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SAVOR

Andersonville's newest LGBT bar set to open

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

When business and life partners Mark Robertson and Mike Sullivan decided to open an LGBT-specific bar, **Meeting House Tavern** (Meeting House), they chose the Andersonville neighborhood because of their long history as business owners in the community. The multistory Meeting House will be at 5025 N. Clark St.

The couple has been in the restaurant and bar business in and around Andersonville since 2010, when they bought Crew Bar + Grill and then in 2011 when they bought Sofo Bar and re-branded it The Sofo Tap. Robertson is also a consultant and financial advisor who has guided a number of hospitality businesses both in and outside of Chicago.

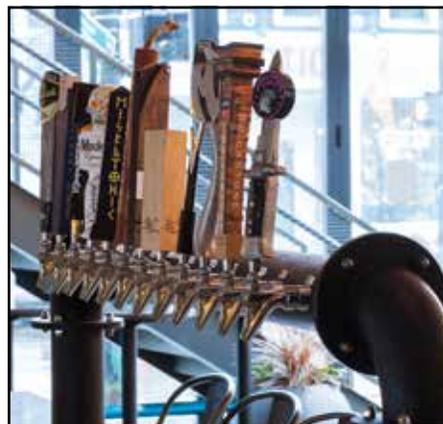
"The Sofo Tap is one of the top destinations in Andersonville and we hope to do the same with Meeting House," said Sullivan.

Robertson noted that adding another bar to the Andersonville landscape was an easy decision



Mark Robertson (left) and Mike Sullivan of Meeting House Tavern.

Photo by Mike Murray



Meeting House Tavern taps.

Photo by Grant Kessler

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because the neighborhood is becoming "another Main Street for the LGBT community."

Sullivan explained that, as active members of the Andersonville community for the past seven years, they "have watched the neighborhood grow and flourish as a diverse community with a continued influx of LGBT and young residents. Andersonville is also a destination neighborhood for entertainment."

"The SoFo Tap brings in a lot of customers from outside the neighborhood—as do many other places in Andersonville—like The Magic Lounge, Neo-Futurists and the great shops and restaurants up and down Clark Street which have received national media attention in the past few years," said Robertson. "With the boom in residential and retail development along the South of Foster [SoFo] part of Andersonville, we wanted to offer a casual, affordable, hangout bar to serve a regular clientele as well as visitors shopping and dining in the neighborhood."

When asked why they chose the name for the bar, Sullivan said, "We think Meeting House evokes exactly what we are trying to create with our next bar—a place to meet up with friends and meet new ones. We want Meeting House to be a social gathering place for the community."

One of the ways Meeting House plans to stand out among the other bars in the neighborhood is its diverse selection of free of charge games—darts, pool tables, Skee-Ball, shuffleboard and arcade offerings. There will also be retro and indie tabletop (board) and card games.

The televisions will rotate between showing sports programming, music videos and popular TV shows for viewing parties. Robertson and Sullivan plan to later add video-based trivia games via tablets and TV screens.

"An awesome bar is not just about the interior or the physical features although we think people will like the look inside," said Robertson. "A bar is really about the customers, community, service team and overall experience. Meeting House will feature a diverse mix of programming and events to complement the games available all the time. Our team will strive to create a safe, no attitude hangout for everyone, every day."

Along with a diverse selection of spirits, wines and beers (10-12 on tap with rotating seasonal offerings); Meeting House will also have Prosecco and their signature margarita on tap. A seasonal cocktail menu will be available as well as two rotating frozen cocktails made with pure sugar and real fruit juices, purees and nectars.

Not only will Meeting House have signature drinks, they will also offer a special Tavern Bites menu from Hutch American Kitchen + Bar (Hutch) located in the rear of the building on Winnemac Ave. Meeting House guests will be able to order the bites from the bartenders and have it delivered to them by Hutch staff or have a drink at Meeting House while waiting for a table at Hutch.

Meeting House will be opening its doors ahead of the Memorial Day weekend. Robertson and Sullivan told Windy City Times to stay tuned for details about their opening day plans.



RPDR stars Mayhem Miller and Monique Heart.

Photos by Jerry Nunn



BILLY Masters

"You obviously have your mother's incredible compassion ... and your father's steely ambition— whoever that may be."—**Bill Maher to Ronan Farrow.** It sounds like a case for 23AndMe.com.

Marriage is kinda like eating at Chipotle. It seems like a good idea at the time, but shortly thereafter you may find yourself rushing for the bathroom. I'm not opposed to marriage, in general—or even same-sex marriage, specifically. I think that this generation sees it as the natural progression of a relationship. But many gay people "of a certain age" never had the reality of marriage on the horizon. Once it became legal, loads of people took the plunge to be part of the movement. Alas, some movements race toward one's bowels.

Colton Haynes has one foot in that older group, and one in the younger generation. I guess one could say Colton straddles the age brackets—among other things. So I was not particularly surprised that he got engaged less than a year after coming out. That was as predictable as news that his "happily ever after" lasted roughly six months—which, to be fair, is longer than Kim Kardashian's first attempt. No official statement has been made, but Colton has unfollowed his hubby on Instagram and deleted all photos of them together from his social media—so that sounds official to me! As the coup de grace, Colton has recorded a song, because apparently now he's a chanteuse! This little ditty is called "Man It Sucks." If the man sucks well, I don't see a problem.

Then there's the marriage of **Nate Berkus** and **Jeremiah Brent**. I give this one odds of lasting till at least 2020. But that doesn't matter to a member of the Duggar family—well, a Duggar-in-law: **Derick Dillard**, who is married to **Jill Duggar** (of the "we don't believe in contraception" Duggars) and was previously on TLC's *Counting On*. Curiously enough, he disappeared from the show under murky circumstances. Some say he was fired; others say he left of his own accord. Either way, he's unemployed and bitter. So why not lash out at a gay couple who has a show on the same network? Derick said, "What a travesty of family. It's sad how blatant the liberal agenda is, such that it both highlights and celebrates a lifestyle so degrading to children on public television as if it should be normal." First off, is TLC "public television?" Is Nate & Jeremiah By Design on between *Masterpiece Theatre* and *My 600-Pound Life*? Nate and Jeremiah are not perfect (although they do have pretty fabulous hair). I'm sure there are lots to criticize, but it's not like the oh-so-Christian Duggars are beyond reproach, either. Nate responded, "My hope with having a show like #NandJbyDesign on @TLC, where we go into people's homes and welcome viewers into ours, is that we can start to break down barriers & normalize the way our family looks & the way our family loves."

When it comes to gay couples who might make



Billy sees great things ahead for couple Lance Bass (left) and Michael Turchin.

Photo by Rodrigo Varela/Getty Images

it, my money's on **Lance Bass** and **Michael Turchin**. Just a hunch. Lance was in the news when *NSYNC got their star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. It gave the famed quintet a chance to reunite, and Lance talked about why he didn't come out of the closet earlier: "I thought if I had come out, *NSYNC would be over. So I kept my secret, and our wildest dreams were coming true, and we were so incredibly thankful. And I still am. But so many nights on stage, I'd see so many young, gay fans, singing their hearts out, and I wanted so badly to let you know—I was you. I just didn't have the strength then. But I do today, and so let me say loud and proud to all my LGBT brothers and sisters who embrace me and show me the way to be who I am, thank you so much." Bravo!

After the star ceremony, there was a dinner at WeHo hotspot Delilah. All five boys were confirmed to attend, along with their loved ones and numerous friends. Alas, **Justin Timberlake** was a no-show. He did, however, join the others on a taped episode of *Ellen* where they played a spirited game of "Never Have I Ever." This game featured the group telling the truth about their previous sexual exploits (not surprisingly, Lance had the least to contribute). There were questions like have you ever hooked up with a fan, on the tour bus, with someone twice your age, etc. When asked if any of them had ever hooked up with a Spice Girl, Timberlake sheepishly said, "I Have." Of course, anyone reading this column already knows that he had a one-nighter with Baby Spice, **Emma Bunton**. She previously confirmed it to UK chat-show host Jonathan Ross, saying, "We hung out and partied a bit, and he was very sweet. He spoke about it first, 'cause otherwise I would have never said a word. He's very sweet."

Since I'm still across the pond, it seems appropriate to answer an "Ask Billy" question from Tim in Surrey, England: "Have you come across the nude photos of **Freddie Woodward**? My mate told me they were online, but when I went to the

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website, they were gone."

This happens a lot to nude photos. First, for my U.S. fans, let me explain who Freddie Woodward is. He's a 22-year-old British diver—sigh, I know: yet another hot diver! It's SO tedious. Whilst he claims to not be gay, one cannot deny his attractiveness—or his perfectly pert posterior, which he's previously paraded. Now we can add to that his ponderous penis, which appears to be close to three meters (but you know how things appear larger on camera). You'll spring out of your shorts when you see it on BillyMasters.com.

When we're measuring in meters instead of inches, it's time for me to end yet another column. No matter whether you're a metric or an imperial man, you'll wanna check out BillyMasters.com—the site that'll always leave you all wet. If there's something on your mind, jot it down and send it to me at Billy@BillyMasters.com, and I promise to get back to you before Colton returns my wedding gift (and I regift it to that other wedding I'm headed to). Until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.

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