

WINDY CITY TIMES

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

NOVEMBER 28, 2007 • VOL 23 NO 11



World AIDS DAY Events

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Amy and Peter Hit Toronto

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Military Man Lou Tharp

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Nightspots

pick it up
take it home

WindyCity Queercast

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windy city times' holiday gift guide 2007

week one of two
special pullout section
p. 13-24

Carol Ronen: Past, Present and Future

BY ANDREW DAVIS

When State Sen. Carol Ronen, D-7th Dist., steps down from the Illinois General Assembly early next year, the transition will mark the end of an era. For a decade and a half, Ronen took part in the passages of numerous measures that benefit the healthcare and LGBT communities, including the landmark gay-rights bill that Gov. Rod Blagojevich signed into law in 2005. She recently talked with Windy City Times about her life—including her entry into politics and her next career move.

Windy City Times: You [said in an earlier conversation with the newspaper] that your goal was not to be in political office. What was your goal?

Carol Ronen: I don't know that I had a specific goal; I just never thought I'd run for political office. [Running for office] wasn't something that I thought was a possibility, so I was always interested in working on issues and [doing] public service. I majored in political science because I was interested in international relations, the Constitution and the whole political process. When I graduated, I wanted to do some kind of social work.

Turn to page 12



The Bible Tells Them So

Chicagoan Michael Leppen hosted a grand premiere for the new documentary *For the Bible Tells Me So*, a film which Leppen helped produce. The film's director, Daniel Karlake (pictured below with Leppen), was on hand, as were representatives of each of the five families featured in the film, including above, from left: Chrissy Gephardt, Bishop Gene Robinson and Rev. David Poteat. The film opens to the public this weekend at the Music Box Theatre. See page 6 and www.windycitymediagroup.com for more coverage; review, page 29. Photos by Steve Becker/www.beckermedia.com



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WINDY CITY TIMES

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U.S. Rep. Danny Davis, State Sen. Jacqueline Collins, State Rep. Karen Yarbrough and State Rep. Connie Howard (from left) all attended the recent Quality of Life celebration. See page 7.

Photo by Emmanuel Garcia

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Windy City Times book critic Yasmin Nair is not timid about her feelings for *Shyness*, by Chris Lane (above). See page 23.

www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com

This week's online-only features include:
 -Theater reviews of Butt Nekkid (right) and Old Wicked Songs
 -Media Watch
 -Deep Inside Hollywood

Also, get all the world news and the latest Pop Making Sense

Photo by Scott Cooper/Archetype Images



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Nightspots

IN THE 54 POSITION
 Anthony of MidTangent Productions stars in @mosphere 54.
 photo by Kirk Williamson



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Global AIDS Estimates Revised Downward

BY BOB ROEHR

Estimates of the number of people living with HIV throughout the world have been lowered from roughly 40 million to 33 million, according to figures released by UNAIDS in their annual report on November 20. The correction did not come as a surprise to either supporters or critics of the agency.

The report is a compilation of information provided by national governments. The decrease in estimated infections reflects better gathering of data rather than a change in the epidemic itself.

India saw its estimate of infection cut by more than half, to 2.5 million, in a study that initially was released in July. It was the greatest single contributor to the decline and when combined with five sub-Saharan African countries—Angola, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria and Zimbabwe—they accounted for 70 percent of the change.

New infections worldwide are now estimated to be 2.5 million a year, a decrease of about 40 percent from the figure last year. The calculation reflects changes in the assumption of life expectancy from 9 to 11 years for persons not receiving antiretroviral therapy. It is based upon new, not yet published data from several countries. If more people among the total number are living longer with the infection, then fewer of them have been infected recently.

The reduced number of both new and total infections makes the tasks of prevention and treatment more manageable, though still daunting.

The CDC estimates that approximately 40,000 new HIV infections occur in the United States each year. That estimate has remained the same since it was first put forward in 1994. Many people believe the number of new infections is

higher, perhaps by as much as 50 percent. Some people anticipate that the agency will release new estimates at its big HIV prevention conference in Atlanta, Dec. 2-5.

"Reliable public health data are the essential foundation for an effective response to HIV/AIDS," said Kevin De Cock, director of HIV/AIDS at the World Health Organization. "While these new estimates are of better quality than those of the past, we need to continue investing more in all countries and all aspects of strategic information relating to health."

"For the first time, we are seeing a decline in global AIDS deaths," De Cock said. Much of that is because prices for drugs in the developing world have been slashed, and programs such as PEPFAR and the Global Fund have provided support to deliver that treatment.

Project Inform's Martin Delaney says, "The new numbers are good news for several reasons from a human perspective, but they're bad news politically. The right wing bloggers and commentators are already going nuts with it, arguing that the UN inflated the numbers for funding purposes, while the denialists are screaming 'we told you so, there's no such thing as an AIDS epidemic in Africa, it's just poverty and malnutrition!'"



World AIDS Day Kits

Ready two Go has designed special-edition "safer sex kits" in honor of World AIDS Day, with the hope of promoting safe sex and AIDS awareness. See ReadyTwoGo.net for these and scores of other items.

World AIDS Day Events

Although World AIDS Day is officially Dec. 1, a variety of events will take place around Chicago before, during and after that date. A run-down of some of the events is below:

Wed., Nov. 28:

—**Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus Full Body Meeting and Open Mic** (6-8 p.m. at Little Black Pearl, 1060 E. 47th; www.lovelthybrotha.com)

—**Better Existence with HIV (BEHIV)--Free HIV testing** (10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Loyola University Chicago's Mertz Hall; www.behiv.org or e-mail tburkin@luc.edu)

Thurs, Nov. 29:

—**AIDS Foundation of Chicago's World of Chocolate** (5:30-9 p.m. at Hilton Chicago, 720 S. Michigan; see www.aidschicago.org/events/world_of_chocolate.php)

—**Free HIV testing** (10 a.m.-4 p.m. at George's Music Room, 3915 W. Roosevelt; www.istandwithmagic.com)

Fri., Nov. 30:

—**Mosaic Initiative World AIDS Day Prayer Breakfast and fundraiser** (7-9 a.m., \$25/person, \$250/table, at The Abington, 35002 Rt. 53, Glen Ellyn; 630-665-5194, www.mosaicinitiative.org)

—**Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus' The Red Party** (8-11 p.m. at Circuit Nightclub, 3641 N. Halsted; cover-\$20-\$25; www.lovelthybrotha.com)

—**"Facing HIV/AIDS" photographic exhibit opening**, (5:15 p.m. at Meadville Lombard Theological School, 5701 S. Woodlawn; see www.meadville.edu/Ab_News_HIVAIDSExhibit.html)

—**Free HIV tests** (9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Howard Brown, 4025 N. Sheridan and 1-9 p.m. at Broadway Youth Center, 3179 N. Broadway)

—**American Medical Student Association (AMSA) and Chicago Women's AIDS Project**

rally to demand reform of PEPFAR (the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief), the U.S. global AIDS initiative, from the Republican and Democratic presidential candidates (12-2 p.m. at the office of Sen. Barack Obama, John C. Kluczynski Building, 230 S. Dearborn; www.chicagowomenaidsproject.org)

—**Town-hall meeting with representatives from Abbott Laboratories and The Magic Johnson Foundation**, followed by entertainment (6 p.m. at the AFC World Outreach Center, 7859 S. Ashland; www.istandwithmagic.com)

—**Sex and Art at Columbia College Chicago's World AIDS Day 2007**: workshops and HIV testing (workshops: 11 a.m.-10 p.m. and testing 12-4 p.m. at Conaway Center, 1104 S. Wabash; www.colum.edu)

Sat., Dec. 1:

—**HIV testing at Walgreens** (10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Walgreens, various locations, including 71st & Jeffery, 75th & State, 26th & Albany and Belmont & Broadway; e-mail hunter_michael@cdph.org for more info)

—**Gospel Shout-Out** (6-9 p.m. at Malcolm X College, 1900 W. Van Buren; call 773-848-3853)

—**The Pocketbook Monologues** (4 p.m. at Mercy Hospital Auditorium, 2525 S. Prairie; see www.cityofchicago.org/health or call Mercy at 312-567-2000)

—**The Broadcast Ministers' Alliance of Chicago and the Illinois Department of Public Health** will host day-long HIV awareness activities (at Rainbow/PUSH headquarters, 930 E. 50th; www.basuah.org)

—**Liz Long Gallery at Urban Art Retreat**: A group show of art by people affected by AIDS/HIV opening reception. (1-4 p.m. at 1957 S. Spaulding; 773-542-9126 or www.urbanartretreat.com)

Sun., Dec. 2:

—**Testing at 400 W. 95th** (all day)
—**TV broadcast of Kevin's Room: Together** (7:30-9 p.m. on WCIU-Channel 26)

Commemorate World AIDS Day:
In memory of those we have lost,
in honor of those who are with us.

Friday, November 30

Free HIV tests*

**Howard Brown, 4025 N. Sheridan Road:
9 am - 3:30 pm; 773-388-1600 for info**

and

**Broadway Youth Center, 3179 N. Broadway:
1-9 pm for those under age 24; 773-935-3151 for info**

*No appointment necessary. Free confidential syphilis screening also available at Howard Brown; chlamydia and gonorrhea testing available at Broadway Youth Center. Rapid HIV testing will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis, and is dependent on availability of supplies.

www.howardbrown.org



Howard Brown

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SAGE

Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders

DECEMBER 2007

NEW! FRIENDLY VISITOR PROGRAM

Trained volunteers provide companionship visits to isolated or homebound LGBT Elders or disabled individuals. Volunteers are committed to one visit a week for a year. If you know an isolated LGBT elder who would enjoy a weekly visit, please contact Serena Worthington, SAGE Director at 773.472.6469, ext. 160 or sworthington@centeronhalsted.org.

TUESDAY TOPICS

On Tuesdays we often present a special education topic. These seminars coincide with the weekly Coffee and Conversation. Come for lunch and stay for the seminar or come later just for the seminar.

COMPLETE THE FIVE WISHES SEMINAR

Tuesday DEC 4 — 2:00p – 3:00p FREE

Completing Five Wishes, an advance directive document, is a gift that you can give yourself and your family. Complete the Five Wishes document in this follow-up seminar presented by Venoncia M. Baté from Midwest Palliative & Hospice CareCenter.

CITIBANK FINANCIAL EDUCATION SEMINAR—LONG-TERM CARE

Tuesday DEC 11 — 2:00p – 3:00p FREE

Modern medicine has worked miracles in lengthening our lives. But that can also mean longer periods in which special care is required. Learn what long-term care can cost and how the costs can be met.

SPECIAL EVENTS

LAKESIDE PRIDE SYMPHONIC BAND: For Friends And Family... At The Holidays

Sunday DEC 1 — 8:00p \$15 at the door \$12 in advance

SAGE members will meet at Northside College Prep for this holiday event. If you would like to sit with the SAGE group, please call 773.472.6469, ext 160 to **RSVP no later than November 28**.

SHARING OUR HISTORY, LIVING OUR LEGACY

Saturday DEC 8 — 1:00p – 4:00p FREE

A one-of-a-kind intergenerational dialogue event for the LGBT community. Join us to share stories with other LGBTQ youth and adults through an interactive conversation about our past, present and future. Come build community through our shared experience of living Queer Then and Queer Now! Organized by Howard Brown Health Center's Mentor Program, Broadway Youth Center, and Center on Halsted's SAGE and Youth Program. **RSVP required by December 5**. Call 773.472.6469, ext. 160.

HOLIDAY POTLUCK LUNCH, GAMES AND CAROLING

Sunday DEC 16 — 12:30-3:00p FREE

Join us for this holiday gathering. Play games, sing carols and share a potluck dish. This is a joint program with SAGE and A Church4Me.

COFFEE & CONVERSATION HOLIDAY PARTY!

Monday DEC 24 — 12:00p – 3:00p FREE

We'll provide a special lunch and you bring some Holiday cookies to share.

WEEKLY EVENTS

All events are in the *John Baran Senior Center* at Center on Halsted unless otherwise noted.

CARD NIGHT

Tuesday DEC 4 | DEC 11 | DEC 18 — 6:30p – 9:30p

Experienced and novice players are welcome to this evening of cards.

Bridge – Casual card game led by participants. Come and make the foursome! **FREE**

Euchre – 6:30p informal game; 7:30p formal game begins **\$3/game**

Organized by the Euchre Club of Chicago

COFFEE & CONVERSATION

Tuesday DEC 4 | DEC 11 | DEC 18 — 12:00p – 3:00p FREE

Monday DEC 24 | DEC 31 — 12:00p – 3:00p FREE

Join us in the *John Baran Senior Center*. This is a safe, confidential place for participants to gather, socialize, and discuss concerns and ideas. Lunch is provided!

COMING OUT, COMING HOME SUPPORT GROUP

Tuesday DEC 4 | DEC 11 | DEC 18 — 2:00p – 3:00p FREE

This group provides a supportive environment for adults 45 years and older who are beginning their coming out process. Because older adults often have well-established careers and families, the struggles of coming out of the closet later in life are often mixed with creating a new family that blends old relationships with a new community and identity. No registration required. *Mental Health Room 223*

NEEDLEWORK NIGHT

Thursday DEC 6 | DEC 13 | DEC 20 | DEC 27 — 6:30p – 8:30p FREE

Crochet! Knit! Needlepoint! Bring whatever needlework you have and enjoy an evening of crafting and conversation. *Second Floor Living Room Seating Area*

MONTHLY EVENTS

AFTERNOON TEA

Monday DEC 3 — 2:00p – 4:00p FREE

Warm up with afternoon tea, treats and friendly conversation.

LGBT CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

Thursday DEC 6 — 6:00p – 7:00p FREE

Offered in partnership with Rush University Medical Center, this is an educational support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender caregivers who are attending to a partner, parent, family member or friend. *Mental Health Room 223*

HOT TOPICS FOR LESBIANS

Friday DEC 7 — 6:30p – 8:30p FREE

A social event for older women. Come have some fun and make new friends. This is a casual evening and all women are welcome. Arrive anytime between 6:00p and 7:00p.

MOVIE NIGHT — GIORNI (AKA DAYS)

Saturday, DEC 8 — 6:30p – 8:30p

Claudio, a 35-year-old manager, has been HIV+ for ten years. His life is marked by the medicine he has to take, his monthly medical examination, his humdrum job, and his long-term relationship with Dario. But when he meets Andrea, a sweet and handsome waiter, his certainties shatter. From aramichael@hotmail.com.

AFTERNOON MOVIE

Friday DEC 14 — 2:00p – 4:00p FREE

Join us for an afternoon movie. SAGE participants select the movies, so if there is a film you want to see, let us know.

NIGHT AT THE OPERA: OPERA APPRECIATION

Friday DEC 28 — 6:30p – 9:00p FREE

Hosted by Jason McVicker, COH's Director of Mental Health Services, and a writer and lecturer on all aspects of opera. A lifelong fan, he first began attending opera in his native New Orleans at the age of 10. Jason has been published in *Opera News* and is a regular contributor to *Parterre Box*, the "queer opera zine."

CULTURAL OUTING—HOLIDAY FEVER: A Musical Tribute to Peggy Lee

Saturday DEC 22 — 2:00p – 3:30p FREE

Chicago Cultural Center, Preston Bradley Hall

Many of Chicago's finest jazz and cabaret performers will perform a musical tribute to the late jazz singer Peggy Lee. **RSVP required by December 19**. Call 773.472.6469, ext. 160.

PLANNING MEETING

Tuesday, DEC 11 — 3:00p – 4:45p

Everyone is welcome at this monthly planning session.

FRIDAY NIGHT AT THE MOVIES

Friday DEC 21 — 6:30p – 9:30p FREE

Monthly movie night. Look for LGBT and general cinema and documentaries. SAGE participants select the movies, so if there is a film you want to see, let us know.

CHICAGO PRIME TIMERS/CENTER ON HALSTED BOOK GROUP

No meeting in December.

www.centeronhalsted.org
Center on Halsted 773.472.6469
SAGE Program Information
773.472.6469, ext. 444

3656 N. Halsted
Chicago, IL 60613

CENTERONHALSTED



Parents Randi and Phil Reitan, featured in *For the Bible Tells Me So*, with Michael Leppen and filmmaker Daniel Karlslake. Photos by Steve Becker/www.beckermedia.com. More photos online at www.windycitymediagroup.com. Full story online this Friday and in next week's *Windy City Times*. The film opens this weekend at the Music Box Theatre in Chicago. See www.forthetbelle-tellsmeso.org for details on the film.

The Bible Tells Them So

Daniel Karlslake, who produced and directed *For the Bible Tells Me So*, was joined by people featured in his film Monday night at the Center on Halsted for the Chicago premiere of this terrific documentary about gays and religion. Those attending were Randi and Phil Reitan, Rev. Dr. Laurence Keene, Bishop Gene Robinson, Bob and Mary Lou Wallner, Chrissy Gephardt, and Rev. David Poteat, all of whom tell the story of reconciling religious beliefs with the coming-out process of family members. The 90-minute, Sundance award-nominated story is told through moving interviews, early home movies and other footage including the Reitans' and their gay

son's arrest when attempting to confront the anti-gay group Focus on the Family and the inside story of Robinson's ordination as the first openly gay, noncelibate bishop in the Episcopal Church in the United States. Also appearing in the film are Jane and Dick Gephardt, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Rev. Irene Monroe, and the former wife of Bishop Robinson, who each speak of the effect of religion on gay and lesbian people. The movie is premiering in 50 cities and will show at the Music Box for one week beginning this Friday, Nov. 30. Chicagoan Michael Leppen hosted the grand premiere for the film, which Leppen helped produce.

Center Receives \$1 Million

The Alphawood Foundation announced recently that it is awarding a \$1 million grant to Chicago's Center on Halsted. The grant will provide operations funding to support all aspects of Center on Halsted's mission, including the expansion of the Center's programs for LGBT youth, adults, seniors and families.

Along with its other programs—including Sexual Orientation and Gender Institute (a training program for LGBT service providers); Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE); and the Anti-Violence Project—the Center also offers comprehensive cultural programming and recreational activities for all ages.

"Alphawood's grant of \$1 million will help us provide even more programming to meet the explosion in demand since our move to the new

facility this past June," commented Modesto Tico Valle, the Center's executive director. "Our participants and clients have doubled in all of our programs and we expect those numbers to continue to rise."

Founded in 1992 (as WPWR-TV Channel 50 Foundation), Alphawood Foundation works to strengthen and support the efforts of nonprofit organizations working in the arts; arts education for children; institutional and public policy advocacy; architecture and preservation; and domestic violence prevention. "The size and scope of this grant are unusual for our foundation," said Laura Samson, Alphawood Foundation's executive director. "Yet, we strongly believe in the value and the potential of Center on Halsted. The successful completion of its extraordinary new facility is just the beginning for this long-needed community resource."

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10th Annual Damski Award Ceremony Nears

The 10th Annual Jon-Henri Damski Award Ceremony, held in honor of the late, revered columnist, will be held Dec. 2, 1-3 p.m., at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the annual Jon-Henri, a memorial honoring Damski on the anniversary of his passing. The event was conceived by his good friend, veteran AIDS community activist and service provider Lori Cannon.

This year's recipient is Phil Hannema. A Chicago native, Hannema, 80, has worked throughout the years in many capacities, including staff member, officer, photographer, fundraiser, donor, cheerleader, friend and mentor. He currently works with Equality Illinois and Chicago House.

HIV/AIDS Writing Contest for Youth

The Hear Me Project is hosting a national HIV/AIDS story-writing contest.

The contest is open to those between the ages of 14 and 22 until Dec. 1, World AIDS Day. The original submissions can be fictional or non-fictional and must be about personal vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. The characters in the story must be impacted by HIV/AIDS. Also, the maximum length for stories is five pages.

Judges include celebrities such as entertainer Hilary Duff, actress Jasmine Guy and film director Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu.

For entry forms and more info, see www.HearMeProject.org.

IDHS Awards HIV, Abuse Funding

The Illinois Department of Human Services awarded \$5 million in grants to expand substance abuse treatment and HIV/AIDS services targeting the state's Hispanic/Latino and African American communities.

Last year, men who have sex with men (MSM) and IV drug users were the leading causes of HIV infections among Illinois males. State statistics show African Americans and Latinos are disproportionately affected by the disease.

One of the \$2.5 million grants expands methadone treatments for minorities through a Humboldt Park clinic. The other \$2.5 million grant expands treatment and HIV/AIDS services currently available to African American and Latino MSM. Family Guidance Centers, Inc. will provide the services.

Gay immigrant support group announced

Center on Halsted's Mental Health Program launched a safe and supportive space for LGBT immigrants with it's a weekly, free immigrant support group starting Nov. 27. LGBT immigrants can discuss issues and concerns important to them, network and find support. Pre-register by calling 773-472-6469, ext. 261. See www.centeronhalsted.org.

BEHIV to host art show

Participants of Better Existence with HIV's (BEHIV) Art Therapy Program will showcase their creative talents in an upcoming art show.

The show, titled "...And Our Art Lives On: A Legacy of Survival from BEHIV," will run through Dec. 12 at Northwestern University's Dittmar Gallery in Evanston. See www.behiv.org.



Continuing a Tradition

HIV/AIDS organization Vital Bridges/Groceryland and Ann Sather Restaurant continued their joint tradition of delivering Thanksgiving Day meals to the agency's clients. However, it was the last one that will take place at that particular location, as the restaurant is scheduled to re-open at 909 W. Belmont on Nov. 30. Top photo: North Side Groceryland Coordinator Lori Cannon (center) with, from left, Vital Bridges/Groceryland volunteers Glenn Sieverson, Jay Cook and Joe Lepkowski, along with Ann Sather employee Kelly Cooke. Bottom photo: Cannon shares a laugh with Ann Sather owner (and 44th Ward Alderman) Tom Tunney. Photos by Kat Fitzgerald

Foreman in Town for Black Youth Forum

National Lesbian and Gay Task Force (NLGTF) Executive Director Matt Foreman will be one of the special guests at a Dec. 4 forum at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, that will focus on Black LGBT youths.

Cathy Cohen, Ph. D., a principal researcher with the Black Youth Project (BYP), is also slated to be part of the event, which will take place at 5:30 p.m. in the Center's Hoover-Leppen Theatre.

The Black Youth Project is a research-based organization devoted to documenting and examining the attitudes, resources and culture of Black youth aged 15-25, exploring how these factors and others influence their decision-making, norms and behavior in critical domains such as politics, sex and health.

RSVP at Culture@CenteronHalsted.org.

NLGTF and BYP are sponsoring the event.

Quality of Life Not a Gamble

BY EMMANUEL GARCIA

Move over, Turkey Tripler; there is a new scratch-off lottery ticket in town.

On Nov. 16, the Quality of Life (QOL) Red Ribbon Cash ticket was unveiled at the Garfield Park Conservatory to an impressive crowd of politicians, advocates and community activists. The lottery ticket will become available starting in early February 2008. On hand were bill sponsors State Sen. Jacqueline Y. Collins, State Rep. Constance A. "Connie" Howard, State Rep. Greg Harris and State Rep. Karen Yarbrough.

The idea came about from a Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus meeting and spearheaded by Marc Loveless, Benny M. Montgomery, Jr., and Michael O' Connor. Despite a amendatory veto by Gov. Rod Blagojevich, the Quality of Life measure (SB 774) recently received the necessary state votes from both houses to become law.

The QOL lottery ticket, which is played by scratching off red ribbons, is the first of its kind in the United States. Fifty percent of funds will be awarded to agencies or organizations with an annual budget of \$300,000 or less, explained Montgomery.

The event, organized by the office of Congressman Danny K. Davis, was a celebration of the commitment and dedication of the men and woman who lobbied for the bill in Springfield.

Passages:

Laverne Hofbauer

Laverne Hofbauer, a former San Francisco resident who resided in Chicago, passed away Nov. 19. She was 72.

Hofbauer was an active member of Chicago 35 and The Saints and was an avid and talented dancer and sailor. She was volunteer coordinator for the Covenant Village, where she not only provided services for seniors, but provided support and guidance to adolescent volunteers doing community service.

Hofbauer moved to San Francisco in 1965 and loved the city, where she lived for 32 years. She returned to school there, earning her Bachelor's degree from San Francisco University in 1980.

Hofbauer was the loving sister of Mary Ann (Michael) O'Brien; dear aunt of Patrick O'Brien and Colleen (Clayton) McCaffery; and a great-aunt who adored her Grace Ann and Fiona Irene McCaffery. Donations may be made in her name to Rainbow Hospice, 444 N. Northwest, Park Ridge, Ill., 60068. She will be missed by her many friends in Chicago and San Francisco.



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NATIONAL ROUNDUP

BY AMY WOOTEN

Philadelphia Mayor John Street recently presided over the commitment ceremony of his long-time colleague and friend Micah Mahjoubjan and partner Ryan Bunch, reported Gay-wired.com. Mahjoubjan said he asked the mayor over brunch last year. Street previously told the Associated Press he agreed to it because Mahjoubjan is his friend.

According to 365gay.com, **anti-gay U.S. Senator Trent Lott, R-Miss., will not be seeking re-election.** Lott has consistently voiced his opposition of LGBT rights and protections during his four terms in the Senate. Lott was also the key sponsor of the proposed anti-gay marriage amendments to the Constitution in 2004 and 2006.

According to Queerty.com, **students at Pasadena City College elected a 24-year-old trans man as their Homecoming King.** A Homecoming Committee tried to veto the choice, saying Andrew Gomez was ineligible because he has a pierced ear. However, many students lodged complaints, accusing the committee of discrimination, and the decision was reversed.

Thousands of people have submitted video questions for **the upcoming CNN/YouTube Republican Debate,** including Florida parents Lynn and Pat Mulder, who talk about their gay son Ryan, who was murdered because of his sexual orientation. The couple have recently made headlines for their question about protecting LGBT citizens, as well as their activism since their son's death. Their 25-year-old son was killed in March, and police call his death a hate crime, reported The Ledger.

Openly gay councilman Gary Cloutier recently won the Vallejo, Calif., mayoral race by a mere four votes, according to The Advocate. Cloutier ran against Osby Davis, who was arrested prior to the election for public intoxication. Cloutier will be the Bay Area's first openly gay mayor.

Three men convicted in the 2006 death of a New York gay man were sentenced to prison. The three men had lured the victim, Michael Sandy, from a chat room to Brooklyn in hopes of robbing him, and when Sandy attempted to flee, he was struck and killed by a car on the highway. One of the convicted men, Anthony Fortunato, recently made headlines during his trial when his lawyers claimed their client is gay, therefore the crime was not inspired by hate.

V-Day, a global movement to end violence

against women and girls created by playwright Eve Ensler, will celebrate its 10th anniversary in 2008. A large two-day anniversary celebration, "V to the Tenth," will take place April 11-12, 2008, at the New Orleans Arena and Louisiana Superdome. "V to the Tenth" will feature Ellen DeGeneres, Jane Fonda, Rosario Dawson, Oprah Winfrey and many more.

Wal-Mart is under fire by Human Rights Campaign for its refusal to offer domestic partner benefits to its workers. Wal-Mart received a red "do not buy" rating in HRC's new consumer guide (the 2008 Corporate Equality Index), receiving a 40 out of 100.

According to The Hill, **The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force is pressuring Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., the chairwoman of the Senate Ethics Committee to put a stop to its investigation of Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho,** following the airport toilet scandal. The organization is calling for lawmakers to either drop the Craig investigation or start investigating Sen. David Vitter, R-La., and a female prostitute's claims Vitter used to be a regular customer.

Controversy has erupted over **an anti-gay marriage sign a business owner placed in his Southport insurance agency's window,** reported Star-Gazette.com. The business owner's sign reads, "Save the kids. Say no to gay marriage in NY." Some people have called the sign discriminatory.

The Charlotte Observer reported that **North Carolina Baptists kicked out a church for being gay-friendly.** The Baptist State Convention recently voted to cast out the welcoming Myers Park Baptist. One of the church's deacons is openly lesbian. The church had been a member of the Baptist State Convention since the early '40s.

A Baltimore federal judge recently unsealed the financial records of Rev. Fred Phelps' Westboro Baptist Church, and according to 365gay.com, the records don't really indicate what funds the anti-gay group, enabling it to frequently travel the country. The group protested the funeral of a fallen Marine, and the soldier's family was recently awarded nearly \$11 million in damages.

The City Council of **Toledo, Ohio, passed an ordinance that allows gay and unmarried couples to register as domestic partners,** according to the Toledo Blade. The ordinance passed 10-2, and was created to help employers that offer domestic partner benefits to verify relationships.

QUOTELINES

BY REX WOCKNER

"ANY MINORITY THAT DOESN'T GET THE SAME TREATMENT and equal rights under the law as everyone else is being discriminated against. The cure is to just say who you are, to be clear about how you are proud of who you are, and to make sure that people get to know you as a person and not a category." — *Democratic National Committee Chairman Howard Dean to QVegas magazine, November issue.*

"I WANT HER [BRITNEY SPEARS] TO COME LIVE WITH ME, but I have to stop saying that. I'm a 45-year-old overweight lesbian. She's like a 23-year-old hot, skinny sexy girl. I think she's going to call the police soon, you know. I mean I phone her, I leave her like stalker-like messages at the Four Seasons." — *Rosie O'Donnell at the New York Comedy Festival on Nov. 6, according to the New York Post.*

"I THINK THE GAY AGENDA, QUOTE-UNQUOTE, IS JUST OUR CONSTANT drumming that we need to rise up as a human race and become one. And we're not backing down. We really did mean it when we said: 'We're here; we're queer; get used to it.'" — *Singer Melissa Etheridge to Variety, Nov. 13.*

"I THOUGHT IT WAS HILARIOUS. J.K. Rowling is an incredibly intelligent woman. She can't have thought for a moment that that would go down well in the Bible Belt of America, but she put it brilliantly herself: 'He's my character—I can do what I want with him.'" — *Daniel Radcliffe, star of the Harry Potter films, responding to Potter author J.K. Rowling's recent revelation that Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry headmaster Albus Dumbledore is gay, to the BBC, Nov. 12.*

"IT NEVER REALLY OCCURRED TO ME BEFORE BUT NOW J.K. ROWLING'S SAID THAT HE'S GAY, it sort of makes sense. I think what

surprised everyone was the amount of media attention it's received. I think it's nice that the story has ended but there are still things that people don't know." — *Harry Potter actress Emma Watson (Hermione Granger) responding to Potter author J.K. Rowling's recent revelation that Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry headmaster Albus Dumbledore is gay, to the BBC, Nov. 12.*

"ONCE UPON A TIME YOU WEREN'T DOING YOUR BIT FOR THE COMMUNITY if you weren't loudly out. Now that seems a bit passé. Nobody wants to hear you're gay. They already know. Increasingly gays look like everyone else, which is to say segregated by class, education and cultural interests. ... [W]hat if anything holds them and/or us together? What, at this stage of gay lib, is the social glue?" — *Columnist Brent Ledger in the Toronto gay newspaper Xtra!, Oct. 11.*



GLAAD photo.

...I want [Britney Spears] to come live with me.

—Rosie O'Donnell, according to the New York Post.

"I HAVE FRIENDS WHO HAVE TOLD ME THAT IF THEIR PARTNER GETS SICK, they wouldn't be allowed in the hospital room because they're not considered immediate family and they have no spousal rights. I think it's very unfortunate that a person can't marry who they want to marry. Everyone should take care of their own business without judging others. Like I always say, 'Don't judge me unless you've walked a mile in my shoes.'" — *Singer Reba McEntire to the Carolinas gay newspaper Q-Notes, Oct. 6.*

"IT WAS HANDS OFF THE BUSH GIRLS FOR THE PAST SEVEN YEARS. Nobody could say a word about them, they've stood for nothing, they've said nothing, they are flatliners. Their mother is a flatliner—Laura Bush has done nothing to define this country, she's done nothing as a woman." — *Lesbian comic and actress Sandra Bernhard to London's The Independent, Oct. 21.*

"[DESPERATE HOUSEWIVES CREATOR] MARC [CHERRY] SHOULD BE APPLAUDED for creating gay characters who aren't issue-oriented. A lot of the time, gay characters are known through issues—coming out or health problems. There are a few cliché gay jokes on Desperate Housewives. But Bob and Lee aren't stereotypical. They have horrible taste. They have a sense of humor. They're a little mean. They're certainly not PC." — *Actor Tuc Watkins who plays one half of the new gay couple on TV's Desperate Housewives, to USA Today, Nov. 2.*

—Assistance: Bill Kelley

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...VIEWPOINTS...

Frank Kameny's Outrage

The following letter was sent to author/retired journalist Tom Brokaw, Random House Publisher Gina Centrello and Random House Executive Editorial Director Kate Medina regarding Brokaw's newest book, *Boom! Voices of the Sixties*.

Dear Mr. Brokaw and Mmes. Centrello and Medina:

As a long-time gay activist who initiated gay activism and militancy at the very start of "your" Sixties, in 1961; coined the slogan "Gay is Good" in 1968; and is viewed by many as one of the "Founding Fathers" of the Gay Movement, I write with no little indignation at the total absence of any slightest allusion to the gay movement for civil equality in your book "Boom! Voices of the Sixties". Your book simply deletes the momentous events of that decade which led to the vastly altered and improved status of gays in our culture today. This change would have been inconceivable at the start of the Sixties and would not have occurred at all without the events of that decade totally and utterly ignored by you. Mr. Brokaw, you have "de-gay" the entire decade. "Voices of the Sixties"??? One does not hear even one single gay voice in your book. The silence is complete and deafening.

As a gay combat veteran of World War II, and therefore a member of the "Greatest Generation", I find myself and my fellow gays as absent from your narration as if we did not and do not exist. We find Boom! Boom!! Boom!!! in your book about all the multitudinous issues and the vast cultural changes of that era. But not a single "Boom", only dead silence, about gays, homosexuality, and the Gay Movement.

The development of every other possible, conceivable issue and cause which came to the forefront in that period is at least mentioned, and is usually catalogued: race; sex and gender; ethnicity; the environment; and others, on and on and on—except only gays.

In 1965, we commenced bringing gays and our issues "out of the closet" with our then daring picketing demonstrations at the White House and other government sites, and our annual 4th of July demonstrations at Independence Hall in Philadelphia. The Smithsonian Institution displayed these original pickets last month, in the same exhibition as the desk where Thomas Jefferson drafted The Declaration of Independence. The name of the Smithsonian's exhibition? "Treasures of American History". In your book: No Boom; only silence.

About 1963, a decade-long effort commenced to reverse the psychiatric categorization of gays as mentally or emotionally ill, concluding in 1973 with a mass "cure" of all of us by the American Psychiatric Association. No boom in your book; only your silence.

The most momentous single Gay Movement event occurred at the end of June, 1969, when the "Stonewall Rebellion" in New York, almost overnight (actually it took three days) converted what had been a tiny, struggling gay movement into the vast grass-roots movement which it now is. We had five or six gay organizations in the entire country in 1961; fifty to sixty in 1969; by the time of the first Gay Pride march, in New York one year later in 1970, we had 1500, and 2500 by 1971 when counting stopped. If ever there was Boom, this was it. In your book, no Boom, only your silence.

About 1972, Elaine Noble was elected to the Massachusetts state House of Representatives as the first elected openly gay public official. I had run here in Washington, D.C., the previous year for election to Congress as the first openly gay candidate for any federal office. Harvey Milk was elected to the Board of Supervisors in San Francisco. No boom in your book; only your silence.

Mr. Brokaw, you deal with the histories of countless individuals. Where are the gays of that era: Barbara Gittings; Jack Nichols; Harry Hay; Del Martin and Phyllis Lyons; Randolfe Wicker; Harvey Milk; numerous others? No booms in your book; only silence and heterosexuals.

Starting in 1961 a long line of court cases attacked the long-standing U.S. Civil Service Gay Ban (fully as absolute and as virulent as the current Military Gay ban, which actually goes back some 70 years and was also fought in the 60s)

with final success in 1975 when the ban on employment of gays by the federal government was rescinded. In your book, no boom; only your silence.

The assault on the anti-sodomy laws, which made at least technical criminals of all gays (and most non-gays for that matter, although never used against them) and which was the excuse for an on-going terror campaign against the gay community through arrests the country over, began in 1961 and proceeded through the 60s and onward. In your book, no boom; only your silence.

In 1972, following up on Stonewall, the first anti-discrimination law protective of gays was enacted in East Lansing, Michigan, followed by the much more comprehensive one in D.C. in 1973, starting a trend which now encompasses some twenty states, countless counties and cities, and has now reached Congress in ENDA. In your book, no boom; only your silence.

The Sixties were a period of unprecedented rapid social and cultural upheaval and change. We gays were very much a part of all that. A reader of your book would never have the slightest notion of any of that. In your book, no boom; only your silence.

At the start of the Sixties gays were completely invisible. By the end, and especially after Stonewall, we were seen everywhere: in entertainment, education, religion, politics, business, elsewhere and everywhere. In Boom, our invisibility remains total.

The only allusions to us, in your entire book are the most shallow, superficial, brief references in connection with sundry heterosexuals. Where are the gay spokespeople? We are certainly there to speak for ourselves. But in your book, only silence.

Mr. Brokaw, I could go on, but this should be sufficient to make my point. The whole thing is deeply insulting. As I said, you have de-gay an entire generation. For shame, for shame, for shame. You owe an abject public apology to the entire gay community. I demand it; we expect it.

Gay is Good. You are not.

Sincerely,
Franklin E. Kameny, Ph.D.
www.kamenypapers.org

GUEST VIEWPOINT/LETTER

Congresswoman Melissa Bean on ENDA

Written Nov. 8, 2007

Last night, the U.S. House of Representatives passed ENDA, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which would amend existing workplace discrimination laws to include sexual orientation. Our vote followed an impassioned plea for support from my colleague and chairman, Congressman Barney Frank.

Since coming to Congress, I can't remember being so personally moved by a member's remarks on the House floor. And I was not alone. While Barney is renowned for his quick wit, humor and incisive intellectual arguments, he disarmed his opponents last night with pure emotion.

Teary-eyed members, including myself, were touched not by Congressman Frank, Financial Services Committee Chairman, but by Barney, their respected gay colleague, emotionally sharing how he has personally faced discrimination, and his passionate pleas to finally remove such workplace barriers from the lives of gay Americans.

Barney told us how he's been fighting to pass this type of legislation for 35 years, and that he couldn't help but "take personally" attempts to derail his efforts. He implored his colleagues to

not send him back having failed gay Americans. For the first time since I've been on the House floor, you could hear a pin drop.

His emotional appeal influenced a number of members to change their positions, something that so rarely happens these days.

Walking off the floor that night, I was proud to be a member of Congress. All the way home, I reflected on how rarely we pass a historic, precedent-setting law that affects the basic rights of Americans.

Like many working parents, sometimes I wonder if the time away from my family is really worth it—particularly when time gets wasted on petty and/or partisan issues.

But that night, I was excited to tell my daughters about what Barney said on the floor and how Congress responded. He said: "Americans shouldn't fear losing their jobs because someone might find out who they love." We voted to make sure they won't have to.

If Barney's personal passion as well as the respect he has earned as one of our most gifted colleagues carries any weight, the Senate and president will follow the House and pass ENDA quickly. Let's not wait another 35 years.

HRC-Chicago on ENDA

Dear Editor:

We respectfully disagree with the sharp rhetoric from some of our friends in the LGBT community being directed at HRC [Human Rights Campaign] in the wake of its support for the version of ENDA that recently was approved in the House. Like them, we wanted an ENDA bill that included protections for the T community but, unfortunately, given the realities of the current political environment, putting such a bill to a vote would not have led to any legislative achievement at this time. We believe that what needs to be heard now is not criticism of HRC, but rather plans to channel our allies' energy into something positive.

Rather than spending hours organizing a protest at an HRC event, a better use of time would be for the LGBT community to pull together and organize in-district lobbying appointments with their elected officials, create volunteer committee phone banks to call constituents, reach out to fair-minded religious leaders and hold community meetings to educate individuals about gender identity and expression.

The Human Rights Campaign Chicago Steering Committee is eager to work with other community organizations to put together a collective Transgender plan on lobbying, education and awareness. We hope many will take us up on our offer.

—HRC-Chicago Board

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WORLD ROUNDUP

BY REX WOCKNER

Nicaraguan sodomy ban disappears

Nicaragua's sodomy ban is history.

A rewrite of the nation's Penal Code, which takes effect in March, simply left the ban out.

"We are not wanting to moralize," explained José Pallais, president of the National Assembly's Justice and Legal Issues Committee. "The state should not be regulating conduct or giving moral indicators of how citizens should behave."

"We are not making a code of the Catholic Church here," he said. "We are making a democratic code under modern principles and principles of legality."

Old Penal Code Article 204 stated: "Anyone who induces, promotes, propagandizes or practices in scandalous form sexual intercourse between persons of the same sex commits the crime of sodomy [and] will incur a penalty of one to three years in prison."

At least three nations in Central or South America continue to ban gay sex—Belize, Guyana and Panama—along with several Caribbean islands, including Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago. Ten of the countries are former British colonies.

The International Lesbian and Gay Association says gay sex also remains illegal in Antigua and Barbuda, but Amnesty International USA and other sources report it is legal. At the time of this column's deadline, the actual situation could not be determined.

(A September item in this column failed to note the sodomy bans in Belize, Dominica, Panama and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines as well as the conflicting information regarding Antigua and Barbuda.)

Singapore bans, unbans Microsoft video game

Singapore in mid-November banned and then unbanned Microsoft's new Xbox video game "Mass Effect" because it offers a sex scene between a woman and a female alien.

The Board of Film Censors at first prohibited the game, citing "lesbian intimacy," but then decided to implement a rating system, gave the game an adult rating and unbanned it.

The nation also recently has banned "God of War II," because of nudity, and "The Darkness," because of violence and religious profanity.

In October, Parliament decriminalized oral and anal sex for heterosexuals but declined to also legalize gay sex. Penal Code Section 377A punishes sex between men—"gross indecency"—with two years in prison. The law is rarely, if ever, enforced.

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong supported keeping the sex ban, saying: "We do not approve of them setting the tone of mainstream society. They live their lives, that's their personal space. But the tone of the overall society, I think, it remains conventional, it remains straight and we want it to remain so."

—Assistance: Bill Kelley

For other world items—including the lifting of a sodomy death sentence in Iran and an LGBT equality march in Poland—see www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.

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RONEN from cover

My first job was as an employment counselor on the West Side of Chicago. [Eventually,] I realized that one-on-one social work wasn't for me, so I went into the administrative end of it. I worked for the City of Chicago in their social service agency.

Then I [became] director of planning and research for the Criminal Justice Commission, and came back and worked for different agencies. When Harold Washington was elected mayor, that's when I really became more involved with legislative issues. I headed the city's human services department of the Office of Legislative Affairs; I worked on the city's legislative agenda in Springfield. I loved that job; it was great working with all the different advocacy groups.

WCT: So what propelled you to run for the State House?

CR: When Rich Daley became mayor, I moved over to head up the women's commission, [which] I did for a year. While at the commission, I met David Wilhelm, who had run Mayor Daley's 1989 campaign. When the '91 campaign was about to start (back then, the mayor's term was two years), Dave asked if I'd like to become deputy campaign manager—[and that] booted me into the political arena. It was the first time I had worked professionally on a campaign. After that campaign, I tried to figure out what I wanted to do next, and that's when David Wilhelm [said], "Why don't you look into running for office?" ... Because I was at a crossroads; I had spent my entire professional life working on child-care and health issues; and I had the experience of the Daley campaign, I saw how [everything] could fit together.

I also had people like David Wilhelm, Pete Giangreco and [U.S. Rep.] Rahm Emanuel, who [were parts] of the Daley campaign; I learned how to put together a political campaign. At the same time, my friend, [Alderman] Mary Ann Smith ran in '91; at the local level, I helped her campaign, so I got to know some local people.

[Running] just made sense; it was a logical next step for me to keep on working on the issues I care about. I ran against an incumbent who had been there for 14 years. I was able to build a coalition in the neighborhood; in the Daley campaign, one of my jobs was working with the Asian, [LGBT] and African-American communities, so I was able to build friendships there. I was able to get support from so many sectors of the community that my opponent didn't know were part of the community. So my earliest supporters were people from the gay and lesbian community, so that's where my commitment started to help pass the human rights bill.

WCT: I was going to ask how you became so involved with gay rights, so you answered my question.

CR: I grew up in the '60s, and it's a civil rights issue; everybody deserves to be treated equally. Plus, that's how I got elected—with huge support from the gay and lesbian community. The three things I talked about the most in my first campaign were choice, human rights and education. Those were the constant themes of that early campaign, and I felt that those were commitments to deliver on.

WCT: Going back to that first term in the General Assembly, was it anything like you thought it would be?

CR: No, not really. I loved the campaigning, meeting people and working on issues, but I wasn't sure how I would feel about being in Springfield. [However,] it [turned out] to be more comfortable than I thought it would be. In the class of 1993, there were 45 freshmen; there was a lot of energy—and a lot of women. I don't think we've had a class that large size, and I don't think there was one before [that was that large]. It was fun to be part of that newness, energy and excitement. We developed a really strong bipartisan women's coalition, with great Republican women like Rosemary Mulligan, Judy Biggert, Pat Lindner, Carolyn Krause and [others]. However, there were also [people such as] Judy Irwin, Rod Blagojevich, [Cook County Sher-



Carol Ronen at an Equality Illinois event. Photo by Tracy Baim

iff) Tom Dart [and] Nancy Kazak—and, because we were all new, we bonded. It was fun and inspiring. [Also,] I was surprised that so many people cared about so many issues.

WCT: A few years later, you decided to run for the State Senate. Why?

CR: Again, it wasn't something I had planned on doing. Mark Berman announced that he wasn't going to run again, [so] I put my hat in the ring. I ran for the 2000 primary.

He ended up leaving a little early, so I filled out the last month of his term; then I ran for the primary. I went over to the senate [and took] a leap of faith, but I thought that being in the house for eight years it would give me a chance to represent a broader area.

WCT: What would you consider your greatest achievement and [biggest disappointment] to be?

CR: I feel best about passing the human rights bill. It made a difference, it was an important piece of legislation and it was the hardest thing I've ever done. We put together a great coalition to do that, and I've always been so proud of being part of that effort.

I also feel really great about all the things we did on early childhood development and pre-kindergarten programs; Illinois leads the nation in this area. Also, in the same vein, [I like] what we've done with health care, another area where Illinois leads the nation. I think we're the only state that provides health care for every child, regardless if their parents are legal or not.

There were two things I started in my freshman year: human rights and working with nurses. Illinois was the last state to recognize advance-practice nurses; the doctors' lobby didn't want the competition from these nurses. Advance-practice nurses are a way to expand quality health care to people. I have so much respect for nurses.

WCT: And the most frustrating aspect?

CR: The most frustrating was how hard it was [to pass] the human rights bill. I guess it's "all's well that ends well" but that last year, especially, was extremely frustrating. It was just pushing, pushing and pushing, but everyone came through. Sen. [Emil] Jones—I can't say enough about what he did. Then, the governor twisted the final arm. It was frustrating going through and trying to put everything together, but I don't look back on it as a frustration because it ended well.

As for things that we haven't done, I [wished we had passed] the health-care bill. It got caught up in all the political fighting in Springfield. I was excited that I was going to be the lead sponsor of the governor's universal health-care bill. The fact that we couldn't get it out of the senate was probably one of my greatest frustrations.

WCT: You were inducted into Chicago's Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame as a friend of the community. What was that like?

CR: Oh, that was great. It was wonderful because so many of my friends had been inducted. I think I made it the year before [Mayor Daley] did; that was pretty cool. [Laughs] No one's been a better friend to the community than

Mayor Daley has. [Being inducted] was really, really special. You feel good about what you did, but you realize that the community understands, too. The [human-rights] bill is not just about gay and lesbian rights; it's about transgender rights as well. It was very important that we kept [trans rights] in; I see what's happening in Congress now...

WCT: So how do you feel about ENDA [without gender identity] passing the [U.S.] House?

CR: I think it's really too bad. We had discussions here—working with Equality Illinois, Lambda [Legal], PFLAG and ACLU, a really good group—and some people suggested taking out the transgender part of it. We decided not to. To put the transgender community out by itself is wrong; you have to keep the coalition together. The more I looked at it, the more it [seemed] that transgender rights are the new arena. Most people understand that people should not be discriminated against [based] on sexual orientation, but they don't understand the rights for transgender [people]. Illinois is one of a small number of states that includes transgender [protections]; I'm glad we did that. In the coming years, I think it'll become more apparent how important [trans rights] are.

WCT: Now, there are all of these rumors regarding why you're stepping down. I've heard everything from legislative gridlock to illness...

CR: Oh, I'm not sick. [Laughs] I'm feeling great.

I've been in Springfield for 15 years and I'm 62 years old; I feel like it's time to move on to other things. I feel that I've reached a certain plateau in Springfield; [however,] if I hadn't passed the human rights bill, I wouldn't be ready to leave. I'd feel like there was this major unfinished business.

It's a hard decision because I love being a senator. It's been 15 years; you need fresh blood. There are things that I think I can accomplish on the executive branch; there's a certain freedom you have to make things happen that are different in the legislative branch. And, yes, the gridlock didn't help; it was a brutal session.

WCT: Would you consider yourself an ally of Gov. Blagojevich—and do you think he's being unfairly maligned?

CR: He's a friend. Like I said earlier, we were both elected in 1992, and we became friends in the legislature. I ran his campaign in 1996 when he ran for Congress. I'm a huge supporter of his first and second elections. And I'm usually supportive of the things he's accomplished. The stuff I talked about—health care and early childhood development—would not have happened without the governor. And I think that's being missed in the political stories and infighting. If he were not governor, we would not have passed the human rights bill.

I do feel [that the governor is being unfairly attacked], but he understands that it is the nature of media and politics. I think a lot of what he's done is being overshadowed by some of the [goings-on] in Springfield, but I try to separate the arguments [happening there] from the substance of what is really happening.

WCT: How would you like your years in the General Assembly to be remembered?

CR: As someone who fought for the things she cared about and was effective in fighting for those things. [I'd like to be remembered] as someone who put principle about politics.

Local Events

Role reversal: Women will take on the men's roles in Teatro Luna's world premiere of MACHOS. The interview play explores contemporary masculinity by an all-Latina cast in drag. The production runs through Dec. 16 at Chicago Dramatists, 1105 W. Chicago. Buy tickets at www.teatroluna.org or call 773-878-LUNA.

Speak out: Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus presents an open mic for World AIDS Day on Nov. 28. The free event, hosted by Mz. Ruff N' Stuff, will take place at Little Black Pearl Art and Design Center, 1060 E. 47th St., 6-9 p.m. See www.lovelybrotha.com.

Get kinky: Leather Archives & Museum presents movie screenings at CineKink Chicago Nov. 29 through Dec. 1. Tickets to all six screenings during the three-day festival cost \$30 advance and \$45 at the door. Individual tickets are \$8 in advance and \$10 at the door per screening. Specific titles will be announced later. See www.leatherarchives.org/cinekink for more information.

Red hot: Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus commemorates World AIDS Day with The Red Party, a CBGMC fundraiser, on Nov. 30 at Circuit, 3641 N. Halsted St., from 9-11 p.m. See The Soul People and Lorenzo Owens in concert. General admission is \$20, and admission for the 8-9 p.m. VIP reception is \$25. Call 773-865-3740 or see www.lovelybrotha.com.

Hosed: Hell in a Handbag Productions presents Rudolph the Red-Hosed Reindeer, now in its tenth year. David Cerda's parody of a holiday classic features a cross-dressing reindeer. The show opens Nov. 30 at Bailiwick, 1229 W. Belmont, and runs through Dec. 30. Call 773-883-1090 or see www.ticketmaster.com.

Art from the heart: Liz Long Gallery presents a group show of art by people affected by HIV/AIDS at Urban Art Retreat. The opening reception will take place Dec. 1, from 1-4 p.m., at 1957 S. Spaulding Ave. The show is free and on display through Jan. 26. Call 773-542-9126 for more info. See www.urbanartretreat.com.

Celebrate: Equality Illinois will throw its Women's Holiday Party and Table Captain Reception Dec. 1. The event will take place at La Tache, 1475 W. Balmoral, from 3-5 p.m. RSVP by Nov. 28 at 773-477-7173 or rsvp@eqil.org.

We are family: Lakeside Pride's Symphonic Band presents its "For Friends and Family" holiday concert Dec. 1, 8 p.m., at Northside College Prep High School, 5501 N. Kedzie. Tickets are \$15 at the door or \$12 in advance at www.lakesidepride.org.

Trailblazers: Bailiwick Repertory Theatre presents the 2007 Trailblazer Awards, which honors members and friends of the LGBT community who have moved the community forward, on Dec. 3. Honorees include Dale Levitski (Bravo's Top Chef), Amy Bloom, Art Johnston and Pepe Pena, Marcia Lipetz, Patrick Sinozich, Neil Steinberg and Honey West. A 5:30 p.m. reception will take place at Joey's Brickhouse, and the ceremony will be held at Bailiwick, 1229 W. Belmont Ave., at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$50 for general admission and \$75 for VIP. Call 773-883-1090 or see www.bailiwick.org.


Wine and tease: Chicago NOW's Lesbian Rights Team presents its annual holiday party at Early to Bed, 5232 N. Sheridan, on Dec. 7 from 9-11 p.m. The event is free and open to the public, and includes wine, cheese, entertainment and a raffle.

Peace of cake: Folcrum Point New Music Project presents the 10th Annual Concert for Peace: Songs of Love and War, Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m., at Harris Theater, 205 E. Randolph St. Tickets are \$20 (or \$10 for seniors and students), and can be purchased at 312-334-7777 or www.madtchi.com.

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a special pullout section



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THE AIR UP THERE

The Blueair AirPod is probably the stylish—and one of the most efficient—air purifiers around, as it comes with a whole selection of accented bases. There's even a pink one in honor of breast cancer research. (\$99 for bases; www.BlueAirStore.com)

December 25, 2006
The Magazine For Celebrating Cynthia

It's Our Christmas Queen Magazine

Cynthia Forrester

Top Ten Ways To Help Cynthia Celebrate Christmas

Cynthia Offers Her Perspective On The Benefits Of A Probiotic Diet

Why 101 Frost Lane Is The Best Place To Celebrate Christmas

Tips From Cynthia On How To Make Beautiful Ornaments


Why She Loves To Ferment Food - Not Trouble!

December 25, 2006
1123456789
www.photocover.com

SPECIAL HOLIDAY ISSUE

SAY CHEESE

On your way home from shopping, swing by **Radio Shack**, which offers everything from lasers travel mouses to robot toys to the Olympus FE-210 7.1MP Digital Camera, which features 16 shooting modes and a "My Favorites" feature. (\$129.99 for the camera; multiple locations; www.radioshack.com)



TAKE COVER

For that person who always wanted to be a cover model, why not make that wish come true? **Your Cover** allows you to personalize a magazine cover with a picture of that budding Gisele, Kate or Tyson. (\$49.95; www.yourcover.com)



UNDERCOVER

Everyone knows that **Undergear** has an extensive selection of men's underwear and activewear, but did you know that it also offers items like Anthony Logistics for Men skin-care line and a mega-hot 2008 calendar that will definitely keep the winter chill at bay? (www.undergear.com)



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THAI ONE ON

Gift certificates are almost always the right thing to buy, especially if they're for eateries. With the gazillion restaurants in Chicago, your recipient could go for an old favorite or a new adventure, such as **Thai Urban Kitchen**, 500 W. Madison, which features such dishes as open-faced ravioli with shrimp and squid in sweet soy vinaigrette. (www.thaiurbankitchen.com)

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PHOTO OP

Nikon has new D40x digital SLR camera that is designed to allow users to take spectacular photographs with very high-resolution at the touch of a button. The D40x maintains the same compact size, portability and ease-of-use as its already successful sister camera, the D40, and adds features like a higher 10.2-megapixel resolution—making it the equivalent of hi-def TV. (\$729; www.nikon.com)

FEEL THE FIRE

Fire Island Pines Arts Project (FIPAP), a non-profit organization promoting the arts in the legendary gay beach community, has released its first-ever cookbook, **Into the Pines Kitchen**, filled with recipes from Pines residents gay, straight, young and old. Into the Pines Kitchen contains 200 recipes from 100 contributors, including Pines notables Scott Bromley, Gilbert Parker and Hal Rubinstein. (\$20; www.fipap.org)



GOODBYE, RED-EYE

How many times have you taken pictures of your friends, only to have them looked possessed because of problems with red-eye? That's where **Photobot**, the first zero-click, automatic digital photo correcting software, comes in. Photobot launches when you start your computer and begins continually searching for pictures. You can set it to scan your entire hard drive or only specific folders. Whenever it detects new images, Photobot immediately applies image-correction technologies that automatically brighten dark pictures, reduce red-eye and improve color. (\$29.95; www.photobot.com)

Buying With Pride With HRC

BY AMY WOOTEN

Just in time for holiday shopping, Human Rights Campaign (HRC) released its 2008 "Buying for Equality" guide.

The guide makes buying with pride much easier. Products are searchable by product category, and the guide allows consumers to comparison shop by utilizing the organization's Corporate Equality Index, which ranks a company's LGBT inclusiveness.

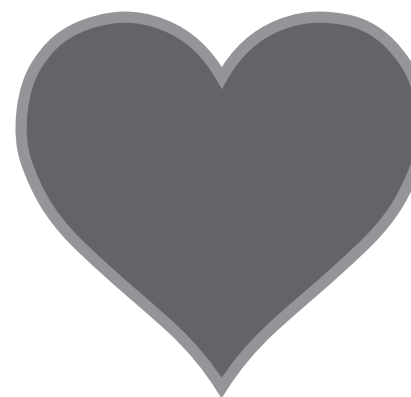
HRC found 195 companies received a perfect

score for the 2008 Corporate Equality Index, the highest number of companies to date.

Companies included in the guide that received a perfect score include Best Buy, Borders, The Gap, Estee Lauder, Liz Claiborne, Microsoft, Starbucks, Apple, The Walt Disney Company, Gamestop and many more.

See www.hrc.org/buyersguide to download the 2008 guide.

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THE EYES HAVE IT

You know **John Varvatos** for his clothes—and what could go better with his high-end attire than his high-end eyeglasses? Hand-embossed filigree detail brings a vintage touch to shades like the very trendy V723 aviator. (\$340; www.JohnVarvatos.com)



FLOWER POWER

A rose is definitely a rose when you consider **Organic Bouquet's** five-foot-tall roses. Whoever gets these will have a special holiday indeed. (\$249.95; www.organicbouquet.com)



STORMIN' MORMONS

Mormons Exposed has a steamy 2008 calendar featuring 12 handsome returned missionaries who have dared to pose bare-chested in the first-ever Men on a Mission calendar. Usually seen riding their bicycles and preaching door-to-door, the sexy new calendar celebrates the great looks, beautiful bodies and amazing stories of service of these men. Just don't tell Mitt Romney. (\$14.99; www.mormonsexposed.com)

CORNUCOPIA

Garrett Popcorn Shops are offering festive green and red-striped holiday tins and brand new snowflake-adorned tins filled with plain, buttered, cheese or caramel popcorn—the perfect gift to order online and ship to loved ones this holiday season. (Starting at \$26; 1-866-6-POPCORN or www.garrettpopcorn.com)




BEING IN ECSTASY

For a drink that's a little bit different, there's **Ecstasy**, described in a press release as an "enhanced spirit." Ecstasy has the predominant flavors of pomegranate and citrus, and the 70-proof spirit includes ginseng, taurine, guarana and a boost of caffeine. (www.drinkecstasy.com) Also, check out **Trago Tequila**, which is offered in Silver, Reposado and Añejo varieties; just make sure you don't confuse the sleek bottle with that of your favorite cologne. (www.trago-tequila.com)



PET IT OUT

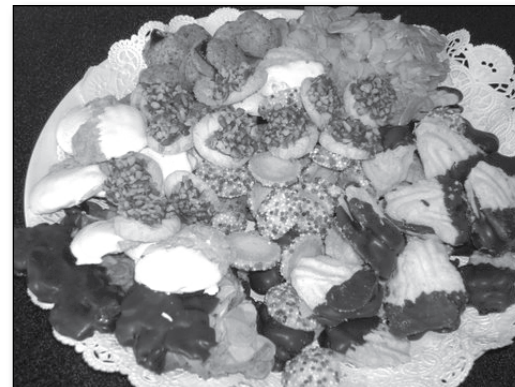
For those whose pets have everything—like that neighbor whose pooch has a cashmere sweater—how about getting Sniffles his own line of dog food? "**Paw Made**" Designer **Doggie Labels** by Castor & Pollux Pet Works allow pet parents to go to www.castorpolluxpet.com and upload a snapshot of their four-legged best friend to create a customized case of canned food, personalized with their dog's picture and name. (\$24.99; CastorPolluxPet.com)

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NAUGHTY GIRLS (AND GUYS) NEED LOVE, TOO

PervArtistry is a game that combines charades and drawings, but with terms such as "pocket rocket" and "eye candy." However, the people behind the game have expanded the line to include wearable items such as Dare2Stare T-shirts and Dare2Bare underwear. (www.pervartistry.com)



SWEET THING

Austrian Bakery & Deli, 2523 N. Clark, offers a ton of tempting European-themed treats, including sandwiches, breads, soups and desserts such as pastries and the classic Bienenstich Cake, or "bee sting cake." One bite of the eatery's Pertikus White Chocolate cookies was enough to convince us. (www.AustrianBakery.com, 773-244-9922)

TECH THIS OUT

How do you wow the tech lovers in your life? Let **Motherboard Gifts & More** dazzle them with strikingly original, completely functional products such as clocks, coasters, clipboards, cuff links, card cases (above) and key rings—all made from reclaimed circuit boards originally designed for computers, TVs and other electronics. (www.Motherboardgifts.com, 888-842-6788)



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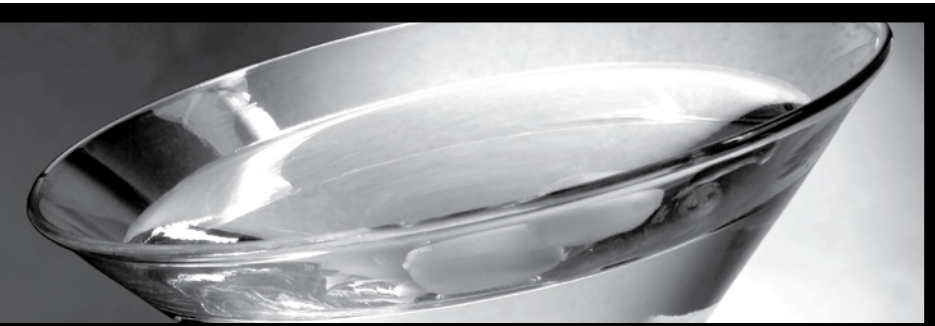
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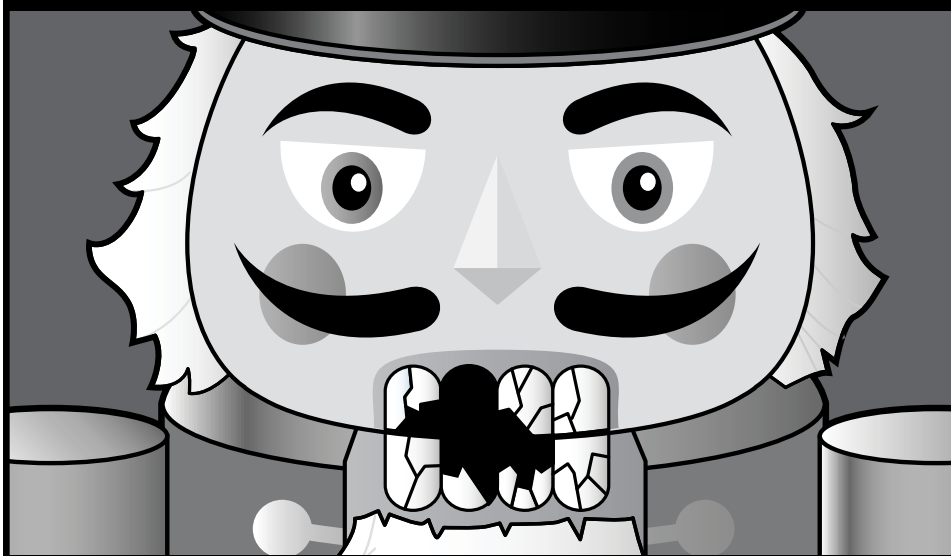
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DECEMBER 2007

BUILDING TOURS

SATURDAYS: DEC 1 | DEC 8 | DEC 15
Meet in the Amy N. Maggio Lobby — 1:00p **FREE**

COMMUNITY, CULTURAL & LEGAL PROGRAMS

WEEKLY EVENTS

MONDAYS: DEC 3 | DEC 10 | DEC 17
> Co-ed Open Gym: Volleyball — 6:00p – 9:00p **FREE**
No open gym Dec 24

TUESDAYS: DEC 4 | DEC 11 | DEC 18
> Card Night: Bridge — 6:00p instruction, 6:30 play **FREE**
> Card Night: Euchre — 6:30p informal; 7:30p formal. \$3/game

WEDNESDAYS: DEC 5 | DEC 12 | DEC 19
> Women's Open Gym-Basketball — 5:00p – 7:00p
No open gym Dec 26

WEDNESDAYS: DEC 5 | DEC 12 | DEC 19 | DEC 26
> Dyke Mic 2.0 — 8:00p – 9:30p (Under 18 @ 7:30p)
\$10 donation

THURSDAYS: DEC 6 | DEC 13 | DEC 20
> Co-ed Open Gym-Basketball — 6:00p – 9:00p
No open gym Dec 27
> ALMA: Our Multiple Identities and the Power of Them/
Nuestras Identidades el Desarrollo y Poder de Cada Una —
6:30p – 9:30p A developmental program for Latinos in the
LGBT community. Register at info@almachicago.org

THURSDAYS—SATURDAYS: DEC 6 – DEC 8 — 8:00p
\$20 adults; \$15 students/seniors; \$10 Industry Thurs.
> Hubris Productions: *Five Women Wearing the Same Dress*
by Alan Ball. Hoover-Leppen Theatre. For reservations and
tickets: 773.661.0938 or visit www.hubrisproductions.com.

SUNDAYS: DEC 1 | DEC 8 | DEC 15 | DEC 22 | DEC 29
> Worship Services by achurch4me MCC — 11:00a **FREE**
> Pillar of Love Fellowship Church Services — 1:00p **FREE**

SPECIAL PUBLIC EVENTS

Sat 01 Saturday, DEC 1 — 4:00p \$10 donation
After, Image: A Memorial for Those Lost to HIV/AIDS.
Visual arts installation by Cole Robertson.

achurch4me: World AIDS Day
Service of Remembrance and Celebration of Life — 6:30p
Candlelight Vigil and March — 7:15p
Chicago World AIDS Day Committee, achurch4me, Sankofa
Way and others will hold a brief service of poetry and
reading of names of loved ones. Vigil and march follows.

Tue 04 Tuesday, DEC 4 — 5:30p – 7:30p
Black Youth Project Presentation. Join the National
Lesbian and Gay Taskforce as they present and discuss
project findings. RSVP to culture@centeronhalsted.org
Hoover-Leppen Theatre

Tue 04 Money Matters Seminar: Life Insurance Basics —
6:00p – 8:00p Donations accepted

Wed 05 Wednesday, DEC 5 — 9:30a – 11:00a \$3 per family
Parent/Tot Play Group. Join with other parents and toddlers
for a morning of play and conversation. *Billie Jean King*
Recreation Hall

Fri 07 Friday, DEC 7 — 7:00p Self pay
Windy City Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf (WCRAD) Coffee
Social. Caribou Coffee, 3500 N. Halsted St., Chicago

Sat 08 Saturday, DEC 8 — 3:00p – 8:00p General Admission:
\$20, w/ Costume: \$18; members: \$17; w/ costume: \$15.
Brokesilent Mountain Costume Holiday Party/WCRAD
Holiday Party. 5:00p performance followed by costume
contest. *Charlies*, 3126 N. Broadway, Chicago.

Wed 12 Wednesday, DEC 12 — 6:00p – 7:00p
\$10 (sliding scale applies)
Money Matters Seminar: Debt Management.
RSVP to culture@centeronhalsted.org.

Tue 13 Thursday, DEC 13 — 6:30p – 8:30p
Exchange: A Town Hall Meeting to Discuss Issues and
Concerns of LGBT Immigrants. RSVP to
culture@centeronhalsted.org. *Hoover-Leppen Theatre*

Sat 15 Saturday, DEC 15 — 5:00p & 8:00p \$20 general admission
Sun 16 Sunday, DEC 16 — 2:00p \$20 general admission
Windy City Gay Chorus and Aria/Windy City Women's
Ensemble: Home for the Holidays! Purchase tickets online
at www.windycitysings.org or at the door one hour prior to
performance. Discount for groups of 10 or more.
Hoover-Leppen Theatre

Mon 17 Monday, DEC 17 — 6:00p – 7:00p
Money Matters Seminar: Home Equity.
RSVP to culture@centeronhalsted.org.

Lakeside Pride Saxophone Ensemble — 7:00p – 8:30p
\$10 – \$20 (sliding scale applies)

Monday, DEC 17 — 7:00p – 9:00p \$4 per hour
Child care. For children ages 1-8. Space limited.
Please RSVP by Wednesday, December 12 to
creid@centeronhalsted.org or call 773.472.6469, ext. 259.
Butler-VanderLinden Children's Space

Tue 18 Tuesday, DEC 18 — 6:00p – 8:00p \$10 donation
Money Matters Seminar for Ages 21 to 35: Far-Flung Future.
Retirement planning.
RSVP to culture@centeronhalsted.org.

Mon 24 Monday, DEC 24 — 7:00p
achurch4me/MCC: Christmas Eve Celebration.
Everyone is welcome.

Sun 30 Sunday, DEC 30 — 11:00a
achurch4me/MCC: Cross-cultural Kwanzaa Celebration.
Community pot luck follows. Music provided by Drum
Divas. Everyone is welcome.



Center on Halsted commemorates
World AIDS Day and the continued fight for
a **CURE**. For information on HIV/AIDS,
STDs and testing resources,
call 1.800.AID.AIDS.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
AND UPDATES, VISIT US AT:

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CENTER ON HALSTED

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60613 tty: 773.472.1277

YOUTH EVENTS

Holiday Celebrations: The Youth Program will hold special activities for Christmas, Kwanzaa, the Winter Solstice, and Hanukkah. Please visit www.centeronhalsted.org for details.

Tue 04 Tuesday, DEC 4 — 5:30p **FREE**
YOGA

Sat 08 Saturday, DEC 8 — 1:00p–4:00p
Sharing Our History, Living Our Legacy: Share stories about our past, present & future with other LGBTQ youth and adults. Organized by Howard Brown Health Center's Mentor Program, Broadway Youth Center, & SAGE Center on Halsted, with Horizons Youth Program & About Face Theater.

Thu 13 Thursday, DEC 13 — 5:30p
GLOCY (Gay Lesbian Outreach Center for Youth): Explore and talk about spiritual matters.

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Mon. – Thurs. Group time: 5:30p
Sat. Programming: Noon – 5:00p

MONDAYS

- > **Meditation/Feelin' Good** — Learn relaxation techniques, the art of meditation & how to care for yourself.
- > **Young Men's Group** — Discussion group.
- > **Zee's Discussion Group** — Youth-guided discussion.
- > **FREE and Confidential HIV Testing by BEHIV** — First and third Mondays, 3:30p – 5:30p.

TUESDAYS

- > **Holiday Blues?** — Join us at 5:30p for a group on grief, family and the holidays.
- > **Up and OUT** — Coming out group
- > **Teen Talk Group** — Focusing on topics that impact teens.
- > **Above the Belt** — Art and discussion designed to address issues related to dating, relationships & violence.
- > **FREE & Confidential HIV Testing by CHRRPY** — Ask for Luis.

WEDNESDAYS

- > **After School Matters Film Project** — 4:30p – 6:30p
 - > **Youth Gym** — 4:00p – 5:00p, 7:00p – 8:00p
 - > **Job Club** — 4:00p – 5:00p Career services for ages 13–24.
 - > **Become a Peer Educator** — 5:30p
- Sign-up required: Jeremy at jcarter@centeronhalsted.org

GROUPS

- > **Dance Class** — Prepare for a performance.
- > **Women's Group** — Led by & for lesbian & bi women.
- > **BELONG/Peer Education** — Learn the ABCs of HIV.

THURSDAYS

- > **Youth Gym** — 4:00p – 5:00p, 5:30p – 6:30p
- > **Let's Talk About Sex** — Education about HIV & safer sex.
- > **Art Group** — Express yourself!
- > **OUT-standing** — Care about safety in your school? Learn to be an activist and make a difference.
- > **Illinois Safe School Alliance Workshop** — 5:30p
Learn activism and how to create safer schools.

FRIDAYS

- > **Youth Volleyball Games** — 4:00p – 6:00p Ages 13–24.
Challenge other youth programs in a volleyball game.

SATURDAYS

- > **Art Expression, Movie Making and Movie Watching**
- > **About Face Theatre/Youth Workshop** — 12:00p – 2:00p
Contact Paula at paula@aboutface theatre.com for info.

Youth programming supported in part by:

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FOUNDATION

UBS

MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

WEEKLY GROUPS

MONDAYS: DEC 3 | DEC 10 | DEC 17

> **Women's Support Group** — 7:00p – 8:30p \$15/week

TUESDAYS: DEC 4 | DEC 11 | DEC 18

> **Coming Out, Coming Home Support Group** —
2:00p – 3:00p **FREE**

> **Immigrant Support Group/Grupo de Apoyo para
Immigrantes** — 6:30p – 8:00p **FREE**

A weekly support group for LGBT immigrants, regardless of status. Grupo de apoyo en Espanol para inmigrantes gay, lesbiana, bisexual & transgenero, independiente del estratus migratorio.

WEDNESDAYS: DEC 5 | DEC 12 | DEC 19

> **Mental Health Rainbow Group** — 3:00p – 4:00p **FREE**

THURSDAYS: DEC 6 | DEC 13 | DEC 20 | DEC 27

> **HIV Support Group for LGBT Individuals** —
7:00p – 8:30p **FREE**

MONTHLY EVENTS

Thu 06 Thursday, DEC 6

> **LGBT Caregiver Support Group** — 6:00p – 7:00p
Offered in partnership with Rush Medical Center.

Sat 08 Saturday, DEC 8 — 10:00a – 1:00p \$15

> **Many Loves Workshop and Support Series: Poly 101 and
Embracing Intimacy**

Mon 10 Monday, DEC 10 — 7:00p – 8:30p \$5

> **Monthly LGBTQ Grief Group:** Offered in partnership with
Rainbow Hospice.

Sat 15 Saturday, DEC 15 — 10:30a – 12:00p **Donation requested**

> **LGBT New Parent Peer Support Group:** Monthly drop in
group for parents with children 5 and younger. Offered in
partnership with Chicago Women's Health Center.

Mon 17 Monday, DEC 17 — 7:00p – 8:30p \$15

> **LGBTQ Grief & the Holidays**

12-STEP PROGRAMS

FRIDAYS: DEC 7 | DEC 14 | DEC 21 | DEC 28

> **CMA Beginners Group** — 7:00p – 9:00p

> **SCA Group** — 7:00p – 9:00p

Call 773.243.2301 or visit www.scachicago.org

SATURDAYS: DEC 1 | DEC 8 | DEC 15 | DEC 22

> **Gay & Straight Together NA** — 11:30a – 1:00p

SUNDAYS: DEC 2 | DEC 9 | DEC 16 | DEC 23 | DEC 30

> **Sober Horizons** — 9:00a – 11:00a

> **SCA Group** — 7:00p – 9:00 p

Call 773.243.2301 or visit www.scachicago.org

NEED INTERNET ACCESS?

The *Dr. David J. Lochman Cyber Center* at Center on Halsted is your technology resource. Classes begin soon. For a schedule and class offerings, visit www.centeronhalsted.org.

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for general information
on Chicagoland LGBT
resources & events:
773.929.HELP (4357)

CENTER ON HALSTED

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO GAY GIFT GIVING

BY MIKEY ROX

HOT DOG



Show your pet some love with the Komfort Pets Carrier (\$299, komfortpets.com), a climate-controlled case with patent-pending conduction/convection technology that offers both heating and cooling capabilities. Designed to take advantage of the natural methods by which a pet regulates its own body temperature, this cutting-edge carrier features a sophisticated LCD control panel; a folding handle for maximum portability; and safety features, such as overload protection and an "overtemperature" indicator light. Though not as posh as Louis Vuitton's Sac Chien that celebretards insist on toting, this still stylish alternative is clearly more practical. Take that, Jessica Simpson.

BLOWN AWAY



You're a big boy now, and your stemware should show it. Designed by Simon Pearce, the hand-blown Wellesley Collection (\$55-\$60, simonpearce.com) features 15 functional pieces intended for day-to-day use—from brunches and baby showers, to Friday nights in front of the flat screen. Precise manipulation, timing and placement by master artisans are required to achieve the elegant wisp of glass that defines each piece, offering a touch of refinement and grace to every occasion. A Wal-Mart special these ain't.

GIVING TREE



Start a new gift-giving tradition with Lindsay Olives' Holiday Olive Tree (\$50, lindsayolives.com), the proceeds from which will benefit The Fruit Tree Planting Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to planting edible, fruit-producing trees and plants to support needy populations in the United States and around the world. By purchasing a single tree you'll help plant entire groves for disadvantaged communities while sprucing up the front yard of a friend or family member. You'll also help reduce the amount of returns Target receives from all the thoughtless tchotchkes you hand out at the holidays.

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STAR-CROSSED LOVER

Viewed as blasphemous by some, the Star of David Rosary by Cruz Azur (\$125, cruzazur.com) was ironically created to symbolize unity among diverse denominations. Eighteen-inches long with a clasp to connect it, this controversial conversation piece was handmade using 925 sterling silver and features a 3-centimeter-by-3-centimeter star bound by black glass beads and sterling wire. The Star of David Rosary is the perfect present for multicultural friends who say to hell with religious restriction and hello to avant-garde style.

CONTROL FREAK

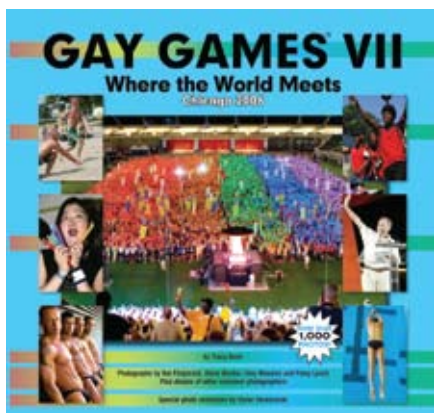
Unless you're Kevin McAllister, you probably don't have the time or techniques to protect your dwelling from common criminals. But with the iControl home monitoring service (\$249.95, ww.icontrol.com), you can keep an eye on your abode from country near and far. Years ahead of the average spy system, the iControl allows users to access its network of cameras, sensors and light modules via the Web, and, as if George and Jane Jetson lived next door, the Z-Wave-enabled service will proactively deliver real-time information by e-mail or text message. Just don't get locked out in the buff; you never know who's watching.





GOT GAME?

Step up what you're spittin' with eye-popping **MiniCards** by MOO (\$19.99, moo.com). These unique, pocket-sized cards allow you to keep in touch with potential suitors while avoiding the stalkers. Each card in a pack of 100 can be personalized with your own images uploaded to Moo's Web site, with as much or as little text as you choose. Which means that when you're at the bar, business cards won't mix with pleasure—eliminating that awkward explanation at the office as to why "Leather Larry" is waiting in the lobby.



BREAK A SWEAT

Gay Games aren't just what twinkly 20-somethings engage in after 2 a.m. The real thing is comprised of more than 11,000 athletes competing in 31 Olympic-like events, and scenes from the 2006 Gay Games—held in Chicago, Ill., from July 15 to 22—are available in **Gay Games VII: Where the World Meets** (\$49, lulu.com), by author Tracy Baim. Included within the book's 208 full-color, glossy pages are more than 1,000 images of the event's sports, culture and ceremonies, as well as an overview of the past seven Gay Games, which have visited such cities as San Francisco, Amsterdam and Sydney. Featured photographers include Steve Becker, Amy Moseley and Patsy Lynch, to name a few. A limited number is also available at Women & Children First, 5233 N. Clark (www.womenandchildrenfirst.com).



WRAP THAT PACKAGE

Naughty or nice? You decide in Ristefsky Macheda's holiday-inspired skivvies (\$12.50-\$34.95, rmunderwear.com). With fashion forward styling, the red and white contemporary trunks and briefs feature contrast-paneled rear seams that make daring declarations, while the all-white athletic logo briefs provide support and promise unrestricted leg movement and maximum ventilation. Need another reason to change your underwear? Through December, Ristefsky will offer its red hipster briefs—combining a figure-hugging design with unrivaled support—for half price. Which gives you new authority to be a ho-ho-ho.

OLIVE ANOTHER

Reenact scenes from *Cocktail* with The Perfect Temperature Martini Maker (\$99.95, hammacher.com). This cool contraption shakes or stirs your dirty drink until it reaches the optimal temperature of 34 degrees, ensuring that every sip that touches your lips is as refreshing as the first. The 20-ounce stainless-steel shaker can accommodate enough ingredients for two, while a line on the inside denotes the amount of ice versus vermouth needed to create a classic concoction. Tom Cruise not included.



See more about Mikey Rox at www.myspace.com/roxi-mikey.

STOCKING STUFF



Stuff his stocking with sex and supernatural storylines with here! TV's **"Dante's Cove: Guilty Pleasure Collection"** (\$49.95, www.dantescove.com) on DVD. In addition to the first two seasons, this five-disc package is loaded with features that'll have you both howling at the moon quicker than you can say Old Saint Nick.



Pump up your Christmas perk with **Syzmo** (www.syzmo.com), the first USDA-approved organic energy drink and the only certified Glycemic Index Tested carbonated beverage in the world. It's not, however, proven to reverse the effect of Tom Turkey's tryptophan. Flavors include Original, Passion and Prickly Pear.



Give those winter-worn cheeks a boost with Evian's redesigned **Brumisatuer facial spray** (\$5-\$15, evian-couture.com). Nature's solution for a glamorous glow in the dead of the dry season, this sleek spritzer combines balanced mineral composition and remarkable purity to rehydrate harsh-looking skin. The brighter side? It's cheaper than Botox.



Fill your home with the seasonal sounds of **Darlene Love's It's Christmas, Of Course** (\$15.98), featuring a dozen neo-classic Christmas covers originally recorded by artists like The Pretenders, Tom Petty and James Brown. Afterward, pretend you're Santa Claus and have a hottie sit on your lap.

POP MAKING SENSE

BY DAVID BYRNE AND TONY PEREGRIN

On Sun., Dec. 9, out saxophonist **Dave Koz** brings the 10th anniversary edition of the Smooth Jazz Christmas Tour to The Chicago Theatre, 175 N. State. Special guests for the evening include Jonathan Butler, Waymon Tisdale and Kimberley Locke. On his most recent holiday-themed album, *Memories Of A Winter's Night*, Koz puts his trademark touch on standards like *Deck The Halls*. For tickets, call 312-902-1500 (Ticketmaster) or see www.ticketmaster.com.

In the holiday spirit, **Wynonna** sounds at her most relaxed and serene on *A Classic Christmas*. It is no secret that she loves the holiday season, as she sings standards like *Winter Wonderland* and *White Christmas*. The multi-platinum country star even remarkably tackles *O Holy Night*

and then sings *Ave Maria*—in Latin, no less. Like Koz, Wynonna is embarking on a tour and will be performing her beloved hits as well as yuletide carols. On top of a scheduled stop at The University of Illinois Assembly Hall Star Theatre in Champaign on Thurs., Dec. 13, Wynonna will be making a special appearance on the forthcoming ABC's *A Holiday Celebration At Ford's Theater*. Moreover, NBC is saluting the diva with this year's *Tribute On Ice* on Sun., Dec. 23.

On *It's Christmas, Of Course*, soul singer **Darlene Love** prefers holiday favorites from the '70s and '80s, steering clear of the expected standards. Here, Love opts for material made famous by Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers (*Christmas All Over Again*), The Pretenders (*2000 Miles*) and John Lennon and Yoko Ono (*Happy Xmas (War Is Over)*). One of the season's highlights is seeing Love's big finish on the Phil Spector-produced staple (*Christmas*) *Baby Please* come on *The Late Show* with David Letterman, as she has every year for the last 17 years. Love might

be recognized as Danny Glover's wife in the *Lethal Weapon* movie franchise, and she was also a back-up singer for greats like Elvis Presley, Cher and Dionne Warwick. The Tony nominee currently is in Broadway's *Hairspray* and *Love returned to Letterman's stage* earlier this year to cover *River Deep Mountain High*.

All of this warm and fuzzy holiday sentiment needs to be sobered up with a double shot of **Johnny Cash**. Both *The Johnny Cash Christmas Special 1976* and *The Johnny Cash Christmas Special 1977* have finally come out from the vaults thanks to Shout! Factory and the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum. The 1976 special features guests Tony Orlando, Roy Clark, Barbara Mandrell, Billy Graham and, of course, June Carter. Since Elvis passed away only two months prior to the 1977 Christmas Special, the *Man In Black* roped in Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis and Roy Orbison to pay a special tribute to *The King*, which is mixed with more yuletide classics.

My favorite perennial holiday compilation is back, as **Broadway's Greatest Gifts: Carols For A Cure** returns with its 9th installment. This two-disc set features 30 original and traditional songs. Broadway newcomers and veterans from shows including *Altar Boyz*, *The Color Purple*, *Jersey Boys*, *Legally Blonde*, *Spring Awakening*, *Xanadu* and *Young Frankenstein* chime in here. This collection also has Tony Award winners David Hyde Pierce, Christian Hoff, Shuler Hensley and Karen Ziemba. Also joining in the fun with *This Little Light Of Mine* are Rosie's Broadway Kids, a group of young students in a performing arts program started by Rosie O'Donnell. Making the perfect gift at a party or a thank you present, this compilation benefits Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. Broadway's Greatest Gift's: *Carols For a Cure Volume 9* can be ordered through www.broadwaycares.org.

Read the entire Pop Making Sense column at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.



WE

PETS

BY TERRI KLINSKY
Time to shop!

I know that if you have a pet you must be busy shopping for their holiday gifts, right? Eighty-five percent of pet owners not only purchase holiday gifts for their pets, but they also wrap them for their pet to tear open. (OK, I just made that whole thing up so we would feel more normal over here.)

Here are a few gift ideas to make your pet happy this holiday season:

—The folks at **MoodyPet.com** were nice enough to send us a sample of this one. Topo will really enjoy ripping apart *George the Lame Duck*. The

dog toy is 9" and also has two squeakers inside for Fido to bleep out blunders like "nuclear," "I'm the Decider," and "They underestimated me!" The cat toy is kitty-sized and includes the best catnip around, so Fluffy can just forget ... need we say more!?! www.moodypet.com. Order now and get free gift-wrapping!

—**Doggy Java** from *Doggylicious* was voted the best new dog product of 2007. More than just a breakfast drink, caffeine-free Doggy Java provides vitamins, minerals and other essential nutrients for the health and well being of your dog. You can purchase it in cute little coffee bags or purchase the Combo Treat Pack including a *Bonescotti Biscuit* for dunking. www.Doggy-Java.com

—If couture is what's on your pet's list, Chicago's very own **Parker's Pets** in Hyde Park carries an extensive selection of T-shirts, sweaters and coats to keep your pup warm and stylish during the cold Chicago winters. They have clothing to fit dogs from two pounds all the way to 200 pounds. It's not just any clothing either; they have clothing from the top designers, including *Kwigy-Bo*, *Cha Cha Couture* and *Techelklub*. For that special occasion, they also have tuxedos, dress suits, gowns and ties to make your dog the belle (or beau!) of the ball. They also carry a full line of Chicago sports team apparel

for the sports fanatic pet. www.parkerspets.com

—For your pet lovin' partner or friend, stop in your favorite bookstore and check out **Woof! A Gay Man's Guide to Dogs**, by Andrew DePrisco. Some of the topics covered are: finding the right puppy finishing school; throwing a puppy shower to score fabulous puppy gifts; and baking, knitting and shopping for your pooch. Aside from the whimsical, there is also very practical information for anyone thinking of inviting a dog into their home, or for those settling into family life with their new addition. www.woofbook.com

If anyone dresses his or her pets for the holidays, please send in a photo by Dec. 7 to WCTPets@aol.com; some will appear in the Dec. 12 issue of the paper. Don't make me beg!



The author's pets, Bowie (left) and Topo.

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BOOK REVIEW

Shyness:

How Normal Behavior Became a Sickness,
by Christopher Lane
Yale University Press; 272 pgs.; \$27.50

REVIEW BY YASMIN NAIR

A 2003 Pfizer advertisement for the anti-depressant Zoloft featured a downcast woman and the words, "Is she just shy? Or is it Social Anxiety Disorder?" Below that were only four sentences about the drug's efficacy, and the standard disclaimer about side effects.

As Christopher Lane points out in his stunning and revelatory book, "social anxiety disorder" is seen as so commonplace that there's no need to explain the symptoms. These encompass a broad array of responses once considered normal behavior. Are you nervous about public speaking? Do you blush in certain social situations? You've got social anxiety disorder. Ordinary shyness (who isn't nervous before speaking in public?) is now classified as a sickness.

Some of the literature on social anxiety disorder inserts the qualifying word "excessive" in front of its supposed symptoms. Regardless, contemporary norms of social interaction leave no place for shy people. Those who are reclusive and prefer solitude are especially under suspicion. After the Unabomber and the Columbine shooters, anyone who shows signs of withdrawal from society is suspected as a potentially violent killer. Shyness no longer exists alongside social anxiety disorder, it IS social anxiety disorder.

How did shyness, a perfectly natural response to the world that can be a protective cocoon for many, become diagnosed as social anxiety disorder? What are the long-range effects of this diagnosis?

In response, Lane relates a series of histories of language and diagnosis. At the center is the behind-the-scenes battle over the third edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-III, 1980). Lane doesn't argue that excessive shyness might be debilitating for some, or that mental illnesses like depression don't exist. But he argues that shyness was cast as the base catalyst for a host of perceived ills, including many defined as psychotic, whose symptoms remain vague. DSM III warns that those with "Schizoid Personality Disorder" often engage in "excessive daydreaming." As Lane puts it dryly, "What constitutes an appropriate amount of daydreaming remains anyone's guess."

DSM-III calcified social anxiety disorder as such, but not without opposition from psychoanalysts who argued against pathologizing those who did not hew to societal norms of proper behavior. Or, as one psychoanalyst wrote in a 1975 memo, "...people should not be called mentally ill because they are different or unhappy." In contrast, psychiatrists held that reclusive behavior was abnormal and that it should be pharmacologically treated. Psychoanalysis lost the battle and was henceforth reduced to a caricature and debunked for its willingness to let patients understand the roots of their issues through a more reflective process than that allowed for by quick-fix drugs. We have since attempted to scrub ourselves clean of the unconscious.

The dependence on pharmacology has devastating physical consequences. The drug Paxil, for instance, blankets "the nervous system so completely it prevents the brain and nervous system from distinguishing between routine stress and chronic anxiety." In 2003, the European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products, which oversees the distribution of drugs in the European Union, warned about the drug's role in the increase in "suicide-related behavior" among young adults.



Christopher Lane, author of *Shyness*.

There are social and political losses as well. As Lane puts it in the most haunting sentence of the book, "The sad consequence is a vast, perhaps unrecoverable, loss of emotional range, an impoverishment of human experience." Political dissent is pathologized as "a symptom of Oppositional Defiant Disorder." I'm reminded of the Nation's first cover image after the Nov. 2000 election: Bush as Alfred E. Neuman. Instead of the icon's insouciant line, "What, me worry?" was now a single word: "Worry." Anxiety can be both justified and productive.

For a book that's about the invention of a medical condition, *Shyness* is as riveting as a detective story. Lane writes elegantly and passionately about the need to maintain our consciousness about the maddeningly rich complexity of human emotion and thought. Without romanticizing the figure of the tormented genius, he reminds us of the costs of being mired in an excess of equilibrium. In the end, he seems hopeful about the tide shifting against the overdiagnosis of social anxiety disorder and towards a resurgence of psychoanalysis. For the sake of our lives, we can only hope that he's right.

Contact Yasmin Nair at welshzen@yahoo.com. Nair also blogs at bilerico.com.

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directed by Pam MacKinnon

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GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



FAMILY TIES

The Gephardt family, including lesbian daughter Chrissy, is in the documentary *For the Bible Tells Me So*. Review on page 29.

THEATER

Holidays and humbug,
page 26



TRAVEL

O Canada,
page 32



CALENDAR

Sweet dreams,
page 33



Measure for Measure

... for the Holidays

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

What's Christmas without a carol? Jesus without a jingle? The holidays without a hallelujah? No event in recorded history has inspired a larger body of music than the birth of Yeheshua/Joshua/Jesus in the West Bank town of Bethlehem some 2007 years ago. Actually, it probably was only 2004 years ago and it was celebrated in July until the early church cleverly Christianized Northern Europe's pagan winter solstice Yule celebrations.

Listed here are some of the most delightful holiday musical treats. They may pay lip service to Hanukkah and Kwanzaa and whatever the Moslems celebrate, but Christmas is the Big Enchilada. Performances are listed alphabetically. Times are listed only if they aren't standard evening performance hours. Addresses are given if the presenting group and venue name are different. Phone numbers are listed, but tickets also can be purchased online for all attractions. Prices are for an adult ticket. Almost all events offer discounts for kids and seniors. Ask.

Amahl and the Night Visitors, Chamber Opera Chicago, Nov. 30-Dec. 2. This is a fully-staged production of Gian Carlo Menotti's beloved 1951 one-act Christmas opera, staged by no less an authority than the composer's adoptive son, Francis Menotti (who studied at Chicago's Goodman School of Drama). Victoria Bond conducts the orchestra and cast. Performed at the Harold Washington Library Center (enter at 401 S. Plymouth); 312-951-7944; \$10-\$25.

Bella Voce Chamber Choir, Dec. 18 only. Chicago's premier *a cappella* choir offers a program of rarely-heard old and new holiday choral music from the Baltic Sea region of Northern Europe, which might mean music from Sweden, Finland, Russia, Poland, Latvia, Estonia and/or Lithuania.



Eileen Ivers. Photo by Clay Patrick McBride

Among the works are *Magnificat* by Einojuhani Rautavaara and *O Antiphons* by Arvo Part. Harris Theater, 205 E. Randolph; 312-334-7777; \$40.

Caroling at "the Bean," Friday nights through Dec. 21. OK, so it's really Caroling at Cloud Gate, the iconic sculpture in Millennium Park. Each Friday evening at 6 p.m., a top local choir will sing its buns off for 50 minutes to put you in a festive spirit. For instance, this Friday, Nov. 30, the Chicago Gay Men's Chorus is the bun-singing group. You can listen or join in the fun. There's complimentary peppermint hot chocolate, peppermint mocha, and Christmas blend coffee courtesy of Starbucks, and everyone will be invited to light a holiday candle to reflect off Cloud Gate. Concerts will run about 50 minutes and are FREE! Choral groups to perform on later dates include Bella Voce (Dec. 7), the Chicago Mass Choir (gospel, Dec. 14) and the Chicago Children's Choir (Dec. 22).

Carols by Candlelight: A Holiday Sing-Along, Chicago Chamber Choir, Dec. 16-20. Three performances in three different locations of this annual vespers-inspired 90 minutes holiday program, by one of Chicago's oldest choral organizations. Admission to this family-friendly program includes a post-concert reception with the singers and refreshments. Dec. 16, St. Gregory's

Episcopal Church, Deerfield, 4 p.m.; Dec. 17, Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church, Chicago, 7:30 p.m.; Dec. 20, Unity Lutheran Church, Chicago; 7:30 p.m.. 312-409-6890; \$20.

Concert for Peace, Fulcrum Point New Music Project, Dec. 11 only. For the 10th year, Fulcrum Point dedicates its holiday season concert to peace. This year, it presents three regional premieres of contemporary works exploring the nature of love and war through music and poetry. Harris Theater, 205 E. Randolph; 312-334-7777; \$20.

Duke Ellington's Sacred Concert, Chicago Jazz Ensemble, Dec. 14 only. Ellington felt his Sacred Concerts—composed between 1965 and 1973 and combining elements of jazz, classical, blues, dance, spirituals and gospel—were his most important works. For this holiday-centered concert, the Chicago Jazz Ensemble will be joined by a gospel choir, tap dancer Bill Barrett and vocal soloists Bobbi Wilsyn, Maggie Brown and Paris Delane. Harris Theater, 205 E. Randolph; 312-344-6000 or 312-334-7777; \$15-\$45.

Holiday Brass and Choral Concerts, Music of the Baroque, Dec. 13-14, 22-23. The justifiably celebrated Music of the Baroque presents its annual holiday concerts of joyful carols, solemn chants and soaring brass choirs to ring the rafters, all under the baton of Edward Zelnis. Dec. 13, Grace Lutheran Church, River Forest; Dec. 14, St. Michael's Church, Chicago; Dec. 22-23, Divine Word Chapel, Techny/Northbrook; 312-551-1414; \$25-\$65.

In the Dark of Winter's Night, New Classic Singers, Dec. 16 only, 4 p.m. For their 26th Christmas Album concert, the New Classic Singers welcome harpist Stephen Hartman in a family-friendly program of carols old and new. McAninch Arts Center (the MAC), Glen Ellyn, 630-942-4000; \$22.

An Irish Christmas—An Nollaig, Eileen Ivers and Immigrant Soul, Dec. 13 only. Celebrate the holidays, the peace and beauty of Christmas, and the festivities of that unique British tradition, Boxing Day (Dec. 26), with pipes, drums

and fiddler Eileen Ivers, described by the New York Times as "the Jimi Hendrix of the violin as Ivers blends her Celtic roots with African and Latin traditions. McAninch Arts Center (the MAC), Glen Ellyn; 630-942-4000; \$38.

An Irish Christmas in Chicago, Irish American Heritage Center, Dec. 15 only. Local favorites Jamie O'Reilly and Paul Amandes offer a family-friendly concert of carols, folksongs and stories, among them a musical setting (by folk composer Michael Smith) of O. Henry's *The Gift of the Magi*. 773-282-7035; \$18/advance-\$20/at door. Holiday sweets will be served to all by the Chicago Chapter of Celtic Women International.

The Messiah, Apollo Chorus of Chicago, Dec. 16 only, 3 p.m.. Chicago's oldest musical organization in one of Chicago's very oldest Christmas traditions. This ain't your sing-along Messiah; this is the one where you sit and listen to the 140-voice Apollo Chorus with soloists and baroque orchestra. This concert *always* sells out. Harris Music and Dance Theater, 205 E. Randolph; 312-334-7777; \$25-\$48.

La Noche Buena, San Antonio Vocal Arts Ensemble, Dec. 15 only. Presented by Milwaukee's excellent Early Music Now, the seven singer/instrumentalists of the San Antonio gang present the very first Christmas music composed in the New World in diverse dialects and rhythms combining Aztec, Incan, Mayan, African and European influences. At the St. Joseph Center Chapel, Milwaukee, 5 p.m.; 414-225-3113; \$20 (general)-\$38 (reserved section).

Welcome Yule!, Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Dec. 14-16, 21-23; times vary. For the 13th year, the vocal and instrumental forces of the fabulous CSO assemble for festive family concerts of classic and contemporary Christmas favorites peppered with new vocal, instrumental and dance delights and costumed holiday characters. (Even Santa will be there!) As if the CSO weren't enough, the Welcome Yule! Dance Ensemble and Midwest Young Artists Voices Rising will also take part. Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan; 312-294-3000; \$26-\$70.

Larry Yando: There's a New Scrooge in Town

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

"Twenty-nine years!" proclaim the advertisements, "Seven Scrooges! 27 Tiny Tims and 17 thousand 'Bah, Humbugs'!" It's the Goodman Theatre's production of *A Christmas Carol*, adapted from the novel by Charles Dickens. Despite the title, this fanciful tale of a misanthrope reformed through supernatural intervention appeals to audiences of all religions, creeds and beliefs, its message firmly grounded in values common to both sacred and secular proponents. These are illustrated in the spiritual awakening of one Ebenezer Scrooge, a Victorian moneylender whose experience has rendered him crabbed and miserly, the accumulation of wealth having become his sole obsession.

The story relates how one Christmas Eve, the ghost of his long-deceased business partner warns him that his eternal damnation is nigh, but that his one chance of redemption lies in the hands of three spectral guides. The first of these re-acquaints the reluctant pilgrim with the events responsible for his condition: the constant threat of poverty that led him to alienate his dowryless fiancée, the bankruptcy and ruin of his too-generous mentor and the death of his beloved sister, whose son he now spurns as a reminder of her loss.

The second vision takes Scrooge on a tour of London meant to demonstrate how pain and fear may be banished, not by money, but by fellowship, love and good will. In the company of warm and loyal friends, the scorned nephew speaks charitably of his estranged uncle, and the



Larry Yando in *A Christmas Carol*. Photo by Brian Warling

family of Scrooge's underpaid clerk defy hardships—the pawning of their possessions to meet expenses, children forced to labor as apprentices, and a crippled youngest son languishing under an unnamed malady—to enjoy their holiday. Finally, the third vision confronts Scrooge with the future unhappiness that his selfishness will engender, consequences so terrifying that Scrooge vows to change his ways.

The Goodman Theatre production of this popular fable has undergone several variations over the nearly 30 years that it has been a Chicago event as eagerly anticipated as Santa Claus himself. Musical interludes have commanded and relinquished the spotlight; cinematic special effects have been introduced and abandoned; the ambience has ranged from gothic horror to candy-box coziness; and the cast now includes actors of all ethnicities, further emphasizing the universality of its theme. But at the center of the action, always, is Scrooge, the character whose name has entered our language as the embodiment of corporate inhumanity, and whose journey repre-

sents the possibility of redemption for even the most flagrantly antisocial perpetrators of white-collar crimes.

No humbug about it: These are some big shoes to fill. Many Chicago thespians have taken up the challenge, including William J. Norris (who played Scrooge from 1978 to 1983, and also from 1985 to 1990), Tom Mula (from 1991 to 1997), Frank Galati (in 1984), Rick Snyder (from 1998 to 2001), William Brown (from 2002 to 2005) and Jonathan Weir (in 2006). But for 2007, the role will be essayed by veteran character actor Larry Yando, long a Chicago-area favorite who recently completed a three-year tour playing the villainous Scar in the Julie Taymor-designed production of Disney's *The Lion King*.

Windy City Times: Every culture in the whole world has somebody like Scrooge in its folklore. How are you approaching the character for ours?

Larry Yando: I'm trying to connect with Scrooge on a human level. I guess every actor who plays Scrooge does that, but what makes it so hard for me is having to allow myself to be very vulnerable in my own emotions. After running the show every day, I feel completely drained—but in a good way.

WCT: Exactly what's Scrooge's problem, as you see it?

LY: He let the greatest love of his life go.

WCT: Is this what makes us identify with him, no matter what our background or circumstances?

LY: Regret is a motivating factor for anyone, I think. Doesn't everybody feel, at times, like they somehow missed the step that would have led them to true happiness? I want to tap into that psychological injury—whatever it was—that Scrooge incurred in his deepest past, and then operate from there.

WCT: He doesn't make it easy to discover.

LY: No, he doesn't! I don't know about other actors' interpretations, but I know that Scrooge's defense is a sarcastic, heavily-ironic

humor. Scrooge is very smart, and he's very funny. There's a lot of wit involved in playing him.

WCT: How did you go about preparing for the role?

LY: I started looking over my lines early, because I was still performing in *Cymbeline* [at Chicago Shakespeare] while rehearsing for *Christmas Carol*, right up to tech week. I usually don't like to memorize until I'm on my feet in rehearsal, and can learn my role with my body as well as with my brain. But after I took into consideration the fatigue that would come from doing two shows at the same time, it seemed a good idea to come into the Goodman already knowing my part.

WCT: Did it help?

LY: It did. It helped a lot. I also re-read Dickens' original novella. His descriptive passages were very informative—the way he writes about the streets and the people, and how awful it was there in Victorian London. When I walk out on-stage now, I may be actually walking on wooden planks, but I'm seeing the snow and the slush and all the dirt that Dickens saw.

WCT: How will your Scrooge differ from the previous ones?

LY: The last time I saw *A Christmas Carol* was so long ago, I hardly remember it, so I came in with no frame of reference. That put me a little behind, rehearsing with actors who have done this show before. On the other hand, it means I'm starting fresh and not copying anybody. I feel I have it in myself to sense that thin line where pain and humor co-exist, battling—but also assisting—each other.

WCT: And that's what *A Christmas Carol* is all about.

LY: Yes. It's not the cute holiday story that I had in my head when we started. It's actually a deep and hard-hitting human drama.

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— Chris Jones, Chicago Tribune

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THEATER REVIEW

What the Butler Saw

Playwright: Joe Orton

At: Court Theatre, 5535 S. Ellis

Phone: 773-753-4472; \$38-\$54

Runs through: Dec. 9

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Fans of Chicago storefront theater surely know of the consistently fine work of Sean Graney, artistic director and founder of the 10-year-old troupe The Hypocrites. So it's a natural progression to see this dynamic director being invited to strut his staging stuff on a professional Chicago stage.

Building upon his Chicago Children's Theatre's success with *Honus and Me*, Graney more than manages the twists and turns of *What the Butler Saw* for Court Theatre. There may be a few inconsistencies in Graney's modernization, but the pluses outweigh any excessive directorial decisions.

What the Butler Saw was the last play penned by gay British playwright before his lover, Kenneth Halliwell, bludgeoned him to death in a murder-suicide in 1967 (dramatized in the 1987 film *Prick Up Your Ears*). There is no butler to be seen since the title is taken from a late 19th-century penny-arcade peep show.

And what a peep show *What the Butler Saw* is. Things rapidly spiral out of control when a psychiatrist must cover up his attempt to seduce a prospective secretary in his antiseptically modern home office (a multi-door fluorescent enclave by designer Kevin Depinet that gets trashed and splattered by blood by the end).

With *What the Butler Saw*, Orton takes unrelenting potshots at the stereotypical British sex farce, Freudian psychobabble and tidy melodramatic endings. Orton also inserted shocking-for-the-day revelations of gay-for-pay sex, incest and a playful dose of cross-dressing and nudity.

Graney takes things a step further by updating the setting from the 1960s to today (allowing him to add a not-entirely-justified plush animal sexual fetish). Graney's updating works for the most part, though occasional lines in the script don't jibe (references to secretarial shorthand and an unbelievably cheap rent-boy rate).

Thankfully, those inconsistencies are easily brushed over by the expert comic cast, whose exasperated running around and mistaken identities win a constant string of laughs.

Blake Montgomery and Mary Beth Fisher make for an wonderfully adversarial married couple of Dr. and Mrs. Prentice, what with his botched secretarial seduction and her dabbling with lesbian intellectual societies and hotel porters.

As the couple's frequently undressed sexual playthings, Mechelle Moe is hilarious as the not-so-bright secretary Geraldine Barclay, who mistakes a bodily examination as a regular psychological procedure. JB Waterman is a looker as the tall blackmailing porter Nicholas Beckett, which makes his drag transformation all the more comical.

Joe Foust gets the lunacy just right as the officiously deranged governmental inspector Dr. Rance, while Eric Slater's down-to-earth take on the butch Sgt. Match wins hearts when he gets dragged into this web of deceit.

Though not perfect, Graney's *What the Butler Saw* is a zany joy of theatrical naughtiness. Let's hope that Graney has more opportunities to show off at Court and other professional theaters in the future.

Bailiwick Trailblazer Awards Dec. 3

Bailiwick Repertory, 1229 W. Belmont, will hold its annual Trailblazer Awards Dec. 3—and plenty of local stars will be on tap.

The Trailblazer Awards are presented annually in memory of past Bailiwick Board President Larry Osburn.

Chicagoan Dale Levitski, a runner-up on Bravo's critically acclaimed and Emmy-nominated reality show *Top Chef*, will receive a Trailblazer Award. Other awardees include Amy Bloom (executive director of Equality Illinois), Art Johnston and Jose (Pepe) Pena (co-owners of Sidetrack), Marcia Lipetz (president and CEO of Executive Service Corps), Patrick Sinozich (artistic director of Chicago Gay Men's Chorus), Neil Steinberg (columnist, Chicago Sun-Times) and entertainer Honey West.

The award show will take place at Bailiwick at 7 p.m. The show will also include entertainment and a silent auction.

Tickets are \$75 for VIP admission (including preferred seating, gift bag and program recognition) and \$50 for general admission. See www.bailiwick.org or call 773-883-1090.

SPOTLIGHT

The Nutcracker



It's that time of year for dance—the onset of the Nutcracker ballets! One production in particular that is a must-see will be Salt Creek Ballet's **The Nutcracker**. This critically-acclaimed staging, complete with magnificent sets, costumes and a cast of over 75 dancers, also features American Ballet Theatre dancers Gillian Murphy and Gennadi Saveliev. Salt Creek Ballet performs in Aurora at the Paramount Theatre on Saturday, Dec. 1 at 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. (See www.paramountarts.com.) The company then takes its Sugar Plum Fairies over to The Center for Performing Arts at Governors State University on Sat., Dec. 8, at 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. In addition, guests can enjoy holiday treats, meet costumed characters from *The Nutcracker* and take photos with Santa Claus during the Sugar Plum Parties in the lobby at 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. (www.centertickets.net). It's a holiday favorite you shouldn't miss!

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THEATER REVIEW

The Philadelphia Story

Playwright: Philip Barry

At: Remy Bumppo Theatre Company at the Victory Gardens Greenhouse, 2257 N. Lincoln
Phone: 773-871-3000; \$35-\$40
Runs through: Jan. 6

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

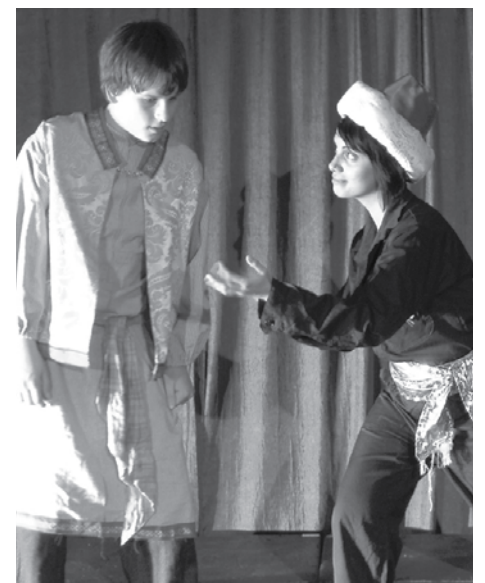
In 2007, when wealthy young ladies revel in mischief meant to flout convention, a socialite who holds herself circumspect in her demeanor would seem a good thing. But this is 1939, and so the well-born Tracy Lord is berated by her ex-husband for her absence of "sympathy" re-

garding his drinking problem during their marriage and chastised by her skirt-chasing father for her refusal to overlook his infidelities with "an understanding heart," much as the household politely ignores Uncle William's sly habit of pinching women's *derrières*.

And therein lies the obstacle in Philip Barry's otherwise appealing romantic comedy. How many times have we heard perpetrators of antisocial antics excuse their incorrigibility with precisely these words, or family members—female ones, especially—exhorted to turn a blind eye to the irresponsibility of their kinfolk? But Barry is not advocating approval of bad behavior. Quite the contrary, he is championing the generosity that accepts individuals for their virtues, rather than defining them by their faults. The heiress' mistake is not her idealism, but her refusal to acknowledge imperfections—her own as well as

those of others—and move on, despite them. After she embarks on a champagne-fueled skinny-dip with a visiting journalist on the eve of her wedding, however, the manner in which her transgression is received by her peers serves to illustrate the difference between self-serving sham and charity toward all.

Shawn Douglass' direction of this Remy Bumppo production likewise allows us to take our own lesson from Barry's sermon, giving no special emphasis to the troublesome utterances any more than to the quaint catch-phrases of the period (e.g., "Like fun!", "Suds!" and "Golly Moses!"). And while this interpretation is not without its oddities—what's with the Mary Pickford hair on kid sister Dinah, and who instructed Steve Key, playing the newshound from Indiana, to channel James Cagney for the second act?—its elevation of human values over artificial distinctions and populist compassion for its characters, whatever their status, more than compensate for the occasional stilted moment. So does the sumptuous old-money ambience invoked by Rachel Laritz' museum-accurate costumes (check out the stockings worn by Wendy Weber's smartcracking shutterbug) and Jacqueline and Richard Penrod's antique-strewn country estate. And did I mention an accordion rendition of Lydia, The Tattooed Lady?



Salman Rushdie's Haroun and the Sea of Stories.

use tools placed at his disposal and discover the meaning of hints. Think Harry Potter.

To its credit, Halcyon does much with limited means to vivify what is a colorful and significant story despite its narrative challenges. There's little scenery or lighting (it really needs more/better lighting) but great color and fun in the costumes (Jennifer Zielinski) and props (Jessica Jane Childs and Andres Morales), which are the chief decorative devices. Director Jennifer Adams and choreographer Alka Nayyar fill the stage with clever and effective motion and tableaux, influenced by Asian theater and dance. The staging often duplicates the spoken text, thus showing *and* telling and proving that less verbiage would be more in this case. Young Jackson Chalinor (Haroun) and Chris Amos (his father) head the hard-working cast that understands the joy and solemnity of the story but hasn't yet mastered all its rhythms.

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THEATER REVIEW

Salman Rushdie's Haroun and the Sea of Stories

Playwright: Tim Supple (translator) and David Tushingham (adapter)

At: Halcyon Theatre, Lincoln Square Arts Center, 4754 N. Leavitt

Phone: 312-458-9170; \$15

Runs through: Dec. 16

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

In hiding from an Islamic death *fatwa* for his novel *The Satanic Verses*, Anglo-Indian author Salman Rushdie wrote a book for his 11-year-old son featuring an 11-year-old hero. *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* ostensibly is a father-and-son picaresque adventure in classic Indo-Persian style. But Rushdie also made it political by creating thinly veiled satiric characters based on Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini (who issued the *fatwa*), Pakistan's corrupt dictator Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (Benazir Bhutto's father) and other Islamic figures. For Rushdie, freedom of expression is the highest freedom and acts of imagination—stories—are political acts in the face of repressive forces. Despite his classical tone, Rushdie's theme is immediate and its political application is universal. Think the United States right now.

A decade ago, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* was adapted as a children's play for Great Britain's Royal National Theatre. Given Rushdie's literary fame and political notoriety, it's surprising that this production is Haroun's regional premiere owing to several factors. First, Rushdie's agents may be stingy granting rights. Next, fantasy sequences and a large cast (Halcyon uses 15) make production difficult. Finally, the stage adaptation is charming but not well-structured and is too word-dependent—a considerable irony in a work for which the central question is "What's the use of stories that aren't even true?"

Rushdie acknowledges that dance, movement, music and symbol are language as much as spoken or written words, yet this adaptation literally tells us everything rather than showing us. It quickly establishes Haroun as the hero, then bogs down introducing secondary characters before taking an intermission (in the script? or just this production?) without dramatic purpose. In the last 40 minutes (it runs about 100 minutes) Haroun finally becomes an active figure, a point the play needs to reach earlier. The picaresque hero cannot be passive, but must continually

CRITICS' PICS

A Christmas Carol, Goodman Theatre, through Dec. 30. Fezziwig's holiday blowout remains the gold standard in office parties in this evergreen fable featuring four ghosts, the world's coolest door-knocker and possibly the greatest redemption tale ever told. CS

The Island of Dr. Moreau, Lifeline Theatre, through Dec. 2. Last days for this pithy adaptation of H. G. Wells' prescient 1896 sci-fi tale of evolution, genetics, mad-doctor experiments and the nature of humanity. Splendid designs and fine performances. JA

Julius Caesar, Lyric Opera of Chicago, through Dec. 1. It may be more than four hours long, but David McVicar's updating of Handel's classic 1724 opera to the age of the British Imperial Empire is smart, sexy and staggeringly successful. Don't miss it. SCM

The Magician, National Pastime Theatre, through Dec. 15. Zoya Fuchs' romantic piano score conjures an immediacy belying Ingmar Bergman's gloomy screenplay, thus lending panache to this adaptation staged amid the faded elegance of the Old Speakeasy. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge, Morgan and Sullivan

THEATER REVIEW

Things We Said Today

Playwright: Neil LaBute
 At: Profiles Theatre, 4147 N. Broadway
 Phone: 773-549-1815; \$25 - \$21 students, seniors
 Runs through: Dec. 16

BY CATEY SULLIVAN

Cue the sound of me sighing with exasperation. Things We Said Today is not Grade-A Neil LaBute. The seven one-acts by the playwright known for his ruthless examination of men behaving badly range from mildly engaging to eye-rollingly manipulative to annoyingly pointless. These single-scene endeavors are more Playwriting 101 exercises than stage-worthy dramas. With six directors helping the pieces, they're also receiving a better production than they deserve as part of Profiles' all-LaBute season.

Ever one for tacking on a twist to the final scene, LaBute doesn't veer from his standard operating procedure here. But unlike the clever, haunting turns of superior one-acts such as the trifecta that comprises Bash, the end rotations in Things We Said Today presumes an audience of slow learners. You can see the curveballs coming a mile off.

The most inexcusable of the septet is a bit of



Things We Said Today. Photo by Wayne Karl

wannabe meta-theater wherein LaBute gets cute with the fourth wall and attempts to maneuver the audience into a crisis of conscience. Never mind the lame dialogue and sliver-thin (non) characters. What's unforgivable here is the way LaBute keeps changing the structural rules as he goes along. The dialogue all but announces, "Now the fourth wall is in place," "Now it is gone," "Now it is back again," and "Isn't the playwright clever, toying with you like this?" The result is an affected mess with pretensions of being a mindfuck. And can I just say that any theatrical device that gives audience members the opportunity to yell out "Don't do it girlfriend!" in the middle of a show is a bad idea?

Things We Said is also burdened with a several

non-starters: pieces that amount to nothingness, and not in a good, Waiting for Godot way. In "Persuasion Paper 101," we get 10 minutes of repetitive variations on the sentence "Men suck ass." That's it—the whole thing: A monologue with a vocabulary of roughly 20 words, including

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For the Bible Tells Me So, Sing-Along Xanadu

BY RICHARD KNIGHT, JR.

About midway through **For the Bible Tells Me So**, Daniel Karlslake's riveting documentary about the decades-long pummeling gays have been subjected to by religious fundamentalists, a woman holds up a protest sign that reads, "Stop Spiritual Violence." After 30-plus years of a non-stop media campaign (from Anita Bryant to George W. Bush) from these fearmongering religious conservatives, here at last was the phrase that hits the nail on the head. Subconsciously, that's what I've been reeling from since Bryant went public in the mid-70s with her anti-gay rhetoric—the first celebrity that I can recall spewing this non-stop form of, yes, "spiritual violence."

Bryant eventually got dumped as the spokesperson for Florida orange juice for her strongly held convictions that we homos were an abomination, but did enormous damage that still lingers. She was famously caught on camera during a press conference taking a pie in the face for her intolerant stance in 1977, and it's this footage that opens Karlslake's film. The clip includes what came after—when Bryant ignored the dripping pie and seized on the chance to further dramatize the moment. Clutching the hands of her cohorts, she immediately leads a prayer for the soul of the depraved "fruit" pie thrower and his ilk—sure to be damned to the proverbial "lake of fire" if the "sin" of homosexuality wasn't



A vintage photographer of the Gephardt family, profiled in **For the Bible Tells Me So**.

renounced forthwith.

But as Karlslake's movie asks, "Is the Bible an excuse to hate?" and "Can the love between two people be an abomination?" These are huge questions for one movie and Karlslake's film obviously can't answer them, but it does delve into how this social conundrum came to exist. It also traces the rise of religious intolerance for Our People as it follows the stories of several gay and lesbian individuals raised in families with strict religious beliefs and their relationships to these families as they came out. The profiles include the troubled journeys to acceptance of two well-known leaders in the gay community—Episcopalian Bishop Gene Robinson and Chrissy Gephardt, daughter of politician Richard Gephardt. Interspersed among these stories is a group of religious scholars who examines the questionable way homosexual references in the Bible have been historically twisted by fundamentalists to line up with their narrow viewpoints.

Many of these Religious Right leaders are defined as being Biblical literalists who interpret ancient scripture through a modern prism. The scholars point out the craziness of this literal point of view and Karlslake includes a scene from an episode of the TV series *The West Wing* in which Martin Sheen, as the president, confronts a fundamentalist to emphasize the point. Karlslake also points out that the majority of these religious leaders are raking in millions—a convenient lapse in adherence to Biblical liter-

alism. But none of these conservative big guns is taken to task for their misguidance or is confronted on camera. I would have liked a more hard-hitting approach to the topic (as in the recent abortion documentary *Lake of Fire*), in which on-camera interviews from the opposing viewpoint might have offered. Karlslake includes a potentially galvanizing "what if?" moment when, at one point, David Poteat—a young gay activist—and his parents, who have converted to true Christian values, do try to meet with Focus on the Family's James Dobson in Colorado but only get as far as stepping onto the property before being arrested.

This isn't surprising. With such a great fear-based, hate-filled cause useful in raising millions for their coffers, which one of these media-savvy fundamentalist leaders would be expected to backtrack—especially on camera? What's in it for them? But even though **For the Bible Tells Me So** doesn't give us confrontations and bites off more than it can chew, it offers plenty of anecdotal evidence that supply hope that these intolerant, prejudicial opinions will move in a more enlightened direction. The heartbreaking example of Mary Lou Wallner, a former arch-conservative whose rigidity led to her lesbian daughter's suicide, is more than enough of a lesson to serve as a warning of the terrible price religious ignorance can garner. Here's hoping that those who need to hear it most are listening. Plays exclusively at the Music Box Theatre, Nov. 30-Dec. 6. www.musicboxtheatre.com

prepositions and conjunctions. Almost equally pointless is *Stand-Up*, a forgettable monologue about an amateur comic that spends approximately 9 minutes and 30 seconds in take-off mode and then 30 seconds ending in a stall.

Land of the Dead is exceptional for its sound design, but defines itself by inviting unfavorable comparisons to the *Twilight Zone*. The title piece plays like an outtake from *Fatal Attraction* while *I Love This Game* is a ripped-from-the-headlines bit of sermonizing on the ultra-competitive nature of the ugly American.

The saving grace of the production comes with Maggie Liston (directed by Sarah Franklin) in *Love at Twenty*. A captivating mix of innocence and guile as an undergrad about to school a professor in *Vengeance 101*, Liston soars above the material.

In addition to the heart-wrenching, fascinating *For the Bible Tells Me So*, the Music Box Theatre is also offering something much lighter: a one-night midnight screening of **Sing-Along Xanadu** (a Chicago first). This sure-to-be-memorable showing of the rancid but beloved 1980 roller-disco musical starring Olivia Newton John, her leg warmers, hunky Michael Beck and Gene Kelly (in his last film) will be emceed by Dick O'Day, the alter ego of yours truly. My Dick O'Day character has joined with Hell and a Handbag Theatre's Artistic Director David Cerda and members of the Handbag company to present the first in a seasonal series of "camptacular" midnight screenings of classics called appropriately enough "Camp Midnight." The Sat., Dec. 1 midnight screening of *Sing-Along Xanadu* will include lots of games and surprises as well as prizes (including a pair of tickets) from *Xanadu* on Broadway and an audience of queens belting out *Magic*, *Xanadu*, *I'm Alive*, and all those other songs. Costumes and roller skates are encouraged. Tickets are \$12 and are available in advance. www.musicboxtheatre.com

Check out my archived reviews at www.windycitytimes.com or www.knightatthemovies.com. Readers can leave feedback at the latter Web site, where there is also ordering information on my new book of collected film reviews, **Knight at the Movies 2004-2006**.



Dick O'Day. Photo by Rick Aguilar

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Birthday for 'Little John'

Long-time community sports and culture lover Linda Barsaloux, aka Little John, celebrated her 65th birthday in big style recently. Family and friends helped her mark the big day at Lost & Found, Chicago's oldest lesbian bar, on West Irving Park Road. Top photo, Linda surrounded by friends. Middle, Linda with son Jim. Bottom: Lost & Found owner Ava Allen (left) with Gwen Meyer, community activist and co-owner of Chicago's old Razzmatazz, a fondly remembered lesbian club. Photos by Tracy Baim



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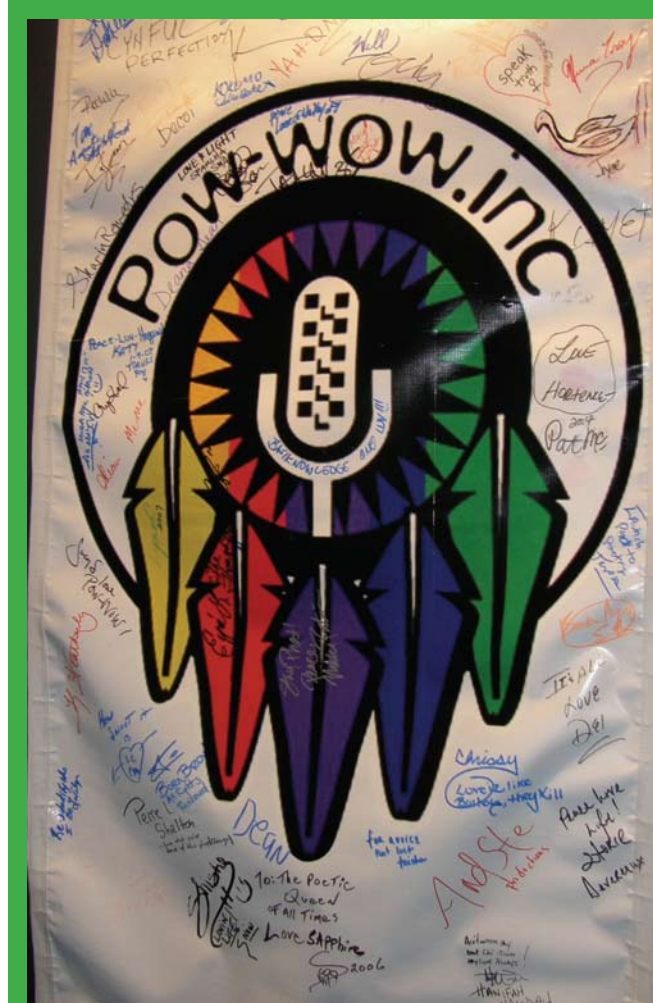
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Jackie Anderson Celebrated

Jackie Anderson was roasted and toasted for her long-time community activism, as well as her retirement and 65th birthday, during an event at Center on Halsted. Friends and family from around the country were in town for the special event, hosted by Pow-Wow and featuring some of Pow-Wow's poets. Pictured right, from left: Family friend Tina; Jackie's grandson Torrence Gardner; Jackie; Jackie's daughter Tracey Gardner; and Jackie's son-in-law, Terrence. Photos by Tracy Baim



TORONTO: Feels Like Home

BY AMY MATHENY AND PETER MAVRIK

When Midwesterners consider where to head for their next vacation, thoughts generally turn to warmer climates. Yet, there is a growing buzz about a city just north of us that seems to consistently wow all who visit.

Toronto. You've heard the name, and if you know anyone who has visited, you've probably heard only good things about the city. And if you've never been, or just haven't been back recently, it's time to plan a long weekend up north because Toronto is the place you want to be.

In many ways, it's like a cousin to Chicago. The similarities are obvious the moment you land: Both cities sit on the water. Toronto's streets follow a natural grid. And one look around at the diversity of the people and the cultures will make anyone comfortable.

Speaking of landing, did you know that, by air, Toronto is just over an hour away from Chicago? That's closer than L.A., NYC or Miami. All you need is a passport to hop on the plane and, before you know it, you've arrived at Toronto Pearson International Airport. A bus or taxi ride and you can be in the heart of downtown Toronto in no time, mingling with the native Torontonians.

Toronto has been consistently diverse. Having been settled by various European countries whose members had been displaced, by the early 20th century Toronto became home to many European immigrants. Even more migrated after the Second World War, along with a significant Chinese population. By 1951, the city was populated with over a million people, and by 20 years later the population had doubled. Today, the city is home to more than 2.5 million people, with



Various sights around Toronto: (from left) the Oasis Spa, Church Street Bar, Woody's. Photos by Peter Mavrik

5.5 million living in the greater Toronto area.

Like Chicago, this city is super-green, with trees and rolling valleys winding throughout the downtown area. The downtown area is quite residential, with many of the wealthiest homes adorning neighborhoods such as Rosedale and Forest Hill, which was named one of the top five neighborhoods in the World. This landscape provides gorgeous biking, but if the weather is unfavorable you can enjoy the pedway for getting around efficiently and warmly. It is 27 kilometers of malls, transportation and more.

Interestingly enough, no single culture dominates Toronto's population. That diversity is clearly evident both around town and in the various ethnic neighborhoods. Little Italy, Chinatown, Greektown, Portugal Village, Little India, Little Jamaica, The Westway (formed by a significant Somalian population) and the ultra-diverse Kensington Market all provide not only extraordinary eating and shopping experiences, but proof that Toronto is a world-class city that successfully and harmoniously weaves many

parts of the world together.

Any visit to Toronto should mandate a shopping excursion or two. The Church and Wellesley area, known to many a native as simply the Village, is a great place to begin. It's the center of the queer community in Toronto and bordered by the streets Bloor, Yonge, Jarvis and Carlton. If the view along Church Street—right in the heart of it all—looks familiar, it's because much of Queer as Folk was shot there, including the famous steps of Woody's Bar. And there are many other experiences to try in this area, such as cocktail hour at Zelda's, late nite at the Manhole and Slacks (for the gals). Fun shops are scattered around the Village, plus there's Timothy's Coffee Shop, a favorite LGBT hangout day or night for a cup of joe, or the elegant restaurant Fuzion.

Traveling along Yonge will carry you to the Bloor/Yorkville area if you're interested in hitting high-end shops. Bloor Street is home to Hermes, Gucci and Prada plus Canadian high-end retailer Holt Renfrew and Winners, the latter which houses designer brands with big-time savings. And if you get tired of shopping, pop into the Bata Shoe Museum (yes, it is all about shoes!) or venture over to the architectural wonder that is ROM, the Royal Ontario Museum. At the other end is Eaton Centre, the largest shopping mall in the city.

If you happen to come upon the TTC, Toronto's subway system, it's an easy way to get around town. Head to the Queen's Park station and then catch a streetcar to Kensington Market for a serious taste of how diverse shopping can be. Flea-market delights, kitsch deals, second-hand shops, Bohemian styles and more—you may be surprised what you find in one of the oldest neighborhoods in Toronto.

East of downtown Toronto is a 13-acre area called the Distillery District, formerly known as the Gooderham and Worts distillery. Founded in the 1832, the distillery became the largest in the world by the 1860s when it was producing nearly 2 million gallons of whiskey each year. The once-flourishing area eventually ground to a halt by 1990, finding some life as the number-one film location in Canada, and the largest film location outside of Hollywood. Films such as Cinderella Man, X-Men and Chicago were all shot on location in the this district.

In 2001, the area was purchased by pair of development companies and, in only a few years, was open to the public as a pedestrian-only village dedicated to arts, culture and entertainment. What was once a collection of thickly walled empty industrial brick buildings has given way to a flourishing destination in the city. Independent art galleries, stage theatres, designer furniture, boutiques, cafes and more have all moved into the historic buildings and invigorated the area. During the Toronto Film Festival, the Distillery's restaurants hosted many of the star-studded parties. The largest day spa in Canada, Oasis, resides on the site, as well as a child-care facility, a dance studio, several restaurants and a micro-brewery, which all make the Distillery District a worthy place to spend a day.

For theatre and music, head to King Street in the theatre district. Sweeney Todd is currently playing at the Princess of Wales Theatre and Dirty Dancing is pounding the boards at the Royal Alexander. Plus, the Roy Thomson Hall is a wonderful concert facility. And surrounding this thriving district of theatre and music are small restaurants and clubs plus a booming condo and loft market. And ride the streetcar down King Street to see it all.

Sound like paradise? It's no wonder so many decide to move to Toronto. More than half of the people in Toronto are not from there. It is a supreme place to live. The healthcare system is universal. Crime is low. Sixty to 100 percent of maternity leave (and paternity leave) is paid for a year. And, best of all, LGBT people can live out and proud, openly and legally, since it only takes same-sex couples a day to get married in Toronto.

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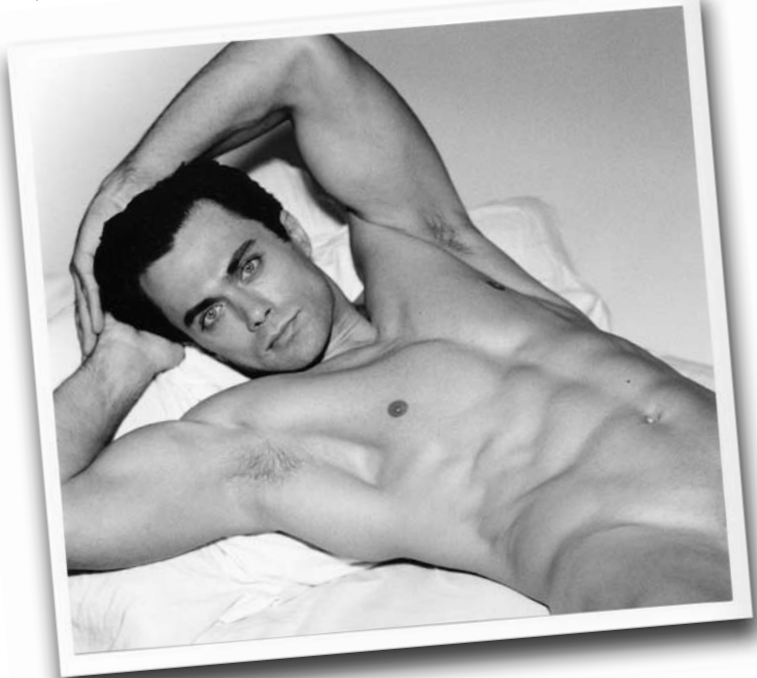
To listen to more about Toronto, visit windycityqueercast.com for shows 153 and 154 about Amy and Peter's travels.

To read more about Toronto, read Ross Forman's curling article on page 34.

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Sidebar:

Did you know that Toronto has an all-gay radio station? 105.9 Proud FM with hosts DJ Cajmere Wray, Ken Kostick and Mary Jo Eustace, Deb Pearce and Shaun Proulx. Listen live on your computer at www.proudfm.com anytime day or night.

WHAT TO DO?

Wednesday, Nov. 28

Center on Halsted Women & Money Matters Series: How Can I Get the Job I Want? 6-8 p.m., donations accepted, 3656 N. Halsted St., www.centeron-halsted.org

Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus Open mic for World AIDS Day with host Mz. Ruff N' Stuff. 6-9 p.m., free, Little Black Pearl and Design Center, 1060 E. 47th St., 773-285-1211, www.luvethybrotha.com

Chicago NOW Rise up! Raise your voices in song and sing along for all that is wrong. Even with CNOW, Kristin Lems, Peggy Lipschutz, Jim Bilger and Tery Veras. 7-9 p.m., \$5 or free with CNOW membership, The Theatre Building, 1225 W. Belmont Ave., janniefried@yahoo.com for more info

Women & Children First Bookstore Elynn Chaplik-Aleskow: "The Revolving Door," Chicken Soup for the Chocolate Lover's Soul. 7:30 p.m., 5233 N. Clark St., 773-769-9299, www.womenandchildrenfirst.com

Thursday, Nov. 29

AIDS Foundation of Chicago World of Chocolate, AFC's annual holiday event. 5:30-9 p.m., \$75 advance, \$100 at door, other tickets \$150-\$700, Hilton Chicago, 720 S. Michigan Ave., RSVP and info at www.aidschicago.org or 312-922-2322

Leather Archives & Museum CineKink Chicago film festival. Through Dec. 1. All screenings \$30 advance and \$45 at door; individual tickets \$8 advance and \$10 at door, see www.leather-archives.org for more info, or www.cinekink.com

Davenport's The premiere of Geisha & Gaysha, featuring Kyle Hustedt and Brenda Bushera, \$13, 8 p.m., 1383 N. Milwaukee, 773-278-1830

Newtown Writers Chicago's GLBT literary group holds an open reading. 7:30 p.m., Gerber/Hart Library, 1127 W. Granville Ave., frauman8@yahoo.com, 773-528-3637

Test Positive Aware Network Team

(Treatment Education Advocacy Management) Training. 10 a.m.-6 p.m., limited space, RSVP at 773-989-9400, 5537 N. Broadway, www.tpan.com

Women & Children First Bookstore Anne Elizabeth Moore: Unmarketable: Brandalism, Copyfighting, Mocketing, and the Erosion of Integrity. 7:30 p.m., 5233 N. Clark St., 773-769-9299, www.womenandchildrenfirst.com

Friday, Nov. 30

Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus The Red Party fundraiser commemorating World AIDS Day. DJs Kenae and Dana Powell. The Soul People and Lorenzo Owens live in concert. 9-11 p.m. general admission (\$20 donation), 8-9 p.m. VIP reception (\$25 donation), Circuit, 3641 N. Halsted St., 773-865-3740, www.luvethybrotha.com

Meadville Lombard Theological School "Facing HIV/AIDS" photographic exhibit by John Gevers. Opening reception. 5:15 p.m., 5701 S. Woodlawn

Mosaic Initiative World AIDS Day Prayer Breakfast and fundraiser. 7-9 a.m., \$25/person, \$250/table, The Abbington, 35002 Rt. 53, Glen Ellyn, 630-665-5194, www.mosaicinitiative.org

West Suburban Gay Association Dinner at Alfie's Inn, Glen Ellyn. 7:30 p.m., 425 Roosevelt Rd., see www.wsga.com for info.

Saturday, Dec. 1

Equality Illinois Women's Holiday Party & Table Captain Reception. 3-5 p.m., La Tache, 1475 W. Balmoral, RSVP at 773-477-7173 or rsvp@eqil.org

Euclid United Methodist Church Regional World AIDS Day Liturgy and Observance. 6 p.m., 405 S. Euclid, Oak Park, 708-848-7360, www.euclidumc.org

Hole Bar Markus Larsen signs his new book, The Sex Club Murders and Other Kinky Tales. 10 p.m.-1 a.m., basement of Jackhammer, 6406 N. Clark

Hydrate The Red Ball, benefitting Chicago House, 8-11 p.m., followed by

DJ Chris Cox. 3458 N. Halsted, www.hydratechicago.com

Jackhammer presents a book signing by author Markus Larsen for his new book Sex Club Murders and Other Kinky Tales, in the Hole Bar, 10 p.m., 6406 N. Clark St., 773-743-5772

Lakeside Pride Symphonic Band Holiday Concert: "For Friends and Family." Performs favorite holiday tunes and classical works. Lakeside Pride Wind Ensemble makes its debut. 8 p.m., Northside College Prep High School, 5501 N. Kedzie, \$12 (advance) or \$15 (at door), tickets at www.lakeside-pride.org

Liz Long Gallery at Urban Art Retreat A group show of art by people affected by AIDS/HIV opening reception. 1-4 p.m., 1957 S. Spaulding Ave., free, on display through Jan. 26, 773-542-9126, www.urbanartretreat.com

Movie Series debuts with Sing-Along Xanadu with Hell in a Handbag Productions and Dick O'Day. 11:30 p.m., 3733 N. Southport Ave., \$12, tickets at box office or www.ticketweb.com

St. Peter's Episcopal Church Annual Christmas Bazaar, luncheon and raffle. \$10 donation for luncheon, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 621 W. Belmont Ave.

Windy City Gay Naturists Trim the tree party. 7:30 p.m., \$10 fee, RSVP by Nov. 29, 708-299-4081

Sunday, Dec. 2

10th Annual Jon-Henri Damski Award This year's recipient: Phil Hannema. 1-3 p.m., Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St.

Berlin presents the third anniversary edition of Madonnarama, DJ Riley York, giveaways and prizes, 954 W. Belmont Ave., 773-348-4975, www.BerlinChicago.com

HRC Chicago Transgender Outreach Social house with Susan Ashley Stanton. 3-4:30 p.m. social hour, 4:30 p.m. presentation and dialogue, Unity Temple, 875 Lake St., Oak Park, free but RSVP. Email Katie Thomas at kati029t@aol.com for info

Women & Children First Bookstore

Anastasia Royal, Undoing I Do. 4:30 p.m., 5233 N. Clark St., 773-769-9299, www.womenandchildrenfirst.com

Vital Bridges 18th annual Holiday Brunch: Feed the Spirit. 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Four Seasons Hotel, 120 E. Delaware St. \$200 and tables starting at \$2,000, www.vitalbridges.org or 773-665-1000

Monday, Dec. 3

Bailiwick Repertory Theatre 2007 Trailblazer Awards given to members and friends of the LGBT community who have moved the community forward. Honorees include Dale Levitski (Bravo's Top Chef), Amy Bloom, Art Johnston and Pepe Pena and much more. Includes raffles, silent auction and entertainment. 5:30 reception at Joey's Brickhouse, 7 p.m. awards at Bailiwick, \$50 general admission, \$75 VIP, 1229 W. Belmont Ave., 773-883-1090, www.bailiwick.org

Baton Show Lounge presents Miss Continental Elite & Plus, starring Miss Continental Elite Danielle Hunter and Miss Continental Plus (Chicago's own) Tajma Hall, doors open 8 p.m., pageant 9 p.m., \$20 includes two preliminaries and buffet, 346 N. Clark St.

Tuesday, Dec. 4

National Lesbian and Gay Taskforce and The Black Youth Project host presentation and discussion on black youth and the impact on the future of the LGBT community. Special guests: Matt Foreman (Taskforce), Cathy Cohen (Black Youth Project) and others. 5:30-7:30 p.m., Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St.

Wednesday, Dec. 5

Women & Children First Bookstore Beth Finke & Hanni, Hanni & Beth: Safe and Sound. 10:30 a.m., 5233 N. Clark St., 773-769-9299, www.womenandchildrenfirst.com

Monday, Dec. 3



BLAZER'S EDGE

Sidetrack owner Art Johnston (above) is among the designated honorees for the Bailiwick Trailblazer Awards at the Bailiwick Repertory, 1229 W. Belmont.

Photo by Emmanuel Garcia

Thursday, Nov. 29



SUGAR, SUGAR

Plenty of sweet treats will be on hand, along with entertainment and saleable goods, at the AIDS Foundation of Chicago's World of Chocolate, to be held at the Chicago Hilton, 720 S. Michigan.

Photo from the 2006 event by Andrew Davis

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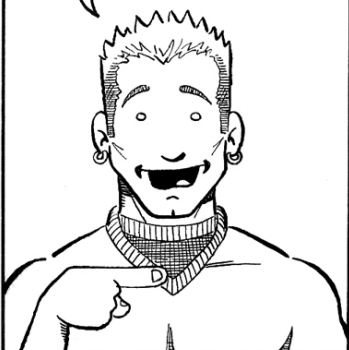
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SO RICHARD FINALLY CALLED HIS ESTRANGED BOYFRIEND.

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

HOW DO YOU THINK IT WENT?



CHOICE A

OH, RICHARD... I'VE MISSED YOU, TOO!

I'M SORRY I ACTED BADLY...

LET'S GET TOGETHER RIGHT AWAY!



CHOICE B

WHATEVER. I'VE BEEN BUSY.

I GUESS WE HAVE TO TALK.

BREAKING UP? DEPENDS ON HOW THE CONVERSATION GOES...



WELL? WHAT D'YA THINK?

DUH, RIGHT?

TUNE IN NEXT TIME TO GET THE ANSWER.





Curling, Toronto style. Photo by Ross Forman

SPORTS

Curling: A Canadian Classic

BY ROSS FORMAN

TORONTO, Ont. – It's best described as chess on ice and, boy, do they love curling here—especially the LGBT community.

Gay curling has existed locally since 1962, when a handful of curlers started playing. It has since grown into two full leagues boasting 250 members, with waiting lists of 25-plus players wanting to join.

Gay curling within Canada is big time, as showcased by the 3rd Annual Canadian Gay National Curling Championship, set for Feb. 15-17, 2008, in Winnipeg. A team from Montreal is the defending champion, and Vancouver claimed the first title, yet Toronto remains the largest club in the country.

"It's really hard to explain curling to the general public if you don't actually go and watch it, much like pro football can be difficult to understand for those who don't follow the sport on a regular basis," said Murray Leaning, 39, president of both of the local gay curling leagues, Riverdale and Rotators.

"I really don't know how you'd explain curling to the common person," said Leaning. "But, when you throw a rock, as the name implies, it curls, or it should curl if you've done all of the right things. The sweeping can do one of two things; it can either help stop or minimize the curl, or it can help extend the rock out, meaning, make it go farther."

Curling is a sport that combines cardiovascular conditioning with brainpower. Teams of four must employ strategy, offensive and defensive. Integrity, a sense of fair play and friendly competition are all hallmarks of this icy sport. It is also one of the few sports where men and women of all ages can compete equally.

The Toronto leagues consist of 200 men and 50 women. Leaning said almost all participants

are gay.

"Curling is an extremely social sport, so it's an opportunity to meet other people, see your friends and ultimately work together as a team," said Leaning, who is single, gay and lives in Toronto. "After play, tradition has it that the winning team buys the losing team a drink. And the losing team reciprocates with the second round."

The Riverdale Curling League meets locally on Sundays, while the Rotators play on Wednesdays. Both leagues welcome novice and experienced curlers, and sponsor yearly bonspiels (curling matches).

"The Wednesday league only has a certain capacity for growth because it only has one time slot: 9 p.m.," Leaning said. The Wednesday league has grown from 10 to 14 teams, though only 12 teams play every week; two teams have a bye every week.

The Sunday league has doubled its size; 50 teams now play.

On Sundays, there also is a competitive group, "which allows some of the stronger players to get together and play a more competitive game of curling," Leaning said. "We're at the point now where neither league can grow any further."

Thus, Leaning confirmed they are considering adding a third league on a third night.

Leaning said he is not surprised by curling's popularity within the LGBT community. "The nice thing about curling is it's a good combination of a physical and mental activity," he said. "There's a lot of strategy involved with curling. It's not just about hitting rocks; it's about where do you place them and how do you set up a good defense for your opponents to try to crack, not to mention playing to your team's strengths and the other team's weaknesses. So, there's a lot of thinking involved."

"It's a simple game in many ways, but a complex game in many ways, too."

How physical is curling?

During the course of a regular game, players will walk at least one or two miles as they're following the rocks, he said.

Both the Riverdale and the Rotators Leagues play at the Royal Canadian Curling Club, located minutes from downtown Toronto.

"A lot [of the players] did [curling] as kids,

perhaps when they were in high school. Curling was the social focus in a lot of small towns across the country, so now they are just re-discovering the sport as adults," said Leaning, who has been the local leagues' president since 2001.

"I think curling will just keep growing more

and more within the LGBT community."

The Toronto leagues have had gay curling teams from the United States come to Canada to compete, including teams from New York, Minnesota and Michigan.



Lou Tharp. Picture courtesy of Tharp

Lou Tharp: Military Man

BY ROSS FORMAN

About five years ago, Lou Tharp was looking for a place to train in preparation for various international swimming meets. He went to The United States Military Academy at West Point, knowing that the Army has great facilities, and asked a colonel if he could work out there. She agreed.

And so started Tharp's association with the Army.

Tharp, who is openly gay, was training one day near a cadet with horrible form in the pool. Tharp offered to help the youngster, giving 30 minutes of free advice.

The cadet returned the next day with another cadet who also needed swimming tips.

And so started Tharp's association with the Army's swimmers.

During the 2006-07 season, Tharp was named the swimming coach for the Army's Triathlon Team, a group of 20 world-class athletes dedicated to becoming national champions. They compete in meets that consist of a 1.5-kilometer swim, a 40-kilometer bike ride and a 10-kilometer run.

The Army triathlon team finished fifth at the 2007 Collegiate Nationals.

"I never envisioned this [job]," said Tharp, who started swimming 11 years ago at age 45 to combat issues with weight gain, high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

Tharp's swimming success has its roots in Total Immersion Swimming, a New York-based organization.

He passes his swimming tips to the cadets through word of mouth, of course, and through daily e-mails after every practice. Tharp just published *Overachiever's Diary*, a compilation of e-mails, thoughts and travels with the team. The book is a how-to for competitive or fitness swimmers, and details Tharp's sometimes unorthodox training methods that helped propel

the team to international elite status.

"The primary purpose of the book is to let triathletes, particularly swimmers, know that the same kind of high-level training that is available to elite athletes is available to everyone," Tharp said. "You can participate in the same kind of training as world-class athletes."

A portion of the sales of the book will be donated to the Army Triathlon Team, and Tharp said that portion will increase when LGBT soldiers are able to serve openly.

Ah, yes. The Army, of course, still practices Don't Ask Don't Tell, though being gay has never impacted Tharp at West Point. He made it clear from day one that he is gay and that he is not a supporter of the Army's stance toward gays and lesbians.

Surprisingly, Tharp said his sexuality has "never, ever" been an issue. And he even brings his partner to team functions.

"For a lot of the cadets, I think I am the first gay man they have ever known," Tharp said. "A lot of the senior-ranking officers who are my age ... Many don't hate gay people; it's just that, for the majority of their lives, they've just heard negative things about gays and lesbians. As they get to know me, the anti-gay comments are just based on things they've heard. They are very, very accepting people. I have not met one person who has led me to believe that they were anything but very genuine in their relationship with me."

Tharp said he has had cadets talk to him about being gay; however, none on the triathlon team has.

The 216-page book features more than 100 photos, taken by parents and team members. The Army refused his request to support the book, giving no explanation, but it didn't prevent him from publishing the book with the cooperation and support of the team. Tharp confirmed he already has started compiling material for a second book.

Tharp has competed in past Gay Games, including the 2006 events in Chicago, with one gold and two silver medals to his credit. In Chicago, he competed in five races.

"I walked away from the [Chicago Games] very happy," Tharp said. "The event was very, very competitive, and I was so impressed with the event overall."

"I really couldn't believe how pro-gay the city of Chicago is. It just blew me away."

To order Tharp's book, go to: www.overachieversdiary.com.

Getting To Know ... Lou Tharp

Age: 56

Hometown: Nyack, N.Y.

Grew up in: Baltimore

College: Butler University, graduated in 1972

Status: Partnered for 24 years to Jim Bumgarden, 51

It's a fact: Endowed the first-ever scholarship at Butler for gay and lesbian students, starting in the fall of 2008.

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Crew's Ball Busters	54	30	Hamburger Mary's	33	51	Scot Shotz	47	37
REMAX Edge	45	39	Funky Five	30	54	Bobby Love's	45	39
Cornelia's	44.5	39.5	Gutter Fluffers	29	55	Lady & Her Tramps	43	41
Bowlers-A-GO-GO	44	40				Done More 5 Less	42	42
GYOF	42	42	Division B	W	L	Windy City Sweets	38	46
Jury's	42	42	Castaways	56	28	Extremely Striking	36	48
North End	39.5	44.5	Halsted Bar & Grill	54	30	Juana Bees	35	49
Marty's	37	40	Wicked	51	33	Great Scots	34	50
Second to None	39	45	Salon Michael	50	34	Wells Fargo ONYX 5	26	58



Lesbian Judge Receives Honor

The Chicago Council on Urban Affairs recently hosted its 28th Annual Awards Dinner at the Mid-Day Club, 21 S. Clark. During the ceremony, the Honorable Judge Lori Wolfson accepted the Partners for a Better Chicagoland Award on behalf of the Balanced and Restorative Justice Task Force at the Cook County Juvenile Court, recipients of the award. Wolfson (center) poses with Council Chairman Craig Gilmore and Council President Lu Bailey.

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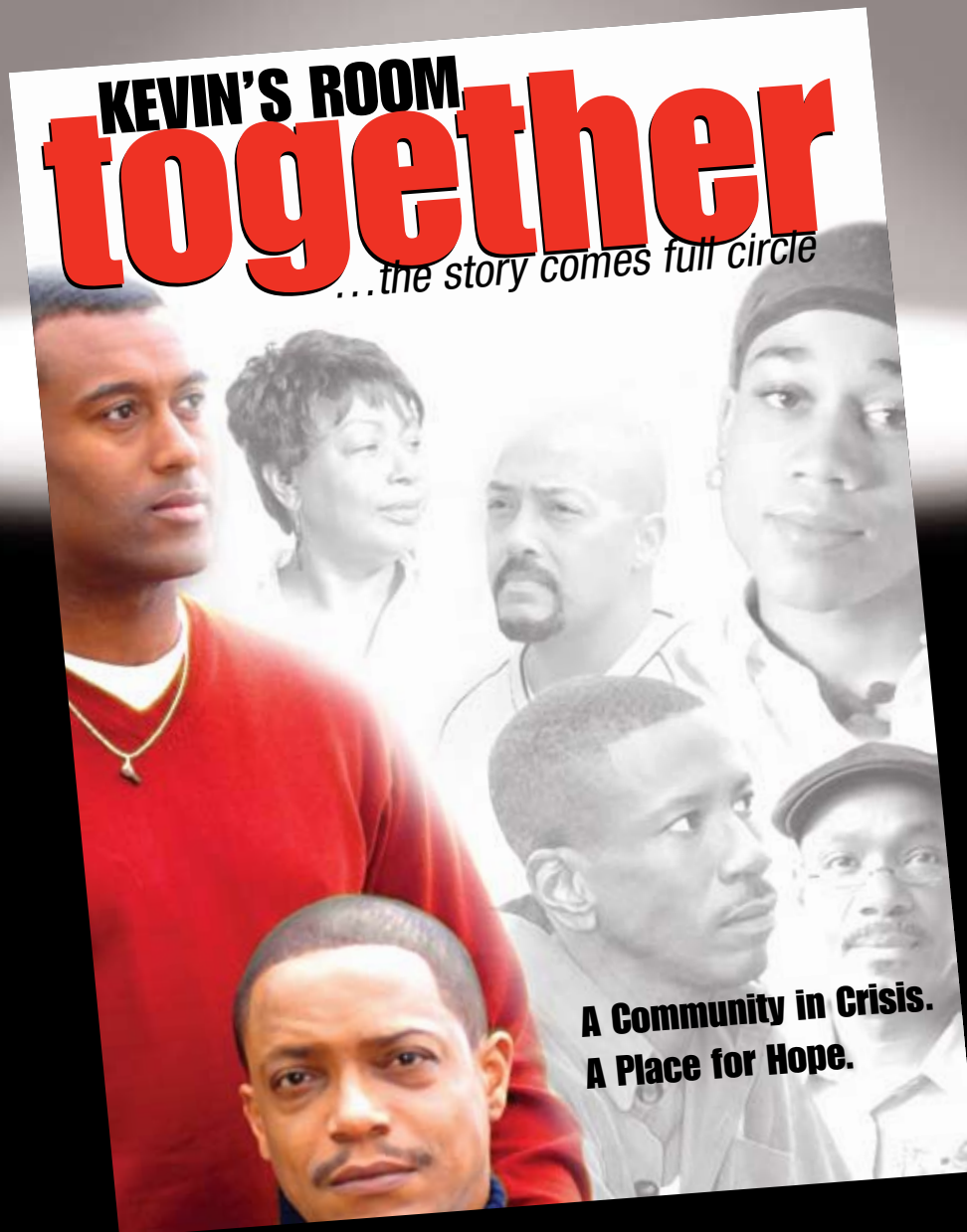
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