

"Kickoff," The Chicago Gay Pride Parade 1976.  
Diane Alexander White Photography



PAGE 20

# WINDY CITY TIMES

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# YESTERDAY

Looking back at Pride memories of the past (above)  
and this month's Drag March for Change (below)

# AND TODAY



PAGE 4

From the Drag March for Change.  
Photo by Vernon Hester



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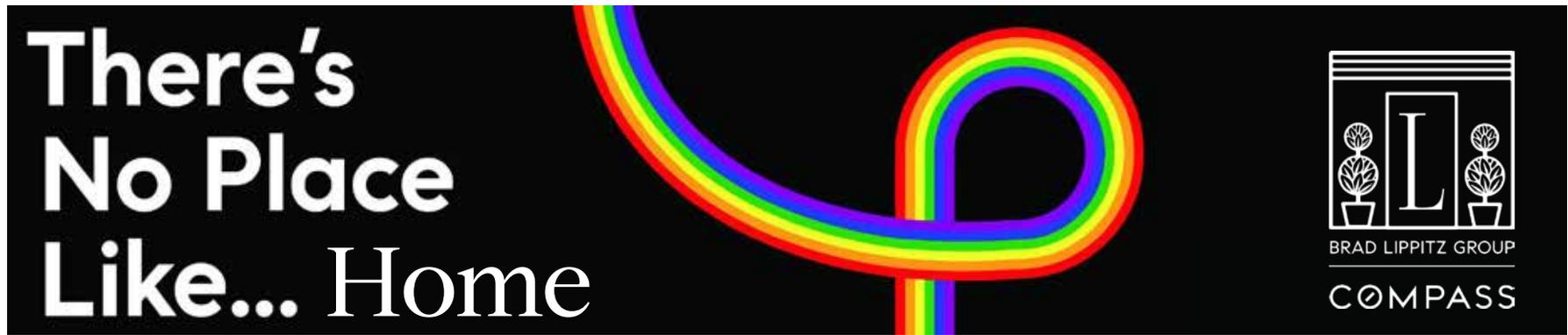


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# WINDY CITY TIMES

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### WINDY CITY TIMES PRINT DATES:

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Aug. 5, 2020	Sept. 30, 2020	Nov. 25, 2020

online exclusives at  
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## ANOTHER COUNTRY

WCT looks at Venezuelan LGBTQI refugees who seek asylum in nearby countries.

Photo of Dialogo Diverso Director Danilo Manzano by Nestor Silverio

## ALWAYS IN FASHION



Actor Miss Lawrence dishes on Lee Daniels, injustice and style.  
Photo courtesy of Digital Dash

## EVENT HORIZON

Find out about events that have been cancelled or postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

## THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Tessa Thompson, the classic LGBTQ show Noah's Arc and Richard Simmons.

plus  
**DAILY BREAKING NEWS**

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All photos by Vernon Hester

***“Make no mistake: This is not a fucking parade.”***

—Rally organizer Jo MaMa at the start of the Drag March for Change Rally

## Drag activists align with Black Lives Matter at Boystown protest

BY VERNON HESTER

On June 14, a coalition of local drag performers and LGBTQ activists led a march in support of Black Lives Matter through the heart of Chicago's Boystown neighborhood. With many large scale Pride events either cancelled or postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and as a reaction to worldwide protest actions started by the death of George Floyd at the hands of the police in Minneapolis, the march came as a wake-up call and rebuke to the Chicago Police Department, Mayor Lori Lightfoot and President Donald Trump, the latter whose birthday was on the same date.

The march kicked off at Belmont Avenue and Halsted Street in the late afternoon and ended at the intersection of Grace Street, Broadway and Halsted Street, where the rally was held.

Speakers at the rally included LGBTQ activists Zahara

Bassett and Jay Rice, of Brave Space Alliance; activist Jasmine Salas; LGBTQ-rights activist Tatyana; and local drag performers Lucy Stooles, Luc Ami, Shea Coulee, Zola, Dida Ritz, The Vixen and Miss Toto. Performer Jo MaMa created, produced and emceed the event.

Among the many issues addressed was a list of demands that included justice through the arrest, indictment and prosecution of police officers in the deaths of trans individual Tony McDade, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, among others; the release and pardon of all protesters in Chicago Police Department (CPD) custody; acknowledgment from all levels of local and national government that all Black lives matter; and the enactment of comprehensive laws on the national level protecting LGBTQ individuals. A major rallying point was the creation of a Civil Police Accountability Council that would hold the CPD accountable to the public.



Jo MaMa.



Tatyana.



Shea Coulee.



Lucy Stooles.



Luc Ami.



Zahara Bassett.



The Vixen.



Dida Ritz.

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# Nightlife figure Cody Laughlin dies at 26

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Lucky Horseshoe Lounge dancer Cody Laughlin died June 15 at his home. The cause of death is currently unknown. He was 26.

Laughlin was born Dec. 30, 1993, in Chicago and graduated early from Northside College Prep in 2011. Shortly after graduating, Laughlin started working for Jarvis Lighting. When Laughlin left Jarvis in 2018, he was a shipping and logistics manager. For the past two years, Laughlin was a Lucky Horseshoe Lounge dancer.

Outside of his work life, Laughlin spent time riding his beloved Kawasaki motorcycle. He also loved Cher and his favorite material was mesh. A foodie, it was said that he frequently told friends he would "get a tummy and bigger thighs" from being such a voracious eater.

Laughlin is survived by his mother, Kathy (nee Skupien) Laughlin; sister Jessica (Solomon) Rigsby; aunt Marianne (Joe) Janesku; uncle Mike (Sue) Skupien; cousins Michelene, Kelsey, Brian, Amy and Erin; nieces Alini, Coco, Selah and Saria; chosen family members Nya and Anita Corkill; and countless friends.

"Cody and I met when we were 12 years old, and were best friends ever since," said longtime friend Lauren Strandberg. "He was an absolute



**Cody Laughlin.**  
Photo courtesy of Laughlin's Facebook page

gem, a beam of pure love and light that brightened every life that was lucky enough to cross paths with his. Cody had the kindest heart, the silliest sense of humor and the most diverse set of interests. The world is dimmer without him."

"Cody was an ageless soul, who could only spread laughter and joy," said another longtime friend, Rachel Hermes. "He lived by his own rules, and never let anyone get him down. Cody loved all animals and to explore everywhere. He was so open-minded. Cheers forever Cody."

"I met Cody five years ago through my friends Antony Morgano and Ken Ballard," said John Michael Colgin, another friend. "Cody was Peter Pan incarnate, but with a thong. His entrances to Ken's apartment felt like waking up in Oz and realizing everything before was in black and white. Cody was Oz forged into a Gaytastic daredevil. He entered every door like a party. So it made sense that he wanted to be a dancer at the Lucky Horseshoe. Cody's audition was 6:30 p.m. on a Wednesday. He gathered us before to act as his audience plants with dollar bills in our hands. Of course, he got the job.

"Hanging out with him was like playing a video game with infinite experience points, like you were cheating life. I miss introducing him to people as my friend and I am sorry some people will never meet Cody. He was a true Boystown original and he created community everywhere he went."

Yet another friend, Anthony Morgano, said, "Loving Cody and being his friend was a lot like riding on the back of his motorcycle. Even before he finally acquired his motorcycle, Cody's innermost self was always zooming down life's highway straddling a rumbling beast. The world felt more exhilarating and alive and flew by in a blur of sound and color and joy. 'Hold on tight,' he would exclaim.

"Even when you would go so fast that a part of your being was scared, wrapping your arms around him and leaning in made you feel safe and right and free and you would scream together at the top of your lungs and feel more alive than any other ride, or night out, or afternoon at the beach. I do not think I will ever hear the roar of

a motorcycle, or pop of a cork, the sound of cackling laughter or Cher's crooning voice, without looking up expectantly, feeling the wind rushing through my hair and hearing his voice echoing all around, 'Hold on tight.'"

The Lucky Horseshoe posted this message on its Facebook page.

"It is with great sadness we inform you that our dancer Cody Laughlin has recently passed away. Our thoughts and condolences go out to his friends and family. He will be missed. The Lucky Horseshoe will host a memorial celebration of his life at a future date to be determined when the bar is able to accommodate an appropriate capacity for this event."

A celebration of Laughlin's life took place June 20 at the Corkill residence at 1135 S. Rose Ave., in Park Ridge.

## Barry Greenwald, longtime ally, dies

Longtime Oak Park resident and LGBTQ-rights ally Barry Greenwald passed away June 13, according to the Oak Park Area Lesbian & Gay Association+ (OPALGA+).

Greenwald's involvement in the greater Oak Park community included his work with the Village Manager Association (VMA) which included his pushing the organization to take an important public stance in support of establishing a domestic-partnership registry in Oak Park. He also actively worked personally to push back the public referendum that challenged the registry in 2004.

He was the recipient of an Oak Park Area Leadership (OPAL) Award for his work promoting diversity and championing of LGBTQ+ rights. Greenwald also served the Oak Park River Forest High School on the District 200 Board, including a period as president.

Greenwald was surrounded by his family at the time of his passing, and is survived by wife Marge (also a longtime ally), children and grandchildren.

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[www.theaij.com](http://www.theaij.com)

## Chicago city council member comes out as queer

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Ald. Rossana Rodriguez-Sanchez (33rd Ward) came out as queer on a twitter post late June 21, making her the sixth member of the LGBTQ+ community on the Chicago City Council.

Rodriguez-Sanchez wrote, "Hi community. It's summer Solstice and Pride Month so I wanted to say I'm queer and have that take some

space."

In 2019, Rodriguez-Sanchez defeated her opponent, incumbent Deb Mell, who is openly gay and was a longtime political player.

Other LGBTQ council members include Aids. Raymond Lopez (15th), Carlos Ramirez-Rosa (35th), Tom Tunney (44th), James Cappleman (46th) and Maria Hadden (49th).

Ramirez-Rosa replied to Rodriguez-Sanchez's post with affectionate emojis to offer his congratulations, to which she replied, "But you knew that LOL."

The 33rd Ward is made up of areas within the Albany Park, Ravenswood Manor, Irving Park and Avondale neighborhoods.



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# Drag performer dropped by nightclubs after racism allegations

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Drag performer and entertainment producer T Rex has been dropped from their ongoing engagements at Roscoe's and Berlin nightclubs after allegations of racism.

Roscoe's published on its Facebook page June 22 that it has "severed our professional relationship with drag host T Rex, effective immediately. We look forward to working with the LGBTQ+ community, and specifically with those on the Black queer and genderqueer communities, to take the necessary steps to ensure that all performers at Roscoe's Tavern are treated fairly [and] equally, and shown respect for their individual art form."

Berlin also posted June 22: "We have decided to end our relationship with T Rex. We do not condone racism or behaviors that hurt others. In our 37 years serving the LGBTQ+ community, we have always strived to be a space where people from all backgrounds and experiences can feel comfortable coming together to express themselves and their art in an atmosphere of love, respect and enjoyment. We are sorry for the part we played in allowing this behavior to remain in

our space and we vow to do better.

"Moving forward, we plan to work with the Chicago Black Drag Council to bring in new shows and new hosts highlighting Black drag artists, to ensure that our space is welcome to all, always. The safety and comfort of our community while in our space is our number one priority and we vow to continue making changes to further that promise.

T Rex had been accused the week of June 15 of disenfranchising performers of color who participated in shows taking place at the two Lake View nightclubs.

The statement calling out T Rex, signed by several local performers, said: "You have abused your power and you've helped perpetuate racism through Boystown by reducing all people of color to tokens for your personal gain. You've based the value of our art of winning your competition. You've used influence to push multiple people out of the scene who've made mistakes. ... You have taken a position of power in an art form you rarely practice, and it is time you make space for others."

Among the demands issued were that Drag Mat-

inee performances be hosted by a Black performer in a bi-weekly trade-off; that more Black talent be engaged overall; and that T Rex attend a digital town hall meeting with representatives from the Berlin and Roscoe's nightclubs.

"These demands are not made to make you feel bad," the statement concluded. "These demands are for a better future and relationship with your community."

T Rex issued an apology June 16 and agreed to their demands; among those was participating in an online forum June 20 wherein T Rex was to be brought to accountability for the allegations.

That forum was hosted by performer Lucy Stoolle and moderated by performer Shimmy Laroux, who is also a diversity/equity consultant.

"We are looking tonight for restorative justice," said Laroux.

Stoolle added, "This is not a witch-hunt of any sort. It's a very needed conversation that has been a long time coming, and it's at a point now where we can no longer ignore it."

Representatives from Roscoe's, Berlin and Side-track were on hand for the town hall as well; the safety of black performers and patrons in North Side nightclubs was a key factor in the discussion and is likely to be a factor in future discussions.

Performer Shea Coulee accused T Rex of "exercising privilege over me" and attempting to blacklist them, adding, "so you directly attacked my livelihood, which is an act of violence."

Coulee recounted an incident one Black History Month wherein T Rex suggested a production number wherein Coulee would perform as a slave,

mockingly being whipped by other performers.

"That incident has stayed with me a very long time," Coulee said, adding that they had to "practically beg" T Rex to apologize.

Activist Zola later told T Rex that the demands were too light; she additionally addressed long-time allegations of racist comments and behavior at Roscoe's, telling the representatives on hand that their business needed to make a "revolutionary and monumental change" beyond promises to change show formats. "We need plans and actions."

"I admit I have too much power," T Rex said, later admitting, "It's fucked up."

"It's fucked up that you're supposed to be one of the most influential people on the scene, and you've created this bubble where you're untouchable, and you can't even have a conversation yourself," Stoolle replied, adding that even he should have done more.

T Rex apologized to "the entire community" and said they got "too comfortable."

Stoolle said that T Rex was very aware of people's perceptions and the extent of their power over other performers.

"That's fair," T Rex said.

Laroux said, "This has been a very heavy conversation for everyone. ... I would strongly recommend that conversations continue with the Black Drag Council and that everyone continues to be open, and that everyone realizes that, in order to have restorative justice you will have to give things up to restore people to wholeness."

# Lighthouse Foundation event explores racism's origins for white allies

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Lighthouse Foundation presented an online forum June 20 focusing on how white allies in the LGBT community can best focus their energies in struggles against racial inequities.

Lighthouse Foundation, which is associated with Lighthouse Community Church in Lincoln Park, focuses its work on uplifting Black and Brown members of the LGBT community. The June 20 session, titled "Anti-Racism for White Folks," was presented by Rev. Smash on behalf of the Foundation.

Smash, a native of Virginia, emphasized that she was not of the "upper-echelon" of race-equality experts, but was a longtime activist, including doing work in her home state around the time of the Charlottesville protests in 2017.

As racial-equity has come to the fore since the murder of George Floyd, many activists have said that Black and Brown activists should not be expected to do the intellectual and emotional labor needed to educate white allies, which is one reason Smash, who is white, was engaged to conduct the June 20 talk.

Racism, she said, is "not about who we are.

[It's] about what we say, what we do, from minute to minute."

Smash traced the historical roots of the white supremacist ideology most white Americans had internalized to the point that, "When we say that something is normal, we typically mean 'white.'" That ideology came about hundreds of years ago as a justification for the economic benefits that white landowners derived from chattel slavery.

Even with chattel slavery long in the past, its effects linger, since most Americans unconsciously engage in the economic, rhetorical and power dynamics which remain in our culture as its legacy. White folks, as one example, are seen as intrinsically stable, family-oriented and hard-working, while people of color are perceived as being lazy and in a state of perpetual poverty.

That perception carries over to explicitly racist fiscal policies, such as redlining of neighborhoods by banks determining whom to lend to. It can be further perpetuated by more implicitly racist policies, such as when state governments tie school funding into property-taxes, thereby ensuring that students in less-prosperous, majority-Black and -Brown neighborhoods receive fewer educational resources.



Rev. Smash. Screen shot during forum

Smash acknowledged that closely examining racism as a systematic whole, rather than just how one manages interpersonal relationships, will be difficult for many white folks, especially those who would never think of themselves as being racist.

"White supremacy... is much more expansive than overt racism," she said, later adding, "We're not used to the stress of processing our white identities."

Smash was joined in the talk by Rev. Tim Wolfe of the Oak Park-based Gather Church, who has also been involved at length with Lighthouse Foundation. The two discussed how whiteness had become further calcified in institutional settings, including those that had committed to the idea of diversity within their ranks.

Smash added that diversity initiatives quite frequently assume "that the normal ways of doing

things are the things we value as white people."

Wolfe said that many allies unfortunately "want to just take up a mantel rather than just making [confronting racism] a part of who we are."

He and Smash discussed how two human traits frequently encoded as being "white"—being averse to both risks and conflict—stand in the way of many allies who are willing to do the activist work. Dismantling racism, they added, involves showing up, listening, knowing when to defer and step down and having a willingness to both fail and be called out for it.

"Most of us have been frozen in this space of not wanting to mess up," Wolfe said.

Nevertheless, Smash added, much of the work has to be figuratively messy.

"Conflict has to happen for change to happen," she said.

# At least two marches centering on Black trans Chicagoans planned for June 28

BY MATT SIMONETTE  
AND TIM PEACOCK

The grassroots activist organization ACTIVATE:CHI announced June 19 that it is collaborating with a number of local organizations and businesses, among them Chicago Pride and Northalsted Business Alliance, for a Sunday, June 28, march that promises to focus on members of the Black transgender community.

Titled “Black Trans Lives Matter: A BLM Pride Protest,” the seven-mile march will kick off in Uptown at 11 a.m. and proceed to a rally in Grant Park, presumably following much of the route of the Chicago Pride Parade, which was cancelled for 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Organizers said in a statement, “The current political, social and economic climate, coupled with the clear inability of our government to protect the most vulnerable members of our communities, spurred the organizers of Chicago Pride to connect with ACTIVATE:CHI to reinstate this year’s Pride as a march. The plan is to create a pro-POC LGBTQ+ march, with a specific focus on the discrimination and injustice faced by the Black Trans Community.

Organizers said their demands included “the

immediate reallocation of funds for the CPD budget, civilian oversight of law enforcement in Chicago and nationwide, an end to qualified immunity and the reinstatement of transgender civil rights protections in health care.”

ACTIVATE:CHI describes itself as “a collective of multicultural and multigenerational community organizers initially brought together by our hunger for justice in the brutal police killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Tony McDade. We seek to dismantle the racist systems oppressing our vulnerable communities through peaceful grassroots organizing.”

For more information, visit [activate-chi.net/initiatives/june-28th](http://activate-chi.net/initiatives/june-28th).

However, several advocacy groups will hold a separate march on the same day to highlight Black and Brown voices (especially of the transgender community)—and this event seems to be a different one than another slated to kick off from Uptown the same day.

During an organizing meeting held June 20, Pride Without Prejudice and Reclaim Pride March (two groups organizing marches with similar underlying goals) merged to form one march that will begin at the Belmont Red Line station Sunday, June 28, at 12 p.m.



Deb Goodman and Andy Thayer at the Pride Without Prejudice/Reclaim Pride March meeting June 20. Photo by Tim Peacock

“We will unapologetically highlight issues of racism, police violence, and the obscene amount of money spent on a militarized police, and a military which polices the world,” the organizing groups said in their public invitation to participate in the event. “In so doing, we will be honoring the rich, but largely forgotten history of the Stonewall Rebellion and the movement that followed it.” (In an email to Windy City Times, co-organizer Andy Thayer called the other planned march one that is “connected with the overpriced, rightly maligned event that was scheduled for there last year.”)

This march—now called the Pride Without Prejudice/Reclaim Pride March, will lead participants north from its starting point and feature speakers from several local advocacy organizations. The march boasts endorsements from Community Cave Chicago, LADhoc Accounting, the National Alliance Against Racist & Political Repression, and the Woman’s March-IL. The event is additionally co-hosted by the Chicago Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression.

For more information on the event, visit “Pride Without Prejudice / Reclaim Pride March” on Facebook.



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- ▶ **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.
- ▶ **The most common side effects of BIKTARVY** in clinical studies were diarrhea (6%), nausea (6%), and headache (5%).

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

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.

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

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Please see Important Facts about BIKTARVY, including important warnings, on the previous page and visit [BIKTARVY.com](https://www.gilead.com/BIKTARVY.com).



# Local transgender man on being affected by healthcare rollback

BY EMILY REILLY

Oli Rodriguez is a transgender man who hopes to carry a child and become a father in the near future.

Following news that President Donald Trump rolled back protections inscribed in the Affordable Care Act, however, Rodriguez said he worries for both the future and his health. He worries for his future child and his safety during his trans pregnancy. On top of that, there's still a global pandemic. Rodriguez is one of the thousands of LGBTQ individuals grappling with the frightening drawbacks of Trump's decision.

"The government should stay out of it; there shouldn't be discrimination in terms of healthcare whatsoever," said Rodriguez. "Also we're in a pandemic. So, having folks unable to get access to care right now is a human rights violation. Don't cut access to care through a pandemic. Don't do it on the anniversary of the Pulse nightclub shooting. Don't do it during Pride Month."

Rodriguez relies on facilities like Howard Brown Health, which offers medical and social service programs for thousands of patients each year.

"We provide care in areas of primary care, mental health, behavioral health, psychiatry, workforce development, transgender and gender non-conforming services, and services that are around for support for individuals that are experiencing homelessness," Howard Brown Health Director of Strategic Partnerships Channyn Parker told Windy City Times.

Transgender patients typically prefer doctors who understand their situation and cater to their medical needs. However, LGBTQ-rights activists contend that the rollback will make many LGBTQ individuals' pursuit of reliable healthcare a more difficult process. Additionally, they say the administration's pushback will make it more difficult for women to safely access abortions.

"What does scare me with the Trump administration dismantling these types of protections is that this leads the Department of Health and Human Services to the authority to interpret what they feel Affordable Care Act provisions are. That's what's scary," said Parker. "So, if there is



**Oli Rodriguez.**

Photo courtesy of California State University, Los Angeles

anything that directly affects the organization, that could be it right there."

Rodriguez has visited Howard Brown for 20 years. "I love my doctor; I only have great things to say about them," he said. "I really support the work they are doing and the programs they have and how much they have expanded."

Despite this, Rodriguez is looking elsewhere for care during his pregnancy, invoking concern for obtaining the right kind of treatment that he is used to. As he is on the trajectory for pregnancy, he acknowledged that his problems may be more difficult for someone living in a rural state with fewer options than his typical back-and-forth abodes in Illinois and California.

"I would be using their services if COVID-19 wasn't happening right now. Howard Brown is where I got hormone therapy. I would've been using their service, but I'm also trying to use the whole scope of services," said Rodriguez. "I was going to use them with assisted help before the pregnancy. I'll also go there for meds, like when I got sick this winter. I love my doctor there."

Trump's rollback, Rodriguez added, "seems like complete erasure in terms of the fact that we're all human. Let's just get the care that we need. It's not that difficult."

Created in 2012, the DACA program allows undocumented immigrants who entered the United States before the age of 16, and meet other requirements, temporary work authorization and protection from deportation for a renewable two-year period. The majority of LGBTQ DACA recipients live in California (29 percent), Texas (16 percent), Illinois and New York (5 percent each), and Florida (4 percent).

The full report is at <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/DACA-and-LGBT-Dreamers-Jun-2020.pdf>.

## Lawrence Hall noted for inclusion efforts

Lawrence Hall—a nonprofit organization focusing on trauma-informed healing and resilience building in youth, families and communities in the Chicago area—announced in a press release that it was recognized in the "Change-Makers in Child Welfare 2020" report.

"Change-Makers" is a report highlighting the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation's All Children-All Families (ACAF) program's partnership with 100 organizations across the country working to improve the services they provide to the LGBTQ community, including children in foster care and prospective foster and adoptive parents.

The agencies featured in this report conducted an internal self-assessment, provided professional development to staff and implemented ACAF's "Benchmarks of LGBTQ Inclusion," which track policy and practice changes within agencies. Change-Makers in Child Welfare 2020 features three "Tiers of Recognition," which celebrate the strides agencies have made toward becoming fully LGBTQ welcoming and affirming.

The tiers are:

—Innovative Inclusion: Thirty-nine organizations met all 25 criteria and are going beyond to innovate their services for LGBTQ youth and families;

—Solid Foundation for Inclusion: Twenty-eight organizations met all 25 applicable policy and practice criteria for LGBTQ inclusion;

—Building Foundation for Inclusion: Twenty-seven organizations met foundational criteria, including non-discrimination protections.

Lawrence Hall was included in the Solid Foundation category. Other Chicago agencies in the report include Children's Home & Aid (Building Foundation), the Adoption Center of Illinois at Family Resource Center (Solid), and Little City Foundation (Solid).

Illinois agencies in the Innovative Inclusion category included 360 Youth Services-Youth in Care Program (Naperville) and Lutheran Child & Family Services of Illinois (Oakbrook Terrace).

The full report is at [https://assets2.hrc.org/files/assets/resources/HRC\\_ACAF\\_Change-Makers\\_in\\_Child\\_Welfare\\_2020.pdf](https://assets2.hrc.org/files/assets/resources/HRC_ACAF_Change-Makers_in_Child_Welfare_2020.pdf).

## Asians & Friends Pride Party on June 27

Asians & Friends Chicago (AFC) will hold a Pride Party on Saturday, June 27, 3-5 p.m.

The organization will be encouraging wild attire and are planning entertainment via a group Zoom call, but will also host small, 10-person functions at up to three different homes around Chicago.

In light of the coronavirus pandemic, AFC also announced that it's suspending its monthly dinners at Furama through June, and possibly July and beyond.

See [AFChicago.org](https://afchicago.org).



**New dean E. Patrick Johnson.**

Photo courtesy of Northwestern University

## Out professor named NU school dean

E. Patrick Johnson has been named dean of Northwestern University's School of Communication, Interim Provost Kathleen Hagerty announced.

Johnson—the Carlos Montezuma Professor of African American Studies and Performance Studies at the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Communication (SoC)—joined Northwestern 20 years ago and has served in several leadership roles over those decades.

A first-generation college student, Johnson was the first African American from his hometown to receive a doctorate, the first African American to be hired and tenured in the Department of Performance Studies and the first to be given a named professorship in the School of Communication.

"I am truly honored and humbled to be selected as the next dean of the School of Communication. I stand on the shoulders of my grandmother and my mother, neither of whom ever stepped foot on a university campus except to celebrate my graduations and accomplishments, but from whom I learned how to be a committed scholar, artist and advocate for social justice," Johnson said in a statement. "As I step into this new role, I carry their tenacity and determination with me."

Johnson—who has written books such as *Honey-pot: Black Southern Women Who Love Women* is in the LGBTQ Nonfiction—also is among an esteemed group of individuals named as the newest class of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences. Some of the other new members include singer, songwriter and activist Joan Baez; lawyer and former U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder Jr.; poet and playwright Claudia Rankine; independent filmmaker Richard Linklater; Native American scholar and artist Edgar Heap of Birds; and immunologist Yasmine Belkaid.



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# Downstate activist Buff Carmichael talks husband, the Prairie Flame

BY MATT SIMONETTE

In the May 27 issue of Windy City Times, in the first of a three-part series, Springfield-based activist Buff Carmichael discussed his early life in Texas and his entry into gay activism in downstate Illinois.

In this second interview, Carmichael discusses meeting his late husband Jerry Bowman and the Prairie Flame, the LGBT-newspaper which he and Bowman published from 1996-2008.

**Windy City Times: What was a key moment that started you in activism?**

Buff Carmichael: We had a proposal to start teaching about racial and religious diversity in the public schools. I was not involved in writing it, and took note that it did not involve anything having to do with sexual orientation. But I felt like it would be a stepping-stone and would be a good thing.

I went to a series of meetings about it. Somebody later wrote a letter to the editor that “representatives from the gay community” were at the meeting and said that it was part of their plan to get homosexuality taught in schools.

I had to respond to that. I said that I interestingly was at the meeting and nothing like that was said, and that, to the best of my knowledge, I was the only gay person there. The person who wrote the letter was not there. I [concluded] that it would be a big step forward for the gay community if we could stop hate.

**WCT: Where did you meet Jerry?**

BC: Smoky’s Den, the old bar that was here. When I was in Decatur I didn’t have a car; a friend of mine loaned me his because the nearest MCC church was in Springfield. ... My friends there told me that they had cowboy line-dancing on Sunday nights at the bar and asked me if I wanted to join them.

I went there and Jerry was there having a beer and we met and talked, and were never apart until he died.

**WCT: How long did it take you for you guys to move in together?**

BC: Three months and a week.

**WCT: How did the idea to start the Prairie Flame come about?**

BC: I sent a letter to Windy City Times, asking them to what extent they covered the central Illinois area, and how we could access the paper locally. I sent a very similar letter to the St. Louis paper that was there at the time. The response I got was, “We cover our metropolitan area and go fuck yourself.”

I identified four or five people in the region who were very well-qualified to publish a paper. None of them seemed interested, but I really wanted a way for local people having access to what was going on. The bar was full of local people saying Springfield was the dumbest place in the world, and, I was going from political meeting

to political meeting, wondering where everybody was. We needed a way to tell people at the bar: “There is something to do—go do it.”

We went through our local public-access TV channel and put together a TV show that aired at 1:30 on a Friday morning. You could set your VCR to record it and watch it at your convenience. It was LGTV, a 30-minute show once a week. I would say the maximum rating was about eight people—nobody watched. We did a lot of good, positive interviews, but it just wasn’t effective. It wasn’t in your hands when you needed it.

I kept looking for people who would publish a paper. One day in May, we had the death of a local AIDS activist, Steve Morel, who had been very active in the AIDS community, and had just gotten on the cocktail. He had thought he was dying, but he was soon thriving. He went to Virginia to help his father move and had a heart attack and died. The local newspaper gave him the average obit of three inches, but this was a very important person. He deserved more than three inches.

About that same time, our local Barnes and Noble put a window display up for Gay Pride Month. The daily publication in Springfield, the State-Journal Register, ran a whole bunch of letters to the editor about how we should boycott Barnes and Noble because of their nasty horrible window display.

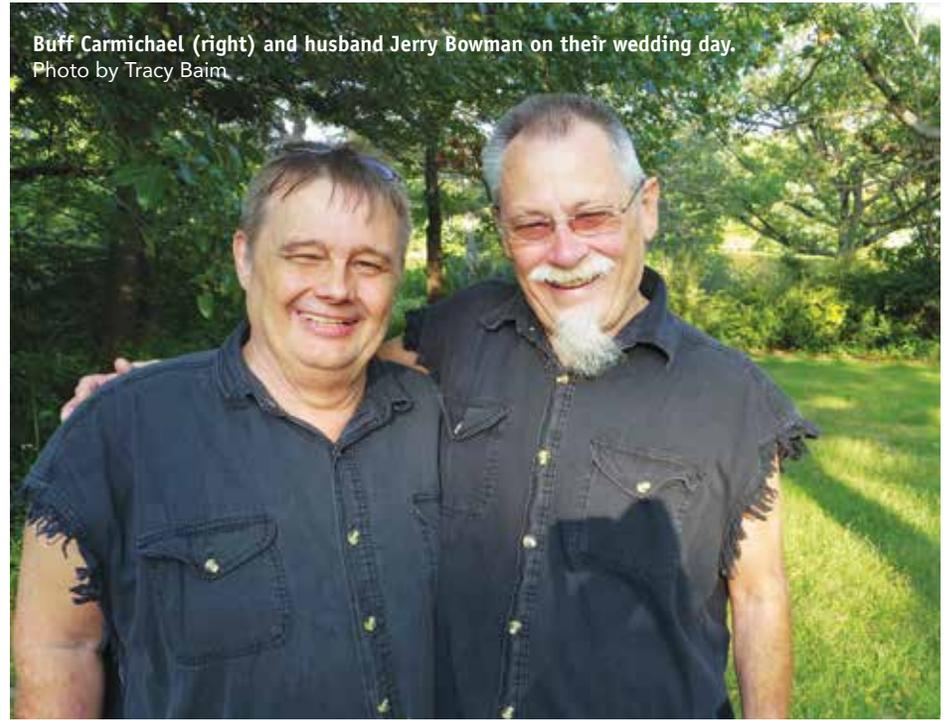
I later ran across a guy who published a local literary newspaper. He published short stories and poetry, and local artwork. He was just thrilled to talk to me. He and I sat down and talked about it, and later I went to his place because he had software for this purpose; I didn’t. We drew up two or three pages of a paper and were going to do the rest later, then his computer crashed. Everything was lost.

I went out and bought the software. Probably in the course of two nights, I put together the first issue. It was pathetic, but I did make sure that there was an obituary for Steve Morel, and there was a front-page article praising Barnes and Noble for their window display. We printed 2,000 copies of an eight-page paper and distributed it. I think I have 1,000 of those down in the basement write now.

**WCT: Did you pay for the printing out of your own pocket?**

BC: Yep. The big question was, would there be a second issue—but we started getting people. We had a guy who staggered out of a bar drunk. Somebody got out of a van and beat him half to death. He got in touch with me. His main concern was that he was HIV-positive and he had bled all over them—they had beaten him, and his main concern was their health and safety. The second issue had a lengthy interview with him. Things just started happening so that we were—from one issue to the next—actually publishing a paper.

Buff Carmichael (right) and husband Jerry Bowman on their wedding day.  
Photo by Tracy Baim



I had absolutely zero credentials in journalism. I had a lot of experience as a paper boy. ... It was a very interesting eleven-and-a-half years.

**WCT: How many people did you have working for you?**

BC: My partner and I did it with no pay. In each major community, we had a volunteer who sent us suggestions for stories. Dave Bentlin in Bloomington was the only person on staff who’d ever had a journalism class. He had a degree in journalism and wrote articles. Once a year we would go to a really nice restaurant and Prairie Flame would buy dinner for all of our volunteer—that was the only pay they received.

The first week of the month, Jerry and I would send out bills. The second week, we would put together the articles. The third week, we would put together the paper. The fourth week, we would distribute. We were holding down full-time jobs at the time. As time went on, each of those tasks got bigger and bigger, and it got to wear we were spending every night of every week on the paper.

When I first moved in with Jerry, he was in a single-wide mobile home. We pretty much destroyed it, using it as a publishing office. After two years, we rented an office space.

**WCT: What were your daytime jobs at that point?**

BC: Jerry spent 33 years working for State of Illinois. For the first 20, he was working for Public Aid. When Blagojevich came in, they combined a bunch of agencies. They came to his desk and told him, “Congratulations, this is your 20th anniversary and you’re fired. Tomorrow, you work for Human Services.”

I worked for the Department of Nuclear Safety, which was combined with the Office of Emergency Management Agency. He and I retired at the same time.

**WCT: How did the community engage with the Prairie Flame as the years went by?**

BC: It was mainly positive. A lot of people made fun of us and thought we were a very poor

publication, and thought it was short of silly. Within the major metropolitan areas, businesses were happy to give us space to distribute. We had a few problems, but nothing major.

The distribution person for Champaign lived in the community of Tolono. She decided that we needed to put them at the Tolono Public Library, to which they said sure. She put out 10 copies.

The next day she went back and all of them were gone. So the next day she put out 25 copies. The next day they were all gone. Then she noticed a fundamentalist church across the street from the library, and she got to thinking that maybe somebody was stealing them.

...I told her to put out 25 every day and see how long they do this. If they did it for a long time, I’d print out an extra 5,000 copies, and we’d stack an extra 5,000 copies in there and notify the news media so they could record whoever comes and tried to heal them away. It never happened—whoever was doing it got tired of doing it and quit.

Our advertising seemed to be Springfield, Champaign, Peoria, Bloomington and DeKalb. We weren’t successful in getting advertisers in any of the areas outside of there.

**WCT: What led to the decision to fold?**

BC: The financial breakdown at the end of the George W. Bush term had already started. Every business starts cutting their advertising when things are tough. Jerry and I were looking at getting to retirement and we couldn’t retire—our money went to keeping the flame alive. We reached the month when the advertising couldn’t cover the printing bill. And there were things besides the printing bill we had to pay, like the utilities and rent. We said it was time to stop.

**WCT: Do you miss the newspaper business?**

BC: I don’t miss the one o’clock in the morning. I wish we had a paper. ... [But] print media is dying and we get our news now from the internet. Springfield’s not alone in being without a publication.

# Organizations respond to murder of trans Chicagoan

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A number of organizations released statements on the May murder of a Chicago Latinx transgender woman who, at the time of her death, had been misgendered by both authorities and local media.

Selena Reyes-Hernandez, 37, was allegedly shot and killed by a man upon his learning that she was transgender. After killing her, according to multiple reports, the man allegedly left Reyes-Hernandez's home, only to return and shoot her again.

The killing occurred May 31, but Reyes-Hernandez's gender identity was not widely known until her assailant was arraigned June 16.

"Our community continues to face transphobic violence, police violence, and systemic violence," said representatives of Howard Brown Health on Facebook on June 17. "We cannot remain silent while trans women of color are murdered. Selena Reyes Hernandez was a Chicagoan living her truth. We mourn her passing and vow to fight for and uplift all trans women."

"Selena Reyes-Hernandez. Say her name. Use her pronouns," said representatives of ACLU of Illinois on Facebook on June 17. "In life and death, trans people should be recognized and remembered for exactly who they are. Selena Reyes-Hernandez should still be alive today. Her death is a reminder of the violence that trans-

gender people, especially transgender women of color, continue to face daily in this city, state, and country."

In a June 17 statement on Twitter, representatives of the Transgender Law Center said, "We are just learning about the murder of Selena Reyes-Hernandez, a 37-year-old trans Latina woman who lived in Chicago. We are heartbroken over the violence that she endured in her last breaths."

In a June 18 statement, officials for the Chicago Commission on Human Relations said, "This killing reminds us how deep hate continues to be in this country. It reminds us that there are still those who believe being trans does not give a person the right to life.

"Being trans should not be a death sentence. As the CCHR recently stated in response to the George Floyd shooting, Black lives, and all lives matter! This includes Trans lives! When human beings are treated as disposable, it sickens our stomachs and makes us ponder the true depths of our progress as a nation. Hate followed up by violence against anyone is wrong! Black, White, Gay, Trans, anyone!"

## Lightfoot, Ross, Nasim among LGBT History Month icons

Equality Forum has named its LGBT History Month icons for October—and Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot, transgender actress Angelica Ross (Pose) and late Pakistani-American poet (and Chicago LGBTQ Hall of Fame inductee) Ifti Nasim are people with local ties who are in the exclusive club.

Thirty-one individuals have been named—one for each day of the month. Some of the others include Russian activist/journalist Nikolay Alexeyev; filmmaker/playwright Moises Kaufman; rapper Lil Nas X; actor Billy Porter; 20th-century novelist Christopher Isherwood; actress Kate McKinnon (Saturday Night Live); 19th-century poet Emily Dickinson; and late boxer Emile Griffith.

Each day in October, a new LGBT Icon is featured with a video, bio, downloadable images and other resources. See [LGBTHistoryMonth.com](http://LGBTHistoryMonth.com).

## UIC named best state college for LGBTQ students

The University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) has been named Illinois' best college and university for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students, according to the 2020 edition of rankings from BestColleges, in partnership with Campus Pride.

"The Best Colleges for LGBTQ+ Students" ranking recognizes U.S. schools that have "established the highest standards for inclusive environments while maintaining strong academic programs for students."

The state-focused ranking, where UIC landed the top spot for Illinois, serves as a guide for prospective LGBTQ students to identify schools that are culturally inclusive, affordable and closer in proximity to their geographic location.

UIC rates highly for its institutional commitment to LGBTQ-inclusive policy, program and practice according to the Campus Pride Index, where it earned 4.5 out of five stars. The university received full marks in LGBTQ recruitment and retention efforts, housing and residence life, and student life.

  
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# Illinois' LGBTQ cabinet members discuss equality, coronavirus

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Among those contending with coronavirus preparedness, not to mention the effects from the resulting shutdowns, were numerous state government officials. They were tasked with keeping the machinery of government operating, and making sure residents received essential services, even while working from home.

The four openly LGBTQ members of Gov. JB Pritzker's cabinet—Department of Aging Director Paula Basta, Department of Human Rights Director Jim Bennett, Division of Banking Director Chasse Rehwinkel and Division of Real Estate Director Mario Treto Jr.—have been among those officials.

"It's been an incredible lift," said Basta, in a recent conversation the group had with Windy City Times. "What we had to do is whatever it was to keep seniors in their homes."

"In the beginning, we were quick to respond," added Treto. "It was exciting to see these government agencies react so quickly to the pandemic."

He said that he's appreciated seeing LGBTQ "family" at cabinet meetings: "This is the most representation that we've had. It's a great honor, but we're working hard together."

Rehwinkel noted that banking activity did not diminish during lockdown and that some banks needed to stay open "in a way that was helping people struggling through a fiscally difficult time. Something I really appreciated is figuring out how difficult inequity is in moments of crisis. One thing I wanted to do getting into this position is, when those challenges come up, to take them full bore and to push to relieve them. ... If you're marginalized when everything is doing well, you're absolutely under fire when everything isn't."

Bennett added that he appreciates the governor and other officials who have been "leading through a civil-rights lens." His division is in charge of ensuring that Illinoisans are treated equitably in the workplace, in public accommodations, and other realms.

"When things just started exploding, we could help each other out," he said. "Civil rights out can easily go out the door when you are having this kind of crisis. Our first fear was, watching in Italy and New York as equipment was being rationed—who gets a ventilator? Who makes a decision on whose life is more valuable and more worthy? Obviously, that touches the Department of Aging more than anyone."

Bennett emphasized that he wanted to make sure that his department was "at the table when these discussions took place." He added that his department is nevertheless still on the periphery of the crisis, and that he expects an onslaught of COVID-related complaints in about six months, as various employees return to work and members of



Illinois Department of Aging Director Paula Basta.

Photo courtesy of Basta

various marginalized groups are not among them.

But just as difficult for the state as it slowly progresses through various stages of reopening will be ensuring that Illinoisans can count on resources made available during the crisis to last, especially as forces in the dominant culture, be they politicians or media interests, suggest that society needs to move on.

Basta, who listed a number of resources for seniors whose deployment needed rethinking once the pandemic hit, said that such nimbleness will have to continue even as the crisis' sense of urgency wains. She added that many of the issues her department addresses are especially acute for LGBTQ seniors in the state.

"Social isolation for adults is very critical to be addressed," she noted. "Speaking of equity, making sure that everyone has access to the resources that help you stay healthy and safe, or if you need a meal, or if you need to connect and [want to] get on a virtual workout from a senior center, is important. So that we make it easier to access. ... We broke down barriers almost overnight because we had to set aside some of the silly rules that we had in place previously."

Basta estimated that her agency rewrote almost 170 pieces of guidance to allow its constituency easier access.

Bennett said that shoring up rights for transgender Illinoisans is especially vital for his office, especially given "the monstrous things that the federal government does—their goal for the LGBTQ community is to erase us. Their goal is to remove

our community, especially trans people, from every single document."

Treto and Rehwinkel's divisions are more ostensibly concerned with regulatory aspects of state government, so LGBTQ visibility might not be as obvious a concern in their work. But Rehwinkel said, "There are people not just at the top of agencies but throughout agencies who are part of the LGBTQ community who are thinking about these things. One of the things that is important for our community, which has been marginalized, is when you have people step into those leadership roles, it's something you have to treasure, and work hard to move fast."

Noting that Treto had similarly rewrote a massive quantity of guidance, Rehwinkel joked that the Pritzker administration was creating a stereotype that "regulation is gay."

Treto said his deputy director is also a member of the LGBTQ community whose "lens is completely different from mine." With their help, he eliminated various gendered references in real estate guidelines, for example, to make them more send inclusive.

He added, "I also wanted the real estate industry to be reflective of the state—we have a lot of minorities. We had a scholarship that is available, so one of the first things I did was double the financial commitment and the number of scholarships that they have, so the real estate professionals really reflect the diversity of our state."

A final initiative was a task force to address disparities in home ownership, a disparity Treto said was evident in the LGBTQ community.

"We're less likely to own homes," Treto added. "Part of that [problem] is from lenders and banks, so that's where Chasse and I are talking about that issue."

"It's not always about being visible, but about how we can lead by example of how we get things done quickly," said Rehwinkel.

## LGBTQ aspect of state aging act taking effect July 1

An amendment of the Illinois Act on the Aging that protects the needs of LGBTQ older adults and people living with HIV will take effect Wed., July 1. Gov. JB Pritzker signed the measure last August.

The act "prohibits unlawful discrimination by an owner, licensee, administrator, employee, or agent of an assisted living establishment of residents in assisted living establishments," according to the Illinois General Assembly website.

The organization Pride Action Tank noted that Illinois is now the first state to include HIV status and only the third to include LGBTQ in the definition.



## Kinsey Institute, Trevor Project team on study of LGBTQ mental health

The critical need for research on LGBTQ youth mental health and suicide prevention—made even more critical by the COVID-19 pandemic—has led to a new partnership between the Kinsey Institute at Indiana University and The Trevor Project, the world's largest suicide prevention and crisis intervention organization for LGBTQ+ youth.

The formal research partnership will enable collaborations including data sharing and innovative project design between the two organizations. These collaborations will leverage the Kinsey Institute's scientific expertise in methodology and data analysis to support The Trevor Project's efforts to advance knowledge of the clinical implications of suicide and LGBTQ mental health.

"The Kinsey Institute is dedicated to impactful research on sexuality, relationships and well-being, so we are very excited to join forces with the incredible team at The Trevor Project to collaboratively research urgent issues around LGBTQ mental health and suicide," said Justin R. Garcia, acting executive director and research director of the Kinsey Institute and a Ruth N. Halls Associate Professor of Gender Studies, in a statement.

"The Trevor Project's Research Department aims to produce and use innovative research that brings new knowledge and clinical implications to the field of suicidology and LGBTQ youth mental health," added Amy E. Green, director of research at The Trevor Project. "Partnering with a premier research entity like the Kinsey Institute will foster our goal of advancing scientific inquiry in ways that support and protect the lives of LGBTQ youth. We look forward to drawing on our shared expertise to create a better world for LGBTQ youth."

The Kinsey Institute's recent Sex and Relationships in the Time of COVID-19 study found that LGBTQ participants were more worried about the risk of COVID-19, and reported higher levels of stress and pandemic-related loneliness.

## Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame selection committee to meet

A Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame's selection committee, composed of individuals inducted into the organization, was scheduled to meet in March, but that meeting was canceled due to restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The selection committee will now review the slate of candidates and select the inductees in a virtual meeting Saturday, Aug. 1.

Anyone inducted into the Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame as an individual is entitled to serve on the selection committee. Those interested in participating should email outreach@chicagolgbthall-offame.org by Friday, July 17. A virtual ceremony for inductees will be held in October in honor of LGBT History Month.

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# {she crew} leaders reflect on feats, end of organization

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Six years after its founding, {she crew} has announced that the organization will be ending later this year. Co-founders Meredith Montgomery and Jess London-Shields told Windy City Times that they agreed at the beginning of 2020 that this would be {she crew}'s last year. London-Shields said the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the end date of some programs and has moved the weekly podcast SHE CAST from an in-person endeavor to a virtual one to comply with stay at home and social distancing orders.

"We are holding the space to be a place of support and to help process this pandemic, to write together, reflect and to also create podcasting content," said Montgomery. "While the pandemic has compromised our ability to meet in person, much sooner than anticipated, we are elongating our weekly virtual meet-ups to last for at least the duration of this pandemic, however long that is, and hold a going-away party once such meet-ups are safe again."

"With regards to why we are shutting down, we believe that every organization has its life span, and it is important to listen and respect that when it shows itself," said London-Shields.

Montgomery and London-Shields, who married in 2016 and are both former Windy City Times 30 Under 30 honorees, started {she crew} "to create a safe, expressive, creative and collaborative

space for young people that was unapologetically feminist and intersectional."

One of the reasons why they wanted to have this space is because Chicago has been segregated in many ways including the education and extracurricular systems in both racial and financial ways.

"We wanted to create a community of people from all corners of the city, and make it physically and financially accessible, with small groups that helped foster safety, sharing and a depth of impact," said Montgomery.

{she crew} has and has had several leaders other than Montgomery and London-Shields. This includes Kayla Lane Freeman, who organized and led the young professional's board; and Lil Cummings, who organized the subscription series Feminist Agenda and is also currently a member of the young professional's board. Other leaders included instructors of all ages, youth interns, board members and young professional's board members.

As for the highlights of the past six years, London-Shields pointed to the six summer intensive programs and the three years of SHE CAST podcast episodes.

"The summer intensive is a free program for young people and it additionally provides free CTA transit cards and a free meal that was collectively cooked/prepared and shared at the beginning of every day," said London-Shields. "The



{she crew} at at 2016 Black Lives Matter march.

Photo by Jess London-Shields



{she crew} co-founders Meredith Montgomery and Jess London-Shields.

Photo by Cole Simon

summer curriculum included a combination of expressive writing, performance, collaborative exercises, social justice education and culinary education/skill development.

"At the end of the summer, participants put on a performance of pieces they have written while in program. This program is intended to provide foundations in supporting the genuine selves of the participants, helping them grow in their capacities of being seen by others and building confidence in their words and validity in taking up space. Our podcast SHE CAST, meets weekly during the school year, and provides SHE CASTers with a larger platform in which to explore issues that matter to them."

Montgomery said the written performances over the course of the six summer intensive programs that stand out to her are Shower Thoughts, Hidden Lines: {hir}story, rumble, Girl Riot, Imperfect Truths and Uprising of the Snowflakes. She added that there are 22 episodes of SHE CAST with more to come in the ensuing months.

London-Shields emphasized that none of these programs would have been possible without {she crew} host and partner, the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum.

"All {she crew} programs have been run out of the Hull-House, starting with our second summer, and they have been a very big part in helping to make {she crew} the program that it has been," said London-Shields.

When asked about the best/favorite aspect of running {she crew}, Montgomery said that it was whenever they worked with the young people and something new was being explored.

"Being present for new connections, friendships, learning and risk-taking has been an incredible and enriching thing to witness," said Montgomery. "We have been able to see many {she crew} grow up and we are incredibly proud

of them."

When asked what they hope {she crew}'s legacy will be, Montgomery said it will be "held in the participants, the adults who helped make it happen and ourselves. {she crew} changed us forever, and I believe there will be imprints and reverberations within everyone who has been a part of this community."

As for their message to the world, London-Shields said COVID-19 has changed everyone's lives in various difficult and sometimes tragic ways but it is not an immoral or villainous character, it is a force of nature.

London-Shields added that this disease has amplified the disparities between people in even more pronounced ways and "shown our true natures both good and bad."

"During non-pandemic times, feminist leadership is rarely given value, funding or serious support," said London-Shields. "However when we compare the leadership that we see throughout our county and our world in response to COVID-19, you can see the stark difference between feminist leadership, and leadership fueled by toxic masculinity. Toxic masculinity, racism and a hatred of poor people is literally killing us. Feminist, anti-racist leadership matters. Policy for people over profits matters. Please, if you can, support your local grass-roots organizations."

Montgomery called on everyone to shift their support to organizations that {she crew} has worked with including Assata's Daughters, Midwest Access Coalition, Women Unite! and the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum.

New episodes of SHE CAST will continue to come out throughout 2020. To listen to SHE CAST, visit [soundcloud.com/shecast](https://soundcloud.com/shecast) or wherever podcasts are found.

See [SheCrew.org](https://SheCrew.org).



## Howard Brown Health

The U.S. Census happens only every 10 years. It counts everyone in the United States and uses that information to determine how many members of Congress represent your community and how federal funds are spent. Completing the census is one more way we can help each other. When you fill out the census, you help amplify the LGBTQ community's voice and ensure federal funds go to critical services like schools, libraries, nutrition and health programs, roads and much more.

Get started today at [howardbrown.org/2020census](https://howardbrown.org/2020census)

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# MEMORIES OF PRIDE

We asked our readers to share some of their favorite Pride memories from years past. Enjoy our shared history!



I never missed a parade and had the feet and stamina to be in heels all day ... so young. You might spot a very young BenDeLaCreme before she became famous. I have tons of photos from over the years. I liked this one.

Frida Lay



2018,  
Center on  
Halsted float.

It's always fun and exciting to see all the colorful floats at the Pride parade! As the float says, "Come out, come out, whoever you are" and join the fun!

Linda "Kizzy"  
Ramos



We saw each other at York on Diversey and had to take a picture together with our rainbow selves. A beautiful, joyful, proud moment.

Bill Bettencourt

It was the year of the United States Bicentennial when Diane photographed the 7th Annual Gay Pride Parade. The parade was a declaration of independence with marchers and floats on North Broadway Street, while traffic ran in the opposite direction.

"Kickoff," The Chicago Gay Pride Parade 1976,

Diane Alexander  
White



Pride 2018, my second favorite day only to Christmas. L to R: Our daughter Meta, me and daughter-in-law Joy Christopher. They've been married for 16 yrs. Their first parade marching, my 19th. They surprised me with the T-shirts, which moved me to tears (all four parents' names are on the back).

Proudly,

Phil Kroker,  
PFLAG Oak Park





I've been to the last 40 Chicago Pride parades. Every parade since 1979. During that time, it's gone from a march with cars still parked on the street to the five-hour-long corporate extravaganza it is today. I know that many people don't go anymore due to the changes, but for me, it's always been about spending the day with friends and celebrating together. Our current group still includes some of the same people as it did in the 1980s. I've been in the parade, on the sidelines, on porches, and one year had a 'skybox view' from an apartment above. We've cheered on mayors, veterans, dykes on bikes, Bozo and more recently, the AARP float. While I know that we don't have to have a parade to have "Pride", I will really miss the fun- and friend-filled day this year.

**Terri Klinsky**



The Chicago Coalition of Welcoming Churches are 80+ houses of worship sharing a witness that whatever universal power you believe in loves you as you were made and exist in this world. Love the energy we get from the crowd when we march through.

**Brent**



Full of love and pride! Kathleen & Lora.

**Lora Shade**



Growing up in Tennessee, there were no Pride parades when I lived there. After relocating to Chicago and coming out of the closet, I made sure never to miss one, either by watching from the sidelines or dancing on top of a float!

**Jerry Nunn**

Pride 2010. Walked 'til my feet bled, met so many wonderful people my first year in a new city and made friends that lasted a lifetime.

**Andi Gray**



Getting ready to march with the Hell In A Handbag float, Pride 2016.

**Aaron Smith**



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A picture of me at my most significant Pride celebration could never have been taken because I was hiding my face in the crowd. In 1992, I was nearing the end of a 20-year Air Force career, afraid to be spotted at a gay event due the outright ban on gays serving in the military that preceded Don't Ask, Don't Tell. I watched the parade from deep in the crowd, wearing a hooded T-shirt low over my eyes and darting away from any television camera I spotted. I'm pictured here two years later and newly out of that life-long military closet, riding high above the crowd on the Windy City Times/Nightspots float and waving my rainbow flag at every television camera I see.

**Jean Albright**

In 2008, my late husband John Pennycuff and I rode near the front of the parade in a convertible bearing "Just Married" signs. We proudly displayed our marriage license, having been married in San Francisco a few days earlier. The energy, excitement and scream of "Congratulations!" from the crowd were electrifying!

**Robert Castillo**



My favorite Pride memory has to be my first Pride spent with my girlfriend in 2018. We had been dating almost six months and I was really excited to experience it with her. Now we try to support as many POC LGBTQ+ events and fundraisers as we can.

**Pauline Zavala**



My first Pride ever, 1996. Here I am with my college friends (and one girl none of us can seem to remember). My friends Al and Amy's mom and dad are the quintessential PFLAG parents and we marched with the organization. I was not prepared for the outpouring of love that day.

**Kirk Williamson**

I attended the Chicago Pride Parade on June 30, 2019, with my best friend from England. She was in the country for the week and with both of us being LGBT+, we had to go to a Pride parade. We drove eight hours round-trip to Downtown Chicago for the parade, and even though it poured down rain we had the most amazing time.

**Demi Lawrence**



For Pride 2012, our family rode as plaintiffs aboard the LAMBDA Legal float decorated with one giant sign that simply read "IL LOVE," in support of the fight for marriage equality. As our float winded its way through the parade route, the crowd shouted words of support, "We love you LAMBDA!" "Fight for Us LAMBDA!" Our children waved their rainbow flags and held their "I Love My Family" signs high in the air.

**Theresa Santos-Volpe**



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## ELECTIONS 2020:

# Karla Bailey-Smith: Queer candidate takes stand in 88th District

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Illinois' 88th District includes spots such as Bloomington (some of it), Mayfair, Washington, Stanford, Shirley and Funks Grove—seemingly worlds away from Chicago, but the possible site of a sea change.

In November, out Democratic candidate Karla Bailey-Smith (who works as a house painter but who has a master's degree in scenic design for theater) will take on Republican Keith Sommer, who has held the office since 1999.

**Windy City Times: For our readers, describe the 88th District.**

Karla Bailey-Smith: The 88th District compasses the city of Bloomington—it's south and west sides; but when you get to the east side of Bloomington, the district starts to zigzag. Then it goes up at an angle into Tazewell County, and it does include southwest McLean County. Into Tazewell, it includes Mackinaw, Morton and Washington.

**WCT: And how would describe the citizens there?**

KB-S: It's a really big mix of people; there's a huge variety of constituents. You've got blue-collar people as well as professors (who work at Illinois Wesleyan and Illinois State). And then there are thousands of people who work for State Farm [whose corporate headquarters are in Bloomington]. We also have farmers and people who work for Caterpillar.

**WCT: We're all going through so much. How have you personally been affected (including your campaign) and how has the pandemic touched your district?**

KB-S: First and foremost, when the lockdown started, my campaign manager couldn't do much because everyone was at home and she lives in a rural area, and they don't have the bandwidth for everyone to use the internet at the same time. I heard stories about people driving to a McDonald's or Burger King so they could sit in the parking lot and use the internet.

Personally, my husband had a kidney and pancreas transplant four years ago, so he's immunocompromised. (I did spend over 20 years with female partners, but I'm married to him now.) I have to be extra-careful when I go out so I don't bring the virus home. Our restaurants and bars have outdoor seating currently; I go one night and people are drinking and not sitting six feet apart and talking—and it makes me very nervous. I can't sit two or three feet away from someone who's not wearing a mask, because I'll put myself and my family at risk.

Within my part of the district in Bloomington, there's the highest concentration of low-income people in that state, including people who've lost their jobs as well as immigrants who may



Karla Bailey-Smith.  
Photo courtesy of Bailey-Smith

have been excluded from benefits. A mutual-aid group was put together within the first week of the shutdown, bringing groceries to people and helping people who are high-risk.

Also, there's a movement to help incarcerated people who are being held on bail. Some people have been released, but not as many as some would've liked. And Bloomington finally voted to make emergency funds available to people who couldn't pay rent, after some pressure; the caveat is that the city council is making payments directly to landlords from funds that were directed from the states—and is not using the city's own funds.

**WCT: Have you had a chance to attend a protest in the wake of what happened to George Floyd?**

KB-S: Yes. I attended the first one we had, and that was just really a mom and some kids, and it was supported by our local Black Lives Matter group.

Then there was another one, recently. It was much bigger, and it was organized by the NAACP and an anti-bullying group called Not in Our Town. There were about a thousand people.

**WCT: One of your stances involves the recognition of gender non-binary people. Could you talk more about that?**

KB-S: On drivers' licenses, gender non-binary people will be recognized, but my opponent was against it. [Note: A Chicago Sun-Times article

noted that it may take years for gender non-binary individuals to actually receive those documents, as the system has to be updated.] And in healthcare and education, as well—these are areas where the state could encourage organizations to provide gender non-binary options to people.

**WCT: You also support the Keep Families Together Act.**

KB-S: Yes. That was an initiative to make sure that, for example, parents flagged for deportation wouldn't be separated from immigrant children. This was something else my opponent voted against.

The tricky thing is that a lot of the legislation I support has already been passed. It's just a way to distinguish myself from my opponent. As a state rep, he's voting against things I care about, and against things that affect people I care about.

If you look at the communities in Morton and Washington, I don't think you'll find as much support for the non-binary options, for example, that you'll find elsewhere. That's why I want to engage in community outreach and education.

**WCT: What do you think is the biggest problem for the LGBTQ community?**

KB-S: I'm going to say, in my district, the biggest problem is people who are not able to set aside their religious convictions and see LGBTQ people for the people they are—people who deserve protection.

**WCT: Let's switch gears. What are your thoughts about voting by mail?**

KB-S: Well, the governor has signed a law to provide vote-by-mail applications. If you have voted, you will get a vote-by-mail application,

and I think that's a huge step forward. I would like to see every registered voter get that application.

We shouldn't rely on voting in person. There are too many safety concerns.

**WCT: What is your biggest advantage in this race, and your biggest disadvantage?**

KB-S: I think my biggest advantage is the fact that a progressive, queer woman is running. I feel I'm inspiring people to engage in the political process. People from all over the district are excited that I'm running.

In the rural areas, there are people who are out in their own circles but not in the community, at large—and the same is true of progressives. We've had a Republican representative for 20 years, and many times he's had no opponents.

But my biggest disadvantage is that I'm a progressive, queer woman trying to do outreach in a traditionally Republican area.

**WCT: Of course, June is Pride Month. What does pride mean to you?**

KB-S: Well, it's always a time to celebrate the diversity, and to be visible and proud of who we are, as queer people. It's so nice that, for the most part, we can be less afraid for our personal safety—which is not true for trans people, especially trans people of color. I feel like I celebrate Pride a lot more openly now than I did 20 years ago.

Certainly in Bloomington, it's time for numerous celebrations. Bloomington Pride tends to be in July because we celebrate the anniversary of our gay bar, The Bistro. We normally have a big street party—but, unfortunately, that's been cancelled this year.

See [Unite88.org](http://Unite88.org).

## GLAAD unveils inaugural 20 Under 20 list

GLAAD revealed its inaugural Rising Stars 20 Under 20 list.

The list spotlights 20 young LGBTQ people, ages 20 and younger, who are accelerating acceptance of LGBTQ people while shaping the future of media and activism. GLAAD's inaugural 20 Under 20 list is presented exclusively by Teen Vogue.

Some of the honorees include gun-control activist Emma Gonzalez, reality star Jazz Jennings, The Empathy Alliance founder Sameer Jha, actress Josie Totah, advocate Ose Arheghan and model/artist Aaron Philip.

Honorees were chosen based on the following criteria: 1) The honoree works to positively affect marginalized communities, particularly LGBTQ people; 2) The honoree has been featured in or a part of broad regional or national news media stories, public media campaigns, or other public media initiatives; 3) The honoree enhances representation for LGBTQ people through media advocacy; and 4) The honoree utilizes an intersectional approach to LGBTQ advocacy.

See [GLAAD.org/risingstars](http://GLAAD.org/risingstars).

## U.S. Rep. Quigley releases Pride Month statement

U.S. Rep. Mike Quigley (D-Illinois) released the following statement in honor of LGBTQ+ Pride Month, which is observed every June in the United States:

"During Pride Month we honor the trans individuals, people of color, and all those who have led the LGBTQ+ movement closer to equality. Their willingness to challenge the status quo, make Americans uncomfortable, and engage in widespread protest is the reason so much progress has been made. They are the reason the AIDS crisis was addressed, LGBTQ+ Americans are able to openly serve in elected office, 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' came to an end, and the reason we have marriage equality today.

"Amidst this progress, we also recognize that this fight is not over. Trans women of color are murdered at a disproportionately high rate and LGBTQ+ people of color are too often targeted for violence.

"I proudly stand with LGBTQ+ Americans and I will do everything in my power to prevent President Trump and his administration from clawing back the community's hard-won victories. I will not rest until everyone—regardless of race, sexual orientation or gender identity—is met with true equality."

# Equality Illinois hosts statewide Pride Month virtual event

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Equality Illinois held a "Can't Stop Our Pride: One Day, One Illinois" afternoon-long virtual Pride month event June 20.

Equality Illinois Institute Board Chair Butch Trusty and Miss Trans Illinois USA 2020 Christina King kicked off the pre-recorded event. Trusty also gave a state of the state address.

An interfaith service followed with a drum performance by Mona Ritemon; messages of hope and love from Greater Peoria Affirming Faith Community leaders; a performance by singer/songwriter Jace William; a Nichiren Buddhism reflection and chant from Kelly Suzanne Saulsberry; Affirming Worship members singing "I Need You to Survive"; and a prayer by Meadville Lombard Theological School President Dr. Elias Ortega.

Equality Illinois CEO Brian C. Johnson led a conversation with U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin and former presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg.

Johnson asked Baldwin and Buttigieg about their first Pride celebration, adding he spent his in Los Angeles in 2004. Baldwin spoke about the

Pride rally she went to with others in 1989 in Madison, Wisconsin, while Buttigieg said it was on the day he married husband Chasten in 2018 in South Bend, Indiana.

Buttigieg also spoke about the need to protect Black trans women and the importance of solidarity and Baldwin concurred. She added that Black and Brown trans predecessors led the way beginning with the Stonewall Riots and how some fundamental things have not changed for LGBTQ people in many parts of the country.

"Moving from invisibility to visibility and silence to voice is vital," said Baldwin.

Johnson remarked that Pride started with a police protest and tied that to what is happening today with the #BlackLivesMatter protests across the world.

Baldwin and Buttigieg also chronicled their political careers and how they navigated being out politicians campaigning in conservative enclaves over the years.

Johnson also spoke with Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot about her first Pride experience in the early 1990s in New York City with her then-girlfriend, with her stating how overwhelming it was



Equality Illinois CEO Brian C. Johnson, U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin and former presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg (clockwise from upper left) in conversation. Screen shot by Carrie Maxwell

for them. (Lightfoot added that she celebrated Pride in Paris, among other cities.) She said the LGBTQ community has a lot to be thankful for but there is still bigotry, even within the City Council. Lightfoot said it is very important for the LGBTQ community to stick together and stand up for each other, adding that her LGBTQ heroes are the late Barbara Jordan and late Michael Bauer.

Lightfoot also touched on the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and #BlackLivesMatter protests and how these two events have shaped her as a mayor.

Community conversations and performances by

LGBTQ and allied leaders in Bloomington-Normal, Carbondale, Champaign-Urbana, Chicago, Peoria, the Quad Cities and Springfield took place throughout the event.

Sprinkled throughout the event were recorded messages from former Second Lady Dr. Jill Biden, U.S. Sens. Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth, Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker, Illinois Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton, Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul, Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs and Illinois Comptroller Susana Mendoza, among many others.

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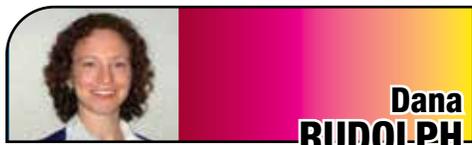
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## viewpoints



**Dana  
RUDOLPH**

## MOMBIAN

# Supporting LGBTQ families requires that Black Lives Matter

Black lives matter. Black LGBTQ lives matter. And we will never have a just world for LGBTQ families until we have racial justice.

Black same-sex couples are roughly twice as likely as white same-sex couples to be raising a biological, step, or adopted child, according to UCLA's Williams Institute. And 50 percent of children under 18 living with same-sex couples are non-white compared to 41 percent of children living with different-sex couples. (Statistics were not available for other LGBTQ identities.) Even if the numbers were far less, of course, these families would still deserve equality and justice—to help underscore just how many LGBTQ families are impacted by ongoing racism in our country.

Racism is a formidable enemy, though, sometimes overt but often subtle. I can only speak to it from my perspective as a white person with a white child, but here are some of the things I am trying to do—and resolve to do better—to help dismantle it. I offer them as suggestions for others engaging in this work as well.

—Educate myself. My day job is with a nonprofit program focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion, which requires a fair bit of reading on the subject, but I've found there's always more to learn about racism's history, impact, and the perspectives of those impacted. I continue to read, consume podcasts and videos, and listen to colleagues and friends of color when they choose to share their thoughts.

There are a lot of good resource lists on racism going around right now, but I want to caution us white folks not to get caught up in feeling that we need to get through every article, book, movie, and podcast on a multi-page list before taking action. Educating ourselves on racism is an ongoing process. We shouldn't feel we need to "finish" (no one ever can) before getting out into the real world and trying to make a difference. We should also not see resource lists as ends in themselves or view our progress through them as a sign of how "woke" we are. Read and listen humbly. Know there is always more.

I'm not going to offer my own list here, as there are many others already, but if you need a place to begin, I suggest the National Museum of African American History and Culture's new Talking About Race portal, which can easily be found with an online search.

—Self-reflect and self-improve. I try not to be racist but, as a white person, I know there are times when I am, albeit unintentionally. And simply by my privilege as a white person in our society, I am tainted by the systemic racism woven into its fabric, benefitting me in ways I may not even realize. This is not a reason to flagellate myself; instead, I need to ask what I can do to be more thoughtful about my words and actions, to use my privilege to be a better ally and accomplice, and to work towards a more just world.

—Teach my son. One of the most important anti-racist actions parents can take, I believe, is to show our children how to be anti-racist as well. My spouse and I have tried to teach our son not only that people of all skin tones are to be valued and respected, but that his peers of color may have very different experiences in the world because of systemic racism. We want him to be thoughtfully color aware, not color blind. We've tried to expose him at every age to books, shows, and movies that not only include characters of color, but that are told from their perspectives.

Hand in hand with finding "diverse" media, however, we parents should talk with our children in age-appropriate ways when we find biases and lack

of representation in any children's media. Why don't we see people of color here? How is this character a stereotype? And how can we see representation in one way but biases in another?

My suggested place for parents to begin is EmbraceRace (embracerace.org), which offers not only resources but also a community of support for parents, teachers, and others of all racial identities. Additionally, on the Oprah Magazine website, award-winning author and Black queer mom Jacqueline Woodson has offered a list of recommended books on racism and race for children of all ages. (Go to oprahmag.com and search for "Jacqueline Woodson.") These are just starting points.

—Take action in the world. First, we should each speak out any time we see racism, from overt slurs, to subtle microaggressions, to lack of representation in workplaces, schools, and other venues. That necessary work can be supplemented by attending rallies and vigils, signing petitions, contacting our elected officials, and donating money and time to civil rights organizations and others that work with marginalized communities, as we are able. One extensive list of "Ways to Help" is at blacklivesmatters.carrd.co.

Yes, we may not always do or say the right thing; we may feel awkward; we may stumble. We should not let these fears keep us from doing anything, however. We need to come into the work knowing it is a process and being willing to listen, apologize, learn, and keep trying.

Pride was born from protest and resistance, led by people of color like Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera, Miss Major and Stormé DeLarverie. Many of our LGBTQ families would not exist today if it wasn't for the smoldering revolution that they sparked into open flame. May we honor their legacy as we work for inclusion, equality, and justice.

**Dana Rudolph is the founder and publisher of Mombian (mombian.com), a GLAAD Media Award-winning blog and resource directory for LGBTQ parents.**

## letters

### We stand with you

It has been a few weeks since the violent death of George Floyd at the hands of four former Minneapolis police officers, who have since been charged with murder.

On a personal level, I am heartbroken and deeply outraged by this senseless killing. TPAN stands in solidarity with all who protest the violence perpetrated against George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery and so many other Black and Brown people who have lost their lives as a result of police brutality. Our hearts go out to the

victims and the families whose lives have been shattered and will never be the same.

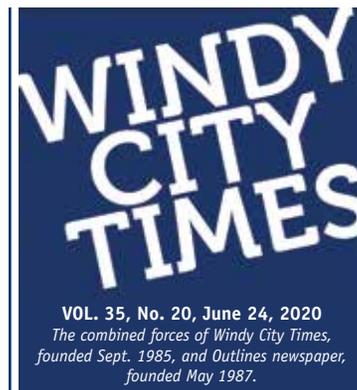
This murder and the anguish and collective anger we feel must be a part of change. We cannot honor George Floyd or seek justice without also examining racism, inequities in access to care, and discrimination against Black and Brown people and marginalized and disenfranchised communities. Change will not happen overnight, by email, or via a social media post, it will require a collective movement and firm commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion at every level—societal, institutional, and individual. Racial and social justice must be the lens through

which we view all of our work.

Throughout its more than 30-year history, TPAN has long fought for people who are marginalized and oppressed. We reaffirm our commitment today by standing together with everyone who fights racism, anti-blackness and white supremacy in all its forms, and state unequivocally that:

Black Lives Matter.

*In solidarity,  
Julie Supple  
Interim CEO  
TPAN*



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WINDY  
CITY  
TIMES

## ARTS + THEATER

Danielle  
Levsky of  
Sapphfest:  
Pride Edition,  
Violet  
Surprise.  
Photo  
courtesy of  
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## THEATER

# Despite everything, there are shows for Pride Week

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

It's almost impossible to write about the indelible events of 2020 (which is still not quite half over) without diminishing them. Words fall short in describing—let alone analyzing—the failures of many government entities across the country to meet the COVID-19 pandemic in timely and forceful ways, while millions of selfish, self-righteous and ignorant individual citizens have refused to cooperate with efforts to beat back infection.

Theaters around the world—stage, film, dance and concert venues—were among the first popular institutions to be shut down (along with schools) and still are not scheduled to re-open any time soon (except, perhaps, movie theaters). COVID-19 brought at least two hit LGBTQ+ shows to an early close: *The Boys in the Band*, at Windy City Playhouse; and *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert—The Musical*, at the Mercury Theater.

The second great shoe to drop in 2020—the uprising of our BIPOC (Black, indigenous and people of color) individuals and their allies in an angry but just demand for change—is far too profound and far-reaching to summarize in a few words. It, too, has had a direct impact on this country's already imperiled theater industry. In Chicago, the combination of economic disaster and political force aimed at show business already has resulted in the permanent closure of two theater companies (the Mercury Theater and the iO) as well as the resignation of two leadership individuals (the longtime CEO of The Second City and the freshly appointed Executive Artistic Director of Victory Gardens Theater).

COVID-19 and the aftermath of the George Floyd killing most assuredly have put a somber twist on the usually joyous celebration of Pride Month, which typically is marked by a small explosion of theatrical activity. Even so, there still are a few celebratory events on offer for folks who may wish to seek out some theatrical entertainment via the internet, and they are being presented by the leadership theater companies within our broad LGBTQ+ communities.

—Packing, *About Face Theatre*, through July 12; \$15: This is a complete performance of the *About Face* hit from last fall, written and performed by Scott Bradley and directed by Chay Yew. It's Bradley's emotional and revealing life story over the course of 30 years, from small town Iowa boy to big city gay man, which *Windy City Times* called "an important document of queer life... the warmth expressed in his acceptance and love for his Midwestern home is undeniable." The video presentation was professionally shot during a live performance and is available on demand.

—Lockdown! *The Golden Girls Lost Episodes, Vol. 4, Hell in a Handbag Productions*, June 25-Aug. 8; \$20: A rarity for internet theater, a world premiere, written by company founder David Cerda and starring Cerda and other Handbag regulars as Dorothy, Rose, Blanche and Sophia. This new episode originally was intended for live stage production, but come the lockdown, Cerda and cohorts rewrote it specifically for streaming, directed by Spenser Davis, and with a timely storyline, too. You know, Cerda and his fellow ensemble members have been playing the *Golden Girls* so long, they nearly are golden girls themselves! Better catch 'em while they still can kick.

—The Last Sunday in June, *Pride Films & Plays*, June 28, 7 p.m.; \$10—*Pride Films & Plays* continues its *Pride in Place* streaming series of readings of signifi-

Turn to page 27

## PODCASTS

# 'A Queer Serial' delves into LGBTQ history

BY EMILY REILLY

Devlyn Camp, the host of A Queer Serial podcast, is preparing for season two, continuing the stories of milestones in LGBTQ history before the Stonewall Riots.

The show explores the world of lost LGBTQ history through its victories, movements, front-runners, government scandals and, most prominently, the secret queer organization known as The Mattachine Society.

"This next season continues on the same story, but the Mattachinos take a back seat as supporting characters of this larger narrative of gay liberation," said Camp (who goes by the pronouns they and them). "I'm following the movement from day one to Stonewall, so this is no longer just about gay white men. This is about an intersectionality story of people of all sexualities, races, genders and classes that led the queer movement."

It all started one day in Camp's apartment when they discovered a book about The Mattachine Society and couldn't pull away from it. Inspired, they fell into a rabbit hole of documentaries, archives, books, all connecting important stories in history. After plenty of writing and brainstorming, Camp ultimately decided a podcast to be the golden medium to share these fascinating stories from the past.

"My goal is to talk about how queer people found liberation before Stonewall ever happened," said Camp.

For example, Camp discusses the story of José Sarria, a drag queen who performed opera parodies in San Francisco during the 1960s. By politically engaging his audience, he became a prominent figure in queer history, and eventually became the first openly gay person to run for office in the United States.

Season two kicks off with the emergence of the Daughters of Bilitis (DoB) in 1955, a similar organization to the Mattachine Society. As the first lesbian civil and political rights organization in

the United States, the DoB became increasingly powerful in their efforts to fight for reform and research. This brought about a magazine called The Ladder that was issued from the 1950s to the 1970's. The season continues to explore a more diverse array of historical LGBTQ subjects prior to Stonewall.

Camp enlivens each episode with witty and thoughtful commentary beyond the storyline,



Devlyn Camp and Randy Wicker, a lifelong activist and Mattachine Society member.

Photo by Michael Kasino

connecting dots between major historical themes and present-day events.

In light of recent events, Camp stressed the importance of the current marches, protests, and fundraisers all over the world for the Black Lives Matter movement. They emphasized that the gay community owes its momentum to those that fought for Civil Rights.

"People that organized protests in the '50s and '60s created these tools and left them behind for us. The Queer Liberation Movement was taking every single cue of The Civil Rights Movement," said Camp. "The Daughters of Bilitis had the first influx of members while Rosa Parks was leading her Bus Boycott through Montgomery, Alabama. They saw what was possible."

The gay liberation movement has historically

overlapped with the civil rights movement in the United States, and A Queer Serial doesn't shy away from addressing the intersectionality and diversity that helped the movement get to where it is today.

"People assume this is a largely white story, but some of the strongest leaders of the movement were people of color," said Camp. "There were so many people of different identities than queer history leads us to believe."

While many LGBTQ history enthusiasts already know the stories of Dale Jennings, Jose Sarria or the Daughters of Bilitis, it's rare to find an outlet that connects stories like these together, addressing their simultaneous existence in history.

The podcast will air approximately 26 episodes, as well as bonus episodes found on Patreon. Camp both writes and produces the show, balancing the schedule's demand while not sacrificing its quality for listeners.

"In my mind, I want to try to release it as soon as possible, but I also want it to be good. This is the second season, and as far as I'm planning right now, is the end of it. I wanted to start this story with The Mattachine and then go up to one year after Stonewall to see the result of it all, and that is it. I really just want to tell the story as best as I can."

Funded on donations, A Queer Serial's Patreon page is available for contribution, where features like bonus episodes and prizes are available for supporters. For regular updates on Instagram and Twitter, follow @queerserial.



Proud.

Image courtesy of Music Box Theatre

## Music Box, Kino Lorber hosting film 'Proud'

To honor Pride Month, the Music Box Theatre and Kino Lorber are presenting Philippe Faucon's three-part episodic cinema event Proud as a Virtual Cinema presentation.

The Virtual Cinema experience was created to assist temporarily closed independent theaters.

In 1981, it was still illegal to be gay in France. Today, same-sex marriage is recognized and has paved the way for legalizing the adoption of children by LGBTQ families. Proud tells the story of Charles, Victor and Diego—three generations of the same family who represent the seismic social changes that took place in just three decades.

Rentals for the three-part series are \$12 total, and are good for five days. For information on rentals, visit <https://musicboxtheatre.com/films/proud>.

The Virtual Cinema link will be <https://kinomarquee.com/film/proud/5ee119fbfbff70001f4ffc6/music-box-theatre>, which will be active June 19.

## SHOWS from page 27

cant LGBTQ+ works with Jonathan Tolins's 2003 play, set in Greenwich Village on the day of the annual Pride Parade, as June 28 would have been this year. Similar to *The Boys in the Band*, but 35 years later and more evolved, it features different gay types who are sometimes witty, sometimes wise and frequently adder-tongued.



This one-time-only event is streamed live, directed by Michael Rashid. The *Pride in Place* series concludes (at least for the time being) with a July 1, 7 p.m. live reading of Brad Fraser's dark thriller, *Unidentified Human Remains the True Nature of Love*.

—SapphFest: *Pride Edition*, Violet Surprise, June 25-26, 7:30 p.m.; free—Violet surprise, a new queer feminist theater company, is offering two different digital variety shows featuring solo performances and short plays by queer women and non-binary artists. Both shows are free via Zoom, but you'll need to log in via the Violet Sur-

prise Facebook page or this link: <https://zoom.us/j/95786910011>.

This is the second digital show created by director Iris Sowlat and playwright Allison Fradkin, the company founders. Violet Surprise has a mission to produce new works which validate the identities and experiences of queer women.

—That's Queer, *Grandma*, PlayMakers Laboratory, Monday nights June 22-July 6; free—Now

in its 19th year, the PlayMakers Laboratory ensemble celebrates Pride Month with a virtual collection of hilarious and heartfelt sketches "written by kids, performed by grownups and enjoyed by humans" under the direction of Brandon Cloyd.



## Out local musician releasing album, launching music station

Out local musician Scott Free Scott Free is releasing his new album, *The Last Revolution*, on Friday, July 3, and is launching Alt Q Radio, an independent queer music station.

The *Last Revolution*, described as a protest album, is Free's first solo album in 12 years. About the subject matter of the timely album, Free said in a statement, "I've always looked at the world from an outsider viewpoint, so this delving into the realm of protest and social justice music is natural for me. I've always done a form of protest in my music, although in the past it was focused from a personal perspective. This time I wanted to take myself out of it - let the song itself be the focus."

Free added that his decision to do an all-protest song album was also "a way to explore ways to merge the more modern genres of punk and rap with the original acoustic protest genre: folk."

He has also launched Alt Q Radio, an independent queer music station. It is a commercial-free 24-hour station on the Live365, the internet radio broadcasting network. There are programs featuring women's music, queercore, trans musicians and queer rap, among others. Free said, "The overall focus of the station is new music; we want to be on top of the latest releases by independent queer artists."

Free has released four previous solo albums, and an LGBT family album by his cartoon group The Diesel Tykes, which featured many Chicago LGBT musicians. He has two original cast albums of his musicals, *Zombie Bathhouse* (book by Brian Kirst) and *Witches Among Us* (book by Rick Karlin). Scott was a producer in the original house-music scene in Chicago, was part of the '90s Chicago queercore scene, and had a

rap video on BET. Free was inducted into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame in 2010.

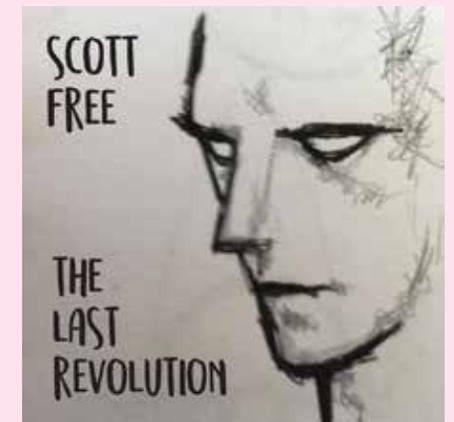
He currently produces *Homolatte*, the longest-running queer performance series in the country (although on hiatus during the pandemic).

The *Last Revolution* will be available on Bandcamp, Spotify and iTunes.



Above: Scott Free. Below: *The Last Revolution*.

Images courtesy of Free



## Telling our stories on stage for 25 years!

Visit [aboutfacetheatre.com](http://aboutfacetheatre.com) for Pride Month streaming content.

NOW STREAMING

# PACKING

Written & Performed by SCOTT BRADLEY Directed by CHAY YEW

"A brave story of growing up queer"  
—Chicago Tribune

Scott Bradley's hilarious and disarming personal journey through recent queer history is now streaming thru July 12.

# POWER IN PRIDE

at Home

Bite-sized performances and Q&As from AFT's community engagement ensemble. New episodes every Tuesday and Thursday thru July 9.



Dashaun Wesley.  
Photo by Barbara Nitke/HBO Max

## TELEVISION

# Dashaun Wesley spills the tea on HBO Max's 'Legendary'

BY JERRY NUNN

"Ladies, gentlemen and genderqueers" exclaims Dashaun Wesley as host and emcee for the new ballroom culture reality-competition show *Legendary*, on HBO Max.

Originally from Brooklyn, New York, he came out at 14 and visited Christopher Street in the West Village often while growing up. He described it as a place where he could be himself as an out gay man. The pier there was where he first saw vogue battles, inspiring him to begin competing, eventually earning the title as King of Vogue.

Fans of America's Best Dance Crew will recognize him as a member of Vogue Evolution. He played Shadow Wintour on the FX series *Pose* and appeared on the big screen for *Magic Mike XXL*.

Brought to life by Scout Productions, *Legendary* is a competition show where different houses perform for judges to take home a grand prize of \$100,000. The judging panel consists of Law Roach, Jameela Jamil, Leiomy Maldonado and Megan Thee Stallion.

**Windy City Times: Had you emceed in the past before *Legendary*?**

Dashaun Wesley: When I found ballroom, I was a competitor in clubs with a fake ID, tagging along with my friends. I always wanted to use my voice. I have a nice voice, not to toot my own horn here. I grabbed the mic for the first time ever in 2003. From that point forward, I never let it go.

**WCT: Is it a lot of freestyling?**

DW: Yes, directly on the spot. However you feel, you call it. You have to flip it around and make it work for the crowd.

**WCT: Were you nervous about being a commentator on *Legendary*?**

DW: To be honest, I practiced before the show. Everyone gets nervous because we don't know how it will be shot or how we will be seen. As a ballroom performer, you don't think you can go

out there and it will be easy peasy, but you have to think positive.

**WCT: You must have won trophies in the past with the name King of Vogue.**

DW: Yes, gawd. In Georgia, one of the highest performance categories for \$5,000 went to vogue, so I am the highest paid voguer out there.

**WCT: Talk about the creation of *Legendary*.**

DW: It started with Scout Productions: David Collins, Rob Eric and Michael Williams, who came to us with the idea and had won Emmys in the past for *Queer Eye*. At first, I was going to be a competitor on the show. I am a house parent as well with the House of Lanvin. When we shot the pilot for the show, I was on there with my house members.

This was two years ago, they eventually spoke to me about being the emcee and I was glad to accept the position.

**WCT: What are your thoughts on the judging panel of *Legendary*?**

DW: I love how the judges have their own opinions and views. That is how it is in the actual scene. The judges come dressed up and sit to watch the competitors.

Leiomy is a person of experience and a legend in the ballroom culture. Momma don't play no games at all! Megan Thee Stallion sees things from a neutral point of view. Jameela is the caregiver and Law gives the tough love.

**WCT: Talk about the moment when the audience turned against guest judge Dominique Jackson on episode three.**

DW: That was the full ballroom experience, where the crowd didn't agree with a judge. They will yell at a judge and the judge is there to do a job. Dominique's reaction was so real and fab at that moment.

**WCT: DJ MikeQ handles the music?**

DW: Yes and MikeQ has been in this just as long as I have. He creates his own tracks. The music is not all about dance, but music plays a part as far



Dominique Jackson and Dashaun Wesley.  
Photo by HBO Max

as communication.

Ballroom is not just about voguing. It's about so many different categories.

**WCT: There is a lot of diversity on *Legendary*, but what are your thoughts on the all-cis girl group House of Ninja? I know you are a big fan of their inspiration, Benny Ninja.**

DW: In conversations about ballroom cultures, you will hear a lot about the Black and Latinx community. This show is a light that there are other parts to our communities. We have categories for trans men, trans women, gay men [and] drag queens; straight men can walk, too. I think it's important because there are women out there that want to participate in ballroom.

**WCT: There are some touching stories on *Legendary*. Has there been one that meant a lot to you?**

DW: Every time I hear a story I want to cry. These are true stories that people should connect with. Our rights are free, but there are a lot of things to go for and achieve. *Legendary* shows what's happening at the moment. There are kids that are having problems at home still or don't have places to live. I am emotional hearing all of them.

**WCT: Shorty, from *House of Ebony*, is from Chicago and mentioned possibly having no home here.**

DW: These are the stories we need to tell. There are so many people going through this that we haven't shown on TV until now.

**WCT: [Actor] Jack Mizrahi worked on *Pose* and *Legendary*. Did you know him well before this?**

DW: He is my gay mother. I have known him since I came out. He is an icon for ballroom culture on the microphone. It is awesome to work with him on both shows.

Years ago, we unknowingly signed up for the same hosting class in New York City. We talked about the future and here we are.

**WCT: What does the TV show *Pose* get right or wrong?**

DW: There's only so much story you can tell in a certain amount of time. It is hard to get the message across to everyone, because there's so little time. There are a lot of things that I wish could be said through *Pose*, but not enough time to say it.

*Pose* has been such an amazing opportunity. By the way, I love playing dress up and it's the best thing ever. I love outfits that shimmer and shine. *Pose* captures the visual of it all.

**WCT: Have you ever hurt yourself voguing?**

DW: Yes, a few times. When you are in a battle moment, you just don't see anybody. I remember not having any money and doing what I had to do to earn that prize. I have messed up my knee by the way I landed. I sprained an ankle before and still won. Of course I still hung out at the ball afterward even with a sprained ankle!

**WCT: What would you like to see on a second season of *Legendary*?**

DW: New houses. There are so many houses out there. I would like to see new challenges. There are more faces to bring in from the community to show their talents, whether as a judge or participant.

**WCT: What do you think about HBO Max removing the movie *Gone With the Wind* from its library?**

DW: I saw those conversations on Twitter and I am sad about it. I wanted to watch it, but now I can't. I am sure I will watch it somewhere. People are talking!

**WCT: How are you doing with Pride and protesting this month?**

DW: We had one of the very first protests out here in Los Angeles, which was awesome. I have been through experiences like that before, being from New York. I appreciate the protests. Things get crazy and wild, but messages need to be put out there.

For Pride, we would usually be celebrating here in LA. This pulls it back a bit. We need to let the world know why we do this. I wish we could just celebrate who we are the last week and have a good time.

We are going through something right now, but we do have a show that is representing Black, queer, trans, lesbian and gay issues. When things aren't open right now, we can still come home and watch *Legendary*.

**New episodes of *Legendary* debut every Thursday on HBO Max.com and more of the King of Vogue can be found at DashaunWesley.com.**

## 'ABC 7 Celebrates Pride: Fun and Fabulous' to run June 28

The 2020 Non-Equity Jeff Awards program wAlthough the Chicago Pride Parade will not take place this year, the celebration of the LGBTQ+ community will continue on ABC 7 during an hour of musical performances, tributes, highlights of past parades and celebrity appearances.

"ABC 7 Celebrates Pride: Fun and Fabulous" will air Sunday, June 28, at 4 and 11 p.m. Janet Davies and Terrell Brown will co-host the event.

The program is being dedicated to Chicago LGBTQ+ first responders battling the COVID-19 pandemic. Several of these everyday heroes will share their first-person experiences. There will also be a special tribute to Richard Pfeiffer, the founder and organizer of Chicago's Pride Parade for 50 years until his death last October.

There will also be performances from local '80s cover band 16 Candles; Katie Kadan, a Chicago native and a 2019 finalist on the NBC show The Voice; and Haley Reinhart, a Wheeling native and a former American Idol finalist.

See ABC7Chicago.com.



Katie Kadan of The Voice is slated to perform as part of ABC7's Pride broadcast. NBC photo



Detail from an image in Sam Kirk and Jenny Q's installation. courtesy of Angela Crawford

## LGBTQ artists' installation being moved to Chicago

For the closing ceremony of last summer's World Pride in New York City, a work of art celebrating the LGBTQ community was wrapped around Times Square's main stage. For five days, this work took up an entire block, depicting large and powerful portraits of LGBTQ people, most of them people of color.

Sam Kirk and her partner, Jenny Q, created the installation.

The first installation of several along the Miracle Mile will take place Wed., June 24, at 401 N. Michigan Ave. Other installations along the Miracle Mile will be installed in the next week and remain through the end of July. Another installation is coming to the Cultural Center later this month and will be on view through September.

Kirk's artwork has been featured throughout Chicago. Some of her artwork has been displayed to transform some of Chicago's damaged, boarded-up storefronts and community faces caused by civil unrest into messages of Hope and Unity.

See IAmSamKirk.com for more of her artwork.



**HOSTED BY JANET DAVIES & TERRELL BROWN**  
**SUNDAY, JUNE 28 AT 4PM & 11PM**

Michael Cimino and George Sear in *Love, Victor*. Photo from Hulu



NUNN ON ONE: TELEVISION

## Brian Tanen talks about 'Love, Simon' spinoff 'Love, Victor'

BY JERRY NUNN

Ready to binge a new queer-centered television series that had a spoonful too much gay sugar to let the medicine go down for Disney? Well, *Love, Victor* might be the cure you are looking for to pass the time during a quarantine, thanks to Hulu.

*Love, Victor* is the story of a student named Victor Salazar struggling with his sexual orientation at Creekwood High School. It's set in the same high school where the movie *Love, Simon* occurred in a similar situation. The first season begins with the young sophomore adjusting to a new school and seeking advice from Simon on social media.

Brian Tanen is the co-showrunner and executive producer for Hulu's *Love, Victor*. He has written for shows such as *Ugly Betty*, *Desperate Housewives*, *Atypical* and *Devious Maids*.

**Windy City Times: If there was a show called *Love, Brian*, what would it be about?**

Brian Tanen: I grew up in South Florida and I am a proud member of the LGBT community. I didn't embrace that part of my identity until college. I come at this project as someone who had been closeted in high school and really related to it.

I have been in Los Angeles for the past 15 years

and live with my partner Scott and dog Dolly. I have worked on shows like *Ugly Betty*, *Desperate Housewives* and most recently *Grand Hotel*, which I created for ABC. All of those shows touched on queer storylines.

*Love, Victor* is the first one for me centered on a gay protagonist, which was exciting. I wish I had this show when I was in high school. I hope it will be meaningful to young people going through these same things.

**WCT: Did you enjoy the movie *Love, Simon*?**

BT: Yes, I came in as a fan. Isaac Aptaker and Elizabeth Berger wrote the movie, then created this series. They brought me on to co-show run with them. Together we came up with all the storylines and what Victor's journey was going to be.

**WCT: Was the series completed when it was originally presented to Disney?**

BT: The project was developed under Disney+. To Disney's credit, when we, as the creative team, pushed towards having more adult territory and having an authentic story, they encouraged us to have the best version of the show.

It was a corporate decision to house the show on Hulu, rather than Disney+. I know there is some controversy around that decision, but my takeaway is that I am thrilled that we landed on Hulu. For longevity purposes, the show will find a nice long life on Hulu. The characters can grow

up and have all the experiences of red-blooded American teenagers with sex being part of the conversation of sexuality. These characters can go places beyond kissing. I think those stories are easier to tell on Hulu.

**WCT: Why do you think a series like *Love, Victor* is important today?**

BT: That's a great question. At the beginning of the process, we talked in the writer's room about whether coming out is still difficult for teenagers. There's a perception in 2020 that being gay is more normalized than 20 years ago and that it's no big deal for kids anymore.

We talked to three different groups of teenagers from various high schools around Los Angeles. They all spoke about there not being overt bullying towards kids that are gay, but being gay is still different. There is still a stigma and not many gay people were out in their high school at that time. The societal pressure is still there to fit in, so this show is important today.

**WCT: What are your thoughts on straight actors playing the lead gay roles in *Love, Victor*?**

BT: I personally am a champion for having LG-BTQIA representation both behind and in front of the camera. You can see that reflected on the show, especially on the eighth episode of this season in which Victor goes to New York and meets a group of friends that is a mixture of different types of queer kids.

I understand the criticism of not casting non-LGBT actors in those parts. The other side of that argument, especially when casting teenagers, is about limiting who you cast. I think it's an important debate to be having. I always want more LGBT representation.

**WCT: The date [of the debut] was shifted from June 19 to the 17 because of Juneteenth?**

BT: Yes. Everyone wanted to honor Juneteenth. This is a show about inclusivity and, especially during Pride month, gay rights as we know them are largely born out of the Stonewall riots led by Black, trans activists. The LGBT community has a great deal of gratitude towards Black activists protesting in solidarity for our movement and we should be doing the same. Our show is about equality and inclusion, so I think it was the right call to move the premiere date.

**WCT: I noticed LGBT artists on the soundtrack, such as Tyler Glenn and Leland.**

BT: There was an intentional effort to include LGBTQ artists throughout this season. Leland produced many of the tracks and wrote our theme song with Tyler Glenn performing it. We had a Carly Rae Jepsen cover on episode three, showing that non-queer artists can be included that have fan bases in our community. There was a real intentionality on the music choices throughout the season.

**WCT: Several of the cast members sing, so I am waiting for a musical episode!**

BT: Yes. They love to sing on Twitter and they were always dancing between takes. They are the sweetest, funniest people and very talented.

**WCT: You noticed many gay allies on *Love, Victor*. You obviously worked with Ana Ortiz before.**

BT: This is my third show with Ana Ortiz. We worked on *Ugly Betty*, the first show I was a writer on. She played the mother of a gay teen

Brian Tanen. Photo from Hulu



on that show, as well, but an absolutely different kind of parent. Reuniting with her here was a dream come true.

There was a lot of great will from people who enjoyed the movie. I was hoping to get the RuPaul drag queen Katya and got an immediate yes. We had a basketball storyline and Jason Collins loved the movie, so he participated. We reached out to Sophia Bush, Ali Wong and Mekhi Phifer to be a part of this season. People wanted to be a part of this inclusive show.

**WCT: Talk about the Latinx aspect [of] *Love, Victor*.**

BT: The decision to make this family LatinX was to tell a different story. Simon in the movie was a white kid with a very privileged background. He had a family that made it easier for him to come out. This has a financial situation that is different and has representation for a queer, non-white character. This allowed us to tell a different narrative with other cultural expectations.

Our intention was to be specific to the Latin identities of our actors. James Martinez's character is Colombian because he is Colombian in real life. Ana Ortiz is Puerto Rican, as is Michael Cimino's background. The family has cultural ties to being both Colombian and Puerto Rican. The set design has knickknacks from their heritage and even the coffee that they drink is reflective of both cultures.

**WCT: What would you like to see in season two for *Love, Victor*?**

BT: With Hulu, I would love to see the show delving into more adult themes and our characters having a sex life. We could see them grow up and find out what happens next. I think that's a natural place for the show to go.

Sometimes there are stories where characters are discovering themselves and it isn't threatening to straight audiences. We want this to be a show about and for gay people. At age 15, the character may not know who they are or what they want, but once those things are identified it would be so exciting to see the characters have that kind of representation. To me, Victor's story is just starting at the last moments on the finale.

*Love, Victor* is streaming all 10 episodes on Hulu.com.

Zach Barack.  
Photo by Max Foley



## TELEVISION

## Marvel's first openly trans actor on Pride, BLM and Hollywood

BY EMILY REILLY

Zach Barack made cinematic history as Marvel's first openly trans actor in the 2019 film *Spider-Man: Far from Home*. He talked with Windy City Times about his experiences in Hollywood, his stand-up comedy, current social issues and Pride

Month.

**Windy City Times:** You've said before that you were 17 the first time you saw a transgender person on TV, and it was really meaningful moment. How does it feel to be that same representation for young LGBTQ fans watching you in *Spider-Man: Far From Home*?

Zach Barack: It was really meaningful. It's kind of weird because I think everything is happening on a different scale now. There's a movie about to come out on Netflix about trans representation and it was bizarre to see how many people could interview for it. I think when I was in high school I could count on two fingers how many trans actors' names I knew. It's still reasonably small but I think being part of that has been monumental in my life and I hope it is meaningful for other people.

**WCT:** As a trans man who has worked in Hollywood and has experience in the industry, do you believe that Hollywood is becoming a more welcoming place for the LGBTQ community?

ZB: Yeah, there's this movement and I think it felt like a really slow process as a young person, watching the roles happen, because they started out more or less the same. It's a lot of tragedy. And it sometimes still is. I get that they're trying to reflect some truth there but the oversaturation of it can be traumatizing. We need to start being humanized in the media. It feels like we've been working out the kinks with the people in power but I really do want to see folks being represented.

**WCT:** It's Pride Month, but also a pivotal time for civil rights. Many people in the LGBTQ community are elevating Black voices in light of the Black Lives Matter movement. What are your thoughts on the current BLM movement and how many are keeping its momentum going with Pride?

ZB: I think the really beautiful thing about being queer is that you can have an intersectional identity. Because of that, we have a responsibility to lift up Black voices right now. There are Black queer people a part of our community; it's our responsibility. The gay rights movement was started by Black and Brown trans people and queer people on the front lines.

Across the nation, a lot has changed for the gay community, and for what it's worth I've had it pretty damn easy in terms of the way the world

has been; to be privileged enough to be born in this time, I see it as a responsibility to be an advocate. Someone once said the best way to be an ally is to not always be speaking into the microphone, but to build the stage, put the microphone on it and let the person who most needs to speak, speak. That's what we need to be doing as non-Black queer people right now: building stages for Black queer people. Just this month, we've lost three trans women of color, [and] it's the same month we've had our healthcare protections repealed and the same month that a popular children's author [Harry Potter's J.K. Rowling] spoke against the movement.

**WCT:** What are some social issues you consider yourself an activist in?

ZB: The intersection of queerness is so broad, it hits a lot of points in my identity. Another thing I'm passionate about is my mental health journey in high school; I struggled a lot. I ended up transferring high schools and doing one of those quirky wilderness therapy programs for delinquents. I had an interesting journey; the layers to being a person who's queer, and unpacking that in therapy for years of your life is a privilege. I think every queer person should have access to therapy. Trauma and being queer in a lot of ways can often go hand-in-hand.

**WCT:** Regarding other forms of entertainment, I know you also do stand-up comedy. What drew you into the comedy scene?

ZB: I was in college and I started as a music industry major, but I just really liked performing. I saw there was a stand-up class at USC. As soon as I got on stage, I thought it was fun because there's nothing more humiliating after something doesn't work. After that, nothing is scary. I think it's really fun to watch other people then to get up and do it. The other thing that really drew me in was how creative people can be with what they say. It's also a really good way to be educational as a trans man, and I see it opens the closed doors when you approach it with comedy.

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Madison Young.  
Image courtesy of Revry



## TELEVISION

# Madison Young delves into queerness, kink in 'Submission Possible'

BY ANGELIQUE SMITH

Queer author, adult film star, and podcaster Madison Young further secures her “Queen of Kink” title with the new sex-positive docuseries, *Submission Possible*. This informative exploration into kink culture kicks off its first episode in New Orleans, where Young introduces the viewer to sex magic, spectrophilia, herbalism and masturbation rituals.

Taking time from finishing up work on an anthology to be released next spring and also a children’s book about being non-binary, Young spoke with *Windy City Times* about her docuseries debut.

**Windy City Times: How did you start your journey into kink and fetishes?**

Madison Young: It’s just inherently always been a part of my sexual identity. Even with my very first sex partner, we used handcuffs and really enjoyed public sex, spanking, ... I just really dove into that. At the age of 20, I moved to San Francisco and I got much further into the kink scene, going to public parties, as well my career as a bondage model. Having the experience of working with some of the top rope artists and dominants, and really exploring true submission

and masochism, was really incredible.

**WCT: Do you feel like there any misconceptions about BDSM?**

MY: There are a lot of misconceptions about BDSM, largely because there aren’t enough safe spaces to talk about sex and sexuality; it’s still something that carries with it a lot of shame. And things like BDSM and fetish carry even more shame. One of the big, significant misconceptions is [around] consent. I think people often have this idea that BDSM and abuse are similar, which in no way are they. [With BDSM], there’s communication, a shifting of energy and sensation with different types of touch. But I think that people sometimes get this idea that if someone is being spanked or engaging in face slapping, they’re thinking about that in a context that is non-consensual and are confused about how that works.

**WCT: Ah, that makes sense.**

MY: And also, the misconception that you can’t be feminist and also be a submissive or masochist. Whether you’re a dominant or a submissive, a top or bottom, you’re building the scene together. You’re building this safe space, this play, that can look like so many different things. Within that play, you’re building that container based

on what your mutual desires are. Both of you, or all of you, depending on how many people are in the scene, are able to surrender to that based on negotiations and communication. I feel like that’s an incredibly empowering thing.

**WCT: It sounds like it.**

MY: Often in vanilla sex, you don’t see that so much, that degree of communication and negotiation. I’ve done sex coaching in the past and I’ve talked to many people that have had years of sex. They’re feeling very unfulfilled and want to talk their partner about having sex that they truly desire, but don’t have that space. It’s not built into vanilla sexual relationships. Within BDSM, it’s built in: that communication  $\frac{3}{4}$  that consent  $\frac{3}{4}$  is a key element before any play happens.

**WCT: That’s a good segue into you telling us more about feminist porn and your advocacy for authentic pleasure?**

MY: I’ve been creating feminist porn since 2005, and performing in it since 2002. I started doing that as a way to make money for my non-profit, feminist art gallery in San Francisco, that [gave visibility to] women and transgender artists and performers. I found that within pornography, there was this really rich and powerful medium in which to document our sexual culture. It’s really the only medium in which we see our sexual relationships being depicted, documented and explored. This is really fucking political and powerful, because it matters who is being documented.

Authentic orgasms and documenting queer, trans and women’s sexuality, is really powerful. Hearing them talk about it, living out their fantasies in front of the camera with someone that they want to have sex with, in the scenario they want to be doing, where they feel the hottest, wearing what they want to wear and holding that space for someone to have their ultimate sexual experience and being able to document that? Every time, I feel immensely honored to bear witness.

**WCT: That is really powerful.**

MY: There’s a lot of work that goes into that, really cultivating that safe space for folks to be that vulnerable. That’s been a really important part of my journey because representation matters. That’s one of the reasons I wanted to work within television, because I know that telling our stories matter. It’s how people see themselves represented and lets them know that they’re not alone in the world. Knowing that there’s another queer, kinky feminist out there, you know? To [help them] feel empowered to speak out loud their truth and to have the sex that makes them happy.

**WCT: How did *Submission Possible* come about?**

MY: Many of my films and projects come to me in kind of a dreamlike state. A few years ago, me and my kids took off for Western [Massachusetts] in the Berkshires. Before falling asleep one night, I had a vision of this show and I just knew it needed to happen. I’m really able to dream big dreams and then manifest them, so from that point I started working on a script, put together a sizzle reel, and then shopped that around for a while. So, I said, ‘Fuck it, I’ve just got to make the pilot.’

**WCT: Yes, I saw the pilot. How far have you gotten into production due to COVID-19?**

MY: It’s been somewhat of a challenge for a travel docuseries. However, the next episode is actually going to be on how kinky, queer culture has adapted to quarantine. Visiting folks, some virtually, some at a social distance ... I’ve done a lot of research on the best modes of shooting at this moment in time. Some production is starting to open up [this] week, but we’re being tentative. The next episode I’ll be shooting at the beginning of July if everything goes well.

**WCT: What do you hope this series accomplishes?**

MY: My purpose for creating all of this work is for that girl that is left back in Ohio. That’s where I grew up: conservative, homophobic Ohio. The more queer, trans, Black and POC voices that we have on screen, the more visibility happens. When we’re able to start conversations and normalize kink, BDSM and queer sexuality, then we’re able to have these conversations more openly. I create this work for the queer in Smalltown, USA, who is seeking out a reflection of themselves. I hope that I’m able to visit different cities around the world and show all of these very unique voices that will resonate with different people.

*Submission Possible* is on the LGBTQ+ virtual cable TV network Revry. Visit [Revry.tv](http://Revry.tv) for more information.

## MARVEL from page 33

**WCT: Some people feel that, when it comes to comedy, nothing is off-limits. What’s your stance on that?**

ZB: As comedians, we have opportunities to create what kinds of audience we want. I see a lot of cultural cues that I’ve taken as a Jewish person, like self-deprecation to work through pain. But, when I see people punching down at the expense of others, it doesn’t feel healing to me. A group is now excluded from enjoying this—why would you want that as an entertainer? It’s more about knowing in your gut who you’re making laugh when you tell a joke and what they’re laughing at.

**WCT: Are there any upcoming movie roles or stand-up venues you hope to pursue once the pandemic calms down?**

ZB: I hope to get back into it in LA. More immediately, I’m doing a podcast that’s coming out in the fall called *The College Kids*; it’ll be coming out on Luminet. It’s a really cool podcast about atypicals, with a twist. It’s been loads of fun to work on and there’s another trans person involved, which is really rad. I have an animated project I can’t talk about yet but I will be keeping people updated on my Instagram.

**WCT: Finally, do you have any words of advice for young transgender people trying to get their foot in the door in the film industry?**

ZB: Do something that makes you really uncomfortable because it makes you more willing to take risks. I love stand-up but it scared the crap out of me when I first started. Push yourself as much as possible and consistently as possible. It sharpens your skills and creates new ones. I’m not a good dancer, but that’s my next step and I’m working on new things.

## Queer artist McKinnon among Foundation leaders

Queer artist/advocate Elijah McKinnon is among 11 local individuals The Field Foundation, in partnership with the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, announced as the 2020 Leaders for a New Chicago cohort.

The leadership awards are part of Field's ongoing investment in racial justice visionaries and organizations addressing systemic issues in Chicago's divested communities. The 11 leaders in three categories—Media & Storytelling, Justice and Art—reach across boundaries to find new ways, stories and ideas that propel Chicago toward its full potential, said Angelique Power, president of the Field Foundation of Chicago, in a statement.

"This award recognizes power. These visionaries are changing the game across the city and we need them now more than ever," Power said. "Each leader will receive a \$25,000 cash award in



**Elijah McKinnon.**  
Photo by Matt Simonette

recognition of past accomplishments, and their affiliated organizations will each receive an additional \$25,000 general operating grant."

McKinnon is an award-winning strategist, creative director, entrepreneur, artist and advocate for queer history, queer artmaking and queer practices in Chicago. McKinnon co-creates an art gallery, event space, and project incubator located in Chicago's Humboldt Park neighborhood for marginalized communities and narratives.

Some of the other leaders in this group include Black Ensemble Theater founder/CEO Jackie Taylor, Free Write Arts & Literacy Executive Director Ryan Keesling, National Museum of Mexican Art Executive Producer & Educator Stephanie Manriquez and Resident Association of Greater Englewood Executive Director Asiaha Butler.

## Reunion, OTV and Slo 'Mo hosting virtual Pride Fest June 26-28

LGBTQ+-centered organizations Reunion Chicago, Slo 'Mo and OTV-Open Television are combining energies and resources to present an intergenerational and intersectional virtual Pride festival that celebrates, centers and advocates for Chicago Black LGBTQ+ artists, community and causes.

Tapping into the talents of Black Chicago LGBTQ+ creatives and communities, this free three-day experience will take place June 26-28, the weekend Chicago Pride would traditionally take place, and will air 7-10 p.m. on OTV's streaming platform.

The programming will feature Chicago queer party and performance collectives A Queer Pride, Futurehood, Molasses, Fabitat and Unfriendly Black Hotties providing original content with the prompt of honoring the past, present and future of Pride as we



celebrate 50 years of Chicago. The festival also features musical performances by Chicago artists including Thair, Mother Nature, Avery R. Young and Drea the Vibe Dealerm as well as queer comedy skits, community PSAs, video content and more.

"While previously we wouldn't have put on virtual Pride festival, in this unexpected and unprecedented timeline we feel compelled to provide engaging, uplifting and accessible queer content to our community—for the culture," said Reunion Development Director and OTV Executive Director Elijah McKinnon in a statement.

See WeAre0.tv and email [Kristen@ReunionChicago.com](mailto:Kristen@ReunionChicago.com) for more information.



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Laverne Cox.  
Photo courtesy of Netflix



## TELEVISION

# Sam Feder, Laverne Cox discuss trans documentary 'Disclosure'

BY JERRY NUNN

Disclosure is a new original documentary debuting on Netflix in time for Pride season. Through a series of movie and television clips plus personal interviews, Disclosure gives a history of the depiction of the transgender community in the media over the years.

Some of the trans artists featured in Disclosure are Laverne Cox, Lilly Wachowski, Yance Ford and Chaz Bono. A few the films covered in the doc include The Crying Game, Boys Don't Cry as well as television shows The Jeffersons and The L-Word, to name a few.

During a brief call with director Sam Feder and activist/executive producer Laverne Cox, Windy City Times began with asking about the origins of the title Disclosure.

Feder explained, "There's an idea that it's the responsibility of the trans person to disclose their identity. It's a violent assumption that anyone owes someone else an explanation of their history. It's framed in a way that someone has done something wrong if they don't disclose. I think most trans people can relate to that tension and understanding. A lot of us have internalized that as well. We have an anxiety that we need to tell someone first and foremost."

He added, "The title came from the idea that all the images we see rely on the fact that we are not real. People say we are not who we say we are and disavow that trans people actually exist. That is all predicated on a need to disclose. To disclose is to say something other than who you appear."

Cox expanded by telling a story: "After I did a reality show in 2008 called I Want to Work for

Diddy, I remember meeting a guy and we went out for drinks. I sat down and stated I was trans to him. He had dated trans women before but they weren't that comfortable to disclose. I felt empowered to disclose who I am. Now I just say google me!"

When asked about the creation of Disclosure, Feder said, "Two documentaries really changed my life. One was The Celluloid Closet, about gay and lesbian representation in Hollywood, and the other was Ethnic Notions, by Marlon Riggs, about Black representation in film. I always wanted to see that history for trans people. Fast forward to 2014 when trans visibility was increasing and mainstream society was talking about us more than before.

"I wanted to get trans and non-trans people's context about this in our culture and how we got to this point in visibility. It was important to not lose sight that visibility in itself is not a goal. It is the means to an end. I felt like there is more to the story than what the public was seeing and talking about. I wanted to tell that story with Disclosure."

Feder talked about securing the clips for Disclosure: "All of the clips in the film came from personal stories. I did about 80 interviews with trans people who have worked on one side of the camera or the other. I wanted to gather their memories of trans representation."

"When we crafted this story, it was created in such a way to show the individual arguments with the footage. With a certain context, we had fair use over the material."

MJ Rodriguez, who is in Disclosure and the FX show Pose, expressed playing roles outside of a trans narrative in a previous Windy City Times interview. Cox said it would take a casting agent, showrunner, director and producer to make that continue to happen, stating, "I am in a Netflix show called Inventing Anna, that is on hiatus from shooting because of COVID-19. I play a woman named Kacy Duke, who is not trans. I was cast because Shonda Rhimes and her team thought I was the best person for the job."

"There are other instances, like Candis Cayne in the Syfy series The Magicians, playing a non-trans character. Hari Nef is playing a character

on You that is not trans. It is really about the showrunner, director and casting director having a vision."

"Kacy is a real person, so we can say she's not trans, but with fictional characters, they could indeed be trans. Does it matter or not? I used to have a joke. If the character doesn't involve periods or pregnancies I can play it!"

The film The Danish Girl was included in a segment in Disclosure, and while director Tom Hooper consulted with artists in the trans community, something apparently went wrong. Cox said, "I met Tom at a screening of The Danish Girl and my understanding was consultants were brought in after casting and after most of it was shot. They were not consulting on the script, but instead came in after the fact. When I spoke to the producers they told me they licensed the book. Lilli Elbe's diaries are so much more expansive around the relationship to herself and her wife.

"Instead of relying on the diaries, they relied on the novel The Danish Girl and is my take on what may have gone wrong there. I thought Eddie Redmayne and Alicia Vikander gave stunning performances, but it was a missed opportunity historically."

Feder added, "There's a history of using consulting just to have that calling card. Susan Stryker, who was the leading historian for trans people, said all of her notes were disregarded for The Danish Girl. Just having consultants should not be the end of the conversation."

Cox clarified that she doesn't want to demonize anyone, but "now we know better and can do better. This is about having moments of learning and awakening our critical consciousness."

As far as cisgender actors playing transgender roles in the future, Cox commented, "I hope that after Disclosure and the consciousness that is raised, we will see if that happens again. I hope we will have a much more educated audience in the industry when that is the case."

Disclosure already did well at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival and the creatives involved hope the film continues the conversation of trans representation in the future.

**Disclosure is currently out on Netflix.**

EXPO CHICAGO  
Vernissage 2019.  
Image courtesy of  
EXPO CHICAGO,  
by Justin Barbin



## EXPO CHICAGO pushed to 2021

EXPO CHICAGO, The International Exposition of Contemporary and Modern Art, will present its ninth edition from April 8-11, 2021, at Navy Pier.

The decision to move the fair from its traditional September 2020 time slot to this coming spring was the result of a collaborative decision-making process that EXPO CHICAGO conducted with galleries, collectors, institutional partners and city officials.

In response to the rapidly evolving social and business environments, EXPO CHICAGO put in place a plan that allows exhibitors to provide non-binding deposits and, subsequently, a flexible payment schedule for those participating in the exposition.

In addition, alongside expanding programming and initiatives, EXPO CHICAGO has pledged to make contributions to both the Art Dealers Association of America and the New Art Dealers Association from the proceeds of the exposition.

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

## 'Chicago Is a [Digital] Drag Festival' June 30

The Chicago Is a [Digital] Drag Festival—a Brave Space Alliance fundraiser, with Shea Coulee hosting—will take place Tuesday, June 30, at 8 p.m. CT.

Just a few of the personalities slated to appear/perform are The Vixen, Detox, Dorian Electra, DJ Jasmine Infiniti, Lucy Stoole, Mimi Marks, Bambi Banks-Coulee and KC Ortiz. Special guests will include Dida Ritz, Joan Jett Black, Theo Germaine, Ruff 'n Stuff and Pussy Riot, among others.

The physical event has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Organizers said they are working directly with Eventbrite to send refund options to all ticket holders, including donations and transfers to future events.

There is a suggested fee of \$10 to benefit Brave Space Alliance. See [Twitch.tv/aqueerpride](https://Twitch.tv/aqueerpride) and [do312.com/chicagoisadrag](https://do312.com/chicagoisadrag).

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## ACTIVITIES

# Brick by brick: Mark Larson talks about a life of LEGOs

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Mark Larson has done a lot of things in his life, from being a theater actor to a bouncer at the now-defunct Boystown nightclub Spin.

Now he's the "chief brick officer" at Brickworld, which embraces the educational and inspirational value of the LEGO brick as well as hosts LEGO conventions throughout the Midwest. He talked with Windy City Times about the conventions and the proliferation of LEGO projects in pop culture.

**Windy City Times: How are you coping with the pandemic?**

Mark Larson: It's my first year owning this public-event business and a global pandemic broke out—so there's that. [Laughs]

It was a lot at first, but I've worked as an actor, a freelancer and an artist, and you learn to take things one day at a time. And this is so far out of my control, and I was lucky enough to identify that immediately and stay calm. [Laughs] I was starting to build more virtual content and now that I'm stuck in my condo for at least several weeks, I've started some YouTube videos to build the community—and that's our mission: to connect LEGO fans and build the community.

The previous owner and I had talked about doing a virtual show. The original intent was to keep our vendors, some who don't have an online presence, connected with new customers. What we've found is that people who are cooped up in their homes and have watched everything really enjoy having something new to do—like talking with designers and exhibitors.

So what we know now is that this is something that can help save the company. It's about sustainability but it's also about our mission statement: to connect LEGO fans with exhibitors and with each other. There's not a lot happening now, except horrible news every day. So this is something we can develop into the future. [Virtual expos] also work for those who may not be in the area, or for those who have disabilities and health challenges that don't allow them to attend actual spaces. It's also an opportunity to share content during our dark months, when we don't have shows; something that's important is buying LEGO pieces in bulk without going through official LEGO channels, like BrickLink.com—although I think LEGO actually bought that site this year.

LEGO's been a great partner for us and, since most of the in-person shows have been cancelled for this year, they asked us for time in our shows to do some media training for their designers and community team. Of course, I said yes because that's a great connection.

Things could have been really bad my first year. So we may break even now while continuing to drive our mission statement.

**WCT: The virtual expos will have presentations and tutorials—but there will also be something called the Great Ball Contraption. What is that?**



Mark Larson.  
Photo courtesy of Larson

ML: There are so many LEGO soccer balls in that and people are always talking about having balls printed or something else. There are so many conversations around balls, and there is always someone chuckling. [Both laugh.] It never gets old.

What that actually is [involves] some of our smarter LEGO fans building machines that are basically small modules that move balls from one end of the module to the other, with an entire line of LEGO motors and gears, along with levers and other items. When you put two modules next to each other, they pass the ball from one to the other; if you put hundreds together, they pass the ball in a huge loop. Brickworld actually holds the record for the world's longest Great Ball Contraption loop—so what we're doing for the

virtual show is that people will have loops set up in their houses. They're going to run the ball through their individual [modules] for 10 minutes and then "pass" it on to the next host. We have people from North America to Australia and back—so we'll technically have the longest virtual loop in existence. [Laughs]

It's just mesmerizing to watch all of these machines pass balls in such clever ways. We're trying to offer 75 percent new material in each show—but we'll have the Great Ball Contraption in each one.

**WCT: So how does one go from being a the-**

**ater major at Illinois State University to being a chief brick officer? By the way, you'll probably be the first—and last—chief brick officer I'll ever interview.**

ML: [Laughs] I don't know about that.

Yes, I studied theater at ISU and got some internship opportunities and auditions in the city. However, I had not come out of the closet yet. And I stayed in Bloomington-Normal because I still had stuff to figure out. I had known for a few years but didn't know how to tell anybody; this was in 1998 and '99. And I was raised in a conservative household as well, so it took me a while to figure out that it was even a possibility.

I eventually got myself to the city, and I worked pretty successfully as an actor for a while, although I never got my Equity card. I also got

to do some commercials. But the money wasn't enough, so I worked as a bouncer at Spin. However, I also got other jobs that allowed me to build my managerial skills, and I helped with marketing. Then I went back to school and got a degree in branding at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago; I was also starting to do shows and taking film classes.

I did this one show and someone from LEGOLAND recruited me; a week later, LEGOLAND hired me and I moved to San Diego. I spent four years there working as an art director and project manager, and traveled around the world. I moved back to Chicago because I'm just not a West Coast guy, at all, plus I missed my friends.

I was trying to work at marketing firms. I was in my 30s and didn't have much experience in that area, but I had my LEGOLAND background—so they'd ask me in basically just to see my portfolio. Then, the previous owners of Brickworld wanted to retire and asked me if I wanted to take over. Who knows what's going to happen next? [Laughs]

**WCT: Of course, there's been such a LEGO pop-culture explosion, with movies and the TV show LEGO Masters. When you're watching the movies or show, do you find yourself critiquing them in any way.**

ML: [Laughs] You know, I was really impressed with those movies. I was glad that LEGO let go, a little bit; there are very strict guidelines about what you can do and how LEGO wants to be represented. But they let go—and the movies were funnier than they would've been. The films did a great job of honoring LEGO fans.

The LEGO Batman movie, I think, is one of the best movies ever made. My husband is a huge comic-book fan, and he got the jokes a good two seconds before the rest of the audience. It made the experience more fun because he's huge and has this gigantic laugh; he would start laughing before everyone else, and I think it caused the audience to have a better time. Because they did so well in honoring the way LEGO actually works in real-life physics, I really enjoyed the movies.

With LEGO Masters, because I knew people on it, I was heavily invested in it. I found myself critiquing that a lot because the show was so overproduced. But I'm glad it was promoting LEGO and the fans, and it introduced us to a new audience. All of the contestants will be part of the May [virtual] show, and at least some will be in the June one.

**WCT: Who or what would you like to see done in LEGO bricks that you have not seen?**

ML: Oh, that's a great question! I've seen just about everything, but I'd really like to see more original content. People are inspired by existing ideas, like they want to see Star Wars or a video game. I like when people use their own imagination—and build something transcendent and new.

Brickworld virtual expos will take place June 27, Oct. 31 and Dec. 12. Tickets are \$9 per show, and \$1 from each ticket will be donated to Brickworld's longtime charity partner Make-A-Wish, along with Riley Children's Hospital, Creations for Charity and FIRST LEGO League.

**Visit <https://brickworld.com/brickworld-virtual>.**

## Lollapalooza, Taste of Chicago among new or reimagined events

Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) announced a slate of new and reimagined summer events including at-home dance parties, drive-in movies, virtual concerts and community meals for frontline workers.

DCASE will produce more than 150 events this summer. Many of these programs support the local music industry during the Year of Chicago Music—now extended into 2021.

DCASE also shared new guidance for large outdoor events across the City of Chicago, cancelling all permitted special events through Labor Day. Regrettably, this includes many of Chicago's annual summertime traditions: Chicago SummerDance, Taste of Chicago and Lollapalooza, in Grant Park; the Chicago Air and Water Show, at North Avenue Beach; Chicago Jazz Festival, in Millennium Park; the majority of programming at the Chicago Riverwalk, the Chicago Cultural Center and Millennium Park; Maxwell Street Market through Labor Day; the Jumping Jack Program; and other festivals, parades and athletic events, some of which have already been cancelled.

### New and reimagined summer events include:

—“Millennium Park at Home” will continue with a genre-defying Music Series featuring Jon Langford, The Braided Janes, Zeshan B, Sen Morimoto and other local musicians on Thursdays (June 25, 6–7:30 p.m.; July 9, 16 and 23, 6–7:30 p.m.); and Blues Music performances by Melody Angel, John Primer, Toronzo Cannon and others are rescheduled for July 31–Aug. 2 at 6–8 p.m. Additionally, Workouts—an alternating weekly schedule of tai chi, yoga Pilates and Zumba—will be online Saturdays (through Aug. 29,



Lollapalooza 2019.  
Photo by Jerry Nunn

8–9 a.m.).

—“SummerDance in Place,” a new citywide, at-home version of Chicago SummerDance will invite residents to plan socially-distant dance parties of up to 10 people connected via a live broadcast and social media. Programs will include a 30-minute lesson followed by 60 minutes of music on Wednesday evenings in July (July 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29). Dance genres include salsa, swing and line dancing.

—“Taste of Chicago To-Go” will include an expanded Community Eats program (July 8–12), supporting about 25 neighborhood restaurants and food trucks while providing free meals to nonprofits serving healthcare and other frontline workers. DCASE will also organize a food-truck procession (July 8) and online cooking demos (July 8–12).

—In lieu of the popular Millennium Park Summer Film Series, DCASE (Chicago Film Office) and the Chicago Park District are planning six drive-in movie nights across the city. The events will have

a limited capacity of 50 cars, all pre-registered—and the city will encourage at-home viewing of the selected movies. Details will be announced soon.

—Beginning in June, in collaboration with local music venues, DCASE will host a series of about 20 live events featuring Chicago musicians performing at neighborhood clubs and other unique locations—for limited in-person engagements, broadcast to larger audiences. This program brings visibility to local music venues, severely impacted by COVID-19.

Concerts will include Jazz music (August/September, in lieu of the Chicago Jazz Festival) presented in collaboration with the Jazz Institute of Chicago and 51st Street Business Association; Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians; Constellation Performing Arts; Elastic Arts Foundation; Jazz Showcase; Kalapriya Foundation; Live The Spirit Residency; Museum of Contemporary Art; Public Media Institute; South Side Jazz Coalition; The Birdhouse, Inc.; and The Hungry Brain.

—Lollapalooza will honor its annual summer tradition by bringing Chicago, and the world, together around a common bond of community, civic engagement and, of course, live music in a weekend-long livestream event July 30–Aug. 2. Details will be announced next month.

—Chicago Park District, Grant Park Music Festival and many other cultural presenters are also considering—or have already announced—alternative smaller and/or virtual summer events.

Millennium Park will reopen in mid-June with limited in-person programming and in accordance with Chicago Department of Public Health safeguards and best practices, to ensure the safety of residents and visitors alike. The Chicago Cultural Center and other DCASE-managed venues remain closed to the public until further notice.

For updates about DCASE programming, permitting and venues, visit [Chicago.gov/dcse](http://Chicago.gov/dcse).

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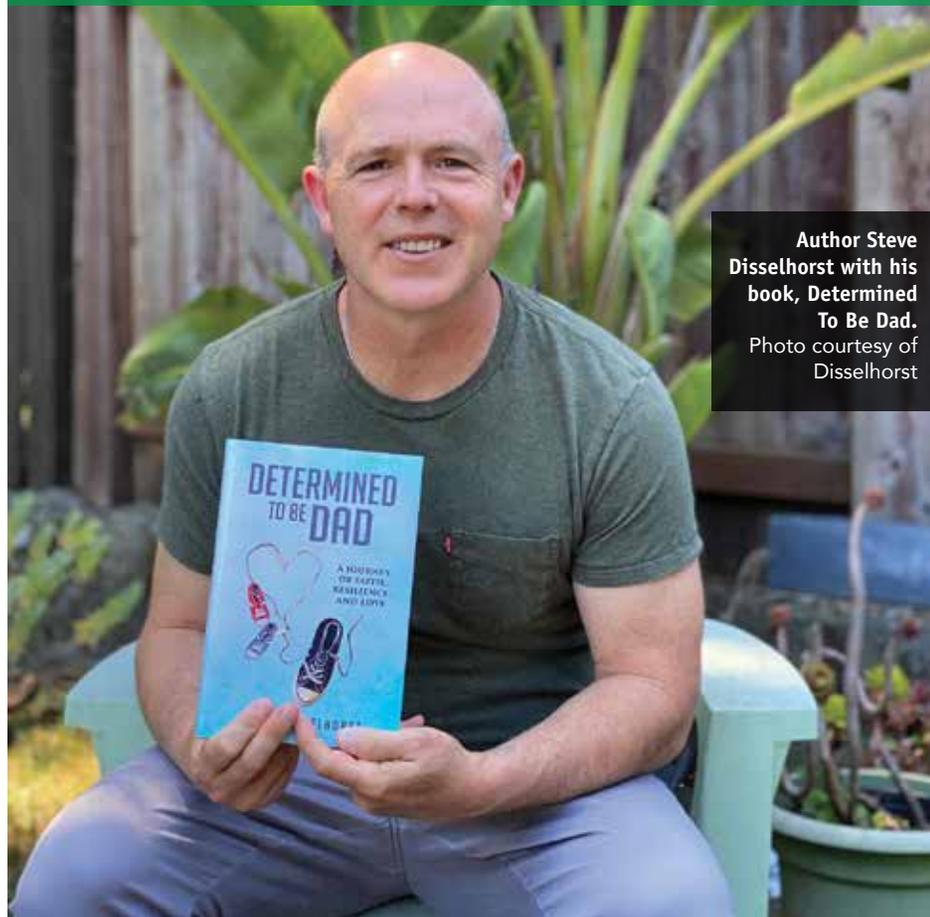
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## BOOKS

# Skokie native writes about creating an LGBTQ family



Author Steve Disselhorst with his book, *Determined To Be Dad*. Photo courtesy of Disselhorst

BY MELISSA WASSERMAN

Steve Disselhorst dreamed of being a parent since he was a kid growing up in Skokie. On June 16, his first book, *Determined To Be Dad*, was released, and it details his journey to fulfill that dream.

Disselhorst grew up in a Catholic, mostly Irish family. Transferring from a Catholic school in Skokie to Edison Elementary School, a public school in Morton Grove, in the fifth grade was a big change, as Disselhorst explained the majority of Skokie residents were Jewish and about 10 percent of people were Holocaust survivors. He recalled it was when he made this move, in the late '70s, that he first interacted with Jewish people since he was "living in this cocoon in my Catholic school setting. "It was the same time the Illinois Nazi party was trying to march in Skokie," he said.

Disselhorst added, "I had been in a sheltered world and didn't know what was happening, but I could understand there was tremendous pain," Disselhorst said of his surroundings. "It was really this life-altering experience on how different minorities are discriminated against and how people do hateful, violent things to people that are different. At that time I didn't know I was gay, but I could empathize with that pain and suffering and it sort of changed my view of the world."

The writer described himself as a sensitive, empathetic child, always connecting relationships to the foundation of his family life. The empathy was something he attributed in part to his grandmother, who immigrated from Ireland under harsh circumstances when she was 14 and building a "tremendous life;" and his father, who he described as a kind, giving person. Being the new kid in school furthered his empathy and under-

standing toward outsiders.

From the outside, Disselhorst led what could be described as a heteronormative life as he went on to graduate from Niles West High School and the University of Iowa. It was during his junior year abroad and senior year that he began the process of exploring and understanding his sexuality and attraction to men. However, he was caught between the Catholic teachings he grew up with and his interest in men, one of the reasons was because he wanted a big family like the one he grew up in and thought he could only have that if he were heterosexual. Seeing the AIDS epidemic happening around him, he said, also had a big impact.

"It was really sort of a challenging time and a challenging time of self-acceptance," he said.

Sharing his struggle of coming out in his early 20s, he went to visit his brother in California for a summer and ended up staying. When he finally accepted his sexuality and started being true to his identity as a gay man, he dismissed his dream of being a parent. In 2003, he met his current husband—who also wanted a family.

Surrogacy or adoption? Disselhorst said he and his husband spent a lot of time thinking about which option was best for them to start their family. Both of them agreed their genetics were not critical for creating a family but they were not in a position, financially, for surrogacy to be a choice. However, they had faith "God [would] bring us the kids that are meant to be." These factors brought them to the decision of a private, open adoption.

"It took two years," Disselhorst said of their experience, which he shares in his book. "We waited two years and, over [those] years we were contacted by 14 different women at various stages of their pregnancies—and all 14 of those fell through, until our daughter was born. So it was very emotional, exhausting, toward the end of it we became really cynical.

"We really kind of started to think maybe this wasn't in the cards for us, maybe this isn't God's plan for us to have kids. At the time there were a lot of messages around, like, 'Gay people really shouldn't have families' so it was kind of, like, 'Maybe there's truth to this, right?' We started to second-guess ourselves."

Disselhorst and his husband did not give up and now they have two children they are raising in the suburbs outside of San Francisco. Their daughter is now 8 and their son, who came into their lives through the foster-to-adopt program, is 4.

*Determined To Be Dad* is Disselhorst's personal story filled with the trials and tribulations of going through self-discovery and acceptance, building a new life and creating the family he always wanted, accompanied by some practical information for educational context.

"My mission is really around helping other LGBTQ people and also beyond LGBTQ community, people who are really thinking about creating a family through sort of non-traditional ways," he said.

In 2018, Disselhorst was diagnosed with prostate cancer and was laid off from his corporate

job in healthcare marketing, which he said sent him into an identity crisis, resembling his coming out. These life-altering events, he described were motivations for writing the book. (Incidentally, he is now cancer-free.)

"One of the motivations for writing the book was the fact that there are like 3.8 million LGBTQ millennials considering expanding their families and having children, and I wanted to help them," explained Disselhorst. "The other thing about writing the book was really it was a [cathartic] experience. We had been through these difficult adoptions and it was a way to just sort of get it all out, and I think it was a way for me to heal from the cancer as well. I did a lot of the writing when I was on hormone therapy after I had radiation treatments and so I was going through my treatment and I was writing. It was a way to sort of cleanse and let go of things from the past."

Past the LGBTQ community, he added, this audience extends to parents, in some cases to help them understand their LGBTQ kids can have a family one day and LGBTQ allies.

In addition to being a dad, Disselhorst has his own coaching and consulting firm where he currently works as a leadership coach and a diversity and inclusion consultant. He also serves on the board of directors for the LGBTQ non-profit Our Family Coalition, and is a San Mateo County California LGBTQ commissioner.

Disselhorst is passionate about creating inclusive environments and equity for all minorities, including LGBTQ and racial groups. He even does this at his children's school, talking to the superintendent about creating cultures for kids whose parents are queer and kids who are queer in the school. He has also been featured on the podcast *Daddy Squared*, talking on this topic.

"It's really about giving hope to people," said Disselhorst. "That ... and my kids keep me going."

Disselhorst added that what continues to drive him is the fact that President Trump and the current administration are changing the foster/adopt laws.

"What's tragic, and this is where I get really worked up, is the fact is that LGBTQ people adopt out of the foster system seven to one, [compared] to heterosexual people," said Disselhorst. "LGBTQ people are willing to take the children that other people are not willing to adopt and they're the ones that are doing it. Now, we have a government that's going to take that away, we're going to end up with more children lingering in the foster system because they don't want LGBTQ people being parents."

In addition, Disselhorst said he sees himself as "an angel [who] helps LGBTQ people create families."

He added, "I'm very tied to spirituality, so it's like you're there, but you're not there, you're an angel—you're kind of in and out. That's what I hope to accomplish with the book is that I'm able to get it to a broad enough audience [to] give them hope."

**To learn more about Steve Disselhorst and where to purchase *Determined To Be Dad*, visit [SteveDisselhorst.com](http://SteveDisselhorst.com).**



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Images from  
People of the  
Pride Parade.  
Photos by Alyssa  
Blumstein

## BOOKS

# Photographer focuses on 'The People of the Pride Parade'

BY EMILY REILLY

Alyssa Blumstein captured a celebratory photography book *The People of the Pride Parade*, which was released in honor of the Pride Parade's 50th anniversary. The images highlight the joyful moments through a collection of marches and events during a Pride celebration.

Blumstein talked with *Windy City Times* about her experience capturing the people of a Pride Parade.

**Windy City Times: What inspired you to capture images of the people of Pride?**

Alyssa Blumstein: First and foremost, I wanted

to work with Julia [Ambroff] and Apollo [Publishers] for a really long time and we briefly discussed some other projects, but then she came to me with this idea. Apollo wanted to make a book documenting WorldPride to be released for the 50th anniversary of Pride. I was thrilled that they came to me with this project; it felt personal and I felt it fit nicely within the photography I gravitate toward. We wanted to take this book in a people-focus direction.

**WCT: Did you have a blueprint of what you wanted to photograph or was it a more spontaneous process?**

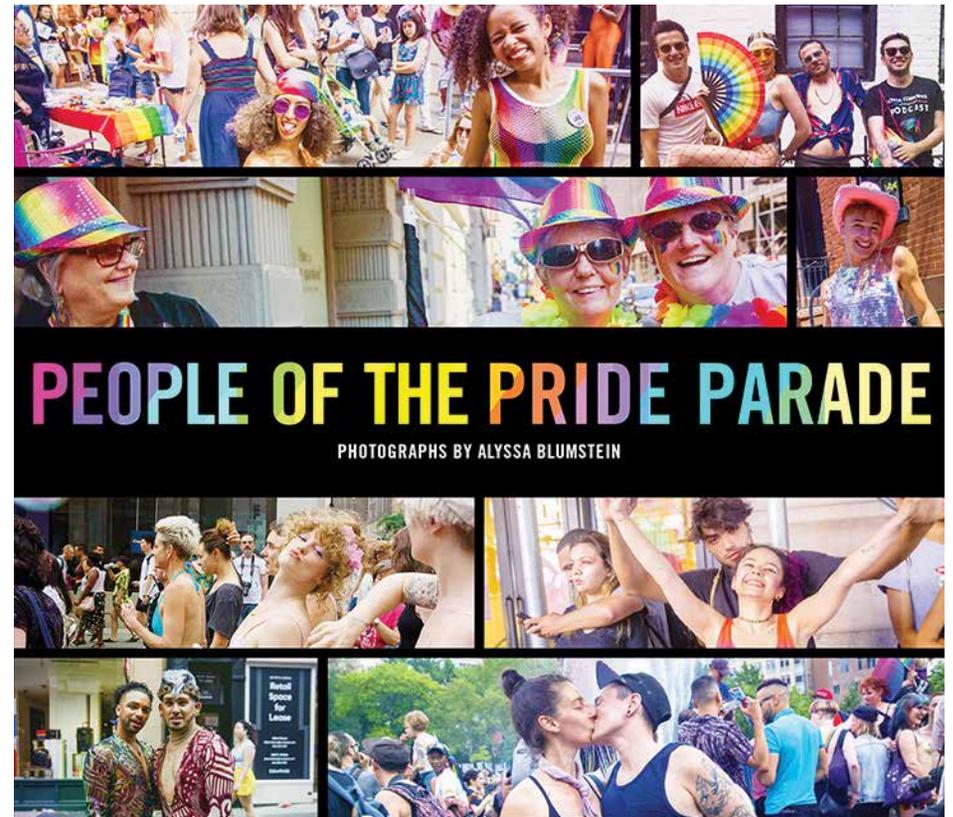
AB: I see myself as an event photographer. I think while I'm working events I aim to capture the vibrancy, quirkiness and joy—whether that be parties or weddings—and Pride is all of those things. I didn't have to look very hard to find the things that are traditionally sought out in photography. Pride encompasses all of those joyous and fun moments.

**WCT: The book included LGBTQ history at the beginning. Then following it, I noticed there were pictures of people from every age group, gender, and race celebrating pride. How do the moments you captured speak to the progress of the movement?**

AB: Pride has changed over time, and putting aside any feelings of corporate sponsorship, or anything felt about pride to this day, it continues to remain an incredible weekend full of joy, full of locals, full of visitors celebrating, and full of instances of amazing identity. Pride was always at least somewhat political depending on where you are in history. I hope that you still see that the instances in those pictures, during the weekend of pride, give people a platform to make statements about the movement and about their joy.

**WCT: What is your favorite picture from the book?**

AB: I really liked the picture of this woman, Una Osato, who I did not know at the time. She's



Alyssa Blumstein.  
Photo courtesy  
of Blumstein

a burlesque dancer and activist and she has a vibrant personality. Then I saw her with some friends and found out she's dating one of my high school friends! New York is so big and I've lived here a decade feeling that hugeness and loving it for that—that anonymity, walking around at night, talking to bodega owners, and just going on your way.

But at this moment during Pride, this made me feel like New York can be small if you want it to be. This was a huge event that millions upon millions are at, but it does end up bringing friends together.

**WCT: I noticed there were funny and thoughtful signs marchers had, and the book ended with a really great sign. The layout of the photos told a story of their own. How was that decision made?**

AB: Julia is the one who designed the full layout and had the final say of the order of photos, and she did an awesome job! I was moved by how

rad the layout was! I think she was particularly fantastic at it.

When it comes to the signs I captured, I'll say that you didn't have to look far to find people who are smart and witty with their sign-use. But Julia's choice of where to put them was fully hers and I love it.

**WCT: Why do you feel it's important for the world to see a modern-day Pride parade?**

AB: I think representation is always important, and it's always important to continue to show a movement at different times through history. It makes it real, accurate, and more familiar to outsiders. If something feels dated it may not feel important to this moment right now, but it's important to showcase that people are involved, are proud, are out there, and that this is an amazing event to take part in. That's important with all events. I believe that across the board.

**The People of the Pride Parade is available on Amazon.**



## BILLY Masters

"On our street, we accept all, we love all, and we respect all. Happy #PrideMonth!"—From your friends on Sesame Street. This message was brought to you by the letter "I"—for Instagram.

Remember the coronavirus? While I continue to wear a mask wherever I go, I see more and more people eschewing the confining accoutrement and simply throwing the wind into the caution. I was under the impression that the first entertainment venues considering reopening were cinemas. Then I read of DL Hughley collapsing in a comedy club. You may ask—where on God's green earth is a comedy club open to a live audience? In Nashville, Tennessee (where they've apparently been open since May 28). During his *SECOND* show of the evening (he also did two shows the previous night), Hughley paused, leaned on his stool and collapsed onto the floor. The capacity audience at Zanies in Nashville was shocked. That continued the following day when they learned that Hughley—who had only hours before been spewing verbal barbs in their general direction—had also been spewing corona-laden saliva!

I hope that nobody reads Billy Masters' column for great insights on race relations. Last week, my dear friend Jenifer Lewis took me to task in a loving, but firm way: "Of course you need to be



**Singer/actor Levi Kreis is among the many guests who have appeared on Billy Masters LIVE.**

Photo courtesy of City Winery

told these things because they're not part of your background ... but you shouldn't need to be told these things." So, whether I should or shouldn't know everything about racial inequality, I am making an effort.

And what a roller coaster it was for Black-ish. Last week, ABC announced that while the sitcom was being renewed, it would return as a mid-season replacement in order to make room for a new sitcom: *Call Your Mother*, starring Kyra Sedgwick. It was a questionable choice in these days of intense racial scrutiny (to say nothing of it happening within 48 hours of Juneteenth). It didn't take long for ABC to change its tune. Black-ish will return in the fall, as the network decided that "it was important to tell these meaningful stories during this moment in time."

In a move that nobody found controversial,

Black-ish star Jenifer Lewis (my Play Mama) will be the recipient of a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame! The honor, bestowed upon great entertainers by the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce (based on fan petitions) will take place sometime in 2021. May I recommend July 15?

Way back in 2013, an all-star cast assembled in NYC to celebrate the 20th anniversary of David Drake's play *The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me*. The event served as a benefit for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, and starred Drake alongside such performers as Anthony Rapp, BD Wong, Robin de Jesus, Andre De Shields and Rory O'Malley. An archival video from that night will be livestreamed to raise money for the Provincetown Theater—where Drake is artistic director. Check out ProvincetownTheater.org on June 28.

The multi-hyphenate Drake, a dear friend of yours truly, was slated to appear on Billy Masters LIVE June 23. While we're tooting our own horn, on Thursday, June 25, Frank DeCaro will return to regale us with stories from his encyclopedic volume, *Drag: Combing Through the Big Wigs of Show Business*. And he'll be joined by two legendary performers—Alaska Thunderfuck and Chad Michaels. Be sure to check out BillyMasters.com/TV, or Billy Masters TV on YouTube.

We just wrapped up another interesting week on Billy Masters LIVE. Last Tuesday, we featured anchormen Thomas Roberts and Steve Kmetko to discuss the changing face of television. It was fascinating when you consider the three of us span three decades in age, and yet our stories were all remarkably similar. On Thursday, we had Eddie Shapiro discussing his Broadway book,

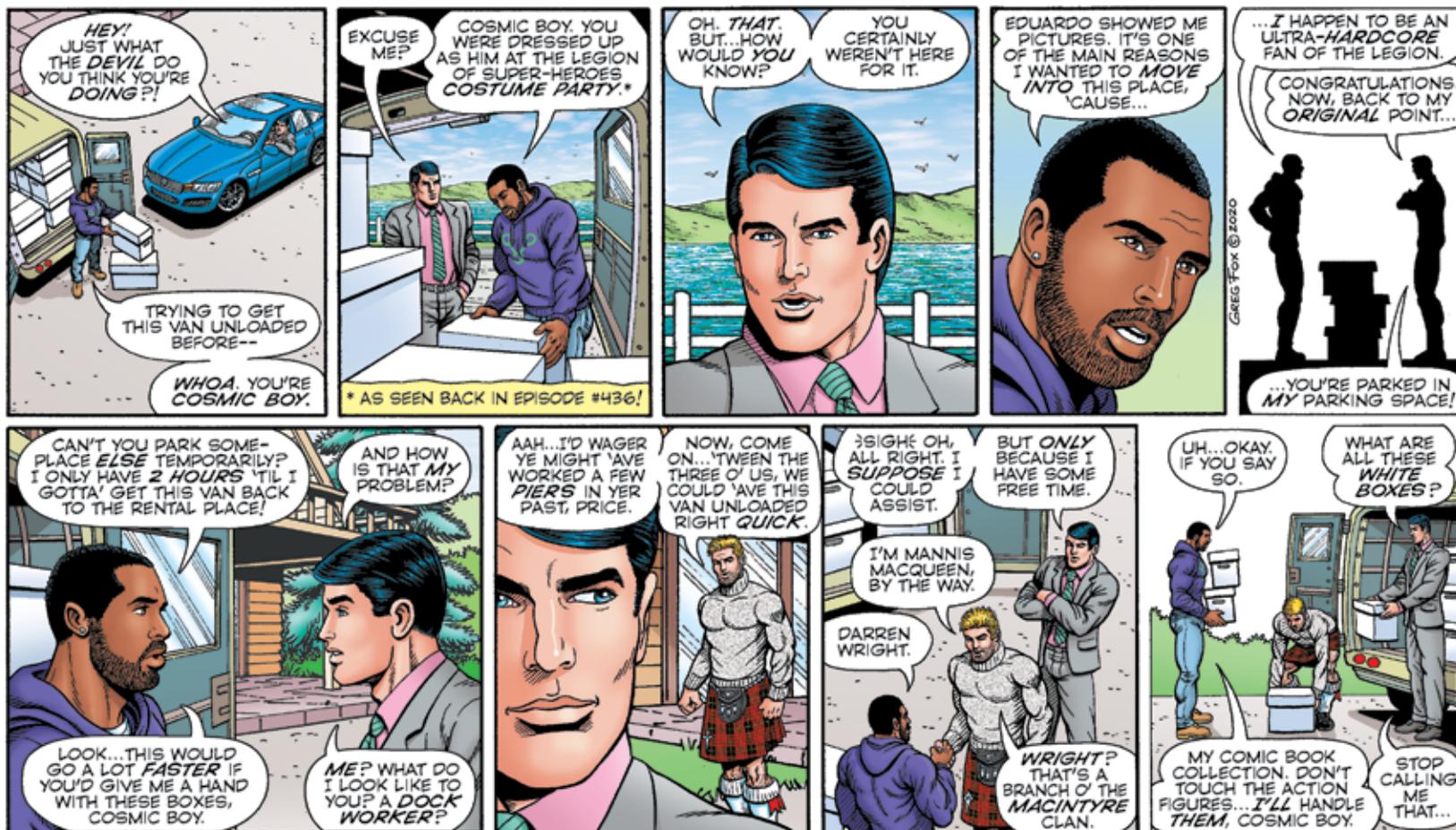
Nothing Like a Dame, alongside Tony Award winner Levi Kreis. We talked about where Broadway has been, where it's going, and what to do with Levi. (I dreamt up a few more suggestions the other night.) You can see it all on BillyMasters.com or YouTube.com/c/BillyMastersTV.

Could it be that anonymous public sex is making a comeback? It is, if the New York City government has anything to say about it. According to the NYC Department of Health, we should still have sex during the coronavirus. In fact, the guide on their website states the following: "Be creative with sexual positions and physical barriers, like walls, that allow sexual contact while preventing close face to face contact."

When I'm boring a hole into Andrew Cuomo's private lavatory, it's time to end yet another column. What a week—both glory holes and live comedy are making comebacks. It's also possible Hughley had more people in his audience than EL Presidente. Of course, exponentially more people are watching Billy Masters LIVE. And you won't catch anything watching us—except perhaps carpal tunnel syndrome! Have I mentioned that we have our own YouTube channel? Who would have thought I'd have so much in common with Barry Diller—except I save the crocodile skin for my belts. Check us out on YouTube.com or go to the TV tab on BillyMasters.com—the site that always delivers (safely). If you have a question or perhaps need to borrow a drill bit, drop a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com, and I promise to get back to you before I book DL Hughley on Billy Masters LIVE. Until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.

## KYLE'S BED & BREAKFAST

by Greg Fox



# the DISH

Dining Guide in  
WINDY CITY TIMES

## SAVOR

### The Clubhouse Oak Brook; Bub City Rosemont

BY ANDREW DAVIS

When the incomparable Nina Simone sang “It’s a new dawn/it’s a new day” in her immortal song “Feeling Good,” it’s a safe bet she wasn’t referring to a coronavirus pandemic.

However, that current development has made it a new day for restaurants, and owners and staffers had to learn a different way of working and interacting. I visited two suburban spots recently (as the suburbs reopened outdoor dining before Chicago), and witnessed tables that were at least six feet apart, bottles of hand sanitizer conspicuously spaced at front counters, and servers sporting face coverings and gloves. (By the way, none of the diners at either spot—save for my dining companion and myself—sport face coverings even when arriving, so don’t say you haven’t been warned.)

Outside of Chicago, most restaurants are part of shopping complexes, and this is certainly true of **The Clubhouse Oak Brook** (TheClubhouse.com), which is in Oakbrook Center. Even dining al fresco, The Clubhouse radiates a sophisticated atmosphere, even with a scaled-down menu.

However, it’s hard to tell that the number of selections is lower than normal because of the variety that’s still available (such as appetizers, salads, sandwiches, favorites and more). Kick back with a mango lemonade while indulging



The Clubhouse's chicken romano.

Photo by Andrew Davis

in such dishes as sweet chili ginger calamari—perfectly fried, served with that sauce and basil-infused olive oil. The entree salads are huge, and the carne asada version is very impressive, and it’s a melange of grilled sirloin, two types of lettuce, chimichurri sauce, white cheddar cheese, black bean-and-corn relish, avocado, corn tortilla strips, BBQ ranch dressing and more. (Other entree salad choices include the Clubhouse chopped, seafood Cobb and chicken Caesar.)

As for sandwiches, one could do a lot worse than the grilled chicken-and-brie option, complete with arugula, avocado, caramelized onion, tomato and aioli, on tomato ciabatta. (Of course, you can customize your selection.) My friend went for one of the favorites: the chicken Romano, and she felt the dish was absolutely amazing. However, these just represent the tip of the iceberg, as there are seafood dishes like orange basil salmon; various steak choices; sides like lobster mac ‘n cheese and jalapeno grits; and desserts like the scrumptious raspberry cheesecake.

(By the way, this spot also offers three specialty grill kits in addition to family-pack options and a la carte menu items. The kits include items such as steaks, pork chops and Wagyu beef patties.)

Offering significantly fewer choices—but just as impressive—is the Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises spot **Bub City Rosemont** (Bub-City.com/rosemont), a restaurant that is part of the

Parkway Bank Park entertainment district and that is open Wednesdays through Sundays. A sign at the front counter (“Git yer diet ass outta here/We serve real food”) says it all, as the casual country-themed spot offers comfort food done right (although vegans will unfortunately find very little to satisfy themselves here).

Available for patio service, delivery and carryout are items such as chopped salad, delicious chicken wings, charcoal-roasted baby back ribs, golden waffle fries and Texas pit beans. But let me tell you: The brisket at this spot is one of the best I’ve ever had—and I’ve been to my share of BBQ spots. The staff (led by Clay Tormey) is among the friendliest you’ll ever encounter.

By the way, indoor dining in the suburbs and Chicago is slated to start Friday, June 26—another dawn of a new day.

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

Bub City's chicken wings.

Photo by Christina Slaton



Sunday's Chicago Pride Fest stream included (clockwise from top left) The Vixen, Steve Grand, Billy Porter and Aunty Chan.

Twitch screenshots

## Pride Fest Chicago goes virtual

Chicago's beloved annual Pride Fest made the move to Twitch for a special Virtual Pride Fest, presented by Northalsted Business Alliance and Gilead Sciences.

The virtual fest streamed on the platform over two nights, Saturday, June 20 and Sunday, June 21. Each night offered special surprises, like a last-minute drop-in on June 20 by pop star Nick Jonas.

Sunday's stream kicked off with some special words from hostess Ruff 'n Stuff, who thanked Gilead as well as the beneficiaries of the event, Brave Space Alliance, Affinity, Center on Halsted and Howard Brown Health.

From there, they kicked it Sidetrack-style, with hosts Dixie Lynn Cartwright and Dida Ritz, who presented video shorts from performers Aunty Chan, Saya Naomi, Krissy Feetface, as well as a video by Dida herself and another featuring Dixie with Alexis Bevels, in a modern take on The Parent Trap.

Festival staple Boy Band Review offered a few familiar numbers. They were followed by local gay country favorite Steve Grand, who played two songs, including a touching cover of Elton John's "Tiny Dancer."

A brief but bright spot in the evening's festivities was a quick greeting from Broadway diva Billy Porter.

Chicago's own trans rising rap star KC Ortiz chimed in for a jam or two.

From there, it was a deep dive into Black Girl Magic, the groundbreaking drag and performance collective organized by The Vixen, who told the poignant story of the formation of the show and relayed the importance of creating a space run and populated by exclusively Black artists. This sentiment was echoed by fellow performers Kenzie Coulee, Sasha Love, Miss Toto, Shea Coulee, Dida Ritz, Lucy Stoolie, Bambi Banks-Coulee and Khloe Coulee.

The evening ended with another festival go-to, Catfight, and some parting jams from DJ Metro.

Get more info at <https://pridefestchicago.com/>.



# WINDY CITY TIMES COMMUNITY CALENDAR

[NOTE: Events may not occur because of compliance with guidelines connected with the COVID-19 outbreak. Please contact the venue if interested in a particular event to see if said event is still scheduled.]

## Wed., June 24

**The Census, COVID-19 and Beyond: Resilience & Vulnerability in LGBTQ+ Communities** Community conversations examining how the Census shapes public policy, representation and impacts local resources for LGBTQ+ communities in the face of COVID-19. 6:00pm - 7:30pm Online Tickets: [http://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN\\_qiL0p1k-MQGa5gXxBB4IXxA](http://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_qiL0p1k-MQGa5gXxBB4IXxA)

## Thursday, June 25

**Plenty O'Cookies for a Cause** Drag personality Plenty O'Smiles will guide bakers as they make and decorate their own cookies at home. La Casa Norte's Next Generation Board works to support LCN's mission to end homelessness in the City of Chicago. \$15. To register,



## GOOD N' PLENTY Thursday, June 25

Plenty O'Smiles (above) will host a virtual baking class to benefit La Casa Norte.

Photo by Andrew Davis

find "Plenty O'Cookies for a Cause" at the link. 7:00pm - 8:00pm Online Tickets: <http://Eventbrite.com>

**Stay Proud, Be Loud Virtual Happy Hour** Join Judy and Dennis Shepard and representatives from the Center on Halsted and Brave Space Alliance as they discuss the importance of staying connected and how people can support the community and celebrate pride when we're socially distanced. By Matthew Shepard Foundation and Miller Lite. Register at the link. 5:00pm Online Tickets: <http://www.MillerLitePride.com>

**IGNITION Festival of New Plays** Thursday evening readings of four new plays from Chicago playwrights. Each reading will be followed by a "Coffee with the Creators" chat during lunch hour the Friday after. Free. Through Jul 17, 2020. Create an account to RSVP 7:00pm - 8:30pm Online Tickets: <http://victorygardens.org/event/2020-ignition-festival-of-new-plays/>

## Friday, June 26

**They Know Not What They Do** virtual screening New documentary from the director of For The Bible Tells Me So looks at how marriage equality was met by severe and successful backlash from the religious Right. \$10 three day rental. Time:TBA Online <http://watch.firststrun-features.com/products/for-they-know-not-at-the-gene-siskel-film-ctr>

**#4theQulture, virtual Pride event** Featuring all-Black LGBTQ+ artists, communities and causes. Avery R. Young, Thair, Drea the Vibe Dealer and Mother Nature musical performances plus skits, mini docs, drag from LGBTQ+ collectives like Fabibat (Lucy Stoolie), A Queer Pride, Molasses, Futurehood and Unfriendly Black Hotties. Queer comedy feat. Tribble, Ashley Ray and Aasia Bullock plus PSAs and interviews from Black activist orgs, Created by Slo 'Mo, Reunion and OTV-Open Television. Free. Through June 28 7:00pm - 10:00pm Online <http://4thequlture.com>

## Saturday, June 27

**Global Pride** 24-hour livestream Full lineup of performances by international musical acts, remarks by prime ministers and royalty, film and content from Prides in Africa, Europe, Asia, Oceania, and South, Central and North America. Organized by Prides from across the world. YouTube and the Global Pride website. 10:30 a.m. ET 9:30am Online <http://www.globalpride2020.org/>

## Sunday, June 28

**Black Trans Lives Matter: A BLM Pride Protest** Seven-mile march to focus on the Black transgender community and organized by the grassroots activist organization ACTIVATE:CHI collaborating with local organizations including

Chicago Pride and Northalsted Business Alliance 11:00am Uptown <http://activate-chi.net/initiatives/june-28th>

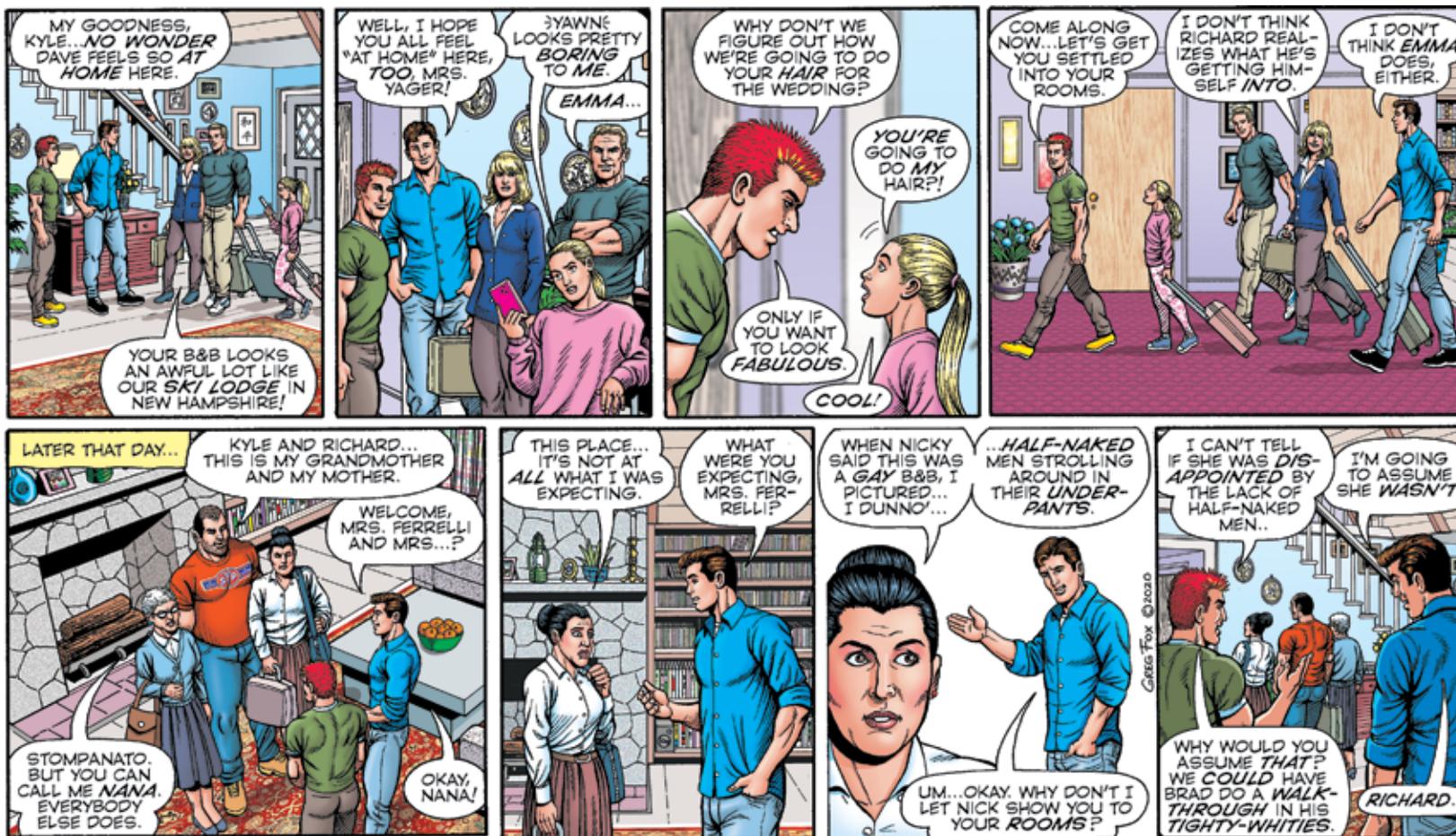
**Pride March** A separate grassroots, promoting the equality and equity of all marginalized members of the LGBTQPIA+ community. No corporate sponsorship, no floats, no alcohol, no parties. Just remembering the brave activists whose righteous anger and frustration refused to take another minute of the systemic abuse. All attendees are asked to wear a mask or face covering. Volunteers and organizers needed. 12:00pm Belmont Red Line station [http://www.facebook.com/events/552252045434223/?active\\_tab=discussion](http://www.facebook.com/events/552252045434223/?active_tab=discussion)

## Tuesday, June 30

**Chicago Is a [Virtual] Drag Festival** Hosted by thee Shea Coulee (RuPaul's Drag Race S9 + All Stars 5. Featuring the Vixen (RuPaul's Drag Race S10), Detox (RuPaul's Drag Race S5 + All Stars 2), Jeez Loueez (Voted #1 Drag Figure in the World // the Honey Badger of Burlesque), Sasha Colby (Nightgowns), Dorian Electra, Louisiana Purchase (Dragula S3), DJ Jasmine Infiniti. Concluding our No Pride Without Justice fundraiser 8:00pm Online <http://www.twitch.tv/aqueerpride>

# KYLE'S BED & BREAKFAST

by Greg Fox



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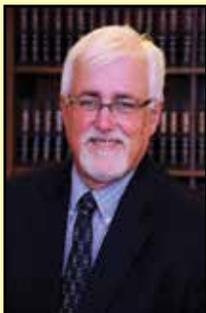
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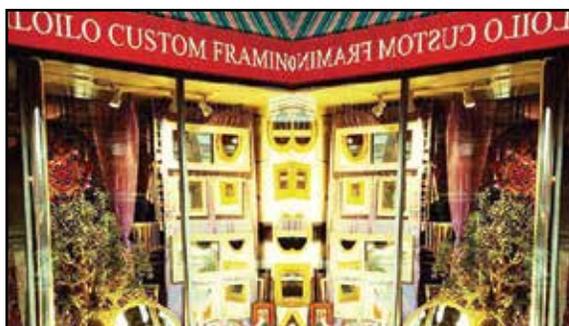


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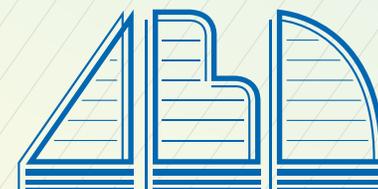


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