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FOR 2014

WINDY CITY  
TIMES

# Gay and Lesbian Wedding Guide

## Civil union or marriage? You decide

BY ROCHELLE GRIMBAU

What is the difference between same-sex marriage and civil unions in Illinois?

The Civil Union Act (Illinois Religious Freedom Protection and Civil Union Act) went into effect in Illinois on June 1, 2011.

Civil unions may be established between opposite-sex couples as well as same-sex couples provided the parties are more than 18 years old, neither party is currently married, party to a civil union, or are closely related.

Generally, the act provides a "party to a civil union" with "the same legal obligations, responsibilities, protections, and benefits" as are afforded or recognized by the law of Illinois to spouses, however, parties to civil unions do not receive any federal recognition. It is important to distinguish between federally derived rights and those provided by the state.

The act explicitly incorporates those provisions contained in the Illinois Marriage and Dissolution of Marriage Act concerning dis-

solution and declaration of invalidity. The act does not, however, explicitly incorporate those provisions concerning property, support, maintenance, attorney's fees, or custody, although such rights and obligations are presumably among those afforded to spouses under the law.

Benefits available to parties to a civil union include state inheritance, pension, medical decision-making and health insurance rights.

Same-sex marriage: The bill known as the Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act was signed into law by Gov. Pat Quinn Nov. 20, 2013 and shall take legal effect on June 1, 2014. The act both amends Illinois' definition of marriage and clarifies how marriages and civil unions entered into elsewhere will be treated by Illinois law. Specifically, the Act provides that:

—All laws of this State applicable to marriage ... shall apply equally to marriages of same-sex and different-sex couples and their children.

—Parties to a marriage and their children, regardless of whether the marriage consists of a same-sex or different-sex couple, shall have all the same benefits, protections, and responsibilities under law...

—A civil union, or a substantially similar legal relationship ... legally entered into in another jurisdiction, shall be recognized in Illinois as a civil union. A Marriage, whether of the same sex or different sexes and providing that it is not a common law marriage, legally entered into in another jurisdiction, shall be recognized in this State as a marriage ...

—The act does not repeal Illinois' existing civil union laws. Same-sex and opposite-sex couples can continue to enter into civil unions in Illinois. Same-sex couples who want to convert their existing civil union into a marriage can do so after the marriage law takes effect on June 1, 2014.

Civil-union couples will not have their civil union automatically converted into a marriage. Those who wish to convert their civil unions to

marriages will have two options:

1. Apply for a marriage license and have a marriage ceremony to convert their civil union into a marriage without a fee;

2. During the first year following June 1, 2014, the couple may apply to a county clerk for a marriage certificate which will reflect they were married as of the date they entered into their civil union. The certificate must be signed and returned; no fee.

Married same-sex couples living in Illinois are eligible for all of the protections, responsibilities, and access to federal programs afforded to different-sex married couples. There are more than 1,100 instances in federal law where a protection or responsibility is based on marital status. By way of example only: access to Social Security survivors' benefits; the option to use family medical leave to care for a spouse; access to veterans' spousal benefits.

In addition to federal benefits and protections, married same-sex couples will also be afforded many rights (and responsibilities) in Illinois, to name a few:

—Dissolution of marriage by a domestic relations court, including access to equitable divi-

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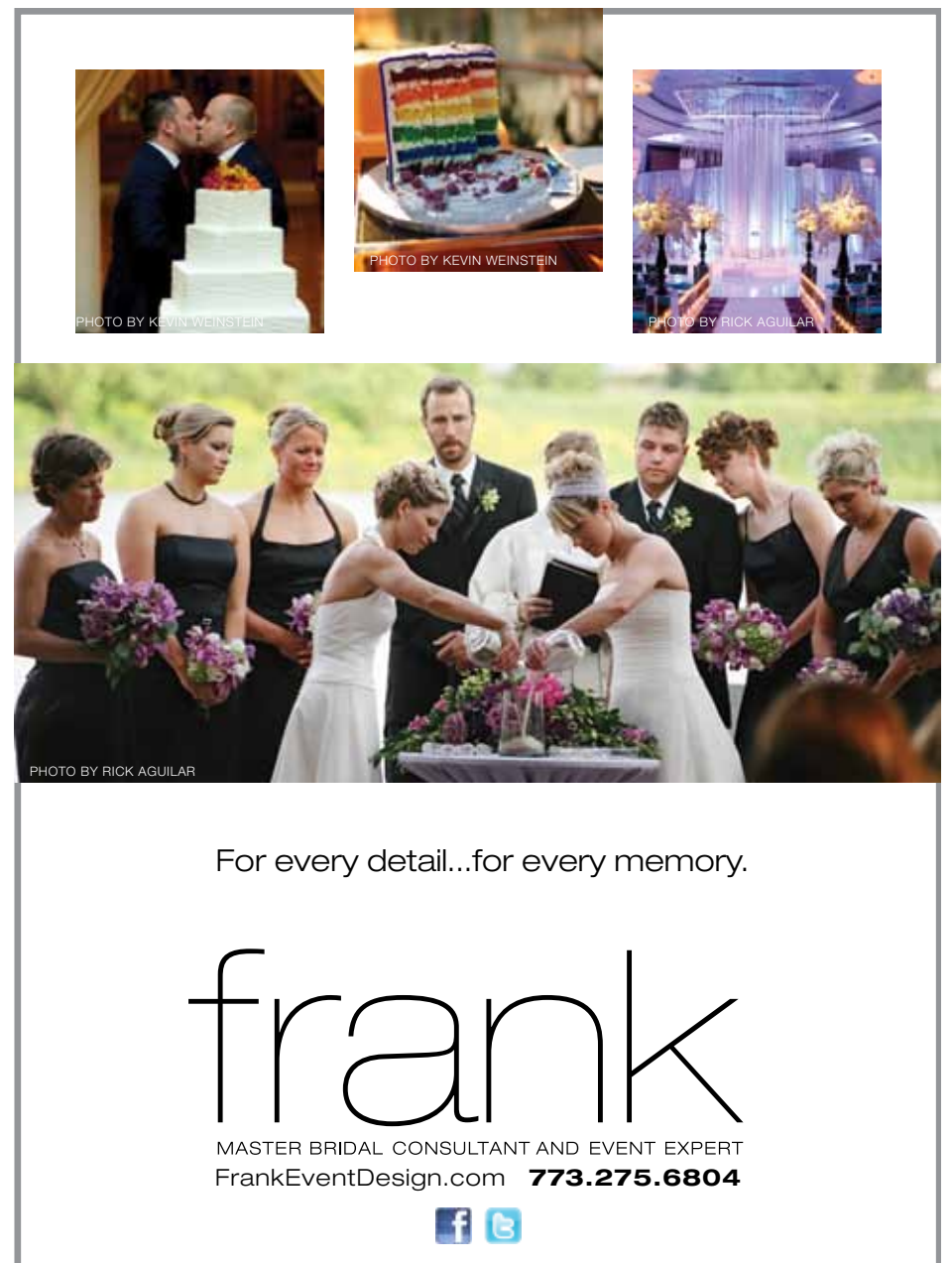


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## Snapshots of Love

We asked readers to send in photos of their weddings/civil unions to share with the community. What we received was a collection of beautiful stories of love and commitment.

All photo courtesy of subjects except where otherwise indicated.



Craig Harzinski and Ken Mertes travelled north to Victoria, British Columbia, July 12, 2005, to tie the knot. They also celebrated with a kiss at the recent signing of SB-10, legalizing same-sex marriage in Illinois.



Partners Drew Bauhs (left) and Olin Eargle seal the deal at their civil union ceremony.



Diane Martino and Tina Kachold joined together in a civil-union ceremony in June 2011, followed by a celebration with friends and family the following month. The couple plan to "upgrade" to marriage in June.



Partners Cally Raduenzel (left) and Polly Jones wed at Herring Cove, Provincetown, Mass. on August 17, 2013.

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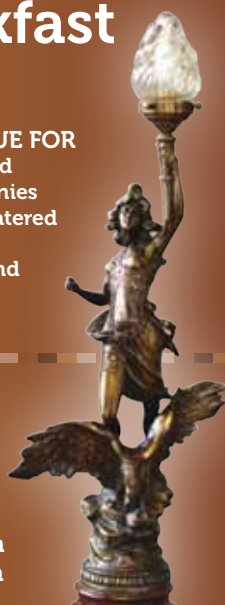
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## Frankly speaking...

*Expert tips to plan your wedding expertly*



BY FRANK J. ANDONOPLAS

The first thing most newly engaged couples ask is "Where do I start?" My advice is to first decide on two key elements: the number of guests you want to invite (actually make a list), and what you would like to spend on the wedding. Both are vital to have decided on before you start any of the planning.

From here you might want to consider hiring a wedding consultant to design, plan. Even if you cannot afford to engage a planner for the entire experience, I actually offer hourly consultations to guide the couple while they do all the legwork with creative ideas, etiquette information as well as vendor referrals. Either will save you time, and help you from making some expensive mistakes.

The first and most important is selecting the reception and ceremony sites, if they are not the same. You would need to check availability on the date you selected, make sure they can comfortably accommodate your guest count, and find out the minimum in food and beverage (which is usually exclusive of tax and tip, so don't forget to add that in) that they require to hold the wedding there.

Other larger venues will charge a rental fee, and then you need to hire a caterer to prepare, cook and serve the food. In addition with this type of venue you will need to rent every fork, glass, table and chair as well a myriad of other items that will be needed. This will probably be the biggest part of your budget. If the ceremony is not in the space, you will need to search for the perfect place to exchange your vows. This can be a garden, church, chapel or synagogue, or any other place you feel is the perfect place to make this commitment. When searching, find out the rental cost, the number of hours you can use the site for, as well as restrictions.

From here you would then move into the other "fixed costs," which would include officiant, entertainment/music, photographer and videographer/filmmaker. My advice for this is to make sure the things you are viewing are the work of who is going to actually be there that

day. Bands switch out singers, and make sure the photos and video are taken by the person who will actually be at your wedding.

The remaining things to think about add to the variable costs, and a multitude of choices and designs come in. Save the dates, invitations, your menu of what is being served, flowers, linen, lighting, upgraded chairs and dinnerware are just a few of the many things that are truly design elements and set your wedding apart from others. But this also is where costs can go out of control, so if you do not have an unlimited budget, this is where a consultant can guide you in choosing the things that are the most meaningful to you, and will make the biggest impact.

**Frank J. Andonoplas has designed social and corporate events all over the country since 1992. Frank is an active member of the Association of Bridal Consultants, and in 1995 was appointed state coordinator. He has also earned the designation of professional bridal consultant in 1993.**

**In 1996, he received the designation of accredited bridal consultant, and master bridal consultant in 1999, then making Andonoplas the 19th in the world to earn that distinction. He is also a member of the International Special**

### GRIMBAU from page 19

sion of relationship assets and debts;

—Right to seek financial support upon breakup; and

—All state law rights and responsibilities spouses receive through marriage, including many others too numerous to list in this article.

This is an exciting, long overdue time, replete with fabulous choices. It should be known, however, that this is a dynamic, evolving area of law which has not yet been legally tested. There are bound to be many questions and uncertainties ... but really, aren't they always the harbingers of choice.

**Contact the Law Offices Rochelle Grimbau, 205 W. Randolph St., Suite 1640, Chicago, Ill., 60606; at 312-781-0193; or at rgrimbau@grimbau-law.comcastbiz.net.**

Born in Havana, Cuba, Grimbau has specialized in family law since 1983 with an emphasis on dissolution of marriage, same sex relationships, domestic partnerships and civil unions; custody; child support; parentage in traditional and non-traditional families or situations; and post-decree issues.



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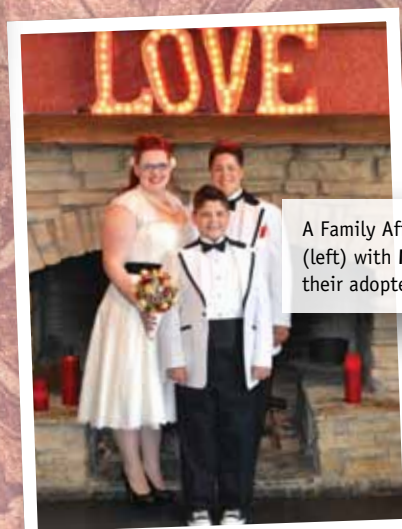
Partners **Blake Ryan Howard** (with glasses) and **Keeton Chamberlain** met at their local neighborhood bar and have been inseparable ever since. After celebrating their civil union, Dec. 11, 2013, at Armand's Pizzeria, they spent their honeymoon in Asheville, NC. At the Illinois marriage bill-signing ceremony, their image was part of the big Powerpoint presentation.



Couple **Michelle Thomas** and **Jan Ferguson** from their civil (and spiritual) union, Sept. 8, 2012. They plan to convert their union to a "real" marriage at City Hall June 1.



Partners **Brian Fallon** and **Fred Mahaffey** exchanged vows in a commitment ceremony on Sept. 6, 2003 (left). 10 years later to the date, they had their civil union at the same church (right).



A Family Affair: **Kate Lindberg-Vazquez** (left) with **Myrna Vazquez** (right) and their adopted son Matheos.

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# Lesbian officiant adding meaning to celebrations

BY ROSS FORMAN

Marguerite H. Griffin has long been interested in rituals and ceremonies—and for the past seven years has turned her passion into her part-time profession.

She is a certified celebrant and non-denominational minister who was born and raised in Chicago, and she now calls the Chatham neighborhood home. Her business celebrates meaningful life moments and, naturally, her website is: [www.meaningfulmarguerite.com](http://www.meaningfulmarguerite.com)

Griffin is a certified wedding and funeral celebrant who strives for authentic, meaningful and unique ceremonies to mark important life transitions, including anniversaries, memorials, baby blessings and more.

"We tend to move from one significant moment to another without really taking time to celebrate it, or truly understand how we've been moved by the occasion," Griffin said. "I heard about celebrants on NPR, an opportunity for individuals to create ceremonies—unique, hand-written to that event and the people involved."

Griffin, 47, who is lesbian, is a motivational speaker and writer, able to create the perfect mood for any ceremony—from sophisticated to intimate and sacred, from light and casual to overly flamboyant.

"I can suggest meaningful ways to personalize your ceremony using music, readings from secular, religious, spiritual or mythical traditions, and rituals that reflect your needs, your beliefs, your cultural, and your religious/spiritual background, and your values," she said.

"Your ceremony will express the great expectations and intense emotions that characterize the moments that have changed your life."

Griffin said the celebrant role has its roots in Australia, where it is most common.

"Things are going well," with the business,

said Griffin, who, during the day, works at Northern Trust Bank. "This is something I do because I enjoy it. It is not full-time, and I don't ever expect it will be. It's a way for me to create value in the world, a way for me to give back, a way for me to be part of special moments for individuals and families, and use my skills as a creative writer and public speaker. That's what draws me to it."

Griffin has married about 15 couples per year, a total that no doubt will rise this year when gay weddings begin in June. She also has done baby blessings and house-warming celebrations. Plus, she has officiated memorial services for pets.

"I've enjoyed it, and really enjoy marrying gay couples," she said.

"I'm looking forward to what will be, hopefully, a busy wedding season [in 2014], which will include gay and straight couples. Now, gay couples can have a ceremony, mark the occasion, invite family and friends, have them learn more about each other, about their love, their hopes and dreams and more—just like a straight couple."

Griffin once performed a civil-union cer-



Marguerite H. Griffin.

emony for two men who had been together for 40 years—and there was not a dry eye in the place, she said. "It was just so meaningful for them."

"For me, as a gay woman, to be able to marry a gay couple, it's very exciting; it's very hopeful and it just feels right," she said.

Griffin has performed countless memorial services over the years, such as the one she did for a terminally ill woman after being hired by the woman's children.

Griffin spent a couple of afternoons with the ill woman, to hear exactly what she had accomplished in her life, what she regretted, what she had wanted for her children, and much more. The woman passed away about four months later, and Griffin presented a perfect celebration of her life.

"For me, it was special to be a part of her journey, and also very meaningful to me that I was able to assist her children, so they didn't really have to spend the time wondering what their mom would have wanted," Griffin said. "It's wonderful work, a truly meaningful connection I have with the world."

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# Food for Thought offers hassle-free options

BY ROSS FORMAN

They don't always cater extra-large events, but they have. Food For Thought was the caterer for the University of Chicago commencement—with 12,000 guests.

But with 350 employees and nearly 30 years of experience, the Lincolnwood-based company is the perfect choice for events of any size.

And that definitely includes gay weddings.

"We cater all events, from small house parties to large galas, corporate and social events," said David Bunte, the senior sales consultant for Food For Thought. "We offer a boutique style of service for all of our clients, no matter what the size and scope of their event. Our menus are diverse, offering all different cuisines and our style is more reflective of contemporary restaurants in preparation and pre-



A sampling of culinary choices from Food For Thought. Photos from Karen Monckton

sentation. We consider ourselves trendsetters in the catering industry and our reputation is highly regarded in our diverse client base. We know that each event's goal and feel is different and work with each client to create customized plans to achieve those visions."

Bunte, 54, who lives in the Gold Coast, has worked at Food For Thought for 19 years. Some

of the major annual events catered over the years by Food For Thought include the Celestial Ball at the Adler Planetarium, Lincoln Park Zoo Ball, Brookfield Zoo Ball, Ravinia Gala, Women's Board of the Field Museum Gala, and more.

Bunte said Food For Thought strives for "personalized commitment in planning, menu development, customization [and] flawless ex-

ecution." He added that the company is driven to "making sure you achieve your vision."

"We pride ourselves on working with each client individually," he said. "It's so much different than walking into a restaurant and ordering off the menu. We need to get to know you and your needs before suggesting a culinary and

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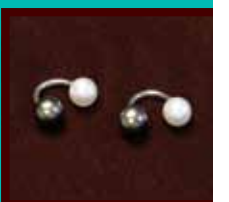
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# Wedding arrangements in bloom at upcoming show

BY ROSS FORMAN

The annual Chicago Flower & Garden Show blooms March 15-23 at Navy Pier, and show organizer Tony Abruscato said the event certainly will answer countless questions for one of the most trendy wedding tops: DIY floral.

As in, do-it-yourself floral, often as part of a DIY wedding. "Couples are getting bulk floral, and then creating their own center-pieces, their own bouquets. It's a big, popular trend—for the last 18 months or so, and I see it continuing," Abruscato said.

At the show, there will be free demonstrations on how to make hand-tied European floral bouquets, and how to make table center pieces, among other wedding floral options. "People can come to the show and just watch these classes and demonstrations," Abruscato said.

This year's show also features the American Institute of Floral Designers, which is holding its regional conference at the event. The institute will have 12 different exhibits, showing the hot trends for 2014 and 2015.

Abruscato said popular colors and flowers this year tend to be a bit more sustainable.

"It's expensive to get married, so many couples are finding ways to do DIY floral arrangements," he said.

That list of soon-to-be-married couples certainly includes a load of LGBTers. And Abruscato said "there are a tremendous amount of LGBT-friendly floral designers." Abruscato noted that smaller, compact floral arrangements are more trendy this year as opposed to the big, over-the-



Chicago Flower & Garden Show organizer Tony Abruscato (above) and Abruscato with Bob Mariano of Mariano's. Photos courtesy of Abruscato



top, tall arrangements. Several couples, including LGBT, have inquired about getting married at the show. "It's something that we think we can accommodate, but haven't done anything final on that," he said.

Abruscato said that a new, wide variety of flowers will be available throughout Chicago this year, including flowers that last longer. At Mariano's, for instance, the floral options will be expanding over the coming months, Abruscato said.

But still, the most popular flower remains the rose. And with a wide variety of options, red roses are no longer the lone must-have flower.

The 2014 Chicago Flower & Garden Show, presented by Mariano's, is March 15-23 at Navy Pier. See [www.chicagoflower.com](http://www.chicagoflower.com).



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## FOOD from page 24

service direction. We do pride ourselves on being a chameleon for our clients as the food that day or night represents them. Whether a dish with roots in traditional preparations or molecular gastronomy, our specials change daily."

Food For Thought has a sales team of 17 and a culinary team of more than 40.

The Food For Thought "Hospitality Group" offers daily food service solutions for a number of different applications, Bunte said. For instance:

- Subsidized corporate dining programs.
- University dining programs.
- Amenity solutions for dining in a corporate office setting.
- Golf club dining management programs.
- Museum dining and special event programs.

"Food plays an integral role in defining the brand of an entity," Bunte said. "Our commitment to creating higher end programs that define a brand people want differentiates us. Our size allows us both the resources to provide these services and be nimble enough to be both flexible and creative."

Food For Thought also has a delivered catering division.

"As with the other services we offer, we understand that food and the experience it provides is integral to getting results," Bunte said. "Our delivered product line provides a more cost-effective solution [than] fully catered meetings and events. Our menus have just recently been overhauled to reflect a more creative and contemporary approach to these events."

Those new menus will launch April 1.

Bunte said Food For Thought has "always been proud supporters of the gay community and are thrilled with their inclusion [in weddings], something that should have occurred a long time ago."

"We do not see any difference in how the gay community approaches their wedding day from our current clients. Will it impact the volume of weddings we produce? We definitely feel it will, but remain committed to our history of excellence in catering, whether the client is straight or gay."

So why go the Food For Thought route?

"Aside from being a staunch supporter of the community over the years, our customized approach toward special events allow each couple to create and [an] experience that defines them on one of the most special days of their lives, and make it worry free."



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# Premarital agreements: Protect your property rights

BY ROGER V. MCCAFFREY-BOSS

On June 1, Illinois LGBT couples will be able to apply for a marriage license, get married the following day, and enjoy all the benefits and legal obligations that married spouses have enjoyed for years.

LGBT couples where someone has a terminal illness, however, can get married now with a supporting letter from their physician.

Although madly in love today, divorce lawyers know that love does not conquer all and that love can sour and turn to conflict. In the world of heterosexual marriage there is an established history of divorce terms, experience with breakup rights and duties that are different from the rules that LGBT couples have lived by.

Divorce clients know the trials and tribulations of a best friend's divorce, the property settlement they got, what their lawyer could or could not do for them and their responsibilities

for payment of maintenance and child support. Unfortunately, these rules are new to LGBT couples planning marriage. They are important and everyone who plans to "tie the knot" should be aware of them.

Whatever you thought was your sole property before marriage changes. When married, spouses have rights as to the marital property of the couple. Marital property is any property acquired by the parties during their marriage except for property which is specifically excluded as non-marital property. The burden is on the party claiming non-marital property to prove it.

If you get married, and split from your spouse, you may have to pay for maintenance. The amount and duration of maintenance is determined based upon relevant factors including age, income and property of each party, education, length of the marriage, whether the recipient's ability to earn income has been impaired

due to absence from the workforce to attend to domestic duties, and lifestyle of the parties.

If you divorce, you may have to pay attorneys' fees for yourself and you may have to pay the legal fees of your spouse. The law says that attorney's fees are the primary responsibility of the party incurring fees. However, if your spouse does not have any money, you may be required to pay his/her fees. Contribution of attorneys' fees from one party to the other is available where the payment of attorneys' fees would undermine a partner's economic stability.

Illinois is an equitable distribution state which means property is not necessarily divided 50/50—there is no guarantee that either spouse will get half. The Court considers relevant factors in determining how assets are to be divided, such as length of the marriage, age, health and employability of the spouses, contribution, both financial and non-financial, to the acquisition of property, the parties' respective abilities to generate capital assets in the future and other factors.

And if you die, your spouse has legal rights to certain retirement accounts you have regardless of who you named as the beneficiary.

Instead of letting a judge decide these issues in case you divorce, you should have a premarital agreement to establish your own financial agreements. Premarital agreements clarify the rights and expectations in the marriage and can reduce the expenses and stress in a divorce by eliminating the issues to be determined.

Premarital agreements must be in writing and signed by both parties. They must be entered into freely and voluntarily. And they require fair and reasonable financial disclosures. They also require each spouse to have their own attorney represent them and be signed well before the marriage so no claim can be made that the Agreement was forced onto one of the spouses.

I have always advocated for all parties in an LGBT couple to create their own property agreements and decide what issues should be covered. Doing that before marriage is the time.

**Roger V. McCaffrey-Boss, Esq., Law Offices of Roger V. McCaffrey-Boss & Associates, P.C., 33 North Dearborn Street, Suite 800, Chicago, Illinois 60602, Phone 312 263 8800, email: RVMLawyer@aol.com**



Snapshots of Love

### Episcopal Bishop blesses marriage of priest and spouse

The Rev. Ms. Shawn M. Schreiner (pictured at right), Rector, Grace Episcopal Church in Oak Park married **Victoria Garvey** in a ceremony in 2013. They were married legally in Baltimore, Md., and then had the blessing at Grace Episcopal Church. More than 400 people attended the service, lead by Bishop Jeffrey Lee. **Photos by Jonathon Lee**









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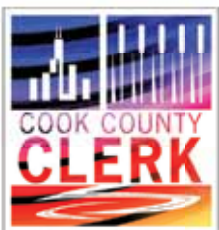
# Marriage Equality coming June 1, 2014

## Marriage License Fast Facts

- Couples must be 18, not blood relatives and not already legally married
- Couples must appear in person at a County Clerk's office to apply
- Couples must bring identification
- Licenses are valid for 60 days starting with the day after they are issued
- Licenses cost \$60, but the fee is waived if you already have a civil union
- Couples have 2 options for converting a civil union to a marriage:
  1. Apply for a marriage license and have a ceremony within 60 days
  2. Apply for a marriage license and request to use your civil union date as the date of your marriage
- Marriage certificates are not automatically sent to couples
- About a week after your ceremony, certificates will be available for purchase in person, online, by phone, or by mail request
- There are 3 types of marriage certificates: standard (\$15), a set of two wallet-sized (\$15), or a commemorative on canvas (\$65)



**For more information, visit [cookcountyclerk.com/vitalrecords/MarriageEquality](http://cookcountyclerk.com/vitalrecords/MarriageEquality).**



**COOK COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE**  
[cookcountyclerk.com](http://cookcountyclerk.com)



# Gay and Lesbian Wedding Guide

## ACCOMMODATIONS

see also **VENUES**

### The Guesthouse Hotel Andersonville

4866 N. Clark St.  
773-564-9568

[www.theguesthousehotel.com](http://www.theguesthousehotel.com)  
Luxurious boutique hotel with spacious two- and three-bedroom accommodations in Andersonville. Gourmet kitchens, spa-like bathrooms, fireplaces, balconies. Perfect for groups. Walk to restaurants, shops, bars. Live like a local!

### Lang House Bed & Breakfast

7421 N. Sheridan Rd.  
773-764-9851

[www.catscradlechicago.com](http://www.catscradlechicago.com)  
[info@langhousechicago.com](mailto:info@langhousechicago.com)

The Lang House Bed & Breakfast, built in 1919, is honored to support the LGBT community. Lang House is the perfect venue for indoor, outdoor, nearby beach weddings, or receptions. We have special offers; call for details.

## ANIMAL SERVICES

### Tree House Humane Society

1212 W. Carmen Ave.  
773-784-5488, ext. 238

[www.TreeHouseAnimals.org/wedding](http://www.TreeHouseAnimals.org/wedding)

[Kristine@TreeHouseAnimals.org](mailto:Kristine@TreeHouseAnimals.org)

Honor your commitment and save an animal's life with a personalized Wedding Donation Page.

## BAKERIES

### Roeser's Bakery and Party Palace

3216-3224 W. North Ave.  
Bakery: 773-489-6900

Party Palace: 773-489-6928  
[www.RoesersCakes.com](http://www.RoesersCakes.com)

We want to celebrate marriage equality with you. Our designs range from traditional to contemporary and will compliment the theme of your special day. We are the place for cakes and everything to complete your party. Free parking.

## CATERING

### Bountiful Eatery

3312 N. Broadway St.  
773-687-9811

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

Gay-owned Bountiful Eatery, awarded "Best Healthy Eats," specializes in healthy food and food sensitivity. Offering a wide range of choices from vegan to wild-caught salmon and grass-fed bison entrees. Call to speak with our catering specialist and we will help you fulfill your dream wedding.

### Conn's Catering

773-262-2666

[www.connscatering.com](http://www.connscatering.com)  
[info@connscatering.com](mailto:info@connscatering.com)

1993 - 2014: 21 years of excellence. A preferred caterer at Chicago Park District venues. We offer full bar service.

### Entertaining Company

312-829-2800

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

Entertaining Company, Chicago's caterer for 20 years, boldly designs every event, from vibrant wedding

and commitment ceremony catering to sparkling social event catering, including backyard barbecues and black tie galas. Entertaining Company catering transports guests to a bold world of celebration inspired by a palate of artisan ingredients, global traditions and colorful settings.

### J&L Catering

1229 N. North Branch St.  
312-280-7900

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

Celebrating over 25 years of bringing creativity and exceptional cuisine together, J&L Catering has been a supporter of the community since 1989. Full-service, custom catering with knowledgeable event planners who will help you through every step to create an amazing experience for you and your guests.

### Tri-Star Catering

150 S. Wacker Drive, Chicago 312-368-8266

[www.tristarcatering.com](http://www.tristarcatering.com)  
[scott@tristarcatering.com](mailto:scott@tristarcatering.com)

After all, you should enjoy your event as much as your guests do. Tri-Star Catering is more than exceptional food tastefully presented. We take pride in creating the complete special event. Tri-Star takes the work and worry out of your busy schedule. Preparation, presentation, perfection!

## ENTERTAINMENT

### Artists, Events and Entertainment Inc

312-832-1100

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

Make your next event beyond your imagination. From a formal affair to an informal party, we can provide the perfect entertainment for any event. World-class musicians, Big Band, orchestras, harp, violins, piano, Top 40 dance, vocalists, jazz and more.

### Becca Kaufman Orchestra

847-892-4150

[www.beccakaufmanorchestra.com](http://www.beccakaufmanorchestra.com)  
[www.beatmixmusic.com](http://www.beatmixmusic.com)

Available for all your weddings and celebrations. Contact Becca to hear the sounds of your wedding.

## EVENT PLANNING

### Food For Thought

847-982-2608

[www.fftchicago.com](http://www.fftchicago.com)  
[info@fftchicago.com](mailto:info@fftchicago.com)

An esteemed place among Chicago special event planners with 30 years of experience. Our veteran sales consultants assist in all phases of the planning process and can provide expert advice on venues, vendors and entertaining. We are committed to creating memorable experiences for our customers through a culture of creativity, expertise and innovation with delicious food we love and true hospitality.

### Frank Event Design

Frank J. Andonoplas, Master Bridal Consultant

5555 N. Sheridan Rd., Arcade Level  
773-275-6804

[www.frankeventdesign.com](http://www.frankeventdesign.com)  
[frank@frankeventdesign.com](mailto:frank@frankeventdesign.com)

Frank J. Andonoplas has been planning weddings for the last 20

years. He was recently Named Event Planner of the year and is one of 79 Master Bridal Consultants worldwide.

### Kelly Ray Wedding and Events

2915 N. Clybourn Ave., Suite 314

773-909-1980

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

Kelly Ray Wedding and Events wants you to enjoy your big event. We provide an avant-garde approach to planning to make your dream day a reality.

## FASHION/HAIR

### Dame Couture

1804 Central St., Evanston, IL 847-866-7599

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

Dame Couture provides an alternative experience: one that's more down-to-earth, personal, and relaxed than traditional bridal shops. We love vintage clothes, and reuse vintage clothes and components as much as possible.

### Jordan Hair Extensions

312-404-3053

[www.chicagohairextensionssalon.org](http://www.chicagohairextensionssalon.org)

LGBT owner catering specifically to LGBT clients. Schedule your appointment with Jordan, a hair extension expert with 20 years of experience. By appointment only; in-home or at our Wrigleyville location.

## FAVORS/INVITES

### Pulp & Ink

1344 N. Wells St.

312-475-1344

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

Since 2001, traditional and urban-minded paper goods adorn this airy showroom. Invitations, programs, and place cards range from clean-lined and brightly colored to those with calligraphy and muted shades. Custom design available in addition to Elum, Oblation and Bella Figura and more.

### Total Promotions, Inc.

Contact David Strzepek,  
773-505-7794

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

Special items for your wedding day: Favors, candles, thank you notes, invitations, monogrammed glasses, boxes, gifts and so much more. Any item that can be imprinted, David can get you the best prices.

## FLOWERS

### The Blossom Boys

9911 S. Walden Pkwy.

773-779-4400

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

The Blossom Boys designed the first legal same-sex wedding in Illinois. Steve and Ryan's rich history, brilliant artistry and sensitivity will honor and celebrate your unique wedding day.

### Flowers by Fragrant Design

1928 W. Fulton St.

312-546-3044

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

Fragrant Design has a passion for designing inspiring style for your one-of-a-kind event. Our commitment and desire to create surpass the high expectations we bring to our clients.

## FINANCIAL

### James E. Elvord, AWM, Financial Advisor RBC Wealth Mgmt.

312-559-1738 or  
800-683-3246

[james.elvord@rbc.com](mailto:james.elvord@rbc.com)

At RBC Wealth Management, we know that a good portfolio is a reflection of your needs and goals. That's why we work with you to create a comprehensive plan that works for you, with a wide range of flexible financial solutions.

## HOME/GIFTS

### Char Crews

8 Grant Square,  
Hinsdale, IL

630-920-0190

800-323-1972

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

The Bridal Registry at Char Crews, Chicagoland's finest selection of china, crystal, flatware and giftware at discount prices. Family owned and operated since 1972. Expert registry and gift assistance. Located in Hinsdale, Wilmette and at Char Crews.com.

### Lighting by Fox

3524 N. Halsted St.

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

Make your NEW life together brighter with Lighting by Fox! Now open at 3524 N. Halsted St., you'll find an extensive display of traditional to contemporary lighting to compliment your new beginnings. Visit [www.lightingbyfox.com](http://www.lightingbyfox.com) to see our showroom and our merchandise.

### Terry's Toffee

312-733-2700

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

[info@terrystoffee.com](mailto:info@terrystoffee.com)

Terry's Toffee offers a remarkable line of gourmet toffee and gorgeous packaging to celebrate your special day. Partners Terry and Michael honor marriage equality in Illinois and across the country, with you.

## JEWELRY

### Leo Bachrach & Son

55 E. Washington St., #801

312-263-3111

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

Leo Bachrach & Son Jewelers have been delivering fine quality jewelry craftsmanship and design since 1944. Proud to serve the LGBTQ community, Leo Bachrach & Son Jewelers carries a large collection of jewelry from designers across the world.

### Jan Dee Custom Jewelry

1425 W. Diversey Pkwy., Chicago

773-871-2222

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

Celebrating serving the community for 40 years. Specializing in custom design. Jewelry repair, watch repair, appraisals, Certified GIA diamond supplier. Mention Jan Dee's ad in this section and receive 15% off your next in-store purchase or \$100 off your custom ring order.

### James & Sons Fine Jewelers

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

Celebrating life's milestones for 50 years. Marriage equality: Now that's a milestone. At James & Sons our mission has always been a tradition of trust, high ethical standards,

knowledge of our jewelry products and services, fair pricing and value to our customers. Chicago, Orland Park and Schererville locations.

### Rodger Kadet, Ltd.

5 S. Wabash Ave., Rm. 1703A

312-854-3007

[rodgerk7753@gmail.com](mailto:rodgerk7753@gmail.com)

In the industry for over 40 years. A one-stop shop for all your jewelry needs, including engagement rings, wedding rings and bands, and more. Specializing in custom-made rings. Proud to support the LGBTQ community.

### Sparkles

5405 N. Clark St.

773-944-9600

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

[info@SparklesFineJewelry.com](mailto:info@SparklesFineJewelry.com)

Custom jewelry design, GIA-certified diamonds for engagements and weddings. Live, laugh, love and sparkle!

### Tucker, Inc.

5 S. Wabash, Suite 507

312-263-3315

[www.tuckercompany.net](http://www.tuckercompany.net)

Established 1935. Jewelry for every occasion. Celebrating marriage equality for all. Donald Strzepek, owner, proud to be part of the community.

## LEGAL

### Berger Schatz

161 N. Clark St.,

Suite 2800

312-782-3456

312-782-8463 (fax)

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

Berger Schatz is one of the largest law firms in the nation specializing exclusively in matrimonial and family law. Our clients come to us because they know we have the experience, expertise and discretion to resolve their most challenging issues.

### Donald B. Boyd, Jr., Family Law

232 S. Lathrop Ave., Forest Park, IL  
708-848-1005

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

Specializing in civil unions, LGBT issues, divorce/wills/trusts, real estate closings, custody violation, and child support. Free initial consultation. Evening and weekend appointments available.

### Ray J. Koenig III, Clark Hill PLC

150 N. Michigan Ave.,

Suite 2700

800-949-3124

312-985-5900

[rkoenig@clarkhill.com](mailto:rkoenig@clarkhill.com)

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

Ray is a legal authority on all of his practice areas, which include probate, trusts, guardianship, estate planning, and elder law, including the litigation of those areas.

### Lambda Legal

312-663-4413

[www.lambdalegal.org](http://www.lambdalegal.org)

Lambda Legal is committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of LGBT people and those with HIV through impact litigation, education and public policy work.



### Roger V. McCaffrey-Boss, Esq.

#### Law Offices of Roger V. McCaffrey-Boss & Associates, P.C.

33 N. Dearborn St., Suite 800  
312-263-8800  
rvmlawyer@aol.com

In service to the community for more than 35 years. Bankruptcy; Wills, Trusts & Probate; Real Estate Closings; Premarital Agreements.

### Rosemary Mulryan, Mulryan & York, Attorneys at Law

4001 N. Wolcott  
Chicago, Illinois 60613  
773-248-8887

www.mulryanandnyork.com

Mulryan & York is a full-service, community-based law firm providing adoption, estate planning, probate, and other legal services people need to keep their families secure, strong, and supported.

## LICENSES

### David Orr

#### Cook Co. Clerk's Office

cookcountyclerk.com/

#### vitalrecords/marriageequality

Congratulations on Marriage Equality! I look forward to finally issuing marriage licenses to all couples! Our office in the lower level of the Daley Center will be open on Sunday, June 1. For more information, please visit our website.

## OFFICIANTS

### Mother Jubi Dutcher, Officiant

773-946-7318

revtjdutcher@gmail.com

A ceremony you'll never forget! When you're planning your commitment ceremony, call Mother Jubi Dutcher to officiate. Your union is a sacrament.

### Dignity/Chicago

www.dignity-chicago.org/content/families

Your Roman Catholic resource for your wedding. Full Mass or simple ceremony, ceremony planning, Pre-Cana preparation, ordained male and female priests, musicians and music direction. Inclusive Roman Catholic community.

### Ethical Humanist Society of Chicago

7574 N. Lincoln Ave., Skokie, IL  
847-677-3334

http://ethicalhuman.org

office@ethicalhuman.org

Our secular officiants will be happy to help LGBT couples tie the knot, either in the beautiful auditorium of our meetinghouse in Skokie, or elsewhere.

### Gay Minister for Gay Weddings

gayminister@gmail.com

Gay minister for gay weddings. Are you planning a wedding after June 1, 2014? I am a gay minister available to perform your wedding ceremony.

### Get Married by John

Officiant John Huebler

773-270-3761

getmarriedbyjohn@gmail.com

Ceremony planning, writing, and rehearsal. Performing the ceremony on your big day. Experienced and recommended. Authorized to certify Illinois marriages and civil unions. Ordained by American Marriage Ministries.

### Marguerite H. Griffin Meaningful Moments

773-919-1333

www.meaningfulmarguerite.com

meaningfulmarguerite@gmail.com

"I would be honored to officiate at your wedding ceremony and to co-create with you a unique and meaningful ceremony that reflects who you are as individuals and as a couple."

### ILWeddingOfficiant.com

847-873-7463

ILWeddingOfficiant.com

Catering to the unique needs of same-sex couples by serving the LGBTQ community according each couple's unique personality, beliefs and desires. Rev. Pamela travels to you or get married at her home.

### Living Well Ministries

773-655-4357

www.livingwellministries.net

Rev. Jacki Belile is a lesbian Baptist minister, life coach, and experienced celebrant in interfaith settings. Her wedding services include custom design and pre-marital coaching sessions.

### Rose LifeCycle Ceremonies

Michele Rose, Certified LifeCycle Celebrant

847-215-7715

www.RoseLifeCycleCeremonies.com

RoseCeremonies@gmail.com

You can't get married without me! I'll perform your marriage ceremony and personalize it just for you. I officiate at interfaith, non-religious, and same sex weddings, and other lifecycle milestones.

## PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO

### Rick Aguilar Studios

773-478-6607

www.rickaguilar.com

This gay-owned wedding photographer studio has been documenting gay weddings for the Chicago community for over 20 years. He is renowned for his reputation, his creativity, and his work.

### Bean Blossom Prod.

www.BeanBlossomProductions.net

773-727-5642

Special event videos/photos for weddings, civil unions, social gatherings, team events and much more. Serving the community with Pride!

### Ingrid Bonne Photography

773-991-2400

www.ingridbonnephotography.com

ingrid@

ingridbonnephotography.com

The visual storyteller for remarkable people. Let me tell your story!

### Lisa Howe-Ebright Photography

708-710-2874

www.LHEphoto.com

Lisa@LHEphoto.com

Capturing the moment now, cherishing the memories forever. Serving our community for over 35 years.

## TRAVEL

### OK Travel

773-581-0100

www.oktravlagency.com

The staff at OK Travel has journeyed to all 50 states and over 70 foreign countries on six of the seven continents. We are confident that we can provide you the best experience at a great value. We specialize in honeymoons and destination weddings, as well as cruises, family vacations, Disney, Las Vegas and more.

### Villa Loretta Palm Springs

310-869-3465

hrisben.2827@gmail.com

3,700 sq. ft., 1/4 acre, beautiful pool and grounds. Room for 250 at a wedding or over 100 sit down. Very romantic and can become your wedding wonderland. Palm Springs home of movie star Loretta Young.

## VENUES

### A Church 4 Me MCC

1545 W. Morse Ave., Chicago

708-951-4862

www.achurch4me.org

Transforming ourselves as we transform the world. Supporting marriage since 1968. Sunday worship celebration at 11 a.m. Weddings anytime!

### Bistro Campagne

4518 N. Lincoln Ave.

773-271-6100

bistrocampagne.com

Celebrate any occasion in the French countryside, in the heart of Chicago. Bistro Campagne offers several intimate spaces, including beautiful gardens, for groups of up to 50 people. Ask for Alejandro to discuss special events.

### Chez, LLC

312-255-0288

www.chez-chicago.com

Christine@chez-chicago.com

Situated two blocks from Michigan

Avenue, Chez provides a versatile space that can be transformed for any occasion. Once home to the famous Chez Paree nightclub, the space has been reinvented as an elegant and modern loft.

### Chicago Botanic Gardens

Private and Corporate Events

847-835-8370

www.chicagobotanic.org

events@chicagobotanic.org

At the Chicago Botanic Garden, your event springs to life amid a backdrop of pure beauty. This world-renowned cultural destination is the perfect venue for your wedding, reception, or rehearsal dinner. From the simple to the sublime, we have something for every taste!

### Chicago History Museum

1601 N. Clark St.

312-799-2254

www.chicagohistory.org/hostevent

Chicago History Museum is the city's oldest cultural institution. Its classic ballroom with adjacent outdoor terrace make it the perfect venue for your next event.

### City Winery Chicago

1200 W. Randolph St., Chicago

312-229-5989

www.citywinery.com

todd@citywinery.com

Host your special day at City Winery Chicago! 33,000 square feet of luxurious indoor and outdoor space. City Winery brings Wine Country to you. Please contact Todd Carr, Events Director, to schedule your private tour and discussion.

### The Drake

Catering Dept.

312-932-4337

www.thedrakehotel.com

drakesales@thedrakehotel.com

The Drake's distinguished service, iconic location, and regal ambiance exemplify the remarkable REAL CHICAGO™ experience. From the breathtaking Grand Ballroom to the legendary Gold Coast Room, The Drake proudly offers spectacular venues for ceremonies, receptions, and rehearsal dinners.

### GayWedding

ChicagoSite.com

847-873-7463

www.GayWeddingChicagoSite.com

Chicagoland's premiere 5-star venue. Elope or 30 guests, enjoy suburban hospitality and legally marry at Pine Manor, the beautiful home/garden of Rev. Pamela. Serving GBLTQ since ... always!

### InterContinental Chicago Magnificent Mile

505 N. Michigan Ave.

312-321-8735

www.icchicagohotel.com

Our stylish atmosphere features breathtaking venues and views overlooking the Mag Mile and are evocative of magnificent eras past, accommodating 20-550 guests. Let us help you create your vision while offering the exclusivity and elegance you expect from Chicago's most sought-after downtown location.

### Keith House

1900 S. Prairie Ave., Chicago

312-907-7909

www.keithhousechicago.com

Weddings and civil unions in the Near South Loop of Chicago. 1870s historic home, with beautiful original woodwork. Ten minutes from downtown, next store to the Women's Park. Also available for corporate events, baby showers, meetings, art shows, and more.

### Maggiano's Little Italy

516 N. Clark St.

312-644-4284

www.maggianos.com

chicago.banquet@maggianos.com

10 private rooms including ballroom with private garden which seats 350. Social and corporate events, A/V-ready. Chef -prepared, made-from-scratch authentic recipes.

### Mars Gallery

1139 W. Fulton Market

312-226-7808

www.marsgallery.com

info@marsgallery.com

For more than 25 years, Mars Gallery has been home to hundreds of weddings and receptions. Housed in a 19th century all-brick timber loft in Chicago's West Loop historic market district. We are proud to be one of Chicago's most unique wedding venues.

### Mayne Stage

1328 W. Morse Ave.

www.maynestage.com

rentals@maynestage.com

Make Mayne Stage yours! Our 200-seated, 400-standing-room venue is the perfect destination for your next special event.

### Polo Cafe and Catering

3322 S. Morgan St.

773-927-7656

www.polocafe.com

Something different ... something wonderful! Minutes south of the Loop, ideal to gather for a special events, dinners or receptions, weddings or holy/civil union ceremonies, rehearsal dinners, or memorial meals, as well as holiday parties, showers, corporate seminars and more, plus unique overnight lodging.

### Sidetrack

3349 N. Halsted St.

773-477-9189

www.sidetrackchicago.com

info@sidetrackchicago.com

Bringing people together with legendary parties for more than 30 years. Perfect for enagement parties, wedding ceremonies, or receptions. Custom music and video entertainment options, custom cocktails, caterer-friendly facilities, choice of staff.

### Unity Lutheran Chicago

773-878-4747

www.unitylutheranchicago.org

Make your wedding dreams come true at Unity Lutheran Church, Balmoral and Broadway, Edgewater. Same-gender and opposite-gender weddings. Multicultural, LGBTQ friendly, community involved congregation. Pastor Fred Kinsey; Associate Pastor John Roberts.

### theWit Chicago

201 N. State Street

312-467-0200

www.thewithotel.com

Modern class in the heart of downtown Chicago. Imagine a serene setting for your vows, then being whisked up to ROOF for breathtaking views of Chicago and a toast to your new life, followed by dancing the night away in one of our glowing banquet rooms with the city lights as your backdrop.





TEXT BY ROSS FORMAN  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF TENNENBAUM

**Age**  
49

**Neighborhood**  
Andersonville

**Relationship status**  
Partnered 20 years

**Job title**  
Jewelry designer at Rony Tennenbaum

**Favorite movie**  
The Women (1939)

**Hobbies**  
Reading, hiking, bird watching and going to the beach

**Favorite TV show**  
Downton Abbey

**Favorite pizza toppings**  
Mushrooms and black olives

**Dream vacation destination**  
Australia

**Little-known fact**  
"I love rainy days."

Rony Tennenbaum has worked in jewelry manufacturing for more than 25 years after having done just about every stage of jewelry production—casting, polishing, setting, sourcing and more.

About six years ago, he started a jewelry line, focused on same-sex couples' engagement, wedding and anniversary rings.

"One element within the industry that hooked me was the wedding portion," Tennenbaum said. "I am a romantic, and love the idea of being a part of a couple's very intimate moment of exchanging wedding vows and commitment, through symbols made of gold or platinum. I felt I could be a part of a couple's ceremony without intruding on their personal moment."

Tennenbaum starts most days at 6 a.m., and no two days are alike, he said.

He answers emails, then sets out on errands to collect castings, diamonds, drop offs, pickups and anything else for rings that may be on order. Then he often creates ads for Facebook and magazines, answers customer inquiries, write columns and articles, and more. "There is always an interview or a training session that needs to be done, or prepared for," he said. "And among all these routines, I am always creating new collections and campaigns for upcoming seasons."

Tennenbaum said building a new collection, and bringing it from sketch to life, "is always thrilling to me," he said. Tennenbaum also cherishes the love stories he often hears. "Their rings always play such an important role, and listening to their needs and desires, being a part of their journey, excites me," he said.

The worst part of his job is "when rings don't turn out the way I want, or on time," he said.

"One of my favorite stories was a male couple [that] came to my store [after driving] almost two hours because they felt comfortable and at ease discussing their ring selection with me," he said. "After their visit, they each knew what the other liked and wanted, and shortly thereafter, each contacted me in secret to start work on the other's ring. For



three weeks I was creating these two beautiful rings, without the other knowing. The first ring was ready and about two days later, he proposed through teary eyes and a speech on one knee while walking along the beach. The second ring was ready a couple of days later, and the other partner surprised the first with a proposal of his own."

Tennenbaum was at their wedding last October.

"Rings to me represent a commitment between two people," he said. "They are a symbol of love, devotion and a commitment to be united in love for one another. I don't think sexual orientation has anything to do with bringing two people in love together."

Tennenbaum said his long-term goal is to be a part of as many same-sex weddings as possible—through his rings, his well-wishes, or simply his thoughts.



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