of Water is slated to show at the Landmark Century Centre Cinema, 2828 N. Clark St., starting Thursday, Dec. 7.**

## 'Vibrators and Vino' event Dec. 12

"Vibrators and Vino: A Feminist Evening with Vibrator Nation" will take place Tuesday, Dec. 12, 7 p.m., at Early to Bed, 5044 N. Clark St.

The reading/discussion will center around Lynn Comella's book *Vibrator Nation: How Feminist Sex-Toy Stores Changed the Business of Pleasure*. In *Vibrator Nation*, Comella tells the history of how sex-toy stores raised sexual consciousness, redefined the adult industry and changed women's lives.

Visit <http://early2bed.com/>.

## Magic Cabaret closing Dec. 27

After a decade-long run, The Magic Cabaret is ending.

David Parr and Joe Diamond are wrapping up the run with four more performances at Greenhouse Theater Center on Nov. 29 as well as Dec. 13, 20 and 27.

Tickets are \$25; visit [MagicCabaret.com](http://MagicCabaret.com) or call 773-404-7336.

## MoCP exhibit looks at gender, sexuality

The Museum of Contemporary Photography (MoCP), 600 S. Michigan Ave., will host the exhibition "Disruptive Perspectives" through Friday, Dec. 22.

"Perspectives," according to the museum's website, "explores gender, sexuality, and identity. The artists included use photography to articulate an expansive range of identities that cannot be sufficiently characterized using simplistic binaries.

"Rather than rendering identity as fixed, the works on view consider gender and sexuality as negotiations that are shaped by the human psyche, the passage of time, and the complex

relationship between self and other."

Artists include Zackary Drucker and Rhys Ernst, Alexandre Haefeli, Laurence Rasti, Jess T. Dugan, Leonard Suryajaya, Lorenzo Triburgo and Barbara Davatz.

See MoCP.org.

## 'We Three Shows' Dec. 11 at Thalia Hall

Members of the national touring companies of Wicked and Beautiful: The Carole King Musical as well as Hamilton Chicago company members will host "We Three Shows: A Broadway Holiday Benefit," a cabaret concert benefitting Chicago House and Social Service Agency and Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS.

The event will take place Monday, Dec. 11, at 7:30 p.m. at Thalia Hall, 1807 S. Allport St.

General-admission tickets are available for \$65 (main floor) and \$85 (balcony seating). VIP tickets are available for \$150 and include a pre-show reception with the performers at 6 p.m., reserved premier seating, catered light hors d'oeuvres and complimentary drinks.

See ThaliaHallChicago.com.

## Deeply Rooted's 'Deeply Free' in Dec.

As the culminating event of its 20th-anniversary season, Deeply Rooted Dance Theater (DRDT) will present "Deeply Free," opening with a program featuring the premiere of South Afri-

can choreographer Fana Tshabalala's INDUMBA and continuing with performances showcasing works that span the company's history.

Performances are Dec. 8-10 at the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts on the University of Chicago campus, 915 E. 60th St.

DRDT embarks upon its next 20 years when it presents "Looking to the Future" on Feb. 24, 2018, at the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts in Skokie. The program features the premiere of Alice by Nicole Clarke-Springer and other works from the repertoire. In the spring, the company tours to Bulgaria followed by performances in New York City.

Tickets for the Dec. 8-10 programs are \$45-\$65 each; call 312-795-9777 or email tickets@deeplyrooteddancetheater.org.

## Baryshnikov in Chicago Feb. 2-4

Cherry Orchard Festival will present the Chicago premiere of the one-man play Brodsky/Baryshnikov—conceived and directed by Alvis Hermanis, and starring Mikhail Baryshnikov—Feb. 2-4, 2018, at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph Dr.

This limited Chicago engagement caps the three-city North American tour of the production that The New Riga Theatre and Baryshnikov Productions co-produced. Performed in Russian and subtitled in English, Baryshnikov recites a selection of his longtime friend and Nobel Laureate Joseph Brodsky's works.

Tickets are \$45-\$150 each; for tickets or more information, visit [HarristheaterChicago.org](http://HarristheaterChicago.org) or call 312-334-7777.



Mikhail Baryshnikov.  
Jennifer Girard Photography

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Lois Smith.  
PR photo



NUNN ON ONE: MOVIES

## Lois Smith: In her 'Prime'

BY JERRY NUNN

The legendary actress Lois Smith continues to have a career that just keeps getting better.

She trained at the legendary Actors Studio, with Lee Strasberg, and she made her Broadway debut at age 22 in the play *Time Out for Ginger*. She returned to Broadway with *The Iceman Cometh*; then, *The Grapes of Wrath* earned her a Tony Award for Best Featured Actress in a Play.

In 1995, she worked on a revival of *Buried Child* at Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre Company and then earned a Tony nomination for it following a Broadway run. More awards came after the off-Broadway production of *The Trip to Bountiful* and she was inducted into the American Theatre Hall of Fame in 2007. In Chicago, she has been

an ensemble member of the Steppenwolf since 1993.

Television credits include *Desperate Housewives*, *Frasier* and *Law & Order*. She was nominated for a Critics' Choice Award for Best Guest Performance on the FX series *The Americans*.

Smith made her film debut with *East of Eden* and won the National Society of Film Critics Award for Best Supporting Actress in *Five Easy Pieces*. Other memorable movies with her include *Fried Green Tomatoes*, *Twister* and *The Comedian*. There is already Oscar buzz about her new film, *Marjorie Prime*.

**Windy City Times:** How was your recent trip to Chicago?

Lois Smith: It was wonderful to have a screening of *Lady Bird* at the Landmark. Some of my

dearest Steppenwolf friends were there. It was so touching and lovely to see them all.

**WCT:** Do you have a favorite memory of the Steppenwolf Theatre Company?

LS: The whole experience of *The Grapes of Wrath*. It went on over three seasons and four different productions. It was an enormously special time.

We started in Chicago, then rehearsed it three different times, building each time. You just don't get to do that very often. It was long term process and we all bonded together. I am still in touch with people from it almost 30 years later.

**WCT:** With the movie *Lady Bird*, there were many Steppenwolf regulars [in it]. Did they reach out to you about the role of the nun?

LS: Yes; they called my agent and asked if I wanted to do it. When I got the script, I didn't know Laurie Metcalf and Tracy Letts were the parents. It was a good surprise.

**WCT:** How did your role in *Marjorie Prime* come to be?

LS: When Jordan Harrison finished the play, she knew me a bit and sent me the play. I loved it the minute I saw it. That was about five years ago. It was first done at the Taper in LA. I was busy with *The Herd* at the Steppenwolf then I did John by Annie Baker at Signature Theatre in New York.

Right after, we did the film in a narrow window to make it in 2015. Right after the filming I did the play again onstage.

**WCT:** How do you feel it translates from the play onto the movie screen?

LS: I think it turned out very well. I think the ocean is a wonderful addition. It no longer takes place in one room. There is an extension of time much more than could be in the play.

The play is tighter. It is a lean script and always has been.

It has not changed much. I can now see the movie for itself and really appreciate it.

**WCT:** In *Marjorie*, you talk about two gay best friends. What was that referring to?

LS: That is a line that Michael Almereyda put in. It is not in the play. It is part of the back and forth between *Marjorie* and *Walter Prime*. It is about what they know and the exchange of information.

**WCT:** You have many gay fans, by the way.

LS: That is lovely!

**WCT:** What would an Oscar mean if you won it for this film?

LS: I have never thought much about it. It probably means better things are offered to you. Sometimes when you get older there are less good parts, but that has not been my experience. I work in theater a lot. As I get older, the roles

seem more interesting and diverse. I already have nothing to complain about, on that score. It is a pretty lucky place to be!

**WCT:** Actresses like Judi Dench and Helen Mirren are doing well these days, so maybe [the theory that older actors have fewer parts] is not as true as it once was.

LS: Absolutely. I think they are better in England about that, though.

**WCT:** How was *The Laramie Project* experience?

LS: I wasn't part of the stage version, but when they put it on film I got to be a part of it on HBO. I loved it and it was so important. That ghostly story was turned into a piece that was so strong. I think it did reach a lot of people.

**WCT:** What advice do you give to actors to have a lengthy career?

LS: From the vantage point I am at now, endurance is a big deal. I have been fortunate in that way, too. I am healthy. I have lived a long life, and kept working—oh: Also, always be on time!

**WCT:** So your appearances on *Grace and Frankie* are completely over?

LS: Well, I did two episodes after they brought my character back in Martin Sheen character's mind. It was part of his story to deal with his mom's death. Once they killed me off, though, I don't think I am coming back.

I had a period on television where many of my characters were killed, so not a lot of returns on those shows.

**WCT:** In *True Blood* you were also killed off, but it was such a standout performance.

LS: It was a terrible death on that one. People really loved that first season.

**WCT:** How was joining Twitter at 87 years old?

LS: It is such a new experience. I have never had any social media at all. I don't think I am very good at it yet.

**WCT:** What plans do you have for 2018?

LS: I am going to do two plays in New York. One is in the spring by a new author, Lily Thorne, at The New Group called *Peace for Mary Frances*.

The other one is at Playwrights Horizons that we rehearse in the summer. It is a new play by Craig Lucas that deals with the deaf. We are learning sign language, and I will be both signing and speaking, so it is not exclusively signing. There are deaf actors involved and interpreters during the performances for everyone to experience it. It is called *I Was Most Alive with You* and is about a deaf, gay, recovering addict. It really is extraordinary.

**Marjorie Prime** is available on YouTube, Amazon Video, Google Play and iTunes.

## Leather Archives has 'Materialkink' exhibit

The Leather Archives & Museum, 6418 N. Greenview Ave., is exhibiting "Materialkink" through Jan. 14, 2018.

Curated by Chicago-based artist José Santiago Pérez, this exhibition features artworks by local, national and global artists "that

expand the boundaries of erotic art through contemporary explorations of the materialities that accompany and structure the lifeworlds of alternative sex," according to a press release.

Artists use rope, nylon, wax, rubber, fabric, furniture and leather regarding art that aims to show the body and its erotic engagement with the substances of kinky sexualities.

Some of the artists include Katie Vota, David Nasca, Betsy Odom, Luis Mejico, Chloe Cooper, Derrick Woods-Morrow and Vincent Tiley.

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



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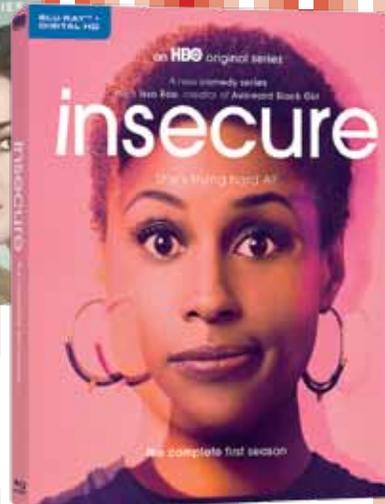
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# WINDY CITY TIMES 2017 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

week two of two

## Heir to the 'Thrones'

There are so many binge-worthy TV shows out there, it's almost ridiculous. However, three shows that are definitely worth your couch time are **Game of Thrones**, **Big Little Lies** and **Insecure** (from HBO Home Entertainment)—and, if you know someone who hasn't started on "Thrones," the holidays are the perfect time to get that person started.



## Straw material

The West is known for many things, and the ice-cream chain **Salt & Straw** (<https://saltandstraw.com>) should be added to gift-givers' lists. There are several intriguing (and, thankfully, delicious) flavors, including Apple Brandy & Pecan Pie and Gingerbread Cookie Dough (my favorite).

## Made in the shades

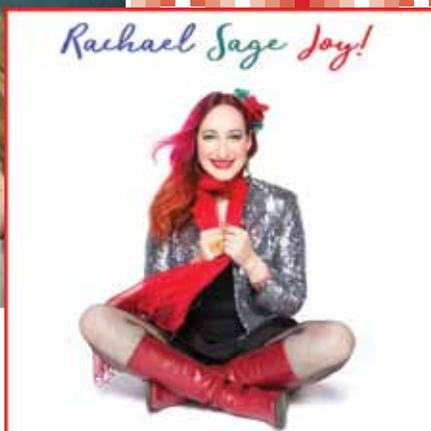
Can you really go wrong with **John Varvatos sunglasses** (JohnVarvatos.com)? The stylish brand introduces two new sun styles this season, Windsor and Stardust, that, respectively, pay homage to Detroit's vintage cars and steel-clad architecture as well as the 1970s British rock scene.



## It's in your DNA

Want to know the truth about your ancestry? Well, take a chance with **23andMe's at-home DNA kit** (23andme.com), which allows you to learn more about their heritage, where they are from or discover family members they never knew—for better or worse. (For those who are skeptical, a recent Today show investigation showed that this kit had 100-percent accuracy rate involving female triplets.)





## Sage of innocence

Two singers are among the many with holiday-themed works out this season. **Rachael Sage** is debuting her first holiday EP, *Joy!* (with five songs like “Joy to the World” and “Tchatchkes & Latkes”), while **Jackie Evancho** has *Someday at Christmas*, in which she collaborates with various stars such as the Italian vocal trio Il Volo while singing such tunes as “O Holy Night” and the title track.

## A saucy attitude

Longtime Chicago restaurant **Italian Village** ([ItalianVillage-Chicago.com](http://ItalianVillage-Chicago.com)) is selling its signature pasta sauces so your favorite cook can appreciate them. Items include marinara, sun-dried tomato and pesto cream sauces, providing at least some of the tools to win over the family—or that date.



## Sound advice

Practically everyone knows that **Dolby** (<https://www.dolby.com>) is associated with sound (witness almost any movie theater)—but people may not know the variety of products the company has to offer. There are the Ultimate Dolby home theater and sound bars, but there are also items such as Xbox One X with Dolby Atmos as well as stocking stuffers such as the movie *Spider-Man: Homecoming* on 4K UHD Blu-ray disc and even Dolby Cinema at AMC Gift Card (so someone can recline while enjoying the 58th film in the *Fast and the Furious* franchise).



## Dare to ‘Dream’

Ever since he won his season of *Project Runway*, Christian Siriano has impressed the world with his dresses and accessories. Well, people can now moon over the book ***Dresses to Dream About*** (<http://store.christiansiriano.com>), in which he guides readers through his creative process.

## Grill-tempered

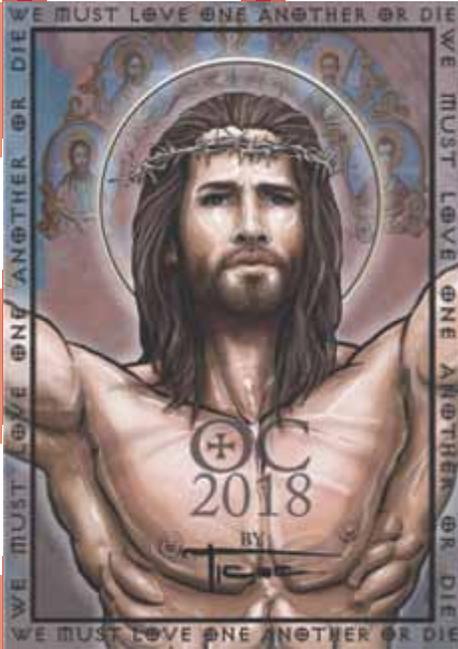
Everyone knows that one person who loves showing his/her/their prowess on the grill. (By the way, I’m not that person.) **Coyote Outdoor Living’s new Electric Grill and The Asado Cooker** ([CoyoteOutdoor.com](http://CoyoteOutdoor.com)) offer innovative ways of grilling that steak or asparagus. Both are versatile, with the Asado having properties more like that of a slow cooker.



## Major league

**The League of Chicago Theatres** (<https://chicagoplays.com/images/playmoneytheatres.pdf>), which serves a membership of more than 200 theaters, is offering play money—its own take on gift certificates. Moreover, Play Money (sold in \$25 denominations and available at the 72 E. Randolph St. Hot Tix location or over the phone at 312-554-9800) is valid for a full year after purchase.





## Losing my religion

**Orthodox Calendar** (<https://www.orthodox-calendar.com>) makes jaws drop every year with its calendar full of muscular models in Catholic/religious situations. However, there's something different this time: a celebration album/coffee-table set that includes framable pictures, a unique 13-months A5 wall calendar, six postcards and even an astrological chart.



## Bring me some water

For consumers interested in brands that give back, water-filtration company LifeStraw has introduced **LifeStraw Play** ([Lifestraw.com](http://Lifestraw.com)), the brand's first water-filtration product for children. LifeStraw Universal is an adapter kit that turns consumers' favorite bottles into an instant filter when hydrating anywhere—and there's a two-stage filtration system that removes bacteria, chemicals and (very importantly) bad taste.

## Works of art

Chicago's **Museum of Contemporary Art** (<https://www.mcachicago.org>) always has innovative items that will impress almost any gift recipient. Among the tempting items this year are an iridescent cobalt eco-friendly tote as well as the Mike Series: Heat of The Bull T-Shirt (created by Chicago artist Hebru Brantley).



## The wine starts here

With the movie being shown soon in Chicago, it's extremely timely (and pro-LGBT) to purchase **Tom of Finland wine** (<https://tomoffinlandwines.com>). Tom of Finland Wines is a new label created in tribute to the legacy and artwork of Tom of Finland (Finnish artist Toukso Laskonen, 1920-1991). It's a blend of zinfandel, merlot, cabernet sauvignon and petite syrah that's sure to please almost any oenophile.



## The JFine-r things

If you or your favorite person likes sparkle, maybe **JFine Diamonds** ([ArgylePinkDiamonds.us](http://ArgylePinkDiamonds.us)) has something that catches your eye. This company that specializes in pink diamonds has items such as a double-halo bezel necklace with pink and white variations of the stones—yep, that'd work for a lot of people.



## Fanning out

The **Brookstone clock or message fan** ([Brookstone.com](http://Brookstone.com)) provides an innovative way of dissipating heat. (This may not seem palatable now, but you or your gift recipient will appreciate this during the summer.) Not only do the fans provide nice breezes, but they provide messages that are customizable. How cool! (Sorry—I couldn't resist.)





## Power move

In pitching **Power Plate** (<https://powerplate.com>) to Windy City Times, a saleswoman said, “You can’t put a price on health.” Even though that’s business-speak for “it’s an investment piece,” the benefits of this machine far outweigh the cost, as it helps to increase strength and flexibility thanks to Precision-Wave technology—and, even better, you can enjoy a complete workout in 15 minutes. That’s only half an episode of *Modern Family*.

## All that Sass

Advertised as “candy for your hair,” **Milk & Sass** (<https://www.milkandsass.com>) has items such as Macaron for Hair—which is part high-end detangler, part travel mirror and entirely chic. Of course, with that tagline, Macaron (also available at Urban Outfitters stores) comes in colors such as raspberry, mint citron and lemon pistachio, among others. It’s the ultimate no-calorie treat.



## The Aera up there

The **Aera diffuser set** (AeraForHome.com) takes making your home smell good to the next level. Aera diffuses fragrance droplets to perfectly scent large areas, and is controllable/programmable via a smartphone app as well as by Alexa. Check it out!



## David Bowie Made Me Gay

100 YEARS OF LGBT MUSIC



Darryl W. Bullock  
AUTHOR OF *FLUORESCENT PUNKER JOURNAL*

## In tune

Your favorite music aficionado might appreciate a couple of books on WCT’s holiday list. **David Bowie Made Me Gay** (from Overlook Press) goes beyond the titular musician to trace the evolution of LGBT music. In addition, **We Were Going to Change the World** (Santa Monica Press) captures the stories of women who were active in the punk-rock scene in Southern California during the 1970s and ‘80s.

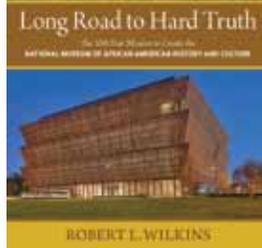
## WE WERE GOING TO CHANGE THE WORLD

INTERVIEWS WITH WOMEN FROM THE 1970s & 1980s SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA PUNK ROCK SCENE



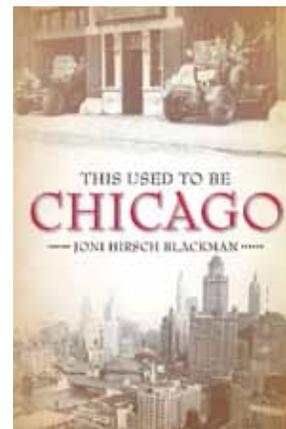
## To tell the ‘Truth’

**Long Road to Hard Truth** (Proud Legacy Publishing), perfect for any history buff, chronicles the journey toward the creation of the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. Among other things, the book looks at the early history, when staunch advocates sought to create a monument for Black soldiers 50 years after the end of the Civil War and in response to the pervasive indignities of the time.



## City life

It’s interesting how little people (including myself) can know about their own cities. In **This Used to Be Chicago** (ReedyPress.com), Joni Hirsch Blackman examines Chicago’s architectural past by uncovering the history of 90 buildings in the Windy City. Did you know of the circus school that used to be a church? See what I mean?



## ‘Word’ up

“Deep thoughts take time to surface” and “Leading the simple life can be very complicated” are just two of the aphorisms in **Wisdom & Wordplay** (Filament Publishing)—a book that could turn you into a modern-day Oscar Wilde. Here’s one more item that might be appropriate for these times: “Having the world at your feet can go to your head.”

Robert Eddison's  
**Wisdom & Wordplay**  
300 original aphorisms to enrich your day



“Take your pain. You are my favorite thing to write!”  
Dylan Brandt

## TRAVEL

# Charleston's Southern flair

BY ANDREW DAVIS

"People come to Charleston, first, for its history and, second, for its food."

These words were uttered by Charleston Area CVB's C. Doug Warner during a recent LGBT media trip to Charleston, South Carolina—and a recent visit to the Palmetto State city showed that it had a lot more to offer than the stereotypical sultry heat.

## Belmond stakes

The first stop in Charleston was Belmond Charleston Place (205 Meeting St.; Charleston-Place.com), a hotel known far and wide for its elegance and efficiency—even in the face of a technological glitch and temporarily altered the check-in process for guests (e.g., manually filling out forms). Fortunately, staffer Star saved the day.

Besides the visual attractions such as the huge chandelier in the lobby and the twin staircases, there's the Thoroughbred Club, which offers light bites, smooth drinks and cool entertainment.

Our media group was fortunate enough to stay on Belmond's exclusive Club Floor—commonly called the hotel within the hotel. With 72 guest rooms, is floor offers numerous extras, such as a complimentary continental breakfast, afternoon tea, evening hors d'oeuvres, after-dinner cordials and desserts, and full beverage service. As the famous commercial line goes, "membership has its privileges."

However, the hotel offers plenty for all. My spa facial was a soothing (and pleasantly talkative) experience, and the health club (which must be reached by walking through the humid pool area) was much larger than I've seen at most hotels. There's also shopping available, thanks to plenty of boutiques on the first floor.

Dining at Belmond is a must. The Charleston Grill has earned a AAA Four Diamond Award—and with good reason. Chef Michelle Weaver's menu is divided into four categories (Pure, Lush, Southern and Cosmopolitan), and everything I tried was incredibly delicious.

## Spilling the LGBTea

As for how LGBT-friendly Charleston is, travelers might be pleasantly surprised, according to locals.

At an LGBT reception at the stunning home of Warner and husband Truman Smith (complete with an infinity pool in the backyard that overlooks an expanse of marshland), many insisted

that Charleston is basically a blue bubble in a red state. (One of the attendees at the reception was lesbian activist/philanthropist Linda Ketner, who, in 2008, narrowly lost a U.S. Congressional race to the Republican incumbent.)

Also, while actual LGBT nightspots might be somewhat scarce (with Dudley's on Ann seeming to be the main one), people insisted that LGBT individuals can go practically anywhere without being harassed. (I do intend on testing that theory the next time I go there.)

And here's another gay-positive sign of change: The aforementioned Bulldogs Walking Tour now has an LGBT walking tour called—drum roll, please—"The Real Rainbow Row LGBT Tour." Check out <https://bulldogtours.com/real-rainbow-row-lgbt-tour/> to find out more.

## Plantation contemplation

Despite all the fun I had during this trip, there was one stop that made this one of the more emotionally tough media trips on which I embarked: Middleton Place (4300 Ashley River Rd.; MiddletonPlace.org)—a National Historic Landmark and home to this country's oldest landscaped gardens that was once a plantation.

It's the latter part of that description that put things (temporarily) in flux for me and the other African-American writer in our journalist group—especially upon hearing the guides discuss how slaves lived (and died) in antebellum days. Also, in showing how owners and workers lived, we saw a shanty that represented a slaves' home—complete with a large sign that showed the names of all the slaves who lived there (as well as how much they cost).

Cue the tears and heavy thoughts. However, it's an undeniable part of our history, and it needs to be acknowledged (although I was admittedly disappointed there wasn't more of an homage).

However, the gardens themselves are extremely beautiful and immaculately manicured, the house museum has a treasure trove of items and facts—and the plantation farmyard features a menagerie of animals ranging from pigs to peacocks (although the smells reminded me why I'm a city person).

Many thanks go to Belmond Charleston Place for arranging this trip. I do highly recommend Charleston (which, incidentally, isn't too far from my actual birthplace)—for its food, history and friendly people.

**Read the entire article about Charleston online at [WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://WindyCityMediaGroup.com).**



Middleton Place.

Photo by Andrew Davis

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# the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in  
WINDY CITY TIMES

## SAVOR Torali; Wood brunch

BY ANDREW DAVIS

The Ritz-Carlton has undergone a radical change.

Walking around the 12th floor of the hotel, the renovations are striking—for example, the opulent fountain that was present is no longer there. Another alteration is the Italian steakhouse **Torali** (160 E. Pearson St.; <http://toralichicago.com>), which combines stately elegance with the service one would expect at such a restaurant.

Unfortunately, my dining companion and I came to the conclusion that the food didn't uniformly



Spaghetti with shrimp at Torali.

Photo by Andrew Davis

meet the standards that Torali's appearance (as well as the celebrity-and-socialite crowd) set. (I'm pretty sure I saw former pro-baseball player Mike Piazza there—or maybe it was just a lookalike.)

Things seemed to start promisingly, with huge polenta fries arranged artfully in a Jenga-like pattern; however, we agreed that the fries

were exceedingly salty—not the last time that would happen during our lunch. Conversely, the meatballs (veal, lamb and mortadella, with bread crumbs and ricotta salata) were absolutely sublime.

The same went for my entree—a seemingly simple dish of spaghetti and shrimp that was accompanied by summer squash, grana padano, basil and olive oil. And my friend said that his filet mignon was incredibly tender—but, again, it was salty, sadly.

The dessert, however, elicited oohs and aahs—an apple-themed piece of artwork that arrived looking exactly like the fruit. Even more gratifyingly, it managed to taste just as good as it looked.

Also, a shout-out has to go to the server, George. Not only did he provide exquisite service, but the longtime Ritz employee (30 years!) regaled my friend and I with tales about meeting everyone from Whitney Houston to Sylvester Stallone.

I would recommend checking out Torali. While there were a couple disappointments in the menu,

the offerings are worth checking out—as are the hotel's renovations. (BTW, the dishes are more affordable than you might think, being no more expensive than those at some trendy River North spots.)

**Note: Restaurant profiles/events are based on invitations arranged from restaurants and/or firms.**

### 'Wrapped' brunch Dec. 10

Boystown restaurant **Wood**, 3335 N. Halsted St., will host the "Wrapped in Red Drag Brunch" beginning at 11 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 10.

Guests are invited to don their most vibrant crimson ensembles as they enjoy a brunch with local drag queen Wanda Screw as emcee.

The special ho-ho-holiday menu will consist of dishes from Chef Ashlee Aubin (Alinea; Salero), like mascarpone-frosted cinnamon rolls, homemade corned-beef hash, pumpkin-spiced waffles, buttermilk biscuits and gravy, and more. There will also be a special holiday cocktail, the Wanda Screwdriver.

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



## Santa Speedo Run zips through Boystown Thousands raised for Center on Halsted

An army of sexy Santas took advantage of the unseasonably warm weather to don red velvet hats (and not much more) for the annual Santa Speedo Run, a benefit for Center on Halsted, Saturday, December 2.

The event kicked off at Sidetrack, as the jolly participants signed up and joined together for the singing of the specialized Christmas carol, Jingle Balls. At 2 pm, they hit the streets as all

participants took part in a one-mile loop run, originating from and returning to the bar. Host Debbie Fox led the crowd for a post-run celebration and awards ceremony.

Organizers say that this year's event broke records, raking in over \$70,000. The top earner, David Roberts, brought in just over \$8,500 himself.

Photos by Jerry Nunn; see many more online.





## BILLY Masters

"I don't know if I'm gonna make a pitcher or catcher out of you."—**Robert Reed** to the child version of **John Travolta** in *The Boy in the Plastic Bubble*. If one believes the testimony of numerous masseurs, the answer is catcher!

Don't fuck with **Dr. Seuss**. The dearly departed doyenne of radio **Lynn Samuels** was given to reading from *Horton Hatches the Egg* on the air. That is, until she got a cease-and-desist letter from **Audrey Stone Dimond**—otherwise known as Mrs. Dr. Seuss! The cantankerous widow is wildly protective of her late husband's work. I was reminded of this story last week at the opening night of *Who's Holiday!* at the Westside Theater. This play tells the story of a grown-up **Cindy-Lou Who**, from *How The Grinch Stole Christmas*.

**Playwright Matthew Lombardo** tells us what happened to **Cindy-Lou** 40 years after meeting the Grinch in a one-woman show written in the style of the late Dr. Seuss. Is it a sequel? Is it a parody? Either way, last year's premiere was thwarted by a cease-and-desist letter from guess who? The tenacious Lombardo took the matter to court—and won! That meant the show was able to go on—albeit a year later—with a new advertising slogan: "See The Show Dr. Seuss Doesn't Want You To See!" It lives up to the hype—due, in no small measure, to the bravura turn of star **Lesli Margherita**. She effortlessly captures the innocence of the young **Cindy-Lou** and then slowly adds layers as the perky mask falls. Oodles of credit must go to **director Carl Andress**, who works his endless theatrical magic to never let the show feel claustrophobic. I predict this will have huge seasonal appeal for years to come.

My matinee the next day was *The Parisian Woman*, a new play starring **Uma Thurman**. It has enormous relevance since it's set in present-day Washington, D.C., and written by **Beau Willimon**, who created *House of Cards*. What was curious was that **Miss Thurman** chose a strange mid-Atlantic accent—kinda a cross between **Madonna** and **Mrs. Howell!** And not being a natural stage animal, she was prone to wild gesticulation of her limitless limbs, which looked even odder in unflattering clothing. The show is saved by **Blair Brown**, who is incapable of giving a bad performance. She's so good, in fact, she magnifies the deficits of the play's star. Then again, reports were that **Uma's** name alone was selling tickets. So, what do I know?

That night, I saw *Once On This Island*, which, like *The Parisian Woman*, is a one-act, 90-minute show—my favorite kind! The production is as magical and enchanting as the story, and the cast (including our own **Alex Newell**) is uniformly superb. That said, I'm still trying to figure out what



A calendar featuring **Steve Grand** is among **Billy's** gift-giving suggestions.

Photo by Joem C. Bayawa

**Lea Salonga** was doing there. Not that she isn't good—she sounds as bright and brilliant as ever. But she has one number and spends most of the show walking up and down the stairs as if she were just crowned **Miss Filipina!** If you like the musical, you'll love this revival. If you don't know it, you'll still love it. And if you love **Lea Salonga**, you'll long for a helicopter.

In a rarity, I then went to my third show of the day! The spot *54 Below* hosted an all-star concert presentation of the **Lauren Bacall** vehicle *Woman of the Year*. Also beside the point—did anyone think to invite **Raquel Welch**? Not that she was missed alongside such luminaries as **Joyce DeWitt**, **Eve Plumb** and **Lypsinka** battling for honors next to such bona fide Broadway babes as **Julia Murney**, **Luba Mason** and **Christine Pedi**. There were also some great men, including **Robert Cuccioli**, **Brad Oscar** and my new discovery, the dashing and sexy **Kevin Zak**. The show's 11 o'clock number, "The Grass Is Always Greener," was expertly handled by **Dee Hoty** and the indomitable **Anita Gillette**. Of all the shows I saw, this was the best of the bunch.

The reboot of *Dynasty* has announced the new incarnation of **Alexis**. Drum roll, please—it will be **Nicollette Sheridan**. Well, she was a vampy bitch on *Desperate Housewives* before her unceremonious ouster, so perhaps it'll work out. And, you know, she is British. No, not British like **Uma Thurman**—but actually born in England.

Time for more of **Billy's** Holiday Gift Giving Suggestions. Each year, **Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS** honors one of our beloved divas as a holiday ornament. This year, it's **Carol Burnett**—fortuitous timing given her recent anniversary special. You can deck your halls with **Burnett** as **Princess Winnifred** from *Once Upon a Mattress* by going to [BroadwayCares.org](http://BroadwayCares.org).

Two of my favorite performers are raising money for a good cause. I ran into **Julia Murney** and **Max von Essen** at *Who's Holiday!* and learned that they recorded a duet of "O Holy Night," with all proceeds going to **Covenant House**, an organization that helps homeless and runaway youth. You can get the single on Amazon or iTunes.

Thursday, December 14 **SIDETRACK**

# HOLIDAY PARTY 2017

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I know you love **Steve Grand** and sexy calendars. So, why not pick up his 2018 calendar—shot on location this past summer in Provincetown. You still want more? You're in luck. "I just had to make two calendars' worth of images. So yes, both calendars have their own unique set of photos," said **Grand**. I don't believe these are benefiting anyone other than **Grand** himself, but that's OK by me. Still, it's a curious choice for someone who previously bemoaned the fact that people focus on his phenomenal physique instead of his music. Eh, who am I to judge? You can pick him up at [SteveGrand.com](http://SteveGrand.com).

When I'm not judging (but I'm judging), it's time to end yet another column. While we may have avoided sex scandals this week (boy, could **Renata Scotto** tell stories), you can't avoid **BillyMasters.com**, the site **Dr. Seuss** probably doesn't want you to see, either! For all your other needs, write to [Billy@BillyMasters.com](mailto:Billy@BillyMasters.com) and I promise to get back to you before "Once Upon a Mattress" is the name of a CNN special report! So, until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.

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# WINDY CITY TIMES COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## Wed., Dec. 6

**LGBTQ Forum with Democratic candidates for governor** Brought by a coalition of organizations that serve and advocate for LGBTQ Illinoisans. Seating 5:00 pm to 5:50 pm. 6:00pm - 8:00pm Second Presbyterian Church 1936 S. Michigan Ave. Chicago Tickets: <http://tinyurl.com/LGBTQForum>

**Golden Girls, the Lost Episodes, holiday edition** Campy parody of one of TV's most beloved sitcoms with Dorothy, Rose, Blanche, Sophia will feature the best of the original run - plus a new holiday-themed episode. Will run in conjunction with the return of Red-Hosed Reindeer. \$25. or VIP \$35. 7:30pm Mary's Attic 5400 N Clark St., 800-838-3006 Tickets: <http://www.handbagproductions.org>

## Thursday, Dec. 7

**LGBTQ fundraiser for congressional candidate, mother of a trans child** Marie Newman, first-time candidate in the 3rd Congressional District of Illinois, oppos-



## VICKY BUSINESS Saturday, Dec. 9

**Christmas Bingo (by Vicki Quade, above) will run at the Royal George Theatre through Dec. 31.**

Photo courtesy of Quade

es anti-LGBT incumbent Rep. Dan Lipinski. 5:30pm Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St Chicago <http://www.marienewmanforcongress.com> Tickets: <http://tinyurl.com/MNFCSidetrack>

**American Veterans for Equal Rights Chi-**

**cago** Chapter of American Veterans for Equal Rights, the national organization of LGBT veterans formerly known as Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Veterans of America (GLBVA). 7:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.averchicago.org/>

**The Gender & Justice: The Criminalization of Youth in Cook County Symposium** Focusing on advocacy and community solutions centering the experiences of girls and LGBTQI/GNC youth in Cook County hosted by leading voices in justice-involved youth advocacy 9:00pm - 1:00pm 225 E. Chicago Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611 <http://www.facebook.com/events/191488001544226/> Tickets: <http://bit.ly/GenderSymposium>

## Friday, Dec. 8

**Chicago A Cappella present Holidays a cappella concert** Guest Music Director Paul Langford with his own arrangement of American folk group Peter, Paul & Mary's "Light One Candle" and new life to holiday favorites with fresh arrangements of beloved carols in their Chicago premieres: Chanukah melodies, Christmas spirituals. 8:00pm Wentz Concert Hall 171 E. Chicago Ave Naperville, IL 6040 773-281-7820 <http://www.chicagoacappella.org>

## Saturday, Dec. 9

**Women's Gubernatorial Forum** To learn where candidates for Illinois governor stand on the issues women say are important to them, the forum will query candidates on issues raised by more than 200 women and nearly 40 Chicago-area women's organizations 2:00pm Chicago Temple Building 77 W. Washington St. Chicago Tickets: <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/cwta-alliance-gubernatorial-forum-tickets-39493732818>

**Forum on LGBTQs, Israel and Palestine** Speakers will be: Senan Shaqdeh, a Palestinian activist and coordinator of the Coalition for Justice in Palestine; Scout Bratt, an activist with Jewish Voice for Peace; Alexis Martinez, a longtime Chicago LGBTQ activist and member of the Chicago Dyke March Collective; and Samer, a community organizer and co-host of the Olive Oil and Time, a podcast by Palestinians. 2:00pm Uptown Chicago Public Library, 929 W. Buena Ave. <http://LGBTliberation@aol.com>

**Christmas Bingo: It's a Ho-Ho-Holy Night** Written by Vicki Quade, co-creator of Late Nite Catechism, Christmas Bingo is the second installment in Quade's bingo series with new material and a special twist on the story of the Annunciation. Through Dec. 31, 2017. \$30 8:00pm Royal George Theatre 1641 N Halsted

St Chicago 312-988-9000 <http://www.nuns4fun.com>

**Chicago Gay Men's Chorus Naughty or Nice** With more than 150 singers and 23 dancers, Selections from John Legend, Morten Lauridsen's "O Magnum Mysterium," Zoltan Kodaly's "Veni Emmanuel," as well as Devo, Eurhythmics, South Park, Ella Fitzgerald, Clarence Carter 8:00pm North Shore Center for the Performing Arts 9501 Skokie Blvd., Skokie. Continues Dec. 10 at Beverly Arts Center. Tickets: <http://www.northshorecenter.org/event/chicago-gay-mens-chorus/>

## Monday, Dec. 11

**Chita Rivera in concert with Seth Rudetsky** One night only. unscripted evening will feature Rivera performing the greatest hits of her vast musical theater repertoire, including songs from her now legendary roles of Anita in West Side Story, Rose in Bye Bye Birdie and Velma in Chicago. 6:30pm Steppenwolf 1650 N Halsted Chicago Tickets: <http://www.steppenwolf.org>

## Tuesday, Dec. 12

**Pride Films and Plays monthly festival of LGBTQ independent films** 7:30pm The Broadway, Pride Arts Center, 4139 N. Broadway, Chicago 800-737-0984 Tickets: <http://www.pridefilmsandplays.com>

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## HUBBARD from page 26

KS: [Laughs]

CDBJ: The more I'm here with Hubbard I'm getting deeper and lower.

KS: My training is more modern and classic contemporary. But I'm shorter and I have bursts of energy.

CDBJ: He's definitely a powerhouse.

KS: I can jump and Craig is a turner. Craig can do like six turns and I can barely do two.

CDBJ: [Laughs] Stop—that's not true.

KS: But I can do double tours. So there are different strengths. Our sense of power comes from

different places. I think that's cool because I see what he does and I think, I could elongate there or be more fluid here. He probably sees what I do and thinks he can be more powerful in certain parts of the choreography.

CDBJ: One thing we do share in common is that we can both be fairly dramatic in performance, but only when a piece calls for it. I think all three pieces in the upcoming show call for a certain level of drama.

**WCT: Can you tell us more about Pite's work?**

KS: Crystal's work really speaks about humanity and what's happening in the world. She doesn't just make dance for dance's sake. There is always something beyond that. So, in doing this work it

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also makes us want to explore what else is out there. We have to pay attention to what else is happening [in the world] so that when we come back to the dance, it is more informed.

CDBJ: I think that kind of influence also helps audiences engage in the work and in the program as a whole. Her work is real. It's what we are experiencing in life.

**Hubbard Street Dance Chicago will devote an entire program to choreographers Crystal Pite on Dec. 7-10 at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph St. Tickets are \$25-\$110 each; visit [HubbardStreetDance.com](http://HubbardStreetDance.com) or call 312-635-3799.**

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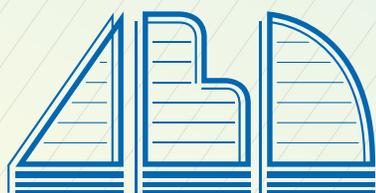
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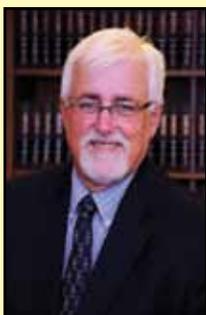
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