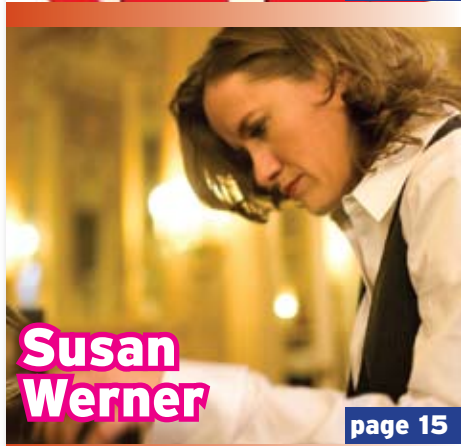




Oscars Party

page 21



Susan Werner

page 15



AIDSCare Ball

page 8



nightspots
pick it up
take it home



www.WindyCityQueercast.com

Prop 8 Donors: A Closer Look

BY YASMIN NAIR

The passage of the anti-same-sex-marriage measure Proposition 8 in California created a furor in the LGBT community. Across the country, both groups and individuals have rallied at large protests and actions to show their support for overturning the measure. Anti-Prop 8 work has relied on the tools of Web-based technology and social-networking sites like Facebook and Twitter. These tools don't just allow quick and easy ways to mobilize large numbers of people at protests; they also make it easy to disseminate information about events and the supporters of Prop 8.

Such information includes the names of donors to the campaigns for and against Prop 8, the amounts they gave and even information about their employers. The San Francisco Gate maintains a database that allows visitors to find donors by state and city. Since its launch, several supporters of the proposition have alleged that they have been subject to harassment, intimidation and even death threats. In January, a suit filed by attorneys for the measure claimed that such alleged harassment of Prop 8 supporters violated their constitutional rights of free speech and assembly. A federal judge denied their suit Jan. 29.

The debate around disclosure has its impact in Chicago. A mid-January rally against the Defense of Marriage Act ended with protesters marching past Holy Name Cathedral, 735 N. State, to protest the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops giving \$200,000 toward Prop 8. That event was preceded by a protest outside the Hyatt global headquarters building, 71 S. Wacker. This was part of a nationwide ongoing

Turn to page 8



'Milk' Strikes Gold

page 21

Sean Penn (above) won his second Oscar Feb. 22 for his role as slain gay politician Harvey Milk in Milk. Dustin Lance Black also won, for Best Original Screenplay. Read more on page 21. Photo by Phil Bray

Thousands will go to the polls Tuesday, March 3, as over 20 candidates in three parties will vie for the Fifth Congressional District seat vacated by Rahm Emanuel. Among those in contention are (clockwise from top left) Jan Donatelli, Tom Hanson, John Fritchey, Charlie Wheelan, Sara Feigenholtz, Pat O'Connor and Mike Quigley.

Read interviews, peruse the political chart and even find out what area the district covers on pages 6-7 and online at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.



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 Elizabeth McKnight, Jeremy
 Gottschalk, Todd Hatoff and Marshall
 Erb, Kevin Hauswirth, Chuck Hyde,
 Arthur Johnston and Jose A. Pena, Ray
 J. Koenig III, Bennett R. Lawson,
 Jim Madigan, John Peller,
 Laura Ricketts and Heidi Grathouse,
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WINDY CITY TIMES

index

NEWS

The U.S. and marriage equality	4
National roundup	4
'State Trek' in March	5
AIDSCare's 'Saturday' ball	8
Local Prop 8 donors	8
World roundup	9
Quotes	9
Guest viewpoint; letters	10

2009 PRIMARY ELECTION

5th Cong. District map	6
WCT questionnaire	6
Political chart	6
Quigley, O'Connor interviews	7

ENTERTAINMENT

Scottish Play Scott	11
Theater reviews	12
Music: Susan Werner	15
Pop Making Sense	16
Knight at the Movies	17
Billy Masters	20
'Milk' wins Oscars	21
Disc and That	21
Oscars party at the Center	21

OUTLINES

Pets	18
Calendar	18
Real estate; classifieds	19
Autos: Chicago show	22
Sports briefs	22



Picasso at the Lapin Agile (above), penned by the inimitable Steve Martin, is one of the theatrical productions reviewed this week. See more on page 12.

Photo by John Oster



The 2009 Ford F-150 Harley Davidson (above) was one of the vehicles in the spotlight at this year's Chicago Auto Show. See page 22.

Photo courtesy of Joe Lamuraglia (Gaywheels.com)

www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com

Features include:
- "Couples Connecting" column
- Media Watch
- Review of the Pretenders (right) at the Riviera
- Dr. Martha Hernandez: "Fear, Part II"

Photo by Vern Hester



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The women still wait for justice. Had this scandal occurred in the USA, the public would be outraged and would demand that those responsible be brought to justice.

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For more information, contact Amnesty International Midwest at aiusamw@aiusa.org or (312)427-2060

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"If all Democratic candidates were as competent as North Side Democrat Rep. John Fritchey, endorsements would be a slam dunk. Fritchey is an activist in his community, weighing in on a diverse range of issues."
Sun-Times (2006)

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Sharon Groves. Photo by Bob Roehr

What Americans think about marriage equality

BY BOB ROEHR

America's changing attitudes towards marriage equality for gays and lesbians suggest a weakening in intensity of marriage as a political issue, said Sharon Groves, deputy director of the Religion and Faith Program at the Human Rights Campaign (HRC).

That conclusion came at a forum on marriage equality that looked closely at polling data on the subject. HRC sponsored the Feb. 18 event.

"It was remarkable how unimportant Americans consider same-sex marriage as a voting priority. ...[It] was dead last out of 10 issues, 10 out of 10," said Robert P. Jones with Public Religion Research.

He drew upon data from the 2008 Faith and American Politics Survey (FAPS), conducted by the group and sponsored by Faith in Public Life, with HRC providing the funding for analysis of this particular subset of issues.

Even among white evangelicals, where 49 percent "said that same-sex marriage was very important in their vote, that still is not in the top five of their voting priorities," Jones said.

Perhaps more importantly, 57 percent of the U.S. population supports either marriage or

civil unions for gays. The figure was 69 percent among those 35 and younger. "A majority of every religious group under 35 favored same-sex marriage or civil unions." Even among younger white evangelicals the number has grown to 52 percent.

In 2006, the American Values Survey found that 28 percent of Americans supported same-sex marriage; among those 18 to 34 it was 37 percent, said colleague Daniel Cox. Another survey two years later found about the same overall support, 29 percent, but among the younger age group support had jumped to 46 percent, "an increase of 9 points in just two years, which is remarkable."

Opposition has remained relatively stable over that time while support for civil unions has shifted to full marriage equality.

If pollsters then told those opposed to same-sex marriage that under the law no religious group or clergyman would be required to perform a same-sex marriage if they did not want to, a so called religious liberty assurance, then support among all groups jumped 14 percent, even among non-religious persons.

They next examined what predicted a person's view of same-sex marriage. Jones said that people with close personal relationships with gays and lesbians, not just minimal contact in the workplace or social settings, "were four times more likely to support marriage, compared with those who had no relationship with gay or lesbian persons."

Those who believed that the Bible is the work of men were three and a half times more likely to be supportive than those who held that the Bible is the literal word of god. Where one stood on the political spectrum of liberal to conservative was equally predictive.

A majority of people have heard something about homosexuality in church and it is 10 times more likely to have been negative than positive, Jones said. That is particularly true of those of attend evangelical churches, while mainline churches are approaching a balance of positive and negative.

Jones said it is unclear persons' views on marriage equality are formed by what they hear in church, or if they choose a church that reflects their existing beliefs on the subject.

Groves said information such as this "provides tools for people to speak openly as people of faith in their places of worship." The problematic news for her is that "only 19 percent of those who support marriage equality feel it is an important political issue, compared to the 47 percent of those who oppose marriage equality."

She lamented, "Opponents have successfully used religion to create a moral wedge issue. ...

We need to push LGBT issues up the moral priority list for our supporters." Groves said progressives must emphasize that "the golden rule" is at the center of all religions "and see LGBT equality as a sacred justice issue."

While the religious liberty assurance increased support for marriage equality, Groves said, "Blanket religious exemptions in ENDA [the Employment Non-Discrimination Act] are hard for our community to swallow, even as they are useful politically. We feel sometimes that religion gets a free pass on discrimination."

The 2008 Faith and American Politics Survey is available at www.publicreligion.org.

Indiana caucus not voting on marriage item

Indiana's Senate Republican Caucus has voted not to consider an initiative that would have proposed amending the state constitution to define marriage as being between a man and a woman.

The vote means the amendment probably will not advance during this legislative session.

In a statement, Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese said, "The Human Rights Campaign is glad to see that this divisive, unnecessary amendment appears to have stalled. We congratulate Indiana Equality, its coalition partners, HRC members and others throughout the state who urged their legislators to reject this resolution."

Indiana Equality Action Vice-President Randy Studdt said, "Indiana Equality is glad to see that the Senate has finally decided this issue is unworthy of their time, after passing a similar measure on four occasions. We appreciate the calls and emails by our supporters to help defeat this measure."

National roundup

BY ANDREW DAVIS

A task force of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America **has recommended that leaders allow gays and lesbians in committed relationships to serve as clergy**, according to a Chicago Tribune item. The recommendation will be voted on this August at the Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis.

Jermaine Jakes, the 29-year-old son of well-known evangelist T.D. Jakes, **was arrested in January for allegedly exposing himself in an indecent way** in front of an undercover detective, BET.com reported. According to a police affidavit, the younger Jakes walked up to a detective at a Dallas, Texas, park with his pants unzipped. He then supposedly began to masturbate while making eye contact with the officer. T.D. Jakes leads the the 30,000-member Potter's House megachurch in Dallas.

In San Diego, Calif., a jury has ruled that **four**

male firefighters were sexually harassed in the 2007 gay pride parade, and ruled that they should receive \$34,300 in damages from the city, the Los Angeles Times reported. The firemen said they were ordered to drive a truck in the parade even though firefighters in previous events were reportedly the subjects of sexual innuendos.

In Georgia, Lambda Legal has filed a friend-of-the-court brief on behalf of Eric Mongerson, a gay man **who a child-custody agreement has prohibited from "exposing his children to his homosexual partners and friends,"** according to PinkNews.co.uk. The legal organization is arguing that custody-related restrictions should not involve sexual orientation and that no evidence exists that contact with Mongerson's same-sex acquaintances is harmful.

Officials at Clara Barton School—an Oxford, Mass., elementary school—have sent a letter to parents announcing that **the night janitor who finished the previous school year as a man would start the next as a woman**, according to WND.com. Although some parents have called for the janitor to resign, school authorities have repeatedly said they do not discriminate on the basis of "sexual orientation."

In Hawaii, the state House passed a civil-union bill by a vote of 33-17—one vote shy of a veto-proof supermajority, according to the Honolulu Advertiser. The measure, which now moves to the state Senate, would grant partners in civil unions the same benefits, protections and responsibilities as married couples under state law. Hawaii would also recognize civil unions, domestic partnerships and same-sex marriages performed in other states.

American Airlines has named lesbian Betty Young as its director of diverse segment marketing, according to a corporate press release. Young, a 19-year American Airlines veteran, will be responsible for the company's support and outreach to its loyal LGBT, African-American, Hispanic and women customers, as well as other diverse populations.

The family of Larry King, a California gay teenager who was shot to death in class, filed a wrongful-death lawsuit that accuses the school district, a shelter and a gay-rights organization (the Ventura County Rainbow Alliance) of failing to protect him, the Associated Press reported. King, 15, of Oxnard, was killed in February 2008. A classmate, Brandon McInerney, was charged and has pled not guilty to first-degree murder.

In Fairfax, Va., **the students at George Mason University elected openly gay senior Ryan Allen homecoming queen**, according to the Washington Post. Allen, who performs as a popular drag queen at local clubs, took the title of Ms. Mason over two women who competed for the crown.

Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle's latest budget proposal includes domestic-partnership protections, according to HuffingtonPost.com. The fundamental protections would include hospital-visitation rights and Family Medical Leave rights for same-sex domestic partners.



Directions from the North: 94 exit Tower Rd., east to Sheridan Rd., south to Maple and turn right onto Maple to Oak.

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Saturday, March 7 - 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 8 - 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

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PREVIEW

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HIV/AIDS Lobby Days advocates on right 'Trek'

BY PAUL MARINKOVICH

The AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) is about to embark on a very exciting voyage. On March 3-4, the foundation will boldly go where no state has gone before, with State Trek 2009: Illinois HIV/AIDS Lobby Days.

Every year, Illinois advocates travel to Springfield to lobby for support and/or funds to raise awareness of HIV and AIDS. The two-day event consists of luncheons, preparation courses on proper advocacy techniques, and meetings with the legislators themselves, to talk about the issues surrounding the growing epidemic.

In the past, the AFC has used themes, such as last year's Mission: Possible, in order to draw attention to their cause. This year, the foundation has chosen State Trek, a clever spin off on the science-fiction cult hit television show, Star Trek.

"State Trek is all about putting an emphasis on engaging advocates throughout the state," said Pete Subkoviak of the AFC, who explained that the majority of participants for the annual event have been mostly out of Chicago. "We understand that the epidemic is centric to the city; however, the epidemic is changing because it is spreading out to the suburbs and out to the rural areas more and more. We really want our advocates to come together and form a true statewide community."

Subkoviak believes that by creating a statewide network, it would allow a community response to HIV/AIDS legislation, not just during lobby days, but at all times. In fact, the AFC plans introduce a program called, "Illinois ASAP," which will enable this community of point people to "rally the troops" whenever a pending piece of legislation needs to be opposed or supported.



Pete Subkoviak. Photo by Andrew Davis

Some of the issues that the AFC will bring to legislators attention this year will be: Expedited Partner Therapy, an overdose prevention program, and the Principal Notification Law.

"Anyone who has a STD or a STI is much more at risk of becoming infected with HIV," said Subkoviak. "So we are advocating for Expedited Partner Therapy. This would mean that if a person tests positive for gonorrhea, or something like that, then their doctor can give a prescription to the person's partner, so that they have access to the medication that will prevent the STD or STI."

Then, the AFC has been working with legislators to reintroduce an overdose prevention bill that Sen. Donne Trotter revealed back in 2008. The program would provide a safe and inexpensive medication called Narcon, or generically known as naloxone, in order to prevent overdose with injection drug users. The bill would also help by teaching injectors the importance of proper HIV protection, which will ultimately reduce needle sharing and unprotected sex.

Finally, Subkoviak explained that the AFC is trying to repeal a very old law, called the Principal Notification law.

"The Principal Notification law says is that if a student tests positive for HIV, the Principal of that school must be notified," he said. "The

principal must then inform the Superintendent and is free to inform any number of school's faculty and employees. Eventually, the whole school knows they have HIV and a lot of kids have had their lives ruined by this."

The AFC will also be giving away Special Cadet Scholarships, for those living with HIV/AIDS in financial need.

The AFC believes that this outdated law serves no legitimate public health purpose and enables more HIV discrimination within the school system. By reversing the Principal Notification law, the foundation hopes that it will encourage proper HIV prevention techniques as well as improve testing efforts.

The AIDS foundation was founded in 1985 by a group of community activists, physicians, and people with HIV/AIDS, in order to implement policy and legislation changes. Every year the foundation works with community organizations to develop and improve community services, fund prevention care and advocacy projects.

State Trek: HIV/AIDS Lobby Days will be held March 3-4 at the President Lincoln Hotel, Springfield. See www.aidschicago.org/events/lobby_day_2009.php for more information.

Committee approves HIV/AIDS anti-names-reporting bill

The Illinois House Human Services Committee voted by a 4-2 vote Feb. 19 to approve a measure that would repeal a state mandate that health departments report the names of HIV/AIDS-affected children to the principals of their schools, according to a press release from the Children's Place Association.

"The disclosure of a student's HIV status creates a deceptive sense of security for students and teachers alike because the HIV status of many people—students and staff—is unknown and unreported, said Children's Place Association President/CEO Cathy Krieger. "If school officials focus on the reported HIV status of one student

and ignore universal medical precautions around undiagnosed, unreported students, they risk the health of the healthy students that they are trying to protect."

The Children's Place Association is a Chicago-based child-welfare agency that specializes in HIV/AIDS-affected children and family care.

WCT seeking 30 Under 30

Windy City Times is seeking to recognize 30 more outstanding LGBT individuals (and allies) who are under 30 years of age.

In 2000, Windy City Times established an award to acknowledge the young movers and shakers of the LGBT community: the 30 Under 30 Awards. Each year since, another 30 get their day in the sun.

Nominees should be under 30 years of age and should have made some substantial contributions to the LGBT community, whether in the fields of entertainment, politics, health and/or other areas. (The deadline to nominate individuals is Friday, April 24.)

Individuals themselves, organizations, co-workers, etc. can nominate a person by sending an e-mail or fax to WCMG. The nomination should be 100 words or less and should state what achievements or contributions the nominee has made. Nominators should include their own names and contact information as well as the contact information of the nominee. Those nominations can be sent to Andrew@WindyCityMediaGroup.com or faxed to Andrew Davis' attention to 773-871-7609.

Honorees will be notified in May and recognized at a ceremony Tuesday, June 23, 5:30-7:30 p.m., at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted.

The co-sponsors for this Windy City Times event are AIDS Foundation of Chicago, Chicago House, Better Existence with HIV (BEHIV) and Center on Halsted.

PATRICK J. O'CONNOR

"It was elected leaders like **Pat O'Connor** whose efforts led to the passage of Chicago's Equal Rights Ordinance in 1988 that paved the way for the progressive laws that our City, County and State now have...On March 3rd, I urge you to cast your vote for **Pat O'Connor** for Congress in the 5th Congressional District."

*Illinois State Representative Greg Harris
13th District*

"**Pat O'Connor** has the support of many in our community due to his long history of being there at the beginning and his continued strong support of issues of importance to our community. I am proud to be Chairman of the LGBT Committee for **O'Connor** for Congress."

*Kevin Tindell, Chairman of the LGBT
Committee for O'Connor for Congress*

As your Congressman, PAT O'CONNOR will:

- ★ Fight to increase funding for HIV/AIDS research and education
- ★ Support comprehensive sexuality education
- ★ Include the transgender community in the Federal Employment Non-Discrimination Act
- ★ Support Civil Unions and the rights of LGBT individuals to be foster and adoptive parents

VOTE DEMOCRAT MARCH 3rd, 2009

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2009 Primary Election: 5th Congressional District

Welcome to the 2009 Windy City Times Primary Election Guide. With more than 20 candidates from three different parties (Democratic, Republican and Green) battling for the Fifth Congressional District seat, this election year is intriguing, to say the least.

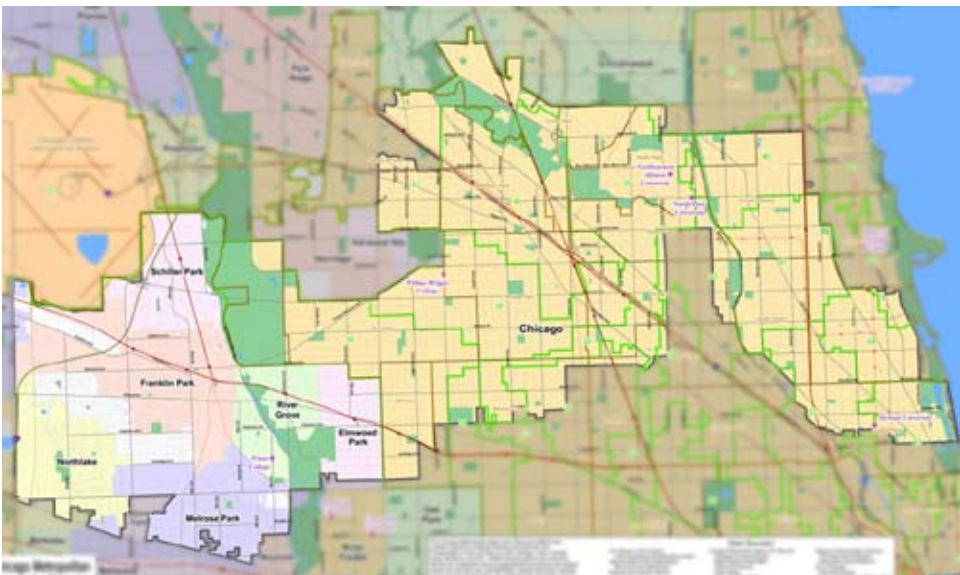
Since Windy City Times is focusing on only one race, we are able to present items we normally would omit. Of course, the chart with the questionnaire scores is still present. However, the questionnaire that candidates responded to is below. In addition, there is a map of the Fifth Congressional District—because not everyone who has seen the political commercials on television or heard them on the radio will be able to vote.

We will also run interviews with five candi-

dates this week. (Two, with Chicago Alderman Patrick O’ Connor and Cook County Commissioner Mike Quigley will run in print; the others—with Tom Hanson, Jan Donatelli and Charles Wheelan—will run online at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.) Two other interviews, with State Reps. Sara Feigenholtz and John Fritchey, ran last week in Windy City Times and can be found in the online archives. (Snippets of those talks are at the bottom of this page.)

Again, please do not forget to vote Tuesday, March 3 (and during the April 7 general election); everyone’s voice deserves to be heard. And please feel free to take the chart into the voting booth with you.

Note: Windy City Times does not endorse candidates.



What is the 5th Congressional District?

The Fifth Congressional District comprises much of the North Side of Chicago, and several of the western suburbs. It includes Schiller Park, Franklin Park, River Grove, Elmwood Park, Northlake and Melrose Park. Wrigley Field is located in this district, along with the Chicago neighborhoods of Lakeview, Uptown and Lincoln Park. Map courtesy of chicagoelections.pbwiki.com

WCT Questionnaire

1. Would you install a written policy in your office regarding sexual-orientation and gender-identity discrimination?
2. What is your position regarding funding for HIV/AIDS treatment and education? Also, do you favor mandatory Medicaid coverage of those with the disease?
3. Have you taken or would you take any steps to further HIV/AIDS treatment and education programs? If so, what are those measures?
4. What is your position regarding comprehensive sexuality education?
5. The impact of the domestic HIV/AIDS epidemic is hardest on racial minorities. How do you propose addressing those populations?
6. What is your position regarding the inclusion of the trans community in the federal Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA)?
7. What is your position regarding the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” military policy?
8. Have you started or would you start sensitivity training for your staff members regarding LGBT issues?
9. Do you favor same-sex marriages?
10. Do you favor civil unions?
11. Do you favor hate-crimes legislation that

increases penalties for crimes based on the sexual orientation or gender identity of the person attacked?

12. Do you believe that LGBT individuals should become foster parents?

13. Do you believe that LGBT individuals have the right to adopt children?

14. What is your position regarding domestic partners of federal employees being eligible for the same benefits that are currently given to spouses of said employees?

15. If you currently hold a political office, are any members of your current staff openly LGBT?

16. Please list any and all experience you have on gay issues.

Note: Among the candidates who responded, the scores ranged from getting one correct to getting all correct.

Obviously, the grading of some answers required some subjectivity. For example, with the last question, there is quite a difference between a candidate who only knows a few gay people and a candidate who has actively fought for LGBT individuals. On the other hand, with same-sex marriages (#9), a candidate either supports it or does not.

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE - 5th DISTRICT

WCT = Windy City Times (out of 16 questions)
IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois-Independent Precinct Organization
NOW = National Organization for Women

	WCT	IVI	NOW
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE 5th District			
DEMOCRAT	Rep. Sara Feigenholtz (D)	16/16	X
	Rep. John Fritchey (D)	15/16	X
	Charles J. Wheelan (D)	13/16	
	Victor Forsy (D)	13/16	
	Jan Donatelli (D)	14/16	
	Frank Annunzio (D)		
	Carlos Monteagudo (D)	14/16	
	Paul Bryar (D)	15/16	
	Tom Geoghegan (D)		
	Cary Capparelli (D)		
REPUBLICAN	Mike Quigley (D)	16/16	
	Ald. Patrick O’Connor (D)	15/16	
	Tom Hanson (R)	11/16	
	Jon Stewart (R)		
	Gregory A. Bedell (R)	11/16	
GREEN	Rosanna Pulido (R)	1/16	
	Daniel R. Kay (Karkusiewicz) (R)		
	David J. Anderson (R)		
	Deb Leticia Gordils (G)	9/16	
	Mark Fredrickson (G)	14/16	
	Matthew Reichel (G)	13/16	
	Simon Ribeiro (G)		

These interviews can be found in the Feb. 18 Windy City Times:

Sara Feigenholtz

BY ANDREW DAVIS

When State Rep. Sara Feigenholtz announced her run for the U.S. Representative seat formerly held by Rahm Emanuel, she was instantly stamped a front-runner. In this interview with Windy City Times, the longtime LGBT ally discussed her ties to the Fifth Congressional District, the economy and the controversy surrounding a poll her campaign staff allegedly conducted.

Windy City Times: Let’s say you win this election. How would you expect the atmosphere at the U.S. House to be different than the one in the Illinois House?

Sara Feigenholtz: I think they’ll be very similar. I think there’s a lot of excitement about new beginnings, and I think that Barack Obama—who I worked with for eight years when he was in the General Assembly... Everybody saw the outpouring of millions of Americans celebrating the transition from eight years of what some would consider a very challenging time (to put it mildly) to a new chapter for this country. I think that, frankly, it’s about change and that people are excited for the change.

I’ve always put my community first before politics, and that’s what I plan on doing in Washington.

John Fritchey

BY YASMIN NAIR

Democrat John Fritchey is currently the 11th District State Representative. He’s also among the many candidates seeking to fill Rahm Emanuel’s recently vacated seat in Illinois’s Fifth Congressional District. Fritchey has a reputation as a progressive and is backed by a number of labor unions. He spoke to Windy City Times about his views on gay marriage, DADT, hate crimes legislation and his stand on labor-related issues.

Windy City Times: But would you support a state or federal law that legalized gay marriage?

John Fritchey: I’m more concerned with the rights that come with the institution than with the institution itself. Accordingly, I support the idea that each and every right that’s extended to every couple by virtue of the institution of marriage be extended to same-sex couples as well. I don’t care what government or anybody else wants to call it. I think at the end of the day what I want to do is make sure is that we recognize the institution for everybody.

Read the entire interview at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/gay/lesbian/news/ARTICLE.php?AID=19998>.

2009 Primary Election: 5th Congressional District

Mike Quigley

BY YASMIN NAIR

Cook County Commissioner Mike Quigley is one of the many candidates running for Rahm Emanuel's seat in Congress. He recently spoke to Windy City Times about his views on gay marriage, hate crimes legislation, the environment (one of his pet issues) and his thoughts about a school for LGBTQ youth.

Windy City Times: What's your opinion on same-sex marriage?

Mike Quigley: I'm in favor of it because I don't think a government should be able to tell people who they can love and how to express it. From a purely equality point of view, there are thousands of rights that derive from marriage and I think it's abhorrent to deny people their rights. I was the author and sponsor of the domestic partnership registry, which is as close as a state law as we could get in Cook County.

WCT: What is your stand on Don't Ask, Don't Tell?

MQ: I don't understand why we're so fascinated with this. I don't understand why someone's orientation affects their ability to serve their country. Obviously, there are thousands of [LGBT] members who are serving in the military and I think it's abusive that we somehow discriminate against someone who is willing to serve their country. I think Barry Goldwater's the one who said, "Just because you aren't straight doesn't mean you can't shoot straight." The Israeli army doesn't seem to have a problem with this, and they're a pretty crack outfit.

WCT: What is your stand on adding sexual orientation to hate-crimes legislation?

MQ: I helped draft various forms of hate crimes legislation in the past and I think, overall, it needs to be strengthened at the federal level. I just think there are just too many homophobes out there in Congress that probably think it's okay for someone to be beaten or hurt and have that exacerbated because it's a hate crime.

WCT: Progressive organizations like the Audre Lorde Project and the American Friends Service Committee are critical of hate crimes legislation, especially with regard to penalty enhancement. They feel that these laws only increase the rates of incarceration, especially among the poor and minorities. What's your view about that?

MQ: I guess I don't understand it. A hate crime is a hate crime. I think prisons are too filled with people who are drug users. If you want to reduce the prison population, you should start with people who have addictions and they should be diverted to treatment rather than incarceration. We criminalize the mentally ill. But I think that if someone commits a hate crime, they're dangerous and I have no problems increasing their penalties.

WCT: What do you think of the idea that hate-crimes legislation punishes thought and not actions?

MQ: I guess I still don't get it. If your statement about what they say is their point, that we're overcrowding prisons, I think we're overcrowding prisons through different actions, through drugs and mental illness. I don't have a problem increasing penalties for hate crimes.

WCT: What do you think about the idea of an LGBTQ school?

MQ: I understand that there's some difference of opinion within the GBLT community. My attitude is: I'm in favor of this high school if the community thinks it's a helpful, good idea. I understand the incidents and issues as it re-



Mike Quigley.

lates to the teenage kids who are discriminated against. In the end, however they want to sort this out—in favor of or against—I'd support it. My inclination is to be in favor of the school if it helps.

WCT: What about increasing anti-bullying measures?

MQ: I favor that as it relates to all issues, [LGBT] students. Bullying is a real serious problem across the board. I favor doing what we need to do in order to reduce and eliminate that problem in our schools. I know very few people who weren't bullied at one point or another; it has a long-lasting impact on many people.

WCT: Could you talk about your issues with Sara Feigenholtz?

MQ: In the end, I think it's pretty obvious Sara did a negative poll accusing people of real negative stuff. And I'm not sure if Fritchey did it or didn't do it. I think in the end what the public wants is for someone to acknowledge it. If you did it, and you think it was okay—say so. If you did something that, upon reflection, you thought was a mistake, you say so. I think we all move on. Comparisons are one thing. You can say, "Look, I voted against taxes, he voted for taxes": That's fair game. But the sort of hidden, behind-the-scenes last-minute negative attacks—I hope we refrain from doing that and let this be a clean campaign at a time when the public is desperate for a cleaner game of politics.

WCT: What differentiates you from Rahm Emanuel?

MQ: I'd be more focused on transit, on local politics. I think Rahm is really partisan. He's very involved in national politics to elect core Democrats; he can destroy Republicans. I would seek more bipartisan efforts to get us to the problems we face.

WCT: Is there a particular issue that you're keen to work on?

MQ: I got into this business because of the environment. The environment does touch all the other issues as well. For example, energy. If we're able to reduce our energy consumption and become more sustainable, look at everything else it touches. It reduces health care costs by reducing air pollution and global warming. It reduces dependence on foreign oil, it helps with national security issues and it drives down the cost of our energy which saves money and helps the economy. I've probably passed a dozen major ordinances dealing with the environment, from smoke-free Chicago to green buildings to green fleets of cars, to mandatory recycling, green practices. The issue affects not just us but our kids and our grandkids and every other aspect of our lives.

See www.quigleyforcongress.com.

Read the entire interview online at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.

Patrick O'Connor

BY PAUL MARINKOVICH

Democrat, Patrick O'Connor, is an attorney, an alderman for the 40th Ward and a candidate with more than 25 years of political experience who is running to fill the Fifth Congressional District seat. In this Windy City Times interview, O'Connor spoke on his experience, the economy, infrastructure and the LGBT issue surrounding same-sex marriage.

Windy City Times: First, can you tell me a little bit about yourself and your background in city government?

Patrick O'Connor: Sure. I am a lifelong resident in the Fifth Congressional District, I've lived in the same neighborhood since I was eight years old. I am married for 31 years; I've got five children—three in college, one in law school, and one that is out. I've been in government; I was elected at the age of 28 to represent the 40th ward. I've been re-elected successfully since that period of time. I've been involved with the community and neighborhood stuff, pretty much all of my life. I am an attorney; I've practiced with firms downtown until I was elected. Then I became private practice so that I could keep my skills up and obviously, with five children the extra income was important. I've gotten involved in this race because, quite honestly, I have been fairly successful at representing the community that I've been elected. I view the opportunity to go to congress as just expanding the neighborhood I've been elected to represent.

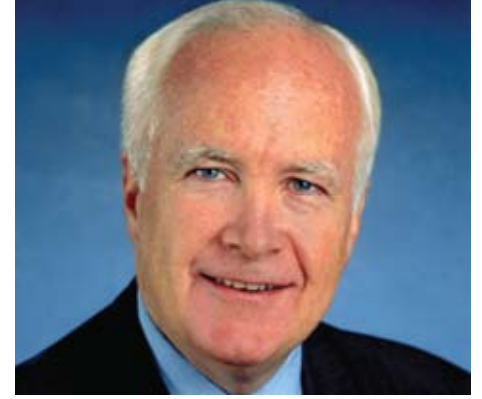
WCT: Why do you feel you are the most qualified for this position?

POC: Here is what I think the distinction is between myself and the other candidates—and there are a lot of other good people running for the office—but no one who is running for this office has the experience in working with the federal government that I do. Chicago is the end user of money that comes from the federal government, comes from the state of Illinois [and] comes from the county. We're the end users; I know the effect federal dollars have on a local budget. None of the other people in the race understands the effects of federal programs on communities as I do, because we work with them all the time. None of them has gone to Washington to lobby for transportation and education as I have. These are areas that I have been working for many years for the people I represent in the city of Chicago and the city of Chicago as a whole. Understanding how interaction works, having spend money from Washington, having to allocate it through budgets—I just think that separates me from the pack.

WCT: What are some important issues people should consider when selecting a candidate for Congress?

POC: Obviously, people will determine what they are looking for in a congressman. What I would tell them is, what they should be looking for in this economic time is somebody who can go into Congress without a huge learning curve. You're looking for somebody who can go into Congress and have the ability to bring things into the district from a stimulus package this is going to be spending an awful lot of money in this country.

The stimulus bill is a lot of infrastructure and if you look at what I've done in my own community as far as infrastructure, I've brought in over \$150 million of new buildings in my community—all city money—not state, not federal. The



Alderman Patrick O'Connor

best performing high school in the state, Northside College Prep, is in my community. Every school in my district has received renovations and additions. I have a new library, a new police station; I have a new firehouse and we've added to parks. All of this has been accomplished because my belief is that people are entitled to see tangible evidence of their tax dollars at work. I have been successful at this level, and if you're trying to figure out how successful somebody will be at doing things in the future, I think that looking at how successful they've been in the past is important.

WCT: You touched on the economy and the stimulus bill. Can you tell me your views on President Obama's stimulus package?

POC: I do agree with the president that the stimulus package needed to be, not just a hard-hat package, it is not just infrastructure—but putting the money into education, trying to work on creating new jobs in other sectors, because these all have positive effects on the economy. Some people have criticized that some of the projects won't come on line for a couple of years and therefore should not be included in the package. But that shows a remarkable lack of understanding of how projects actually get done.

WCT: You have a reputation as being an advocate for "the people." Tell me what your views on the LGBT community, in regards to same-sex marriage.

POC: I support the civil-union concept wholeheartedly. I've always felt that this was a civil-rights issue and if you look at the legal rights that are intended to a marriage, those legal rights have nothing to do with church or religion; they have to do with people's money, estates, their ability to have heirs and next of kin—access to health care—all these things are fundamental rights. That is the position this needs to be taken. A lot of people associate the term "marriage" as a religious institution, and then you bring in all the religious rights, lefts, and centers. If you talk about the civil rights portion of it, and if you say "civil unions," which essentially gives you the intended rights of a heterosexual marriage, that in my opinion, is where the country needs to move.

WCT: How do you feel about the ENDA [the Employment Non-discrimination Act]?

POC: I am in favor of ending discrimination. When we passed the human-rights ordinance in Chicago, that is basically what it said: "You cannot discriminate on jobs, in housing, or in any-way based upon a person's gender, sexual preference, or identity." That is a clear and consistent message from where I was when we passed the human-rights ordinance to where I am today.

See www.oconnorforcongress.com.

As a matter of 'Fat'...



AIDSCare held its "Fat Saturday Ball: Nocturne" Feb. 21 at the Stan Mansion, 2408 N. Kedzie. More than 400 guests enjoyed various types of entertainment, such as the Belmont Burlesque Review, Hot Toddy, Invision Psychics, classical guitarist Mitch Lavin, Prizm Entertainment and mime Greg Stegmeyer. Photos by Steve Starr

2nd Billy Joel/Elton John show added

Billy Joel and gay icon Sir Elton John, the most successful and longest-running concert pairing in pop history, will reunite for their Face 2 Face tour Tuesday, July 21, at Wrigley Field, the home of the Chicago Cubs.

However, a second show—taking place Thursday, July 16, at 7 p.m.—has been added.

The singers open each concert on the tour with a series of duets, playing twin pianos and trading vocals. Each artist then performs a set with his own band. A grand finale brings the two superstars and their supporting musicians back together for a closing encore.

Tickets are \$55-\$175. Visit www.tickets.com or call 800-THE-CUBS.

Or Chadash sponsoring T-shirt design contest

Congregation Or Chadash—a Chicago synagogue that has been serving the LGBT community for over 30 years—is sponsoring a T-shirt design contest.

The goal is to have the T-shirts available for participants marching with Or Chadash at this year's Pride Parade. Entrants may submit more than one design. The contest ends Saturday, Feb. 28. The design must include the Or Chadash logo (in dark blue, light blue or black).

The winning designer will receive \$100, and the winner will be announced at the Or Chadash annual gala dinner on Saturday, March 14.

E-mail office@OrChadash.org or visit www.OrChadash.org for more information.

Holy Trinity showing 'For the Bible...'

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 3609 N. Magnolia, will show the documentary *For the Bible Tells Me So* on Sunday, March 1, at 6:30 p.m. The movie focuses on homosexuality and biblical scripture.

There will also be a post-film discussion led by Rev. David Olson.

Other upcoming events include showings of *Call to Witness* (March 15 at 6:30 p.m.) and *Fish Can't Fly* (March 29 at 6:30 p.m.), which cover themes similar to those in "For the Bible." See www.holytrinitychicago.org.

BEHIV leather event Feb. 28

For the second year, Better Existence with HIV (BEHIV), will partner with Chicago area members of CLAW (Cleveland Leather Awareness Weekend) Nation for a fundraiser to support BEHIV's programs.

This year's event will be Saturday, Feb. 28, 10 p.m.-12 a.m., in the Club Room of Touché, 6412

N. Clark. Admission is \$25 per person or \$40 per couple.

Visit <http://clawinfo.org/clawnation.html> for more info.

'Chicago Takes Off' set for March 7

The third annual Test Positive Aware Network striptease event known as Chicago Takes Off will take place Saturday, March 7, at the Park West, 322 W. Armitage.

There will be two shows, at 7:30 and 10:30 p.m.

Actor/entertainer Miss Coco Peru, in her first appearance in Chicago, will host the event. Tickets for Chicago Takes Off are \$50-\$300. Visit www.chicagotakesoff.org or call 773-989-9400 ext. 233.

In addition, 17 participants from various LG-BT-friendly bars have signed up to take it off online at www.chicagotakesoff.org/bar-lesque.html. As participants raise more money online, they'll take off more clothing.

PROP 8 from cover

series of actions against the hotel chain after gays discovered that Doug Manchester, owner of the Manchester Hyatt in San Diego, had donated \$125,000 to Prop 8.

A search for contributors to the pro-Prop 8 campaign turns up 10 donations. Kermit King gave the largest amount, \$25,000, while Mark Faase gave \$100. A search for opponents of the measure turns up 210 donations.

If even Chicagoans are willing to donate against the measure, it's clear that the issue of Prop 8 resonates with LGBT people across the country. For many LGBTs, protesting the donors who contributed is one way to indicate that they are ready to publicly call out people whose actions they construe as homophobic. But the issue of public naming and shaming raises concerns about the ethics of the same. Is this tactic simply an essential part of participatory democracy? Are there constitutional reasons why such information should not be made public?

Ed Yohnka, director of communications and public policy for the American Civil Liberties Union, told Windy City Times that such information should be kept public: "It would be better if we had a public financing system, but we don't. There is a compelling interest in the context of assuring that there is transparency and not corruption that is linked to campaign contributions, something we can all understand in Illinois." Yohnka said that people can act anonymously in a number of situations, such as when they pass out flyers at a public gathering, without revealing their identities or post comments on a newspaper Web site.

He discussed the central issues around the question of disclosure: "Donors have every right to participate in the political process by giving money. But you don't have an expectation of privacy when you donate to a campaign."

Are there serious downsides to revealing names? A December op-ed in the Wall Street Journal by John R. Lott, Jr., and Bradley Smith pointed out that, in the 1950s, "Southern states sought to obtain membership lists of the NAACP in the name of the public's 'right to know'" and that "[s]uch disclosure would have destroyed the NAACP's financial base in the South and opened its supporters to threats and violence." Yohnka's response to this argument is that "[i]t's a good point, but not a good analogy." He added: "Those issues are issues of association. There's no danger that [association] will corrupt or change or alter an electoral process that's fundamental to democracy, as opposed to contributing millions and millions of dollars to a particular campaign that could have an adverse effect."

John D'Emilio, a professor of history at the

University of Illinois at Chicago, also believed that donor information should be kept public. However, he was wary of the current backlash against donors: "I completely understand the desire of people who are angry and frustrated and annoyed at these right-wing campaigns against marriage." But he added that he was troubled by "the idea that to aim sanction at people who contribute really implies a political strategy based on the values of intimidation and winning instead of persuasion and winning over. Not that you necessarily should be trying to win over the contributors to a campaign against you, but you should be trying to win over people to your side. I understand the impulse on the one hand; on the other I don't feel that it provides you anything more than short-term emotional satisfaction. It doesn't feel like a political strategy."

D'Emilio, whose work has involved the analysis of gay movement-building, also saw broader issues. Asked about the role of the tactics of disclosure in contemporary gay organizing, he pointed out that it was part of a context where "the marriage issue has been moved forward through court cases which don't require political organizing. It just requires a couple and lawyers. And then all these other things have happened in response. Lots of people don't mobilize and organize around marriage."

Indeed, seen in this light, the question of disclosure is not about whether or not it is ethical. Calling the ethics of disclosure into question is more of a strategy of distraction used by those who would like to keep the information private. However, it seems, the disclosure of names and the backlash against donors is part of the ways in which contemporary organizing around gay marriage is based on a reactive rather than a pro-active mode.

Still, for those Chicagoans who donated to defeat Prop 8, giving money was an attempt to correct what they saw as a homophobic measure. Windy City Times attempted to speak to several of the Chicago donors to Prop 8, but none of them responded. Not surprisingly, people who gave money to defeat the measure were more forthcoming. Sanjiv Sarwate is an attorney who donated \$300 to the effort to defeat Prop 8. Why would an Illinois resident contribute to a cause in California? Sarwate said, "I recognized that California was potentially a major battleground, being the state of its size, and [I hoped] it could influence action in other states." Like the others, he was unsympathetic to those who claim threats of intimidation: "I can see how they might feel they are being harassed, but at the same time they did inject themselves into a political issue by giving a donation."

In the coming weeks, there will be more articles on those who contributed for and against Prop 8.

Thursday, March 5
7:30 p.m.
Book Release Party
Achy Obejas
Ruins

Friday, March 6
7:30 p.m.
Emily Mendelhall, editor
and local contributors
Global Health Narratives:
A Reader for Youth



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WORLD ROUNDUP

BY REX WOCKNER

Nepali gays celebrate Valentine's Day in public square

Dozens of GLT people celebrated Valentine's Day with a public demonstration in Nepal's prominent Basantapur Durbar Square in central Katmandu.

The day will henceforth also be known as Pink Triangle Day in Nepal, the activists said.

"Our community needs more than one celebration per year to keep us going and growing," said openly gay Member of Parliament Sunil Babu Pant. "Pink Triangle Day could provide a perfect midwinter lift to our spirits."

Moscow Pride seeks emergency hearing

Moscow Pride activists went to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France, Feb. 13 to plead for emergency consideration of their languishing cases stemming from Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov's repeated bans of gay pride events over the past three years.

The group also joined with around 50 local activists to stage a public protest in which one banner read, "Need there be deaths at Moscow gay pride for the European Court to react?"

When gays have staged unauthorized pride events in Moscow, in spite of Luzhkov's bans, they have been beaten by anti-gay protesters and police.

During a week of lobbying, the Moscow delegation also held meetings with representatives of the Council of Europe (CoE, which oversees the court), members of the European Parliament, and human rights officials from the European Commission.

"Meetings at the CoE were tough," said Moscow Pride founder Nikolai Alekseev. "It was in fact the unpleasant surprise of all this trip. At the CoE, we were told, basically, to put less pressure, that we have to wait, that in several years things will change, that they work 'hard' to make it evolve."

"There is a clear gap between Strasbourg and what people suffer in the whole of Europe," he said. "By staying global, this organization does not act locally. We all got the impression that the CoE is completely powerless in front of Russia."

The activists also staged a demonstration at UN headquarters in Geneva and met with officials from the UN Human Rights Commission.

"One of the conclusions we made after our meeting with this institution is that there is a gap between what we, as activists, face in our countries and what they usually know," said Nikolai Baev, a member of the Russian delegation.

Luzhkov has called gay pride parades "satanic" and "weapons of mass destruction," and said he will never allow them in Moscow.

Phelps banned from entering UK

Anti-gay Kansas pastor Fred Phelps and his daughter Shirley have been banned from entering the United Kingdom, the Telegraph reported Feb. 19.

The "God hates fags" team had announced plans to picket a performance of The Laramie Project on Feb. 20 at a school arts center in Basingstoke, Hampshire.

A UK Border Agency spokesman said: "Both these individuals have engaged in unacceptable behavior by inciting hatred against a number of communities. ... We will continue to stop those who want to spread extremism, hatred and violent messages in our communities from coming to our country."

In an interview with the BBC, Shirley Phelps-Roper stated: "There are members of WBC (Westboro Baptist Church) that are not named Phelps. ... Unless they intend to begin checking the bare backsides of every person coming into that country to find that tattoo that says 'Property of WBC,' they will have no way of identifying who is from WBC."

In the end, a single, unidentified demonstrator showed up and was chased off by about 50 counterprotesters, the BBC reported.

Burundi plan to ban gay sex dies in Senate

A move to ban gay sex in the Central African nation of Burundi was rejected by the Senate Feb. 16 after having passed the National Assembly unanimously in November.

"Burundi's Senate, after significant pressure and 'heated debate,' today rejected the proposed amendment to criminalize homosexual conduct. Victory—for the moment," said Scott Long, head of Human Rights Watch's LGBT Rights Division.

The proposal, part of a much larger bill, set a punishment of between three months and two years in prison, along with a large fine, for engaging in consensual adult gay sex.

The Senate and Assembly must now form a commission to reconcile the two versions of the bill before sending it to President Pierre Nkurunziza.

"Any reconciliation could, potentially, reinstate the provision criminalizing same-sex conduct," said the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission. "Whatever the outcome, the fact that the majority of senators voted against the provision shows a growing recognition that all citizens are entitled to the full enjoyment of human rights irrespective of their sexual orientation."

Eighty-four of the world's 195 nations ban gay sex.

—Assistance: Bill Kelley

QUOTELINES

BY REX WOCKNER

"THE BUMBLING ONE HAS LEFT THE BUILDING. The banal demon has been forcibly sucked back into the horror-movie canister from whence he escaped eight years ago, and reburied in the back yard of your darkest Ann Coulter nightmare. Dubya, W, Shrub, the Decider, Chimp, Junior, Boy King, Smirk, he ambles no longer across the stage of our collective outrage. The easy punch line is no more. It raises the ultimate question for anyone in my line of work: What's a left-leaning columnist (or satirist, political cartoonist, opinionator, et al) to do without the best and finest target in a lifetime? How will I ever survive without the Shrubster to kick around so effortlessly? Where, pray tell, will I ever find such a wicked wealth of material again? It is no trivial query." — *San Francisco Chronicle* columnist Mark Morford, Jan. 30.

"TED HAGGARD AND HIS WIFE GAYLE APPEARED ON OPRAH yesterday and what a festival of nonsense and doubletalk it was. Haggard isn't straight, he isn't gay, he isn't bi, he's just 'got issues'. God made him this way, but God wants him to resist. Oh, and a monogamous heterosexual relationship is still the only way to go. For her part, Gayle trots out the old 'desire vs. behavior' theme—if ol' Teddy is only thinking about mansex, not doing it, then he's straight." — *Popular gay blogger Joe Jervis (Joe.My.God.)*, Jan. 29.

"I WATCHED THE WHOLE THING (TED HAGGARD ON OPRAH). I feel for Haggard—because he is trapped between who he is and his internalized belief that God cannot love him for who he is. But God can love him for being gay. And does love him for being gay. This is hard, I know. Accepting God's unconditional love for me was the hardest part of keeping hold of my Christian faith. My childhood and adolescence were difficult to the point of agony, an agony my own church told me was my just desert. But I saw in my own life and those of countless others that the suppression of these core emotions and the denial of their resolution in love always leads to personal distortion and compulsion and loss of perspective. Forcing gay people into molds they do not fit helps no one. It robs them of dignity and self-worth and the capacity for healthy relationships. It

wrecks family, twists Christianity, violates humanity." — *Gay writer Andrew Sullivan on his blog*, Jan. 30.

"PEOPLE LIKE TED HAGGARD, WHO HAVE GAY AFFAIRS, they say, 'I am not gay.' Because to them, 'gay' is dancing in your Speedo on



—Comedian
Kathy Griffin

Fifth Avenue in the Gay Pride Parade, living in Chelsea with your time-share in Fire Island." — *Alexandra Pelosi (daughter of U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi), who made a documentary about disgraced mega-church preacher Ted Haggard that is currently airing on HBO, to New York magazine*, Jan. 29.

"THE STEREOTYPICAL BOXES DON'T WORK FOR ME. My story's got some gray areas in it. And, of course, I'm sad about that but it's the reality." — *Ted Haggard, who resigned two years ago as president of the National Association of Evangelicals after being caught in an apparent gay-sex-and-drugs scandal, to the Associated Press on Jan. 9 when the wire service asked him to "define his sexual identity."*

"THERE ARE (GAY) EXPRESSIONS TO THIS DAY, I DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT THEY MEAN. I was having a conversation with a friend of mine two days ago, and this was the two of us, literally sitting in the living room of my house saying, 'Well, exactly what is a sloppy pig bottom?' ... There are many of my gay friends that use expressions that are so shocking that I think they're trying to fool me into thinking that they know what they mean. And I still don't really know what a daisy chain is." — *Comedian Kathy Griffin to the New York magazine HX*, Feb. 5.

—Assistance: Bill Kelley

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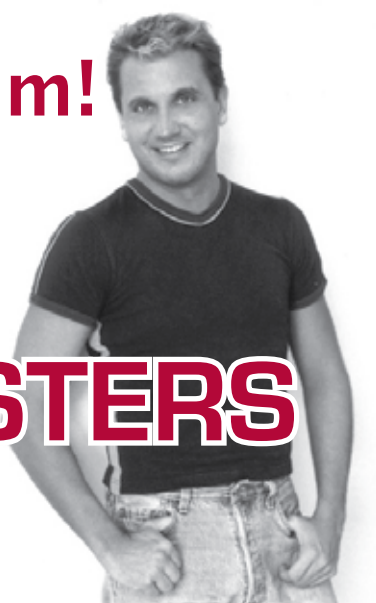
WINDY CITY TIMES

is Chicago's new home for
"filthy" gossip columnist

BILLY MASTERS

Page 20

Billy Masters
.com



QUOTE ON COMPILED BY ANDREW DAVIS

"HE FINALLY SAID HE APOLOGIZED TO THE GAY COMMUNITY. My question is, 'What is he apologizing for?' The fact that he can be married and cheat but gays cannot marry?" — *Former escort Mike Jones on the Rev. Ted Haggard (the man Jones exposed) in a statement to Windy City Times*, Jan. 29.

"BI-FURIOUS: ADJ.: ANGRY OVER SEEMINGLY DISINGENUOUS SAME-SEX EXPERIENTIA-TION. Provenance: Militant queer theorists. Usage: 'Just hearing that Katy Perry song makes my Advocate-reading friends bi-furious.'" — *Part of the December 2008 "Know + Tell" section of Details*.

"THERE WAS A LITTLE LESS PRESSURE AS A GAY MAN. But it's always hard to make a film

that's set in a social milieu." — *Milk director Gus Van Sant, when asked if he felt added pressure in making the film because he's gay, in the December 2008 issue of Details*.

"I NEVER HEARD THE WORD 'FAG' UNTIL I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL. I might have heard about homosexuals from Life magazine, but I never heard anything derogatory. Politically, it might have been discussed in my home. But it never landed. Did I know gay people? I later came to find out that there were gays in the theater world who were friendly with my family. I remember being at a party as a kid, and Paul Lynde telling my mother how sexy my father was, and thinking, 'What's that about?'" — *Oscar-winning Milk star Sean Penn, when asked "Did you know gay people as a kid?" in the Feb. 19 issue of Rolling Stone magazine*.

—Assistance: Vern Hester



ERICA MEINERS



THERESE QUINN

Queer eyes on what prize? Ending DADT

So, we've heard that Barack Obama is going to repeal the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy that prohibits gays and lesbians from serving openly in the military. As two queer teachers that have been working hard to arrest the militarism of education in Chicago—a public high school for every branch of the military, and two for the army (and not one of these with a Gay Straight Alliance for students), and over 10,000 youth from 6th to 12th grade participating in some form of military program in their public schools—we are not leaping with joy at this rumor. Our reluctance has our allies scratching their heads:

"Isn't this what you want?"

"Equal right to fight!"

"What a success for the gay rights movement!"

"I guess this solves the discrimination problem in military public schools, then."

"Gay kids can join up!"

Sure, we think uniforms are hot, but this—permitting out lesbians and gay men to enlist—was never the purpose of gay liberation, a movement aiming as tenaciously at peace as equal rights.

And for us, it's clear that overturning Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT) won't begin to address the public policy catastrophe of turning over our public schools, and some of our nation's poorest

youth, to the military.

We argue that the system of public education should remain a civilian system. This statement rests on three proposals. First, adults may choose to enlist; youth cannot. Next, schools should educate students for the broadest possibilities and choices; the military narrowly aims to prepare recruits. And last, schools should protect young people and nurture peace; but the military is contagiously violent. From the ugly revelations of Abu Ghraib, and the rash of sexual assaults on military women by men in service, to many veterans' post-service violence turned both inward and outward—its legacy of brutality is so vast that the Department of Defense might more aptly be called the Department of Destruction.

This proposed repeal, far from any big win, offers queers an important opportunity to think about our strategies and goals. Let's not unfurl our victory banner too quickly; instead, we should keep our queer eyes, and organizing, focused on the real prize: social justice.

Yes, gays, lesbians and transgendered folks are discriminated against and excluded from full participation in our society and its institutions, including schools (read any report about rates of violence against gay students or employment discrimination for out queer or non-gendering conforming school staff), military (DADT—enough said?), families (remember the 57% majority that passed the 2008 gay adoption ban in Arkansas) and religion (many religious colleges and universities ban homosexual students, staff, and faculty—legally!).

Add to this list the ease with which otherwise smart people, including President Obama, reserve marriage and all its attendant privileges for "one man and one woman" while also claiming they are "ferocious" defenders of gay rights—that's a fairly self-serving stance, isn't it? Yes, gays and lesbians still have a long way to go toward achieving...let's just call it "fully human status" in the United States.

The push to repeal DADT is, on the one hand, a no-brainer—all people should have all rights, right?

But this proposal can also be understood, and it is by us, as an attempt to remap what our social justice goals, as queers, should be—not the right to privacy and the right to public life, and certainly not the right to live lives free from

our nation's ever-present militarism and never-ending war. Instead, lesbians, gays, transgendered and bisexuals are encouraged to forget our historical places at the helm of social justice thinking and labor (to mention just a few, Jane Addams, Bayard Rustin, Barbara Jordan, and of course, Harvey Milk), constrict our vision and dreams, and just be happy for an opportunity to participate in a military that depends on poverty and permanent war to keep enlistment high.

Let's forget repealing DADT and cut right to the chase: Repeal the Department of Defense. What about establishing a Department of Peace, as Dennis Kucinich has already proposed? Let's pair that with bear brigades tossing pink batons (and, of course, an annual teddy bear picnic). Or, we can take up the mermaid parade as an organizing celebration, with its dress-up and float creation. Either of these fanciful, and very queer, forms would allow us all to play and create together, and each seems a better activity for a school to take up that pretend soldiering.

Then let's organize for some real social justice goals.

For starters, let's demand universal health-care, affordable housing, and meaningful living wage employment that supports flourishing, not merely subsisting, lives, for all.

We know we don't need 6th or 12th graders wearing military uniforms, marching with wooden guns on public school grounds. We don't need twelve year olds parsing military ranks or plotting battles. However, we could use more teens painting murals, stitching gowns, and writing code and lyrics. In short, we don't need child soldiers, but we could use more young artists.

A public school system that teaches peace and art, with fiercely equal opportunities for all students. We can see it now: painting classes, soccer clubs, computer gaming classes, drum-kits, comprehensive sexuality education, and musical theatre in every school. That's so excellently queer, and so very just.

Erica Meiners is an associate professor of education and women's studies at Northeastern Illinois University and a social-justice activist. Therese Quinn is an assistant professor of art education at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and director of the Bachelor in Fine Arts with Emphasis in Art Education program.



Providing support

Dear editor:

Holy Name Cathedral is the center of all things Catholic in Chicago. The recent fire that damaged its roof shocked and dismayed many Catholics and others in Chicago. Before the fire, the cathedral had just had its structure renovated. Certainly, many in the LGBT community would join their Catholic sisters and brothers in expressing their concern for the future of such a landmark in the City of Chicago.

The Chicago Rainbow Sash Movement wishes to reach out to the parishioners of Holy Name to assure them that they will be held in our prayers during the difficult weeks and months that will follow.

Circumstances, such as the cathedral fire, are tragedies but can also provide us with spaces for reflection on the uncertainty of this life, and how we should support one another on life's journey. The symbolism of fire is destruction and renewal.

Like the fire at the cathedral, there presently is a symbolic fire raging in the Church around issues of human dignity. Unfortunately, many gay folks, women who seek equal rights and victims of clergy sexual abuse see the vision of the Church hierarchy as a major problem.

However, we also see a church where many

believe the expression of sexuality should not be restricted to marriage and procreation, those who embrace ecumenical dialogue and people who believe in the primacy of conscience.

Pope Benedict XVI, for instance, makes war on the LGBT international community, while paradoxically admitting to the Church people such as Bishop Richard Williamson, who deny the existence of the Holocaust. Virtually all the good Pope John Paul II did to renew and reinvigorate Catholic-Jewish relations has been undone by his hand-picked successor, Pope Benedict XVI. The act of lifting the excommunication ban on Williamson and three other bishops who belong to the Society of Saint Pius X only stoke the flames of alienation so many feel.

Perhaps Cardinal Francis George should take advantage of the goodwill that is being directed at the archdiocese because of the cathedral fire, as an opportunity to reach to members of the LGBT Catholic community to begin a dialogue of compassionate listening, built on respect.

It is our hope that the cathedral will be rebuilt, and will once again regain its status as one of the spiritual hearts of Chicago.

Sincerely,

Joe Murray

Rainbow Sash Movement

Choice pro-choice candidates

LETTERS

To the editor:

Our pro-choice community is very fortunate in the upcoming Illinois' 5th Congressional District Democratic primary. The three frontrunners in this election share a common and important goal: to protect women's reproductive rights. They understand that choice is a public-health issue and a healthcare right for women across this country, and one that must be ardently protected.

Rep. Sara Feigenholtz, a state representative in the 12th district, has been a consistent voice and vote on issues of importance to our community. I know that she will continue to be so.

In the General Assembly, Rep. John Fritchey has been an unwavering leader on issues of importance to women. Time and time again, John has been a leader and champion for reproductive rights. I am confident he will always be so.

The work Cook County Commissioner Mike Quigley has done to ensure that all women have access to all reproductive services at Stroger Hospital is unquestioned. Quigley puts women first and protects an important resource for them in our community.

The Democratic voters in the 5th are very fortunate to have three strong pro-choice candidates in the March 3 special election. Whether Feigenholtz, Fritchey or Quigley win, *women* and their lives and health win.

—Marcena W. Love

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GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



Photo by John Oster

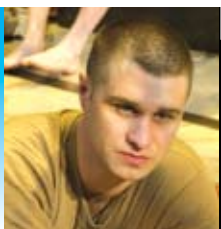
IN ARM'S WAY

Einstein (Doug Werder, left) and Picasso (Luke Daigle) have a spirited discussion in *Picasso* at the Lapin Agile. Read the review on page 12.

THEATER

'Glory' telling.
Page 13.

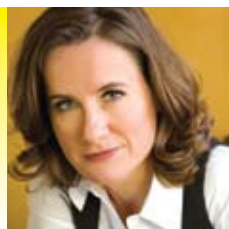
Photo courtesy of Writers' Theatre



MUSIC

Cruisin' for a Susan.
Page 15.

Photo by Asia Kepka



MOVIES

Penn-manship.
Page 21.

Photo by Phil Bray



Scottish Play Scott

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

News broke earlier this month that the Chicago production of Blue Man Group was downsized.

A few extra blue men and musicians were handed pink slips, causing TV newscasts to do a slew of "sign of the times" stories about a long-running commercial show like Blue Man Group letting go of workers just like corporate America.

While some people have grumbled about Blue Man Group overstaying its welcome at the Briar Street Theatre, I'm still thankful that it's running and helping to generate entertainment traffic to the Boystown neighborhood. Still, the layoff news was unsettling, especially in consideration of depressing non-profit arts news coming from other corners of the nation.

In the past few months, three regional opera companies have gone under. The global economic crisis proved to be the final death knell for Opera Pacific in Santa Ana, Calif., and Connecticut Opera in Hartford, Conn. (which isn't even offering refunds and is asking subscribers to write off the tickets as tax donations to help the company to pay off its debtors). Meanwhile, Baltimore Opera declared bankruptcy after canceling the rest of its season.

Even longtime theater companies aren't immune. It was a shock when Theatre de la Jeune Lune in Minneapolis (a 2005 Regional Theatre Tony Award-winner) shut down this past summer after 30 years of existence. The 35-year-old Carousel Dinner Theatre in Akron, Ohio, shuttered this past January, while the 59-year-old North Shore Music Theatre in Beverly, Mass., has already let go of 57 employees and is scrambling to raise \$4.5 million to pay off debts by the spring.

Worries about how the economic crisis might affect the Windy City prompted The League of



Blue Man Group. Photo by Darbe Rotach

Chicago Theatres to conduct a "fiscal health survey" of 70 area theaters. The survey results released this month were a mix of positive spin and dread about the future.

About 50 percent of the surveyed theaters reported increased or steady ticket sales, while 74 percent reported individual donations that were the same or higher than this time last year.

On the downside, the surveyed theaters reported plans to downsize their budgets for the fiscal year of 2010 in anticipation of funding being reduced as much as 60 percent from corporate, foundation and governmental sources.

"In this economic climate it is more important now than ever for our community to continue to support Chicago theatre," said League Executive Director Deb Clapp in a press statement. "We provide our neighborhoods with local en-

tertainment; we provide our schools with arts education and our students with opportunities to discover their own stories on stage."

Stimulating art

One bright spot for the arts comes with the Obama administration's \$787 billion economic stimulus package. An extra \$50 million was allocated to arts organizations on top of the \$145 million annual budget of the National Endowment for the Arts.

Sixty percent of that \$50 million is to go to individual projects by companies seeking grants from the NEA, while the remaining funds are to be distributed to state arts agencies and regional arts organizations.

While \$50 million is just a drop in the bucket when compared to what European countries

spend on the arts, it almost didn't make into the final stimulus package.

During debate in the Senate, an amendment was successfully added by U.S. Sen. Tom Coburn, R-Okla., that threatened the arts funding. Coburn lumped museums, theaters and art centers as undeserving of stimulus money along with casinos, swimming pools, zoos, aquariums and golf courses.

On Friday, Feb. 13, the arts groups and museums were deleted from that restricting amendment (hard luck to zoos and aquariums that will get no stimulus money).

Coming to the defense of the arts was U.S. Rep. David R. Obey, D-Wis. As quoted in The New York Times, Obey said, "You know what? There are five million people who work in the arts industry. And right now they have 12.5 percent unemployment—or are you suggesting that somehow if you work in that field, it isn't real when you lose your job, your mortgage or your health insurance? We're trying to treat people who work in the arts the same way as anybody else."

Guests of the W.P.A.?

Of course, with America facing what economists dub "the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression," one can be tempted to think of the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s. Otherwise known as the WPA, this federal New Deal program put artists to work specifically to artistically enrich the nation.

Loads of murals were painted in public buildings across the country, folk histories and songs were collected, while artists like Orson Wells came to the fore by staging innovative and groundbreaking productions.

We can only hope that Chicago's treasured arts organizations will survive the economic downturn. But at the very least, we know the Obama administration isn't ignoring the arts as part of its mission to stimulate America's economy.

THEATER REVIEW

Picasso at the Lapin Agile

Playwright: Steve Martin
At: St. Sebastian Players at
St. Bonaventure Catholic Church,
1625 W. Diversey
Phone: 773-404-7922; \$15
Runs through: March 8

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

"If [your story] is funny, you can sell a lot of books!" the waitress at the Lapin Agile tavern advises a young writer named Albert Einstein, whose Special Theory of Relativity proved a best-seller despite its lack of waggish repartee. Other authors have long heeded this precept, however, camouflaging potentially weighty contemplations under a thick veneer of slapstick, cross-talk and reliable merriment.

Sometimes it takes a half-century before their secret is found out (only in recent years has Neil Simon's talent been fully appreciated), but no wait was necessary to detect the intelligence behind comedian Steve Martin's salute to the second millennium. Though the scenario locates us in the *belle-époque* Paris of 1904, the sentiments expressed by the visitors on the day depicted—among them, Pablo Picasso and the aforementioned Einstein, along with various other eccentric figures—reflect hopes, fears and speculations not unlike those we encounter today in our first decade of a new century.

We in 2009 have the benefit of hindsight, however, giving us the option of smugly dismissing Picasso at the Lapin Agile as simple anachronism-fueled satire, and its sometimes arcane wordplay as geek-humor at best, cartoonish absurdity at worst. But director Steven Walanka is not content to merely let the play's brains leak through the laughs, instead instructing his actors to lend their material no more artifice than



Picasso at the Lapin Angle. Photo by John Oster

the characters themselves possess. Since any group of boho artists, in any century, can be assumed to include a number of affected posturers, no sacrifice of witticisms, smart or dumb, are necessary to maintain a suitably jocular ambience.

Church basements present their own architectural problems, but Matt Godlewski and Mike Patrick's scenic design expands the shallow stage by seating front-row spectators at cocktail tables presumably composing part of the Lapin Agile's interior—a conceit facilitated by frequent breaks with fourth-wall conventions (notably a cameo scene involving an intrusive art groupie, played by a different actress at every performance). The ensemble for this St. Sebastian Players production exhibits admirable discipline, never engaging in self-indulgent grandstanding (in particular, the bantamweight Luke Daigle, whose lusty Picasso is more than a

match for female skeptics taller and/or brawnier than he), rendering Martin's fanciful premise a fable not only for the time left before 2010, but for the ages to follow.

THEATER REVIEW

The White Airplane

Playwright: Darren Callahan
At: Polarity Ensemble at
Josephinum Academy, 1500 N. Bell
Phone: 800-838-3006; \$15
Runs through: March 22

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

The givens of the play—the basic information provided by it—are that it has four scenes taking place on three different continents and in the air. The scenes offer characters of different races and vastly different socio-economic strata united by a *deja vu* sense that each is a different person in a different place at the same time as he is here/now. Each scene contains violence ranging from stabbings in two scenes to apparent plane crashes. And each key character has a vision of seeing—or being inside—an all-white airplane that others cannot see. Beyond that, author Darren Callahan connects very few dots in a work that is offered as surreal. In the sense that it plays out as an irrational dreamscape, *The White Airplane* is surreal. But it isn't a work of surrealism in the sense of the formal artistic movement. It is, perhaps, more *non sequitur* than surreal.

Truth is, I found my interest—which was keen at first—steadily waning as the play progressed because: (a) Callahan doesn't provide any characters one can care about and (b) he simply doesn't offer enough information for viewers to make sense of the puzzle. Is the white airplane real? Does it crash in the first and fourth scenes? Is it a harbinger of death? Is soul transposition possible? Does any of it matter to me? By offering a conundrum, but not extracting even a spiritual or emotional value from it, the play leaves its audiences twisting in the wind. Callahan shifts radically in tone from scene to scene, from the opening moments of British sex farce to a sober ending that combines *The Twilight Zone* with Sartre. It is, perhaps, too much style and too little information. I think the play wants to be a comedy; it certainly *should* be a comedy, but I don't think that's what Callahan intends.

OK, so you get the idea that *The White Airplane* is quirky and I can't figure it out. Fair enough. Director Susan Padveen puts a generally capable cast of six (four principals and two extras) through their paces in snappy fashion,

but with only two dimensions to play (forget the space-time continuum for a moment) it's difficult to access the competence of the acting. It's energetic, sometimes funny, sometimes merely blustery. To the show's credit, stereotypes are avoided in Scene 2, in which non-Asians play Asians. Before the show and between scenes, the audience is greeted with air travel trappings which are engaging and fun. And scenic designer Jason Epperson has labored with some wit—if not always with complete success—to create four distinct settings in a difficult space with little stage technology to help.

Is *The White Airplane* ambitious, pretentious or merely silly? You decide.

THEATER REVIEW

The Robber Bridegroom

Playwright: book and lyrics by
Alfred Uhry, music by Robert Waldman,
based on a novella by Eudora Welty
At: Griffin Theatre at Theatre
Building Chicago, 1225 W. Belmont
Phone: 773-327-5252; \$15-\$25
Runs through: March 29

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

If you vaguely recall seeing elements of *The Robber Bridegroom* in several other musicals, it's not your imagination. But despite the title character's reputation for thievin' ways, be assured that its creators, Robert Waldman and Alfred Uhry, came by their bounty through honest channels.

The plot traces its origins to the Brothers Grimm—or, more recently, to American author Eudora Welty, whose 1942 novella changed the locale from the Black Forest of Germany to the scrub woodlands of her native Mississippi, incorporating its regional folklore to that of the 18th-century European fables. But Waldman and Uhry (the latter of whom would later achieve fame for his accounts of life in the Deep South—e.g., *Driving Miss Daisy*) recognized the commercial potential of old-world myth coupled with slickly arranged pop-folk music. The result was a fast-and-fluffy romp whose score of ersatz Bluegrass ditties and roster of bucolic stereotypes earned critical acclaim and a Tony award in 1976—long before, take note, Stephen Sondheim's *Into the Woods* set the tone for future fractured-fairy-tale knockoffs.

What tickled urbane New Yorkers in the mid-1970s, however, is not the same as what thrilled fans of Appalachian gothic yarns in the early 1940s, or, for that matter, what appeals to mid-western audiences in 2009. And so even under the capable direction of Paul S. Holmquist, this Griffin Theatre production never quite decides whether it wants to be a reinvention of classical themes or a giddy Hee Haw spoof. Uhry and Waldman seem to have been likewise ambivalent, juxtaposing speeches steeped in homespun poetry with song lyrics flaunting decidedly modern idioms.

Fortunately, the almost nonstop parade of melodies eliminates any necessity for attending to the story—which, for the record, involves a rich man's beautiful daughter, her jealous stepmother, a gentleman bandit, a simpleton, a pair of ruffians and copious backcountry sorcery. A nimble string band led by Timothy Ryan Fisher, along with Heather Haneman's exuberant barn dances, keep the pace brisk and high-stepping, while Cameron Brune, Caroline Fourmy, Amanda Hartley and an effusive ensemble skip the line between innocence and irony without a misstep. With this much dazzle coming at us for 105 minutes at the close range facilitated by Theatre Building Chicago's West Stage, how could anyone *not* have themselves a rollicking no-brain good time to brighten up a chilly spring?

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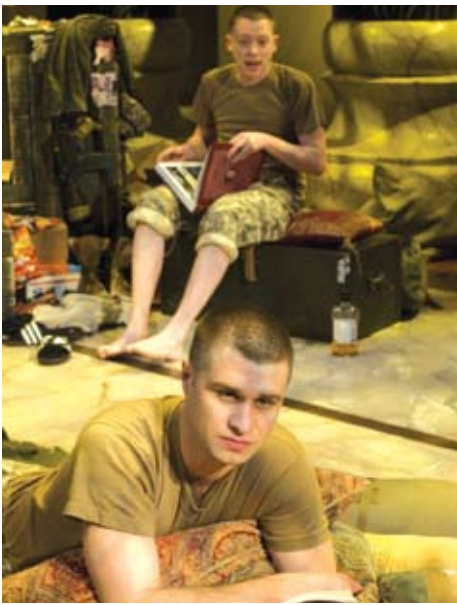
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The White Airplane.



Old Glory. Photo courtesy of Writers' Theatre

THEATER REVIEW

Old Glory

Playwright: Brett Neveu

At: Writers' Theatre, 325 Tudor, Glencoe

Phone: 847-242-6000; \$40-\$65

Runs through March 29

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Brett Neveu's *Old Glory* starts out like a mystery—suggesting that we're in for an expose of a military cover-up regarding a U.S. soldier's death in Iraq. But by the end, *Old Glory* becomes much more about resignation and people realizing that doing "the right thing" isn't always the best thing.

Neveu's bait-and-switch can be a disappointment—especially since the implied conspiracy at the top of the play gets very little traction while the "mystery" for the audience turns out to be which soldier will end up killing the other soldier.

Still, there's a lot to recommend in *Old Glory*, which receives a wonderfully acted world premiere under William Brown's assured direction at Writers' Theatre. *Old Glory* is the final play in Neveu's Trilogy: '04-'05-'06, which previously featured *Harmless* (staged at Timeline Theatre) and *Weapon of Mass Impact* (presented by A Red Orchid Theatre).

It's not necessary to have seen the previous plays, since each is a self-contained drama tied in one way or another to the U.S. after 9/11. *Old Glory* rotates between three confrontations.

The first features two American guys in a Berlin bar making small talk. Peter (Philip Earl Johnson) is a world-weary career military veter-

an who questions why an agitated guy from New Mexico named Torlief (Tom Mcelroy) has sought him out. It turns out that Torlief wants answers from Peter for the real reason behind his son's death in Iraq.

Then there's a meeting in the New Mexico home of Torlief's wife, Margaret (Penny Slusher), and Scott (LaShawn Banks), an ex-soldier who served alongside her son in Iraq. Scott has some awkward truths to share with Margaret, which causes her to have a big emotional outburst.

The final confrontation is between the soldiers Rat (Marcus Truschinski) and Goss (Steve Haggard), who are sharing a room in what looks to be a liberated Saddam Hussein presidential palace (an effectively designed set by Keith Pitts). Goss is obsessed with his graphic novels and is more of a live wire, while Rat appears to be more pensive and shaken up by the brutality of their patrols.

Though Neveu provides a lot of great dialogue and material for each of these actors to sink their teeth into, they're ultimately let down by the play as a whole. It just doesn't coalesce well.

But as the '06 play of Neveu's trilogy, *Old Glory* does reflect the resignation and regret that many Americans had after three years of U.S. involvement in Iraq. People may have done what they felt "the right thing" was following 9/11, but the outcomes proved to be more complex and ambiguous as shown by Neveu's emotionally worn characters in *Old Glory*.

Tony-winning composer appearing

Theatre Building Chicago, 1225 W. Belmont, will conduct a "Meet The Artist" event with Tony Award-winning composer/lyricist Mark Hollmann Monday, March 23, at 7 p.m.

Hollmann was a force behind *Urinetown*, which won three Tony Awards in 2002 and nine Drama Desk nominations in 2001.

This event is free, but seating is limited, so reservations are strongly encouraged. Call the Theatre Building Chicago box office at 773-327-5252.

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—Chicago Tribune

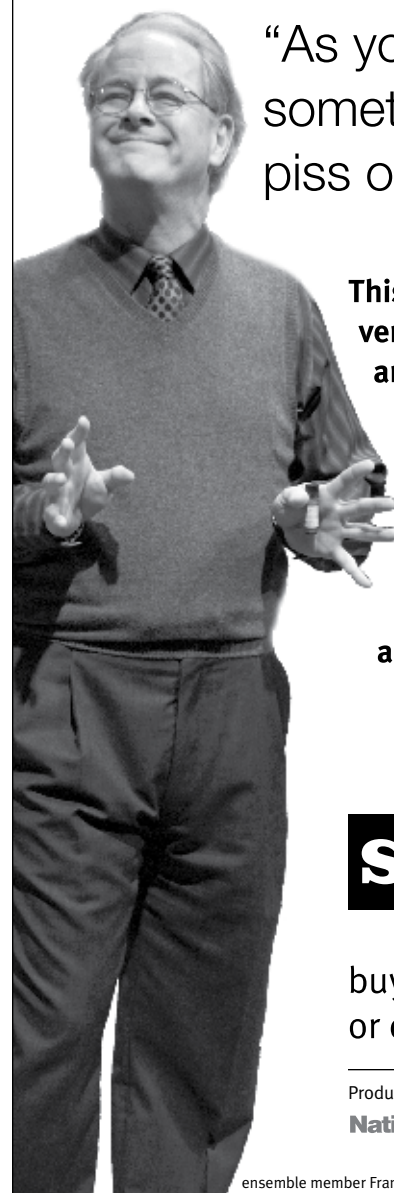


by Yasmina Reza

translated by Christopher Hampton

directed by ensemble member Rick Snyder

featuring ensemble members Ian Barford (4/7 - 6/7), K. Todd Freeman (thru 3/13) and Francis Guinan with Joe Dempsey (3/14 - 6/7) and John Procaccino (thru 4/5)



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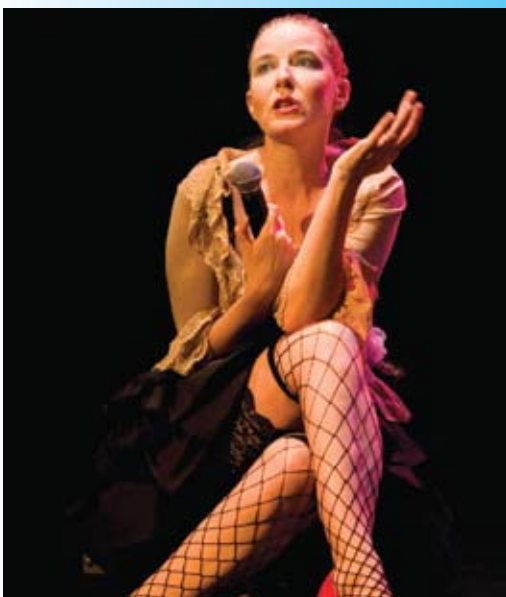
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SPOTLIGHT



The lives of outlaw women through the ages are celebrated in Heather Woodbury's one-woman show, *The Last Days of Desmond "Nani" Reese: A Stripper's History of the World*. Set in the near future, *The Last Days...* follows an "ethno-femino-dance anthropologist" who seeks the half-mad, 108-year-old legendary stripper of the title to help with her dissertation. *The Last Days...* plays 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 3, at Steppenwolf Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted. Tickets are \$30; \$20 for students. Call 312-335-1650 or visit www.steppenwolf.org. Photo of Heather Woodbury in *The Last Days...* courtesy of Steppenwolf Theatre

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THEATER REVIEW

Art

Playwright: Yasmina Reza
At: Steppenwolf Upstairs Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted
Phone: 312-335-1650; \$20-\$70
Runs through: June 7

BY CATEY SULLIVAN

From a white painting of white lines—essentially a blank canvas—Yasmina Reza spins a story as rich as a thousand intricate tapestries. The wholly engrossing 80-minute play isn't about whether the painting is any good—it's about whether decades-old friendships can withstand the inevitable changes that occur as years pass and people change.

It is also a hilarious, biting look at the inevitable, navel-gazing neurosis that only middle-aged men of a certain comfortable income can afford to engage in. Like the crisis-ridden, self-absorbed men of *Sideways*, Marc, Serge and Ivan would be utterly insufferable were you to run into them in real life. On the stage, however, they are wickedly funny, skewering portraits of bewildered boys-at-heart, trying to make sense of the men they've become and the grown-up lives they're leading.

The story takes off with the white painting. Serge has paid an outlandish amount for it, and Marc—one of his oldest, dearest friends—is appalled. As Serge talks about The Artist in capital letters, and tosses about the term “deconstruction” like a pretentious grad student, Marc is forced to wonder: How could he possibly have anything in common with a humorless, elitist snob who would pay thousands for a blank canvas?

The third, essential piece in this picture is Ivan, a walking, talking bundle of obsessive compulsive anxieties. Straddling a middle ground in a disastrous attempt to keep the peace between Serge and Marc, Ivan becomes an all-purpose

punching bag.

On the surface, Reza's play sounds as facile as a cut-rate sitcom. But directed by Rick Snyder and featuring a trio of understated powerhouses, “Art” is anything but.

For one thing, the script crackles with intelligence from opening to closing monologue—both Marc's, and both delivered with a thousand points of sharp subtlety by Francis Guinan. The material in between is both exploration and revelation: That white canvas contains a world entire unto itself, and watching Marc, Serge (John Procaccino) and Ivan (the incomparable K. Todd Freeman) try to find their way in it is endlessly engaging.

Snyder navigates the terrain with a sharp ear for authenticity and—despite several full-throttle meltdowns by Ivan—a light touch. The cast is pitch perfect, from Serge's condescending gestures as he instructs Marc to “read Seneca,” to Ivan's panicked hysteria over the minutiae of planning a wedding. (Speaking of which: Freeman has a monologue about invitations that—in the best way possible—is an utter show-stopper.)

Art isn't epic or conventionally spectacular—the set (beautifully done by Antje Ellermann) is confined to two minimalist rooms, the plot—with one whopper of an endgame exception—pivots on dialogue rather than action. Yet there's no question but that this production is immensely satisfying from start to finish.

Musical Mondays at Drury Lane

New Musical Mondays performances are taking place at Drury Lane, 175 E. Chestnut.

“Ac-cent-tchu-ate the Positive: the Music of Johnny Mercer” will run March 9.

All shows begin at 7:30 p.m. at Drury Lane Theatre Water Tower Place. Tickets are \$25; call the box office at 312-642-2000 or visit www.ticketmaster.com.

CRITICS' PICS

Dying City, Next Theatre, through March 8. Christopher Shinn's uncomfortable drama about betrayal and loss works on both a personal and national level in examining post-9/11 America. Go to see some fine performances from Colburn Goss and Nicole Wiesner. SCM

Living Green, Victory Gardens Theatre, through March 1. The family facing relocation conflicts in Gloria Bond Clunie's drama are African-American. But in a nation founded on the promise of social mobility, the discussions engendered by their dilemma reflect an American experience crossing demographic lines. MSB.

Not Enough Air, TimeLine Theatre, through March 22. Using the expressionistic style of 1920's author Sophie Treadwell, this play examines Treadwell herself and her hit play *Machinal*, a break-through in the portrayal of women. It's an intriguing and very well-acted show. JA

Rouw siert Electra (Mourning Becomes Electra), Toneelgroep Amsterdam at Goodman Theatre, through Feb. 28. Don't look for Valentine's Day schmaltz in this love story. The renowned Danish group distills Eugene O'Neill's adaptation of an Orestian tragedy down to its raw, hypersexualized and emotionally violent essence. CS

—By Abarnabel, Barnidge, Morgan and Sullivan

NUNN ON ONE

Julius Thomas III: Simply a-muse-ing

BY JERRY NUNN

Xanadu skated onto the Drury Lane Theatre, 175 E. Chestnut, stage this past January and continues on for an open run. A standout in the cast is Julius Thomas III, who plays Terpsichore (the muse of dance) as well as Young Danny, Hermes and the Centaur. Taking off his taps and roller skates, he pulled up a chair to sit down with Windy City Times.

Windy City Times: Hi, Julius! I just saw *Xanadu*. What a great job you did! Is the first time that you've played a sister?

Julius Thomas III: Yes, this is definitely the first time playing a sister. But I am sure it won't be the last. Not after this showing. [Both laugh.]

WCT: I grew up listening to the *Xanadu* soundtrack. The music still somehow works today. Did that inspire you to audition?

JT: Actually, it was two things. Roller skates were one of them because when I first heard about the show and heard it was on roller skates, I remembered roller-skating a lot as a kid. My parents were big fans of the roller disco. Also, I had heard that it would be in Chicago for an open-ended run. I said there is no way that I am not getting on a show that's near home, so I could be close to my family. My family has not seen the last few shows that I have done because they have been so far away.

WCT: Have they seen it already?

JT: They have seen it twice. And they plan to come back more.

WCT: Are you from Indiana?

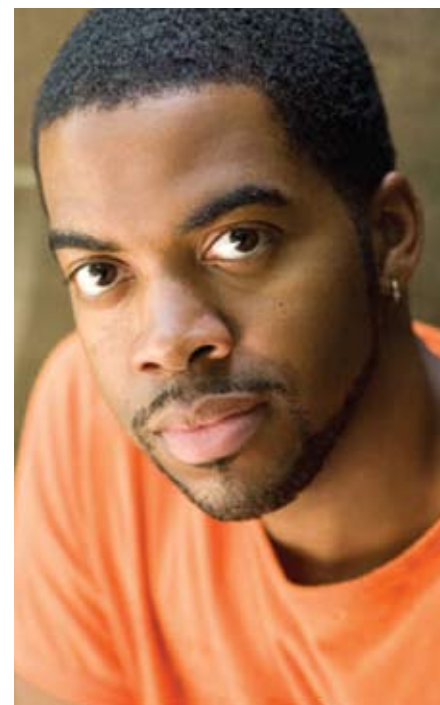
JT: I am from Gary, Ind. I was born in Hammond but we have lived in Gary the majority of my life.

WCT: What was the audition like? Did you have to roller-skate?

JT: I did. They had us come in and read our lines first. Then we had to do interpretive dance to the lines. My audition consisted of my doing my entire role in a southern accent while doing Alvin Ailey-esque moves. After that I sang quite a bit and tap danced for them, as well as roller-skated for them. It was quite a long process.

WCT: Do you have a big dance background? Tap class was impossible for me to learn in college.

JT: Yeah, I started in 2000, right around my freshman year. I fell in love with tap. I consider myself to be a singer/dancer who acts. I am happy to do roles that are more movement



Julius Thomas III.

based. It's a blast for me.

WCT: You're what they call a “triple threat.” You spent time in Oklahoma. That's where I was born.

JT: I spent a summer there working at the Lyric Theatre in Oklahoma. I did *Aida* and *Five Guys Named Moe* there.

WCT: Did you enjoy being in the 25th Annual Putman County Spelling Bee?

JT: That was my first professional show. It was a couple of months after I graduated. I had moved back here and decided that I wanted to make this my home base. I did that for a year and a half working in the same theater, Drury Lane. This is kind of like a homecoming.

WCT: You mentioned the *Thundercats* in your bio. Are you a fan?

JT: You could not talk to me when the *Thundercats* were on television! My mom taped all the old episodes and I still have them. There's no better cartoon in my mind.

WCT: Your centaur is a showstopper. I think in the hard times that we live in now, it's nice to have an escape and forget the problems that we all face with a fun musical.

JT: Exactly. The love story is my favorite part. In between the story of boy meets girl and loses girl and has to get her back, there is all this silliness and the fun. It's an opportunity for me to come to work and be silly for an hour and a half.

I hope the crowds “dare to go” to see *Xanadu*. For more information, visit www.DruryLaneWaterTower.com or www.BroadwayinChicago.com.

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MUSIC

Susan Werner reveals her classic B-side

BY JEAN ALBRIGHT

Susan Werner is known for highlighting the eccentricities of the world and the universal quirks of human relationships through music, which could be called folk, jazz, rock or gospel. Her new CD, *Classics*, partially the basis for her March 7 show at the Old Town School of Folk Music, smoothly gives the classical music treatment to the classic music of the '60s and '70s.

Werner's many voices started with classical opera training. I asked how she grew from that to embrace her current wide range of disciplines. "Disciplines? [Laughs] I wouldn't want to call myself disciplined," she said. "But the question is, where do you really start learning music? I was learning guitar at five years old when my brother brought a guitar home. The nuns were teaching guitar. When church let the guitar in, they let the leftists in and that's when the church veered to the left.

"So I started playing at five with Pete Seeger's records], and to the hootenanny thing in the background when I was seven or eight. Later, to get scholarships to school ... they were not funding folk, but opera. I studied classical voice. And I like language, am good with it. It is like a puzzle to solve."

Werner said she "loved singing with an orchestra. It is like riding the wildest horse in the world. I can see how people scramble for the rest of their lives to do that. I didn't feel I was born to do it, so I started writing my own songs. That's when people started saying, where have you been? No one said that with opera, so I took it to mean something. My studying of classical



Susan Werner. Photo by Asia Kepka

works led to ... I'm glad that I had a certain confidence that I could pull this off. I got confidence, too, from my dalliances with woodwind players. And the Argentinean guitarist. The music of people you know well becomes real to you. So there was some of that along the way."

I asked if the 1960s and '70s music was selected for a target audience and if I, as a boomer, was part of that audience?

"One reason to choose music from that era is that it is known to many people, not just boomers," Werner said. "It is familiar to their children. In planning a cover, you think about who knows the music and what it means to them. To be successful, you have to know how well known the songs are and who knows the music. You want to know that the re-inventions will reveal something new.

"When we dared to take on such things as 'Oh, Mercy Mercy Me' or 'Maybe I'm Amazed,' I was scared. We aimed high with this reinvention to reveal something new and for that we had to

start by knowing who knew the music and what it meant to them.

"In 1995 or so we all listened to radio and we were in touch with the same music. Now, we have iPods and all have our own soundtracks. I worked hard to find the music that everyone knows, and was surprised how many 20-somethings know Cat Stevens, for instance: 'Oh, my parents listened to that on the car radio!' And so much of it has that formal structure that could be revealed, so many segments. Like 'Hazy Shade of Winter,' good for riffs. Perfect for an oboe. Formal like British ... like 300-year-old British."

The *Classics* CD includes all new arrangements for classical instruments and songs by Stevie Wonder, Paul McCartney, Marvin Gaye, Paul Simon and others.

She expresses the goal of having classical forms in music more widely understood to be accessible, to be available for questions and discussion.

"Some people have the impression that classical is too serious, no humanity," Werner said. "Like fine china not for everyday use. Part of classical is that they perform and they disappear, which is part of its charm. But that's not the case here. In the current show, we talk about music and classical music in an informal way. This show is fun, you don't feel you have to bring cough drops like you do to the symphonies."

About the Old Town show, she says: "I guarantee zero boredom, we don't allow that. Old Town School is a good hall: so close, you could reach out and pull anyone on stage. We'll be doing our own songs, too."

This show promises to broaden, too, the definition of singer/songwriter. Both she and cellist Julia Biber, who will share the stage with her, write and perform and look to new challenges.

"It is so exciting. I'm in over my head, that's the fun of the project. We are pushing boundaries," Werner said. "So many think that songwrit-

ing is about self, sort of journaling. It is time to speak not just for yourself and to crack that myth. I invite anyone with preconceived notions of what a singer-songwriter is to come. It will reinvigorate your creativity."

A gay family connection gave me the opening to ask her about her gay following. My brother Dale Albright had conceived and directed *My Strange Nation*, *The Music of Susan Werner* last year in San Francisco. Werner's music was staged with five women representing different types of relationships, including lesbian. The universally human themes of her work held up, according to both Albright and Werner.

"That show was such a gift to me," said Werner. "I'm glad that my work has meaning for what he's lived, for what all of us have lived; a world view sound track. I think he and I are both from blue corners of red states (Ohio and Iowa), a small but fierce fraternity of cool in a conservative environment."

About seeing her work staged with a gay and lesbian interpretation:

"It showed me my where the rural Iowa still lurks in me; where I can do better. It was challenging, I was nervous. I couldn't do anything for the songs; the songs had to work on their own. You want songs to work for every type of person, to work every which way.

"When I talk about my gay and lesbian following, I always say that I put the bacon in the GBLT. And when the Q is added, I'm happy. As that gets wider, the world just gets better and better. Also, claiming that B allows me to not have to disavow my relationship with the Argentinean guitarist"

Susan Werner appears with special guest Anais Mitchell Saturday, March 7, at 7 p.m., at the Old Town School of Folk Music. 4544 N Lincoln. Call 773-728-6000 or visit oldtown-school.tix.com.

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BY DAVID BYRNE AND TONY PEREGRIN

Annie Lennox beams in her latest video, "Shining Light." This remake of Ash's 2001 U.K. hit is one of two new songs on the recently released compilation The Annie Lennox Collection. In this clip, there are five different Lennoxes forming a band, resembling the video to "Head over Heels" by the Go-Gos. The drummer recalls the "Why" vocalist's look in the '70s when she fronted The Tourists. The characters on keyboards and singing are the most at ease. The Grammy-winning humanitarian shies away from playing instruments in her videos, save the flute in early Eurythmics clips and the guitar in "Sex Crime (1984)." Usually partial to melancholy, Lennox has not been this upbeat since "Precious" and "Little Bird" on her 1992 solo debut, Diva—both of which are also on her retrospective.

New York-based **Telling on Trixie** returns with its sophomore effort, Ugly, Broke & Sober. This solid 10-song set is financed by fans courtesy of the Web site A Band with a Plan. Not just seeking monetary aid, the band's direct connec-

tion allows external input. "Crash Me Up" features words submitted to be integrated into the track. Ugly, Broke & Sober opens with the high-octane guitar-based rocker "Shooting in 60." The scrumptious "A.N.F.O." follows suit. One of the standout tracks is the midtempo "Late So Tired." Openly gay singer Derek Nicoletto's booming voice perfectly suits a rock treatment of Belinda Carlisle's '80s pop gem "Mad about You." While the whole album would translate extremely well into a live setting, "Mad about

You" would be the ultimate crowd-pleaser at a concert. Ugly, Broke & Sober is due out March 24. The quintet will take to the stage at Sylvie's, 1902 W. Irving Park, on Saturday, March 14. Telling on Trixie's videos to "Orion's Light" and "Halfway to Sane" were fixtures on Logo's Click List.

I suspect that there are anti-aging ingredients secretly included on **Plushgun's** full-length debut, Pins and Panzers. After listening to it, I felt like I shed years and was a carefree 20-year-old once again. This Brooklyn act offers DIY electro-pop at its finest on "Just Impolite." Try not to sing along with its lyric "I walk the line like Johnny Cash." There is a certain passion with the lines "as we dance the night away" and "boys kissing boys in the moment when the cops came" on the opener, "Dancing in a Minefield." How We Roll sums up the essence on this tale of high school days and youth. Both How We Roll and Let Me Kiss You Now (And I Will Fade Away) have the ever so infectious double clap to keep the beat and to up the so-sugary-it-is-potentially-diabetic-factor. Kiss You Now also

boasts some great wistful scatting. With Postal Service is out of the spotlight, Plushgun is stepping up as a buzzworthy DIY indie electro-pop outfit. Plushgun's Pins and Panzers is out now on Tommy Boy Records.

Dark, twisted, tattooed and with guynliner, Aidan frontman Wil Francis unveils his omnisexual persona, **William Control**. Out now via Victory Records, Control's debut, Hate Culture, broodingly dwells on mortality. The bow's sound is stronger and more cohesive than Aidan's, giving nods to the godfather of goth, Trent Reznor, and Marilyn Manson without dwelling on the latter's gratuitous shock value. The lead single, "Beautiful Loser," sums up Francis's alter ego's last day on earth, set to a KMFDM soundtrack. Put down your Anne Rice novels, bust out your favorite black T-shirt and lace up those Doc Martens—Control is slated to perform with Escape the Fate at House of Blues, 329 N. Dearborn, on Sunday, March 1.

East Coast singer-songwriter **Dan Monjovi** has a knack for penning pop pleasures, coming across as a hybrid of Elton John, Dave Matthews and Kenny Loggins. On his sophomore effort, Woke up This Morning, the out recording artist pines for respect and fulfillment through fame on Celebrity. Considering today's economic climate and the hopefulness surrounding President Obama, "Things'll Get Better" captures some much-needed optimism. "Is Anybody Watching?," another one of this album's highlights, presents a social critique masked with a great sing-along quality. Woke up This Morning, which topped the Out Voice Network Top 10, is available now.

Chicagoan **Susan Werner** is back with Classics, where she interprets favorites from the '60s and '70s, set to chamber music. Here, Werner is accompanied by Boston Symphony Orchestra/Boston Pops instrumentalists as beloved pop songs fuse with classical compositions. Werner is in fine form singing Marvin Gaye's "Mercy Mercy Me (The Ecology)" and Paul McCartney's "Maybe I'm Amazed." With a catalog remarkably balancing jazz and folk, I was curious what this ever-evolving artist's next project would be. Her 2007 The Gospel Truth tackles religious thoughts and last year she released the live album Club Passim. With a heavy tour schedule, this singer-songwriter is a delight to see live. Werner will be performing with Anais Mitchell on Saturday, March 7, at the Old Town School of Folk Music, 4544 N. Lincoln.

Unfortunately, **BETTY** cancelled its upcoming concert, which was scheduled to take place on Sunday, March 8, at the Old Town School of Folk Music.

Entertainment news

Daniela Sea, who plays Max on TV's The L Word, is discussing why she is a vegan and why she just shot a recent vegan ad for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. Sea said she stopped eating meat after the first girl she fell in love with—a vegetarian—detailed to her the horrors of factory farming and the perceived health risks of meat-eating.

Jennifer Hudson has finished filming her first video since her mother, brother and nephew were killed, according to the Associated Press. The clip for "If This Isn't Love" was done in Los Angeles and debuted the week of Feb. 9.

Director Kevin Smith, actor Chris Evans and actresses Anne Hathaway and Catherine Zeta Jones are among the many celebrities with gay brothers, according to AfterElton.com. Speaking about his brother, Don, Smith said, "He's married to a dude and that's as gay as it possibly gets. ... I'm in the gay family. I'm one c*ck and a mouth shy of being gay myself."

New Kids on the Block singer Jonathan Knight has been outed by his ex-boyfriend, Brazilian model Kyle Wilker. According to JustJared.com, the National Enquirer has obtained photos of Knight and Wilker kissing; Wilker told the tabloid that "[w]e had a wonderful relationship. I was in love with him and I believe he was in love with me." The couple recently ended their relationship after 18 months.

Comedian Wanda Sykes, who came out publicly at an anti-Proposition 8 rally in Las Vegas in November, will perform at the annual **White House Correspondents' Association dinner May 9**, according to Advocate.com. "I'm not rooting against him at all, because, especially in this economy and everything, we need him to succeed," Sykes recently said. "But there's gonna be some incidents and missteps, like we saw with the whole tax thing." Those "missteps" will provide Sykes with the material she needs for the event.

Actor James Franco had to "milk" a man dressed as a cow to earn his Hasty Pudding Man of the Year Award at Harvard University, according to IMDB.com. Franco wore a blonde wig, gold bra and purple high-heeled shoes to accept the award, and his challenges included milking a "gay" cow in a nod to the movie Milk, in which he co-stars. He was also handed a fake bag of marijuana for his role in Pineapple Express.



Telling on Trixie.

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Gomorrah, Rebel Without a Cause

BY RICHARD KNIGHT, JR.

By the time you read this, the Oscar for Best Foreign film will have been awarded. But though the year's contenders were a worthy batch it's still a head-scratcher that neither *A Christmas Tale*, Arnaud Desplechin's tremendous film about a dysfunctional French family starring Catherine Deneuve and Marthieu Amalric, nor the sensational *Gomorrah* were among the nominees. Although *A Christmas Tale* has left theaters (and don't expect a DVD until November), *Gomorrah*, the eye-opening look at the vicious Italian criminal organization, opens here this week.

This is no romantic portrait of the mafia *a la* The Godfather or decades of other mob pictures. It's closer in spirit to TV's *The Sopranos* without the fabulous trappings and the emotional ups and downs. This is a stripped-down, realistic venal society in which everything is tainted by the insidiousness of the underworld. The Italian Camorra (the word literally means "gang"), a loose-knit group of constantly warring gangs, never took hold in America the way the Sicilian Mafia did. No one cooks spaghetti or talks about "honor," and there's no opera on the soundtrack. This is simply a world of unglamorous violence with death meted out quickly and bodies disposed of just as quickly. (A shot of two bodies dumped in a bulldozer on a beach toward the end is unforgettable.)

Based on the sensational bestseller by author Robert Saviano (who remains under permanent police protection after repeated death threats from the group), director Matteo Garrone's film weaves together five of the most compelling stories from the book—a work of fiction steeped in reality. The film is primarily set in a section of Naples known as the Caserta, one of the most lawless in the world (where the film was shot). From the outside, the housing complex where most of the action takes place looks attractive enough; it's one of those multi-leveled concrete structures with the apartments facing onto a central courtyard and a skylight far overhead.



Gomorrah.

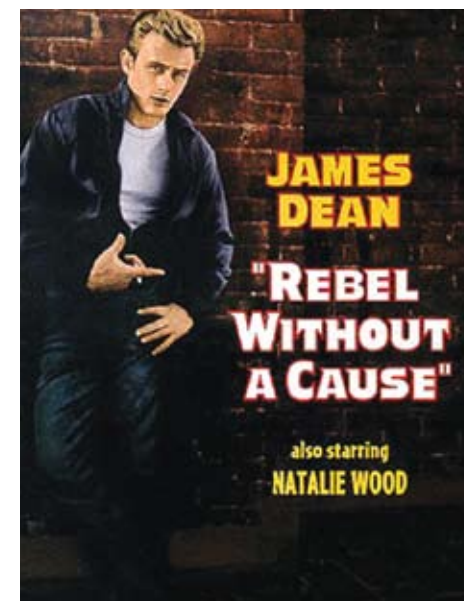
But as we watch the inhabitants scurry about, some dispensing drugs to eager customers, and others running from police and dodging bullets, dropping off hush payments or randomly doing errands, the place quickly comes to resemble rats in a maze—an earthly realization of Dante's hellish underworld, or a forgotten set from Fellini's decadent *Satyricon*.

One story follows two violent but idiotic teenagers who make the mistake of emulating the cocky bravado of the murderous drug lord played by Al Pacino in *Scarface*. (We are introduced to these two as they shown shouting Pacino's lines from the movie.) Ripping off small-time dealers of their drug money and speeding away on a Vespa scooter is one thing but ignoring the warnings from the district crime boss and stealing a cache of hi-tech weapons is another. Another story follows a wide-eyed young boy of 13 who delivers groceries but yearns to prove that he's got what it takes to join the group. At one point he and other hopefuls willingly strap on bulletproof vests and take hits to the chests at point-blank range to prove their "manhood."

Then there is a couture dressmaker whose boss is in hock to the Camorra and counts on the tailor and the other factory workers to work impossible hours for peanuts so he can stay in business. But the dressmaker, who takes great pride in his work, secretly moonlights at night teaching his trade secrets to a Chinese competitor—with tragic consequences. Finally, we see a man at the top, a sophisticated businessman who arranges to dump toxic waste for high-priced clients right in the empty lots and open fields of the surrounding countryside, literally poisoning the earth. When an accident causes the adult truck drivers to walk off the job he doesn't hesitate to hire a batch of fearless kids to drive the trucks filled with the toxic waste into their place.

gagement beginning Friday, Feb. 27, at the Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State. The film stars James Dean, the poster child for the beautiful and the damned who left just three movies behind after dying in an automobile crash in 1955 at the age of 24. (East of Eden and *Giant* were the other two.) The bisexual Dean, poster boy for '50s homoeroticism (along with Montgomery Clift and Marlon Brando) stars as the teenaged malcontent who forms a bond with gorgeous but mixed-up Judy (Natalie Wood) and rich boy Plato (Sal Mineo). Mineo's character forms a crush on Dean and is clearly shown to be gay (almost subjected to a gay-bashing by a group led by Dennis Hopper)—a very daring undercurrent for a film shot over 60 years ago. Bigger Than Life, Ray's 1956 follow-up starring James Mason, is also on the bill (and will be shown in a new 35mm print). Visit www.siskelfilmcenter.com.

Check out my archived reviews at www.windycitytimes.com or www.knightatthemovies.com. Readers can leave feedback at the latter Web site.



Gomorrah is fragmented and jumps about, and there's no visual cuing as in *Traffic* to help the audience keep its bearings—it's all filmed under the same sludgy gray skies (even Venice has never looked so bleak)—and one has to pay attention to keep track. Things quickly move on in this unsentimental world and the icy philosophy of the group, "We have to score, kill and we need money," is visualized in every frame of Garrone's cool film. Though some of the stories allow us to keep our distance, it's also clear that from the poisoned earth up to high fashion the reach of this never-before-seen group is very long indeed. Subtitled.

Director Nicholas Ray's 1954 film *Rebel Without a Cause*, still the benchmark for films about juvenile dissatisfaction, plays a weeklong en-

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WHAT TO DO?

Wednesday, Feb. 25

Conjunto Afro-Cuban Trio Noon - 3 p.m. Macy's River Oaks, 1st floor, www.macys.com/events

Thursday, Feb. 26

Flourish Studios Book launch party for "You Can Be Well" by Dr. Stephanie A. Maj., 5-7 p.m., 3020 N. Lincoln

CANCELLED: Charity Water Fundraiser at The Underground www.charitywaterchicagofundraiser.eventbrite.com

20th Annual National African American Read-In Governors State University, 6 to 8 p.m. Sherman Hall, info or volunteer to read 708-235-3956

Bound to Struggle A kink and radical politics anthology 'zine, reading event 7:30 p.m., Women & Children First Bookstore, 5233 N. Clark, 773-769-9299, www.womenandchildrenfirst.com

Chicago's African-American LGBT Youth Center Living Legends Black History Gala, \$5, 6 p.m., 5480 S. Kenwood in Hyde Park, 773-573-8745

Mapplethorpe Block senior curator Debora Wood leads a gallery talk, 6 p.m., Block Museum of Art, Northwestern U., 40 Arts Circle Dr., Evanston, 847-491-4000, www.blockmuseum.northwestern.edu

Wild Pug GAYSIA featuring DJ Oskar, sexy dancers, shot boy, \$3 Sapporo drafts, \$6 Saki-tinis, 4810 N. Broadway, WorldsGreatestBar.com

Friday, Feb. 27

Crew Fratboy Friday featuring the Hot Jock Contest, \$300 cash first prize, \$3.50 Goose Island pints, 4804 N. Broadway, WorldsGreatestBar.com

Nosferatu The silent film classic, 8 p.m. \$10 door, Skokie Theatre Music Foundation, 7924 N. Lincoln Ave., 847-677-7761

How I Learned To Drive Pulitzer winner. \$20. Village Players Performing Arts Center, 1010 Madison St., Oak Park, 866-764-1010 or www.village-players.org

Hydrate VIVA VARLA with Varla Jean Merman, doors open 8 p.m., show at 9 p.m., tickets on sale at HydrateChicago.com, followed by Black Out Party, free glow sticks and \$4 Jameson shots, DJ Laura B., 3458 N. Halsted St.

Women & Children First Bookstore

Christine Fletcher, author of Ten Cents a Dance, Free, 7:30 p.m., 5233 N. Clark St., 773-769-9299, www.womenandchildrenfirst.com

TPAN Positive Spin Mixer \$5 donation, 8 p.m. - 9:30 p.m., hosted bar. 8 p.m. - 9:30 p.m., VJ Terp until 11 p.m., Spin, 800 W. Belmont Ave., tpan.com

Saturday, Feb. 28

Art & Soul Benefit Art Therapy helps kids develop a positive language of expression and helps troubled students. Auction items from some of Chicago's premier artists. Cocktails and a light soul food dinner, blues act The Blue Lightning. \$125, 7 p.m., Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington St., 773-710-9600, www.arttherapyconnection.org/Events.htm

Touché Cleveland Leather Awareness Weekend (CLAW) fundraiser, with BE-HIV Chicago and Evanston AIDS nonprofit. \$25, 10 p.m. - midnight, in the Club Room, 6412 N. Clark St., 847-475-2115, ext. 104 or ericnelson@behiv.org

Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA) Spring Kick-Off Party (rescheduled from Jan. 31) 8 p.m. Spin, 800 W. Belmont Ave.

Chicago Human Rhythm Project Award-winning tap documentary The Wonder Kids, narrated by Dick Van Dyke and featuring Savion Glover, Debbie Allen. \$12, 8 p.m., also March 1, Beverly Arts Center, 2407 W. 111th St., 773-281-1825, chicagotap.org

Dogs for Disabilities, Inc. 2nd Annual Winter Gala & Silent Auction. \$80, Drury Lane Oakbrook, contact Sue and Dan at 630-879-9561 or info@dogsfordisabilities.com

Hydrate VIVA VARLA with Varla Jean Merman, doors open 8 p.m., show at 9 p.m., tickets on sale at HydrateChicago.com, followed by DJ Susan Morabito, 3458 N. Halsted St.

These Arms are Snakes (ex-members of BOTCH) live show to promote the album Tail Swallow and Dove. \$10, Subterranean, 2011 W. North Ave.

Pinchas Zukerman Legendary violinist, violist and conductor with pianist Marc Neikrug, his musical collaborator of 30

years. 7:30 p.m., Harris Theater, www.harristheaterchicago.org

Sunday, Mar. 1

Berlin Madonna-rama with DJ Riley York, 954 W. Belmont Ave., BerlinChicago.com

Chicago Human Rhythm Project Award-winning tap documentary The Wonder Kids, narrated by Dick Van Dyke and featuring Savion Glover, Debbie Allen. \$12, 8 p.m., Beverly Arts Center, 2407 W. 111th St., 773-281-1825, chicagotap.org

Human Rights Campaign 2009 Monthly Volunteer meetings for Time To Shine gala, 6:30-7:30 p.m., Scarlet, 3220 N. Halsted St.

Spin Kickoff of Teri Yaki's Game Show, \$4 Skyy cocktails, \$6 Martinis, \$10 domestic pitchers, 10 p.m. - midnight, 800 W. Belmont Ave., spin-nightclub.com

Tuesday, Mar. 3

The Marshall Field's Factor Learn about this iconic institution and its influence on clothing and consumer culture nationwide. \$10/\$8; 7 p.m. Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clarkwww.chicagohistory.org

Monthly Volunteer meetings for Human Rights Campaign 2009 Time To Shine gala. 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. Scarlet. 3220 N. Halsted

Thursday, Mar. 5

Annual Winnetka Woman's Club Antiques Show. "Champagne and Chocolate" Preview Party, \$30, 2 to 5 p.m. More than 40 vendors. Regular show hours are Friday, March 6, 10-6, Saturday, March 7, 10-6, and Sunday March 8, 11-5. Show \$12 for all three days. 485 Maple St., Winnetka, 847-446-1830 or www.winnetkawomansclub.org.

Friday, Mar. 6

Annual Winnetka Woman's Club Antiques Show. More than 40 vendors. Also Saturday, March 7, 10-6 p.m. Sunday, March 8, 11-5 p.m. \$12 for all three days. 485 Maple St., Winnetka, 847-446-1830 or www.winnetkawomansclub.org.

Bret Grafton Opening reception for Crew: an exhibition of photographs of gay

and lesbian athletes, 6:30-9:30 p.m., Center On Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., 3rd Floor Gallery, photografter.com

Hydrate Lube wrestling, 8-11 p.m., hosted bar courtesy of TPAN, speed dating at 10 p.m., DJ Jeannette, \$4 Jameson shots, 3458 N. Halsted St., HydrateChicago.com

LCCP at the National Lesbian Health Summit Expanding Our Movement, thru March 9, San Francisco. Info to come.

Saturday, Mar. 7

Chicago Takes Off Once Upon A Time: In the Magical Kinky Kingdom - 3rd annual burlesque fundraiser for Test Positive Aware Network is truly charity at its sexiest! Mistress of ceremonies Miss Coco Peru, TWO SHOWS: 7:30 and 10 p.m., Park West, 322 W. Armitage, tickets available at TPAN.com

Chicago Flower & Garden Show Through March 12. At Navy Pier, 800 E. Grand. Tickets start at \$12; www.Chicago-Flower.com

Sidetrack 10th annual Jack Daniel's chili cook-off, \$10 donation to benefit Chicago Area Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, 2-6 p.m., 3349 N. Halsted St., SidetrackChicago.com

Women of the Western Suburbs Cabin Fever Dance, 6-7 p.m., cash bar, 7-8:30 p.m., dinner, 8:30 p.m. - midnight, \$30/each or tables of 10/\$300, wov-sevents@yahoo.com, 847-622-4327

Tuesday, Mar. 10

Archbishop Desmond Tutu to Speak at Chicago Bar Association's Interfaith Dinner, \$125, 5:30 p.m. reception, 6:15 p.m. program. Standard Club, 320 S. Plymouth Court, reservations, call 312-554-2057 www.chicagobar.org

Saturday, Mar. 21

Center on Halsted Human First 2009 Gala, Honorees State Rep. Sara Feigenholtz, State Rep. Greg Harris, Mr. Joseph Loundy, The Night Ministry. Black tie optional. \$300, 6:30 cocktails 7:30 p.m. wards and program, Hyatt Regency Chicago 151 E. Wacker Dr. www.centeronhalsted.org/HF09.HTML

Fri.-Sat., Feb. 27-28



THE LADY IS A VAMP

Varla Jean Merman will spice things up at Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted.

Sat.-Thu., March 7-12



BLOOM WITH A VIEW

The Chicago Flower & Garden Show will take place at Navy Pier, 800 E. Grand.

Photo courtesy of Becky Antonoglu

See our online calendar: www.windycitymediagroup.com/calendar



PET FOR ADOPTION



In addition to snow and Valentine's Day, this cold month gives us the opportunity to celebrate all things bunny. Rabbits are the third most commonly found homeless animals. Many potential rabbit parents don't even realize that they can adopt a rabbit! Spread the word and hop over to Red Door to visit with some of the great adoptable rabbits.

This is Valentina, the lionhead bunny. Thanks to a posting on Craigslist and several phone calls to Red Door, we were able to isolate her after three days. She was finally captured on Valentine's Day and is now safe and warm. For more information or to meet other adoptable pets, visit www.reddoorshelter.org.

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CONDO SOUTH HAVEN, MICH 3BR/3BA: Sharp 1-1/2 story unit best location steps to beach, finest owner care. **\$439,000 Call Genie for listing info, pics, map. HomeFinders Realty 269-637-3775 homefinderssh@comcast.net** (09/03/08-4)

FABULOUS HARBOR COUNTRY COTTAGE: Near Downton New Buffalo. Hand crafted Arts and Crafts cottage. 2 Bdrm w/ Studio. Private retreat. **Please contact for details and photos. 602-295-8331 traveleer@mac.com for photos** (9/03/08-8)

HOUSES

NEW CONSTR. WILMETTE: 2409 Lake, Wilmette. New Constr. French Inspired 3,725sq.ft. 4/5bdrm,4.5baths. att 2car/gar. Fin.bsmt/wetbar. Custom trim,hand-carved cabs/mantles, HW flrs, 2 frpls. **OPEN HOUSE Sundays 12-4pm.ThomasJames Builders, Inc. 773-307-2575.** (02/18/09-4)

851 NORTH DEARBORN: Renovated Landmark Row House. Five finished floors with elevator. Income plus Owner's Unit. Professional kitchen, 4th floor solarium with two beautiful terraces. Deed garage. **\$1,399,000 Phyllis Hall, Koegnig & Strey GMAC 312-316-3634.** (02/11/09-4)

CONDO

EVANSTON 2BR CONDO: Lovely 8rm, 2ba vintage 2nd flr condo near beach & shopping. Old world elegance with 9' ceilings, original wood floors, fireplace, formal dining room, butler's pantry and updated kitchen. **\$445,000. Koenig & Strey. 847-964-1554 or www.917forest2.com.** (03/18/09-4)

OLD IRVING: 10 new Condos 3952 W. Eddy. 10 New Constr. 2&3 bdrm condos. 4 floor plans w/custom modern/contemporary finishes. 1 gar/space incl. Roof deck w/party area. **\$309,000-389,000 OPEN HOUSE SUN1-4pm. TJBG, Inc. 773-307-2575.** (02/18/09-4)

VINTAGE CONDO FOR SALE: Beautiful 2 bedroom 2 bath (plus den) condo for sale by owner. Near Sheridan/ Foster this rehabed home offers hardwood floors, marble fireplace, new kitchen with granite countertops, upgraded bathrooms, marble shower, den with built-ins, spacious master suite, in-unit laundry, private deck, secured parking. **\$395,000. Call 312-480-9723.** (1/21/09-2)

REDUCED BY \$96,000: Exquisite 2400 SF Duplex Down \$ 529,000. Italian Cabinetry and Brazilian floors, 3br - 2ba - 2fpl s/s app. Balcony + 1car garage w/ roof deck. **Pictures @ www.caminoreale.com or 773-412-4545.** (12/10/08-4)

FOR RENT

PARKING

LAKEVIEW HEATED PARKING: LSD and Hawthorne Place. \$239 a month. **Call Sarah 773-348-2777 ext 1.** (02/25/09-4)

ROOMATE

GREAT GREYSTONE CONDOMINIUM: At 51st and S. Michigan Ave. Bedroom and private bathroom. Washer and dryer in unit with gated parking available. **\$600/ mo. Contact charlotter_reh@comcast.net or 773-396-4092.** (02/25/09-2)

STUDIO APT.

1525 W. ESTES AVE. - ROGERS PARK STUDIO: Sunny Studio with HWF & heat included. Laundry in building. Close to lake, transportation & shopping. **\$565/mo w/ no dep. Credit check required. Call 773-392-4550. www.landstarrealty.com** (2/25/09-1)

TWO BEDROOM

ANDERSONVILLE 3-FLAT: Large, sunny 3rd floor apartment steps from Clark street. 2 bedrooms, hardwood floors, large rooms, separate dining room, sunporch, free laundry in basement. **Available Feb. 1. \$1,450/ mo includes heat. 312-909-0052.**

APT FOR RENT: Sunny, quiet 2BR on 2nd FL. of 2 Flat near Irving and Western. **\$900/mo. plus heat and util. Call 773-793-2244.** (02/18/09-1)

ALBANY PARK (MONTROSE & KIMBALL): 2nd fl of 2-flat 2 bedroom/1 bath, stainless steel appliances & granite countertops in kitchen, sun room, decorative fireplace - built-in bookshelves w/stained glass doors, beautiful woodwork and hardwood floors throughout, stained glass window accents, central air, 5 ceiling fans, free laundry, use of patio in pleasantly landscaped backyard, pets welcome, near CTA buses & Brown line, 1 parking space in garage (possible) the unit has tons of charm & detail. **Available immediately \$1200 plus 1 month security deposit Mel 773.719.9693.** (03/04/09-3)

THREE+ BEDROOM

EDGEWATER: Beautiful duplex, completely rehabbed 3 bdrm on Ridge & Ardmore. Central air/heat, new cabinetry, granite countertop, hardwood flooring. Pet friendly. Laundry in the building. **\$1,500/mo. Please call 312-666-6886 or 312-907-6539, lakesidec@gmail.com.** (03/04/09-4)

NEW 3-BEDROOM BY THE LAKE ABSOLUTELY CHARMING: Newly remodeled, three bedrooms, two baths near Montrose/Lake. Extra-wide apartment, Central A/C, dishwasher, built-in microwave; laundry; Deck. **\$1425/ mo, April 1st. Carl 773-230-5810, GDarchs@GMail.com.** (03/04/09-2)

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BOOKS

NEW GAY NOVEL: COMPLICATED: Best friends since grade school, Barry and Jonathan: one has recently lost his partner and the other finds a possible new love. Jealousy and secrets get in the way of love as they fight to maintain their friendship and not ruin the happiness of the other - it's so complicated! **BUY @ AMAZON.COM OR TARGET.COM.** (3/11/09-4)

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CHESTNUT CLEANING SERVICES: We're a house cleaning service for homes, small businesses and small buildings. We also have fabulous organizational skills (a separate function at a separate cost that utilizes your assis-

tance) for what hasn't been cleaned in many months or years due to long-term illness, depression, physical/mental challenges, for the elderly, if you have downsized and more. Depressed about going home to chaos? We can organize your chaos, straighten out your chaos, help you make sense of your chaos and finally clean what is no longer chaos. **Can we help you? Bonded and insured. Chestnut Cleaning Service: 312-332-5575** (5/24/09-tk)

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NEED A LITTLE HELP WITH THAT NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION?: Supportive, affirming, psychotherapy for LGBTQ individuals, couples, families, and children dealing with any of life's challenges. **Please call Jackie at 773-275-7710 or www.jacquelynsinger.com** (5/20/09-26)

RELATIONSHIPS CAN LAST: We specialize in helping you sift through what is not working in your relationship so that you can maximize the good. With over 20 years of experience serving Chicago's LGBTQ communities, we offer safe, confidential counseling for drinking and drug related concerns, past or present abuse, coming out and coming out of marriage. **Please call Dr. Margo Jaquot at 847-759-9110 exr. 10 or email junipercenter@aol.com** (2/04/09-TK)

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FOR SALE

FOR SALE VEGAS STYLE SHOW COSTUMES: Head pieces, boas and more. **For pictures and details, email designsinc71@cs.com** (2/18/09-4)

HELP WANTED

WEDNESDAY MORNING NEWSPAPER DELIVERY: Four hours, \$56. Must have car and insurance. **Please call Jean at 773-871-7610.**

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TWO STUDS REMODELING: Experienced professionals with good communication skills serving in Chicago and surrounding suburbs. We specialize in kitchen/bath/ basement remodel. Fully licensed, bonded and insured. 24 hour emergency service. **Ask for Paul or Derek 847-804-9993.** (02/18/09-2)

INTERPRETER

FOR YOUR AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE/ENGLISH INTERPRETING NEEDS: To consult with you or your company with your ADA needs. **Diana Thorpe CI/CT/NIC Master, Nationally Certified Interpreter, 773-401-1339, or e-mail thorpe2001@aol.com [P-TB]**

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HEALING DANCE OF TOUCH!: A very relaxing, therapeutic, full-body massage. 10 minutes SW of the Loop. Take care of yourself. Call Tim 773-368-9798 for appointment. \$55/hr. Longer sessions available. (4/08/09-8)

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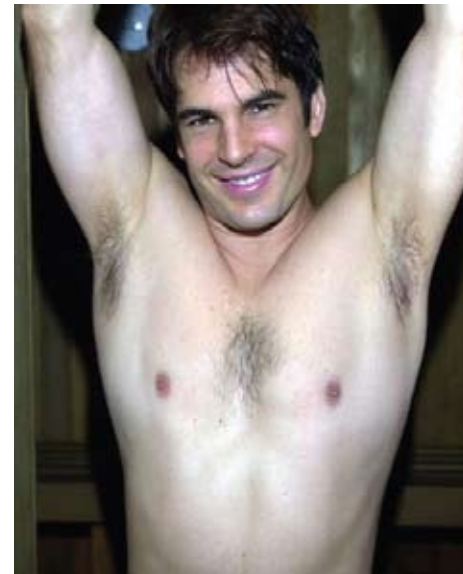


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 - 2 **The Anvil**
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1932 E. Higgins Rd.
Elk Grove Village, IL
HuntersNightclubs.com
 - 55 **John's Place**
335 154th Pl.
Calumet City, IL
 - 56 **Maneuvers**
118 E. Jefferson St.
Joliet, IL
JolietManeuvers.com
 - 57 **Rumors**
2433 Desplaines Ave.
North Riverside, IL
RumorsPubOnline.com
 - 58 **Velvet Rope**
728 W. Lake St.
Oak Park, IL
VelvetRopeOakPark.com
- INDIANA**
- 59 **Dick's R U Craze?**
1221 E. 150th St.
Hammond, IN
DicksRUCraze.com
 - 60 **Encompass**
2415 Rush St.
Lake Station, IN
EncompassNightclub.com

BILLY MASTERS

I'm getting too old for this. Not writing this column—many of my colleagues have shown that you can do this into your mid-100s. No, I'm talking about quick trips. Over my birthday weekend, I zipped to NYC for a frantic 48 hours, culminating in a performance of Charles Busch's "The Third Story," which just extended its run at the Lucille Lortel Theatre. My party was joined by Sarah Jessica Parker, Seth Rudesky and their friends who came out to support the divine Charles and pay homage to Kathleen Turner. I saw this show in its premier production in La Jolla, and Busch has done wonders making it stronger, sharper and sassier. The addition of Turner should seem a slam-dunk, but she's not a natural fit to this type of humor. And she doesn't have much to laugh about. With her rheumatoid arthritis, she's learned to live with varying degrees of pain. A couple of days after I saw her, she had an accident walking off-stage and injured her knee which prompted canceling three shows. When Turner returned, she was sporting a knee brace and cane. The show must go on.

I must mention that Busch is teaming up with Lypsinka, Bryan Batt and Whoopi Goldberg for a performance of the play "Legends!" Of course, you remember this is the play that first toured the U.S. with Mary Martin and Carol Channing and, more recently, hobbled across the country with Joan Collins and Linda Evans. This special one-night-only show will take place March 23 and benefit Friends in Deed, the crisis center for life-threatening illness. You can get more info at www.FriendsInDeed.org.



Soap hunk Thom Bierdz has 36 other soap hunks on top of him? So claims "CBS Soaps In Depth."

While I was in NYC, James Franco was in Cambridge being honored as the Hasty Pudding Man of the Year. During the show, one of those rascally Harvard boys came out in a cow costume. For "Milk". Get it? And after Franco donned the traditional high heels and bra, he was supposed to be presented with the "pudding pot". Instead, he was given a baggie of pot—which was quickly confiscated by someone dressed like Michael Phelps. There's that Ivy League humor. You can watch the ceremony on BillyMasters.com.

Our own Thom Bierdz is being honored for his daytime work from decades ago! "CBS Soaps In Depth" magazine recently compiled a list of the top 100 daytime hunks of all time, and Bierdz was named number 37. This might not sound like a major accomplishment, but he's been off "The Young and the Restless" for 20 years! SoapHunks.net did a list of the 100 most memorable moments in daytime and ranked his death scene at number 10—just two down from Joan Crawford filling in for her daughter on "Secret Storm"! I'm sure you all know that Bierdz is an extremely talented painter, and his work can be found on ThomBierdz.com. Of course, you should also check out www.BillyMasters.com. Why? We just uncovered a photo of Tom painting in the nude—and sporting an incredibly impressive appendage. Let's just say painting really gets his juices flowing—and flowing and flowing!

It's nothing new to find out that a soap actor or model has posed nude or stripped. But we've been hearing some salacious stories about a teen heartthrob who's the star of a show on Nickelodeon! You've probably seen the commercials for "Spectacular," which looks a lot like

"High School Musical" with less talented people (if that's possible). The male lead is Nolan Gerard Funk, and he's an actor with a past (cue scary music). He was a stripper in gay bars! During his stint working at Micky's and MJ's, he went by the stage name of "TJ". And, while never exposing all, he did get his large uncut penis aroused (bringing in more tips, I'm sure). You can check him out on our Web site. Rumor has it he's straight. Other rumors have it that a larger tip got a closer encounter. Hmm...

Our "Ask Billy" question is from Charlie in Atlanta: "I just came back from London where I saw



Bryan Batt - A Legend! in the making.

Speaking of benefits, last week was the fourth annual "Broadway Backwards" show, which raised money for NY's Gay and Lesbian Center. This show features gender-bending performances by many of our favorite people. Florence Henderson did "Nothin' Like a Dame" while fondling a chorus boy's crotch, Alan Cumming did "Rainbow High," Jai Rodriguez sang "Listen", Cheyenne Jackson told Sandra Bernhard, "You're The Top," which she most certainly is (he also admitted to giving good head, which we're sure is true). Clips can be found on BillyMasters.com.

Elsewhere in NYC, I got cozy in an elevator with Christopher Meloni. Surveillance footage will show me petting his big dog which, alas, is not a euphemism.



James Franco (left) and Sean Penn in Milk. Photo by Phil Bray

'Milk' men, Cruz win Oscars

BY ANDREW DAVIS

The 81st Academy Awards, broadcast Feb. 22 from Los Angeles, took on a stronger LGBT tone than usual as Sean Penn won Best Actor for his role as the late gay politician Harvey Milk in the film Milk; Dustin Lance Black won the Best Original Screenplay award for the same movie; and Penelope Cruz won Best Supporting Actress for her turn as a bisexual spitfire in the Woody Allen film Vicky Cristina Barcelona.

Upon winning his award, Penn jokingly called the attendees "[y]ou commie, homo-loving sons of guns," according to SFGate.com. Later in his speech, Penn talked about marriage equality and those who support California's anti-same-sex-marriage initiative, Proposition 8: "I think it's a good time for those who voted for the ban against gay marriage to sit and reflect on their great shame and their shame in their grandchildren's eyes if they continue that support. We've got to have equal rights for everyone."

The openly gay Black gave an even more moving acceptance speech as he talked about not only same-sex marriage, but the life of Harvey Milk and the overall acceptance of gays as well. "If Harvey Milk were alive today, I think he'd want me to say to all of the gay and lesbian children out there who have been told that they are less than by their churches or by the government or by their families that you are beautiful wonderful creatures who have value," Black said. "No matter what anybody tells you, God does love you and that very soon you will have

equal rights federally across this great nation of ours."

The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) issued a press release after the awards, stating in part, that it "applauds those who have brought the important story of Milk to so many millions of people, and congratulates Dustin Lance Black and Sean Penn for their well-deserved Oscar wins. They are to be commended for telling a story that has the power to inform future generations about the history of our community and our struggles for equality."

Cruz, who became the first Spanish-born actress to win an Oscar, thanked both Allen and longtime friend/director Pedro Almodovar for how they helped her career, according to Reuters.

Heath Ledger won a posthumous award for best supporting actor for his riveting turn as The Joker in the blockbuster The Dark Knight. Ledger was first nominated for an Academy Award three years ago for his role as Ennis del Mar in Brokeback Mountain.

The film Slumdog Millionaire—which almost became a direct-to-DVD item instead of a theatrical release—became the little movie that could, winning eight Oscars (after being nominated for 10), including Best Picture.

Many celebrities wore white ribbons to support same-sex marriage. The movement was spurred by the pro-marriage-equality Web site WhiteKnot.org. Among those wearing the ribbons were the cast of Milk and even the father of actress Anne Hathaway.

Actor Hugh Jackman hosted the ceremony—and did a couple song-and-dance numbers, to boot.

Disc and That: Recent and upcoming DVDs

—**Brokeback Mountain** [on Blu-Ray]

(March 10; \$29.98): The 2005 movie that stars Jake Gyllenhaal and the late, great Heath Ledger will soon be out on Blu-Ray. As most people know, the Ang Lee-directed film about two cowboys in love with each other was adapted from the short story of the same name by Annie Proulx. Extras will match the previous HD-DVD and DVD special editions, with a ton of featurettes, including "A Groundbreaking Success," "Music From the Mountain" and "On Being a Cowboy." The Blu-ray will also come BD-Live-enabled (allowing the Internet to extend the movie-viewing experience through downloaded content and advanced interactivity) and with the My Scenes bookmarking feature.

—**The Inauguration of Barack Obama: A Moment in History** (ABC News) (March 3; \$14.98): Relive the crowds, the new president's articulate speech—and Aretha's hat—in this release that focuses on the historic events of Jan. 20. Exclusive special features include Barbara Walters exclusive November 2008 interview with the Obamas, and even an interview with Beyoncé, who performed "At Last" at the inauguration's Neighborhood Ball.



Heath Ledger in Brokeback Mountain.

—**Out at the Wedding** (already out; \$24.99):

Although this film made its broadcast premiere on TV's LOGO channel on Feb. 15, it is out on DVD. Out at the Wedding—which stars Mink Stole and Mike Farrell (of TV's M*A*S*H and Providence), among others—is a rom-com about coming out, love and little white lies. The special features include cast interviews and an interview with director Lee Friedlander.

—Andrew Davis

Read the entire Disc and That column at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.

Hooray for Hollywood



Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, hosted a new and expanded "On the Red Carpet Oscar Party" Sunday, Feb. 22. The red-carpet reception began at 6 p.m. and the Oscar telecast was shown on two enormous screens starting at 7 p.m. Guests actually walked down a "living red carpet" filled with paparazzi—adding to the excitement. Attendees roared with delight when Sean Penn won a Best Actor Oscar and Dustin Lance Black took the Best Original Screenplay award for Milk. Photos by Steve Starr

BILLY from page 20

him before, but on stage he looked awfully buff. Do you know if he's pumped up?"

This production, which is nominated for Best Revival at the Olivier Awards, has been doing very good business and reminding people that Graham actually can act. And sing! What you didn't mention is that Graham looks quite delightful as "Zaza". But, to answer your question, I found a photo of him sitting backstage wearing only pantyhose, and his body does look decidedly buff. I'll run it on BillyMasters.com.

When I'm petting Meloni's dog and Franco's

milking a cow, it's time to leave the barnyard end yet another column. You know, I can sympathize with Miss Turner because bad knees run on my father's side. On my mother's side, it's bad hips. In 10 years, I'll probably be in a wheelchair! But even incapacitated, I'll still find time to bring you the best gossip at www.BillyMasters.com. Feel free to write me at Billy@BillyMasters.com, and I promise to get back to you before Cheyenne shows off his oral abilities—on stage and off! So, until next time, remember, one man's gossip is another man's bible.



2009 Chicago Auto Show

BY JOE LAMURAGLIA VIA
THECARCONNECTION.COM

If you follow me on Facebook or Twitter, you know that I am not attending 2009 Chicago Auto show media days this year. It is a result of belt tightening here at Gaywheels.com and the fact that we aren't on "the list" of invitees that the Chicago show flies in every year.

Rather than just read press releases and regurgitate their content, I've asked my good friends from TheCarConnection.com if I could re-purpose their reporting and post highlights here with links back to their full insight. Enjoy.

—**2010 Ford Taurus SHO:** It's a twin-turbo version of the 2010 Ford Taurus, bringing back the old "SHO" tag. The 365-hp V-6 is the most powerful "EcoBoost" Ford will offer, the paddle-shifted automatic should add to sporting feel and Ford's SYNC system is standard. It will be on sale this summer for \$37,995. The reborn SHO—the favorite of enthusiasts everywhere since it first was introduced on the first-generation Taurus—completes the new Taurus lineup with a tuned suspension and some of the visual flair that made the original hotbed-up Taurus a hit when it took its bow in 1989.

—**2010 Kia Forte:** Kia's new compact sedan, replacing the Spectra, has only four doors this time. SX models get larger four-cylinder engines, while the Bluetooth and Sirius are standard. It will be on sale this summer for \$15,000. The Forte is the first product overseen in its entirety by Peter Schreyer, the *wunderkind* hired by Kia to remake the line-up in a more modern vein. Schreyer's touch shows in a more sophisticated shape, though no one will mistake the Forte for the daring Honda Civic (or the kludgy Ford Focus, for that matter).

The Forte's basics are the stuff economy cars do best: simple independent suspensions, four-cylinder engines, manual and automatic transmissions. Base cars have a 153-hp four, and

five-speed manual and four-speed automatic trannies. The SX edition spools up 173 hp with a 2.4-liter four, and teams it to a six-speed manual or a five-speed automatic.

—**2009 Dodge Ram HD:** According to Dodge, the heavy-duty segment contains about one-third of all full-size truck sales in the United States. And buyers in the segment are said to be the most brand-loyal in the industry. So Dodge is taking aim at Chevy and Ford with its new Dodge Ram HD, introduced at the Chicago Auto Show and fortified heavily from winch to tailgate.

Based on the new-for-'09 Dodge Ram 1500 pickup, the burly tow/haul monsters finally bring a true crew cab to the Dodge Ram HD domain. The crew cab is said to be the highest-volume segment of the heavy-duty pickup arena (approx. 50 percent of HD pickup sales). Regular cab and Mega Cab models will be offered, as will two box sizes (6'4" or 8' even), and five distinct trim levels (ST, SLT, TRX, Laramie and Power Wagon).

—**2009 Scion tC Series 5.0:** This 2009 tC RS 5.0 features unique styling elements draped on a lowered suspension with 18-inch alloys. Numerous mechanical enhancements also give the vehicle a more aggressive driving demeanor.

Outside, the aforementioned 18-inch multi-spoke alloys (matte black with red accents) are supported by lowered springs from TRD to give this bespoke tC aggressive curbside swagger. The vehicle is bathed in gloss black, and an available rear lip spoiler adds some attitude at the rear.

On the inside, the black-and-red theme continues. A black leather steering wheel with red stitching continues the color theme inside, as do black seats with red inserts and TRD floor.

—**2009 Ford F-150 Harley Davidson:** This vehicle is a dolled-up version of Ford's new full-size truck. It features a standard Ford F-150 SuperCrew with Harley trim, and includes interior leather, colorful add-ons and plenty of chrome and enamel badges. It will be on sale shortly at an estimated price of \$40,000.

For more, see www.gaywheels.com.



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8th St. Paddy's 5K Run/Walk on March 15

Blarney Fever will be in the air on Chicago's lakefront at the 8th annual "St. Paddy's 5K Run & Walk & Leprechaun Leap," Sunday, March 15 at Diversey Harbor.

The run/walk starts at 9 a.m., followed by a Leprechaun Leap—a free kids' dash—at 10:15 a.m. Also, there will be awards for the most innovative green garb.

A portion of the day's proceeds will benefit the Lake View Citizens' Council, a non-profit community organization.

Registration is \$25 in advance, \$30 on-site. Visit www.chicagoevents.com or call 773-868-3010.

Gay Games Chicago leader goes global

Kurt Dahl, one of the lead organizers of the 2006 Gay Games in Chicago, has been elected co-president of the international Federation of Gay Games, according to a press release. Dahl was elected by the board to complete the two-year term of the former co-president, who stepped down to take a leadership role in the Washington, D.C., bid to host the 2014 Gay Games.

As treasurer and finance committee co-chair of the 2006 Gay Games, Dahl—who resides in Joliet with his partner of 16 years, Jeff Clark—was part of the team that produced the first financially successful Gay Games since 1986.

Backgammon at Parthenon

The Chicago Backgammon Association presents Monday Night Backgammon, at 5:30 p.m., starting March 2. Games will take place at Parthenon Restaurant, 312 S. Halsted.

All levels of play are welcome. Call Phil at 312-543-0522.

Milwaukee to host gay softball events

During the week of Aug. 30-Sept. 5, 2009, Milwaukee and the Saturday Softball League will host the 33rd Gay Softball World Series (GSWS), also known as Series 2009.

In a related development, the city will present NAGAA Fest 2009 Aug. 29-Sept. 7. In addition to the softball tournament, NAGAA Fest will be

a series of events, celebrations and parties for the entire community.

See www.nagaaasoftball.org and www.nagaaafest.com.

Mammoth Gay Ski Week in March

Elevation 2009, the seventh annual Mammoth Gay Ski Week, will be held in Mammoth Lakes, Calif., March 18-22.

More than 2,000 people are expected to attend this event, the third-largest of its kind in the world. Among the scheduled highlights are several parties, including The Party @ 10,000 Feet and Cliffhanger, the main gala.

See www.mammothgayski.com.

Mauresmo wins tournament

French lesbian tennis star Amélie Mauresmo won her first pro tournament title in two years at the Open GDF SUEZ in Paris on Feb. 15, Advocate.com reported. Mauresmo, 29, defeated Russian Elena Dementieva in the championship round, giving Mauresmo her first tournament win since triumphing in Antwerp, Belgium, in 2007.

Bike Winter Art Show through Feb. 27

The Flat Iron Arts Building, 1579 N. Milwaukee, is hosting the 12th Annual Winter Bike Show through Friday, Feb. 27.

Among the events are an open mic and video presentation on Thursday, Feb. 19, 8-10 p.m.; a fashion show on Saturday, Feb. 21, 6-10 p.m.; films on Thursday, Feb. 26, 8-10 p.m.; and the Bike Winter Carnival on Friday, Feb. 27, 6-10 p.m. Admission is free to all events.

See www.theflatironproject.com/bikewinter-artshow for more information.

Softball classic seeks volunteers

The Chi-Town Softball Classic will take July 2-5, and event organizers are seeking volunteers.

Volunteers of all types and talents are being sought in various areas, including marketing, hospitality, Web design and graphic design.

Interested persons should e-mail ChiTownSoftballClassic@gmail.com.

Having a bowl



The 9 to 12 Bowling League held its annual Strike Out Hunger fund-raiser Jan. 31 to benefit Vital Bridges at River Rand Bowl, 191 S. River, Des Plaines. Photo courtesy of John Paquet

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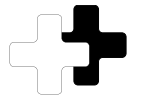
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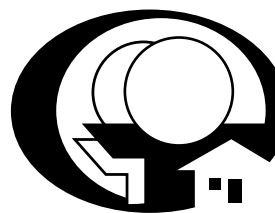
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