

# WINDY CITY TIMES

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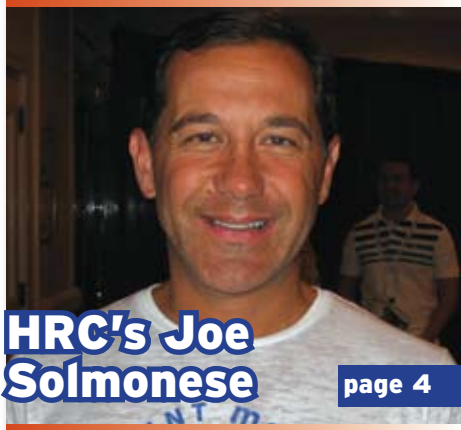
AUG. 26, 2009 • VOL 24 NO 47

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## Hot Glam!

page 15

There was a lot of model behavior to be observed at Macy's Glamorama, held Aug. 21 at the Chicago Theatre, 175 N. State. Among other sights were singers Ne-Yo and Jadyn Maria as well as a lot of fashion—and Miss Piggy. See page 15. Photo by Kat Fitzgerald (MysticImagesPhotography.com); see more online at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com)



## Country Time

There were cowboys and cowgirls galore in Crete, Ill., this past weekend as the Windy City Rodeo came to town. See page 21. Photo by Steve Becker (Beckermedia.com); see more online at [www.WindyCity-MediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCity-MediaGroup.com)

page 21

## HRW: Anti-gay murders in Iraq

BY REX WOCKNER

Iraqi militias are torturing and murdering men suspected of engaging in gay sex or of not being manly enough, and the authorities have done nothing to stop the killings, Human Rights Watch confirmed Aug. 17.

The organization documented a campaign of extrajudicial executions, kidnappings and torture that began early this year in the Baghdad neighborhood of Sadr City, a stronghold of Moqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army militia, then spread to other locations.

Mahdi Army spokesmen have denounced what they call the "third sex" and the alleged feminization of some Iraqi men, and have proposed militia action as a remedy. HRW said some of its sources reported that state security forces have joined in the killings.

The killers invade homes and grab people on the street, HRW reported. Victims are interrogated for names of others before being murdered. Torture practices include supergluing victim's anuses shut, then feeding them laxatives.

Iraqi gays also told HRW they face "honor killings" by homophobic parents and brothers who

believe "unmanly" behavior shames the family or tribe.

"Hundreds of men may have died," HRW said, though the precise figure is "almost impossible" to determine.

One man told HRW that militiamen kidnapped and killed his partner in April: "Four armed men barged into (my partner's parents') house, masked and wearing black. They asked for him by name; they insulted him and took him in front of his parents. ... He was found in the neighbor-

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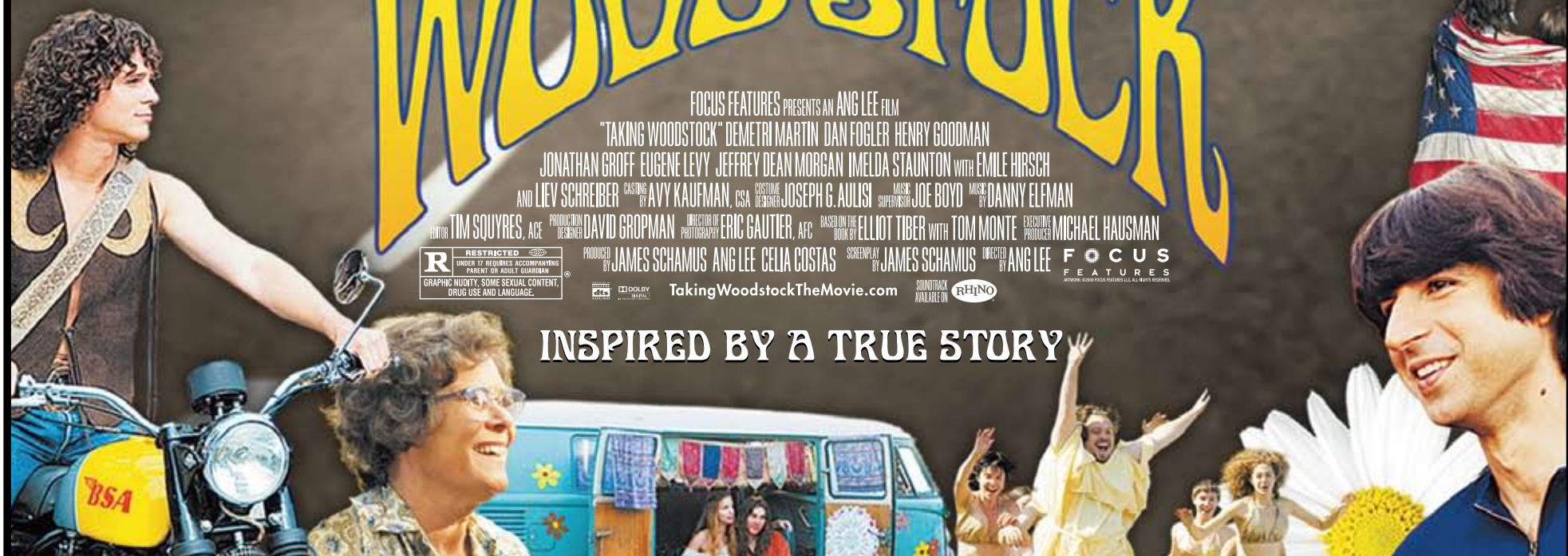
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Chace Chau (left) and Lark Ballinger were two of the presenters at the National LGBTI Health Summit. Read what they talked about on page 7.

Photo by Andrew Davis

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Spike'd—a drag volleyball event that benefited Chicago House—drew plenty of people to a beach on the North Side. See page 22.

Photo by Ross Forman

## OUTLINES

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Cover photos and credits (from top): Publicity photo of Fantasia Barrino; photo of Joe Solmonese by Andrew Davis; photo of Candice Dupree courtesy of Bill Sherbondy

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## www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com ONLINE INDEX

**ALMA'S PARADISE**  
 The Association of Latino Men for Action (ALMA) held a picnic this past weekend. See photos from the event online.  
  
 Photo by Jerry Nunn

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**SUMMER BREEZE**  
  
 Donna Summer (left) and the B-52s held concerts this past weekend. See plenty of photos on our Web site.  
 Photo by Jerry Nunn

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**ARE YOU GAME?**  
 The Outgames have wrapped up in Copenhagen, Denmark. Read all the final numbers in Ross Forman's article.  
  
 Photo by Ross Forman

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# A talk with HRC's Joe Solmonese

BY YASMIN NAIR

Joe Solmonese, executive director of Human Rights Campaign (HRC), frequently finds himself in the eye of the LGBT political storm. In recent years, criticism of the nation's largest gay organization has increased, whether for what many described as the betrayal over the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) or its rumored agnosticism over "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (DADT). The organization recently unveiled a nationwide campaign, No Excuses, which aims to empower LGBTs everywhere to talk to their members of Congress about the issues facing them. Solmonese talked to Windy City Times over the phone about the campaign, and about a range of legislative and political issues.

## Windy City Times: How would you explain the No Excuses campaign?

JS: We have a president who is poised to sign into law everything that we have been fighting for. We have many more allies in Congress that we've had before, we need more help from the grassroots, we need people out across the country doing work to bring [our] legislative items to the finish line. We reached out to our membership and to LGBT people across the country. We asked them to go into the office of their member of Congress' offices, in their district—reminding them that they are, in fact, their constituents—and tell their story.

## WCT: Is this HRC changing tactics in the face of the anger felt by people around [the anti-same-sex marriage measure] Prop 8 and, more recently, in response to widespread LGBT frustration with Obama?

JS: What has changed is not HRC's tactic. What has changed is the dynamic of Congress in that the potential is there, but we're finding far too many excuses for them not to do things.

## WCT: How would someone who goes to the HRC Web site find resources above and beyond HRC's FAQs? How is this different from similar campaigns by other organizations?

JS: You might be someone who lives in Boise, Idaho and live in a very challenging place, with many challenging members of Congress, without many HRC members around you. We've had training conference calls; we're having all sorts of interactive things going on with our membership so that you can be as armed as you can possibly be. You might live in a Congressional district where the member of Congress is scoring



Joe Solmonese. Photo by Andrew Davis

65 or 75 on HRC's scorecard. And there's real work to be done to move that member from a 75 to a 100. In that case, it's very likely that the volunteer infrastructure or staff member would organize an in-district meeting, something almost akin to a town-hall meeting where we would bring all people in for a meeting with that member of Congress.

## WCT: ENDA is looming once again. As you know, HRC still comes under a lot of criticism for the last time, with many in the community using strong language like "betrayal." What guarantee can HRC give that the same thing will not happen this time around?

JS: Well, it's the same guarantee that we gave when it happened. We understood, the last time around, that Congress was going to build support for this legislation and they used a time under a president who wouldn't sign that legislation to build that support. So when Congress brought a bill to the floor that they felt was not all that we wanted it to be but it was something that they felt they could build on, we supported that idea. Every other piece of civil-rights legislation, things like the Family and Medical Leave Act [and] the American Disabilities Act; those were pieces of legislation that were built over years.

## WCT: Are you saying that if the same thing were to happen, HRC would do the same thing?

JS: No, because now what has changed is that we have a president who will sign that law. So the consequences are different. Our commitment is now that no legislation will be signed into law that is not inclusive. And that is because we laid down that legislation, a painful process that we went through to build on it, but we have done that work. We believe that we have done a significant amount of work to close that gap and stand poised to pass fully inclusive legislation. But if we are not there, if we are not where we

need to be, then that bill will not move.

## WCT: And you're not saying that HRC is entirely responsible for ENDA?

JS: I can only say what HRC's position is.

## WCT: Regarding politics in general: Steve Ault's recent Washington Blade article questioned why we should fight for things like DADT and marriage which, he suggests, are conservative issues. As you know, though you talked about the last eight years, HRC has also been criticized for its own conservatism.

JS: It's sort of laughable that we are called right-wing or conservative. You know, we advocate for real LGBT people who are living their lives across America. For instance, there is a tax that same-sex couples pay in order to access same-sex domestic partnership benefits that straight people do not have to pay. So we are advocating to have that tax removed.

## WCT: Can you point out one kind of legislative agenda that HRC has initiated entirely on its own?

JS: I would say we have really led the legislative agenda and have taken the leadership role in most legislative efforts. Going back to the very beginning, of crafting the hate-crimes bill or the more specific things like the Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act or eliminating the tax on [domestic-partnership] benefits. I wouldn't say we singularly did all this, but certainly led the drive on them.

## IRAQ from cover

hood the day after. They had thrown his corpse in the garbage. His genitals were cut off and a piece of his throat was ripped out. Since then, I've been unable to speak properly. I feel as if my life is pointless now. ... (F)or years it has just been my boyfriend and myself in that little bubble, by ourselves. I have no family now -- I cannot go back to them. I have a death warrant on me. I feel the best thing to do is just to kill myself."

Consensual adult gay sex is not illegal under Iraqi law but the militias have claimed to be enforcing Islamic Sharia law. HRW's report said, however, that the killings also violate Sharia law standards for legality, proof and privacy.

Some Iraqi gays have escaped to nearby countries that are only marginally safer for gay people and where, in most cases, gay sex is illegal. HRW urged the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, as well as governments that accept Iraqi refugees, to offer rapid resettlement to Iraqi GLBT people.

Here are some additional personal stories from HRW's report:

Hamid: "[The killers'] measuring rod to judge people is who they have sex with. It is not by their conscience, it is not by their conduct or their values, it is who they have sex with. The cheapest thing in Iraq is a human being, a human life. It is cheaper than an animal, than a pair of used-up batteries you buy on the street. Especially people like us. ... I can't believe I'm here talking to you because it's all just been repressed, repressed, repressed. For years it's been like that -- if I walk down the street, I would feel everyone pointing at me. I feel as if I'm dying all the time. And now this, in the last month -- I don't understand what we did to deserve this. They want us exterminated. All the violence and all this hatred: the people who are suffering from it don't deserve it."

Idris: "We've been hearing about this, about gay men being killed, for more than a month. It's like background noise now, every day. The stories started spreading in February about this campaign against gay people by the Mahdi Army: everyone was talking about it, I was hearing about it from my straight friends. In a coffee shop in Karada, on the streets in Harithiya (Baghdad neighborhoods), they were talking about it. I didn't worry at first. My friends and I, we look extremely masculine, there is nothing visibly 'feminine' about us. None of us ever, ever believed this would happen to us. But then at the end of March we heard on the street that 30 men had been killed already."

## WCT: Can you tell me about a specific instance where HRC spoke to a member of Congress about DADT?

JS: You could speak to our legislative staff and they could point you to a meeting almost on a weekly basis. You have to remember that up until 2006, when you were talking to members of Congress, oftentimes you were talking in the abstract.

## WCT: Regarding politics in general: Steve Ault's recent Washington Blade article questioned why we should fight for things like DADT and marriage which, he suggests, are conservative issues. As you know, though you talked about the last eight years, HRC has also been criticized for its own conservatism.

JS: It's sort of laughable that we are called right-wing or conservative. You know, we advocate for real LGBT people who are living their lives across America. For instance, there is a tax that same-sex couples pay in order to access same-sex domestic partnership benefits that straight people do not have to pay. So we are advocating to have that tax removed.

See [www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org).

Read more of Joe Solmonese's interview—including what he has to say about health care and criticism about endorsing Republicans—at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

Mohammad: "They did many things to us, the Mahdi Army. ... They kidnapped (my partner) for six days. He will not talk about what they did to him. There were bruises on his side as if he was dragged on the street. They did things to him he can't describe, even to me. They wrote in the dust on the windshield of his car: 'Death to the people of Lot and to collaborators.' They sent us veiled threats in text messages: 'You are on the list.' They sent him a piece of paper in an envelope, to his home: there were three bullets wrapped in plastic, of different size. The note said, 'Which one do you want in your heart?' ... I want to be a regular person, lead a normal life, walk around the city, drink coffee on the street. But because of who I am, I can't. There is no way out."

Nuri: "At 10 a.m., (Ministry of Interior officers) cuffed my hands behind my back. Then they tied a rope around my legs, and they hung me upside down from a hook in the ceiling, from morning till sunset. I passed out. I was stripped down to my underwear while I hung upside down. They cut me down that night, but they gave me no water or food. Next day, they told me to put my clothes back on and they took me to the investigating officer. He said: 'You like that? We're going to do that to you more and more, until you confess.' Confess to what? I asked. 'To the work you do, to the organization you belong to, and that you are a queen.' For days, there were severe beatings. ... They beat me all over my body; when they had me hanging upside down, they used me like a punching bag. ... They used electric prods all over my body. Then they raped me. Over three days. The first day, 15 of them raped me; the second day, six; the third day, four. There was a bag on my head every time."

Following the release of the HRW report, Sweden's national gay group, RFSL, "demand(ed) that the Swedish government explore the possibility of evacuating gays from Iraq," said Executive Director Maria Sjödin.

"It is not enough to condemn the ongoing cleansing," added RFSL President Sören Juvas. "We encourage Sweden to explore the possibilities of evacuating homosexuals, bisexuals and transgenders who face the risk of sexual cleansing."

For a PDF of HRW's full 67-page report, visit [bit.ly/1cWi7D](http://bit.ly/1cWi7D). (From HRW and RFSL press material)

—Assistance: Bill Kelley

Read more world news, including new arrests for same-sex relations in Senegal, at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

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Cambridge, Mass., Mayor E. Denise Simmons.

## NATIONAL ROUNDUP

BY ANDREW DAVIS

In Minneapolis, delegates at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's biennial meeting voted 559-451 on Aug. 21 to ordain ministers in committed, same-sex relationships—although they did not endorse same-sex marriage, according to the Associated Baptist Press. In a statement, Emily Eastwood, executive director of Lutherans Concerned/North America, said, "Today I am proud to be a Lutheran. Supporters and advocates of full inclusion have longed for this day since the inception of the ELCA, and for many of us what seemed like a lifetime."

In Massachusetts, E. Denise Simmons—the first Black lesbian mayor in the country—will marry her longtime partner, Mattie B. Hayes, at the city's St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church Aug. 30, according to a press release run in the Cambridge Chronicle. "I believe this may be the very first African-American church to hold a same gender wedding, and that's something that just wouldn't have happened years ago," said Simmons.

In Alaska, Anchorage Mayor Dan Sullivan has vetoed a sexual orientation-discrimination ban passed by the city assembly, the New York Times reported. Sullivan, a Republican, said that it was not clear that such discrimination existed. The ordinance recently passed 7-4; it would have barred discrimination in areas such as employment, housing and education.

Air Force Lt. Col. Victor Fehrenbach, 40, might be expelled from the military for violating "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" after coming out

of the closet to clear himself of a rape charge, according to the Idaho Statesman. Fehrenbach, an 18-year veteran who fought in the Iraq War, was accused of raping a man—and admitted he had consensual sex with Cameron Shaner, 30. Although Fehrenbach was cleared by the prosecutor and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, his discharge is pending.

In Queens, N.Y., gay and lesbian residents of the Kew Gardens apartment complex have filed discrimination-based lawsuits, claiming co-op board members called them anti-gay slurs and refused to make repairs, the New York Daily News reported. The case of one resident, Estelle Torino, is going to court Sept. 9; another plaintiff, Kevin Uhrin, settled in June. Uhrin had said that in 2004, a flyer about repairs was taped to his door with the word "fags" written on it.

On Aug. 18, the North Carolina Court of Appeals allowed State Sen. Julia Boseman, D-New Hanover—the state's only out legislator—to keep her adopted child, according to Q-Notes.com. Boseman's former partner, Melissa Jarrell, was trying to have Boseman's parental rights denied. The three-judge panel said the pair's status as a former same-sex couple had nothing to do with the case.

Attorneys Ted Olson and David Boies, who are challenging the anti-same-sex measure Prop 8, asked U.S. District Judge Vaughn Walker Aug. 14 to stop three gay-rights groups from being parties in the case, according to the San Francisco Appeal. Walker honored the attorneys' request Aug. 19, denying the request of Our Family Coalition; Lavender Seniors of the East Bay; and Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) to join *Perry v. Schwarzenegger*, eNewsPF.com reported.

On Aug. 20, a television ad supporting same-sex marriage starting running statewide through Maine, according to On Top Magazine. The 60-second ad—paid for by EqualityMaine Foundation, Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders and the Maine Civil Liberties Union Foundation—is called "Together." Maine's gay-marriage law was slated to take effect Sept. 12, but has been put on hold because opponents have collected enough signatures to force a "people's veto."

In San Francisco, Calif., a streetcar dedicated to late gay-rights activist Harvey Milk was defaced with anti-gay graffiti, causing transportation officials to pull it from service, according to the Bay Area Reporter. A vandal or vandals defaced placards of Milk inside the car with the words "fag" and "faggot." Milk was among those recently honored by President Barack Obama with the Presidential Medal of Freedom Aug. 12.

## Gay man battles N.Y. university over employment

BY CHASSE REHWINKEL

In 1835, American Presbyterian missionaries established a small secondary school for women in Beirut, Lebanon.

The school was not only the first women's secondary school in Lebanon; it was the first institution of its kind in the entire Turkish Empire.

The school's unique progressiveness, however, made it a visible target for discrimination in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. There were times when the school was even forced to close its doors during periods of heavy unrest.

Undeterred, the small secondary school for women eventually became a two-year junior college and then a full fledged university. Today the school, which after multiple name changes is now the Lebanese American University, offers a wide range of studies for students who attend one of its three campuses, two of which are located in Lebanon and one in New York City.

Similarly, New York-based writer Bob Johnson has endured his fair share of hardships. As a young boy growing up in Warwick, R.I., Johnson was terrified of going to junior high school.

Johnson, who stated that while at middle school he was still unsure of his sexuality, explained that almost every day he was bullied with slurs such as "homo" and "faggot."

The young Johnson would avoid taking the bus into school and found every reason he could to stay after classes had ended so that he could take the less popular late bus home.

However, Johnson said that those troublesome years in Warwick "[g]ot me ready me for life in the real world" and that his life turned around as he got into high school, then college and finally the professional world.

Those hard junior high years even, Johnson stated, made him strong enough to deal with brain surgery, living in New York during 9/11 and being diagnosed with colon cancer.

Both archetypes for strength in the face of adversity, the Lebanese American University and Bob Johnson crossed paths in the summer of 2007 when Johnson was offered the position of a marketing and communications manager for the Lebanese American University (LAU), New York City campus.

In April 2008, after a visit from the LAU's president, Joseph Jabbara, Johnson's supervisor presented him with a 45-day performance improvement plan that outlined deficiencies in his work performance. He was instructed to improve



Bob Johnson.

these problems within the presented 45-day period or face termination.

Forty-five days later, on June 11, 2008, Johnson was fired.

To Johnson, his sudden termination did not make sense. He felt he had performed all the duties that the job had required, including expanding the school's Web site and getting more media placements in North America than LAU had ever been able to achieve.

Then, five months later, while talking with a former co-worker Johnson discovered the root of his termination. LAU had not fired Johnson because of his performance, stated the co-worker—he had been forced out because he was gay.

"Unfortunately, we have found that discrimination based on sexual orientation still happens on a regular basis in the workplace," said Daryl Herrschaft, the director of the Human Rights Campaign's Workplace Project. "In recent reports we have found that in spite of the progress made by many corporations, a majority of LGBT workers—51 percent, in fact—still are afraid to reveal their sexual orientation."

Unlike federal statutes that protect against discrimination based on race or gender, there is no current federal law that prohibits a company from firing an employee based on their sexual orientation in the United States. Presently, only 21 states have some form of law that protects gays and lesbians in the workplace and just 12 have passed regulations against discrimination based on gender identity.

New York law, however, does prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, and Johnson has moved to collect damages from LAU on the basis of these New York State and City human-rights laws.

To read the entire article—including what Johnson's attorney has to say—visit [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).



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## One Iowa meets in Chicago

BY CHASSE REHWINKEL

LGBT Iowans earned a historic victory April 3 when the Iowa Supreme Court handed down its unanimous decision declaring same-sex marriage legal in the state. Twenty-four days later, on April 27, same-sex couples from across the state were issued legal marriage licenses, officially making Iowa the first Midwestern state to do so.

In celebration of this victory, One Iowa, a grassroots organization that helped spearhead the campaign for marriage in that state, and Lambda Legal co-organized an Aug. 18 reception at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted, to toast their success and discuss what the LGBT community should work on in order to firmly secure same-sex marriage in Iowa.

"This is an event that reaches out to our friends and allies in the Chicago area to celebrate the decision made by the Iowa Supreme Court," said Brad Clark, campaign director for One Iowa. "We want to continue to raise awareness about the fight for marriage in Iowa. It's a fight that is nowhere close to being over, so we need the help of our friends from across the country to secure this victory."

Despite the short time frame, organizers stated that they were "very pleased" by the number of people that came in support, especially the large number of walk-ins that showed up from as far away as California.

One passionate attendee, who came to the event from eastern Iowa, was Suzon Esser. Operator of the only strictly gay marriage-planning service in Iowa, Esser—also known as the "pride planner"—was more than happy to come and show her support for One Iowa's work.

"It's a fabulous organization," Esser stated. "They have done so much for equal rights, it's really great."

Tuesday's event was only part of One Iowa's "History in the Heartland" campaign; another reception is planned for Thursday, Aug. 27, in Iowa City. Visit [www.oneiowa.org](http://www.oneiowa.org) for more information.

## Anti-Prop 8 lawyers reject gay groups

Attorneys Ted Olson and David Boies, who are challenging the anti-same-sex measure Prop 8, asked U.S. District Judge Vaughn Walker Aug. 14 to stop three gay-rights groups from being parties in the case, according to the San Francisco Appeal.

Walker honored the attorneys' request Aug. 19, denying the request of Our Family Coalition; Lavender Seniors of the East Bay; and Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) to join *Perry v. Schwarzenegger*, eNewsPF.com reported.

Olson and Boies explained in their request that "[h]aving declined to bring their own federal challenge to Proposition 8, Our Family Coalition and their counsel should not be allowed to usurp plaintiffs' lawsuit now that it is under way and moving forward on an expedited basis."

Lambda Legal, the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Center for Lesbian Rights—which represented OFC, Lavender Seniors and PFLAG—issued a joint statement expressing their disappointment with Walker's ruling: "On behalf of our clients, we are disappointed that the court did not permit organizations that represent California's diverse lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community to participate in the case as the Court weighs the harms inflicted by Proposition 8. The significance of this case for our entire community is enormous. To exclude the people whose very freedom is at stake is troubling."

—Andrew Davis

## LOCAL NEWS

### Club denies benefits to LGBT officers

BY STEVEN CHAITMAN

If a Chicago LGBT police officer, firefighter or paramedic should be killed on the job, his or her partner will not receive any help from the Hundred Club of Cook County. The private charitable organization, which has provided relief checks to families when a loved one dies in the line of duty for nearly 45 years, does not recognize registered domestic partners as being qualified for its survivor assistance.

On July 15, the Chicago Commission on Human Relations' (CCHR) Advisory Council on LGBT Issues approved a measure requesting its commissioner, Dana Starks, to express his support to the Hundred Club for including registered partners.

But Hundred Club President Ralph Scheu said that regardless of personal opinion, the club's board of directors must adhere to Illinois law, which does not treat marriage and partnership equally.

"We have to follow the law as it is at the time of a fatality," Scheu said. "The extension of certain benefits to life partners or any other description of someone in a union which is not recognized in law as equal to or the same as a marriage cannot excuse our need to comply with the law."

As a private organization that is not a government agency, however, the club is not prohibited from extending its benefits to anyone it wishes. It is also allowed to discriminate as part of its right of expressive association, a ruling made in the 2000 Supreme Court case *Boy Scouts of America v. Dale*, which upheld the Boy Scouts' right to bar gay troop leaders.

The Hundred Club has never failed to provide its educational assistance for a child of unmarried parents, but its articles of incorporation and bylaws state that marriage is required for survivor benefits.

The issue was brought to the CCHR Advisory Council on LGBT Issues by former police officer Bob Zuley, who read a piece by Chicago Sun-Times columnist Mary Mitchell on June 11, asking Scheu about the possibility of giving money to a first responder's partner.

"What would you do about same-sex couples?" Scheu answered, as quoted in the column. "The climate is not there for that, and you would create a tremendous opportunity for massive fraud."

If Cook County's domestic-partner registry were to be used, Zuley said, there would be no possibility of "massive fraud." In addition to the CCHR, Zuley has also brought this issue to the attention of Chicago Police Supt. Jody Weis and Congressman Mike Quigley.

Zuley said that he believes the Hundred Club hadn't given the issue any thought until now, and hoped the message will develop enough support that the club will consider changing its governing documents.

"It's incumbent on those [who provide this assistance] to recognize everyone across the board and not pick and choose who they're going to recognize," Zuley said.

Scheu said the Hundred Club would amend its governing documents if the state of Illinois legalizes same-sex unions.

"No question about that," he said. "We certainly would cover it."

There are other organizations, however, that have more inclusive policies. The Mitchell column named the Chicago Police Memorial Foundation (CPMF) as one.

According to the column, when police officer Alejandro Valadez died in the line of duty June 1 and left behind his pregnant fiancée, the Hundred Club did not offer any survivor benefits to the fiancée other than promising to help with the unborn son's education when he graduates high school. The CPMF cut a check to the family—including the fiancée—and also pledged to help with the son's education.

"This is the real reason this foundation exists," said the group's president, Art Hannus, as quoted in the column. "There are things that had fallen through the cracks in previous years. [Former Chicago police superintendent] Phil Cline and Gold Star Families created this [organization] because they understood there were these cracks."

The CPMF Web site uses the term "families" in describing who benefits from its services. In the case of Valadez, the CPMF wrote a \$50,000 check, the maximum amount of relief the Hundred Club provides.

"That kind of substantial financial assistance makes [including registered partners] really crucial," Zuley said.

Meanwhile, Hundred Club members might be unaware that the organization is not one that doesn't extend its benefits to surviving partners.

"Some people would not donate if they knew [the Hundred Club was] engaging in those kinds of distinctions with fallen officers," said Jim Madigan, former interim executive director of Equality Illinois.

Madigan said that if the club is not being upfront about whom it does or does not provide to that "no one should give them a dime."

The Hundred Club Web site uses the term "spouse" when describing survivor benefits. According to Scheu, nearly all of the Hundred Club's one thousand or so paying members come to the organization through word of mouth or after seeing them on TV following a line-of-duty death, so it's unclear whether most are aware same-sex partners would not be helped should an LGBT first responder die on the job.

"I definitely think [The Hundred Club] should come forth on who they cover and who they do not, especially if reasons they create charity are because of the jobs we do," said Officer Jamie Richardson, president of LGPA/GOAL Chicago, an organization of LGBT first responders that advocates for LGBT issues in each department.

Richardson said the issue is very similar to the widower's pension that GOAL Chicago has been fighting to secure for LGBT officers. It's something that she said could affect job performance in a dangerous situation.

"You have to consider if I don't get through that crossfire, what's going to happen to my wife or other half?" she said. "You're going to have to think about it; the guy sitting next to you gets out of the car without hesitation."

Bill Greaves, director of the Advisory Council on LGBT Issues for the CCHR, has drafted a letter that will be sent to the Hundred Club, but the club cannot discuss the issue until its next board of directors meeting, which will be held in November.

Windy City Times has learned that several politicians have expressed support for including registered domestic partners for survivor benefits, including Congressman Mike Quigley; State Reps. Greg Harris, Deborah Mell and Sara Feigenholtz; State Sen. Heather Steans; and Cook County Commissioner Bridget Gainer.

Among the organization's senior board members (according to the Web site, 100clubchicago.org) are Illinois Supreme Court Justice Anne Burke. Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez, Chicago Police Department Superintendent Jody P. Weis, Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart and Chicago Mayor Richard Daley are among its honorary members.

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From left:  
**Chace Chou**  
and **Lark Ballinger**.  
Photo by  
**Andrew Davis**

The National LGBTI Health Summit took place in Chicago Aug. 14-18. What follow are more synopses of what transpired. To see previous write-ups of the summit, visit [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

## LGBTI HEALTH SUMMIT Minorities and mobilization

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Among the several intriguing-sounding workshops Aug. 16 was "LGTBQI People of Color & HIV: The Health Benefits of Community Mobilization," an interactive forum in which participants examined the process and impact of youth- and adult-mentoring programs and role models.

In the opening presentation, Stephaun Clipper—the prevention programs manager at The MOCHA Center, Inc. ([www.mochaproject.org](http://www.mochaproject.org)), a New York-based for gay men, bisexual men and MSM of color—talked about MOCHA Weekend 2008, an annual "celebration of service to the community." One of the highlights was a community-health forum that covered such topics as racism/sexism, transphobia and HIV/AIDS.

A deeper look into said issues revealed much more, according to Clipper. He said that it was discovered that peer-based models were effective, and that trans health issues need more attention. An extended discussion took place when Clipper discussed another topic: HIV and the house/ball community. (House/ball culture involves events in which people "walk," or compete, for trophies and prizes; houses typically are led by one individual, and the houses are usually named after that person.) The talk centered on house parents and youths, and the dynamic that exists between them.

Lark Ballinger and Chace Chou, both from Washington state, talked about developing mentorship program regarding community mobilization. The problem with mentorships, they stated, primarily involves a unidirectional flow of power (as in a student-teacher relationship), so they are seeking to re-define mentorships by making them bidirectional. One way that can be accomplished, they said, is to make mentorships totally inclusive; they can even transcend age, as a thirtysomething individual could mentor a sixtysomething person, especially if the younger person has different experiences in his or her background.

Ballinger and Chou also talked about a program in Seattle, Wash., in which mentees got to choose several mentors from a pool of applicants—including the mentor that the individuals identified with the most. Additionally, the mentors would learn from each other.

Chicago was well-represented at this forum as Lora Branch, Tommy Bennett, Karl Grant and Ariq Cabbler talked about the Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus (CBGMC; [www.lovethebrotha.com](http://www.lovethebrotha.com)), which Branch described as a "type of mobilization." Branch said that the caucus was formed (in 2005) as a result of a recommendation that the health department work with Black MSM (men who have sex with men) leaders to confront HIV-related issues facing African-American gay and bisexual men.

Grant said that the mission of the caucus is to "mobilize and empower Black gay men and their allies to identify solutions to prevent new HIV infections." The organization has six sub-committees and hosts major activities every year. Cabbler added that said activities include a monthly executive planning meeting, a quar-

terly community meeting and the annual Lovefest that takes place in Jackson Park, 63rd and Cornell, Aug. 30, 3-9 p.m. Bennett discussed the caucus' forums—specifically, "The Dating Game," an event in the style of the classic game show that addressed topics such as relationships and HIV.

Read even more about what the panel said about the Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus online at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

## LGBTI HEALTH SUMMIT Summit looks at Obama's LGBT health record

BY YASMIN NAIR

The LGBTI Health Summit came in the thick of very intense national conversations around health care, especially at various Town Halls across the country. Despite the national spotlight on an issue that clearly has the attention of more than the approximately 50 million uninsured, the gay community's response to the health crisis has been relatively muted.

On Aug. 17, Sean Cahill, managing director of public policy for the New York-based GMHC (Gay Men's Health Crisis) and Chicago's David Munar, vice president of AIDS Foundation of Chicago, presented "The Obama administration's efforts to develop a national AIDS strategy" to discuss LGBTI health issues. In the process, they shed light on both the successes and shortcomings of President Barack Obama's administration.

Cahill pointed out that while he agreed with some of the criticism of the Obama administration, such as that around the Department of Justice memo stating that it does not support the Defense of Marriage Act, he was also struck by the fact that few people noted the advances made: "I've asked people: Do you realize that Obama fully de-funded abstinence-only education until marriage?" He said that most people were completely unaware of this, even though it has a significant effect on the sexual and reproductive health of both straight and LGBTQ students.

"Forty-seven percent of high school students are sexually active, and 4 million young people contract STDs each year," said Cahill. In addition, such programs carry "regressive gender stereotypes," presenting boys as "sex-crazed" and girls needing to "manage the [supposed] sexual

predation of boys." They are also gay, presenting AIDS as the inevitable result of homosexuality.

Cahill discussed HIV/AIDS, including the HIV travel ban that prohibits travelers with the virus from entering the country. He said that this has a detrimental effect on the health of immigrants because it "discourages people from coming forward to get tested or access treatment." In New York city, 24 percent of new HIV diagnoses were among immigrants and, of those, 50 percent were more likely than native borns to be dual diagnosed with HIV and AIDS, which means that they are likely definitely testing later because of a fear of being deported.

As for HIV/AIDS in the general population, Cahill said that the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) now estimates that 56,300 were newly diagnosed in 2006—40 percent more people than was previously counted. In the U.S. today, 1.1 million are living with HIV, and the racial and ethnic disparities are clear: While Blacks make up 13 percent of the U.S. population, they account for 43 percent new HIV diagnoses; while Latinos are 13 percent of the population, they account for 18 percent of new diagnoses.

Read more—including what David Munar had to say about syringe-exchange programs—at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

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## CHICAGO GAY HISTORY

BY JOHN D'EMILIO



### Kinsey in Chicago

"He truly brought fire and light to the world," Samuel Steward wrote about Alfred Kinsey, scientist and sex researcher. "He was our Stonewall."

Our Stonewall. Those are pretty strong words. But it doesn't surprise me that Steward, who lived in Chicago from the late 1930s until the mid-1960s, would make such a claim. Though it isn't common knowledge, Chicago played a vital role in Kinsey's research, particularly in forming his ideas about homosexuality.

The heart and soul of Kinsey's research was the face-to-face interview. Kinsey didn't collect data through anonymous mail surveys or telephone polling. Instead, he sat each one of his thousands of subjects down and, with pencil and paper in hand, asked lots of questions.

By all accounts Kinsey was a consummate interviewer. He didn't betray disapproval or surprise. He never suggested there was anything wrong or inadequate about the sex life of the person speaking to him. The result was that his subjects opened up. They talked freely about their intimate lives to a person they barely knew.

Albert Deutsch, a science journalist who profiled Kinsey in a major magazine, described his own experience: "As part of my research I subjected myself to an interview by Professor Kinsey, answering 325 questions on my sex history in one hour and fifteen minutes. I am as inhibited as the next fellow about sexual matters, but to my great surprise I experienced no embarrassment in giving intimate details of my personal life to this amazingly skillful interviewer."

Kinsey's skill was all to the good, but it begged a certain question. How was he going to find gay men and get them to talk about their sexual histories? True, in the largest cities, there was a gay world where men who wanted sex and intimacy with other men could find one another.

But it wasn't announced with rainbow flags and gay posters. You had to search hard for it. And members of the gay tribe did everything they could to keep those places invisible to outsiders.

Gay men observed a code of silence to protect themselves. They built a wall of separation between their gay social lives and the rest of society. As one Chicago gay man explained to Kinsey: "I am always afraid I will give myself away every time I speak or move ... I keep to myself for fear they will find out."

At the beginning of 1939, Kinsey was still in the exploratory stages of his research. He had done fewer than a hundred interviews, most of them in Bloomington, Ind., where he taught. Even at this early point, he noticed homosexual experience surfacing in a number of histories, and this piqued his curiosity.

One of his informants had ties to a group of gay men in Chicago who lived in "Towertown," the near north neighborhood east of Michigan Avenue and south of Chicago Avenue. In the late 1930s Towertown still had something of a bohemian reputation. Men and women just starting out on their own filled its inexpensive rooming houses. It was filled with rooming houses where men and women just starting out might live cheaply. Kinsey's contact promised to introduce him to a group of friends who lived in one of these rooming houses on Rush Street. In June 1939, Kinsey set out for a long weekend trip to the big city.

Staying at a hotel at Harrison and Michigan, Kinsey made his way up to Rush Street. This first trip was hard work. He needed to win the confidence of men who, understandably, were hesitant to talk to this stranger. "It took us five days to get the first three histories out of the city," he wrote afterward. But, by the end of his stay, he had their trust. Writing to the man who had set up the meetings, he described the group of Chicago friends as "nice boys ... all of them most cooperative in helping me." Not only did he get his first interviews, but his subjects promised to introduce him to wider circles of acquaintances if he came back.

And return to Chicago he did. Kinsey made at least half a dozen trips before the end of 1939. As his networks expanded, he found himself conducting as many as seven interviews a day. Soon he had contacts in at least half a dozen parts of town. Wanting a broad range of experience, he consciously sought subjects "in all classes, from the most cultured ... to the poorest type of professional street solicitor." The result, he wrote to a friend, was a "scientific gold mine."

Kinsey left us some tantalizing descriptions of these hidden social worlds. "Have been to Hallowe'en parties, taverns, clubs, etc., which would be unbelievable if realized by the rest of

the world," he wrote to one of his confidantes. "I have had to do more drinking in single weekends than I thought I would ever do in a lifetime." Kinsey's excitement about what he was learning is palpable. "Why has no one cracked this before," he wondered. Based on the extensive and wide-ranging contacts he was making, he estimated that "there are at least 300,000 involved in Chicago alone."

Kinsey's manner must have been as impressive as his colleagues and biographers have claimed, because the participants in Chicago's gay world seemed to welcome him without reservation. "Always they have been most considerate and cooperative, decent, understanding, and cordial in their reception" is how he described his interview subjects. Many of the gay men he met with in Chicago "were bubbling over to tell us everything they could." They "poured out their lives to us."

Several of them began correspondences with him. "You have a strange, poetic, and warmly human quality," a Northwestern student wrote him, "that enables you to cross all sorts of barriers and talk directly to another's heart and soul." Interview subjects began sharing with him their diaries and photo collections, all of which gave Kinsey an even richer picture of gay life. And Kinsey wrote back words of support to his informants, especially if he sensed that they were in conflict about their sexuality. "There is no form of outlet which I will admit as abnormal," he told one of them. "There is no right or wrong biologically."

Plunging into this gay world, as Kinsey did in Chicago in 1939, aroused in this supposedly dispassionate scientist an almost crusading determination to use his findings to bring change to society. "We can get folk to thinking straighter on these matters," he wrote one of his Chicago subjects. "The world's thinking can be made more tolerant only if the facts are known." He thanked his subjects for their time and their help. "You are contributing mightily by accepting me in your circle, and introducing me to others ... It is for them and the rest of you, not for me alone, that it is worthwhile." He assured them that "we can make public opinion more sensible."

When these young gay men on the streets of Chicago exposed their lives to Kinsey in 1939, the possibility of a more sensible public opinion must have seemed remote. Yet, when Kinsey's book on men was finally published, all those interviews did add up to something important. Enough to make one informant, several decades later, refer back to Kinsey's study as "our Stonewall."

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### Living with Pride's hearing postponed

BY SAMUEL WORLEY

Residents of Living with Pride (LWP), the embattled sober living space in the North Center neighborhood, will have to wait another month to find out whether their home is secure—a hearing before the city's zoning board of appeals has again been pushed back.



Alderman Gene Schulner.

At the request of 47th Ward Alderman Gene Schulner, who was out of the country and unable to attend the hearing, it was rescheduled for Friday, Sept. 18.

Living with Pride, a living space tailored specifically to the needs of LGBT people in recovery from addiction, has faced controversy since it opened its doors in March. Following complaints from neighbors, city zoning commissioner Patricia Scudiero found LWP to be incorrectly zoned. While house administrators argue that it is a "community group home" (allowed under current zoning), Scudiero found it to be a "transitional" residence—and in need of re-zoning. If the appeal of this decision fails, it is unlikely that LWP would be able to successfully apply to re-zone, given its contentious relationship with its neighbors and with Schulner.

More information on the house can be found at [www.livingwithpride.org](http://www.livingwithpride.org).

### Lovefest Aug. 30

The Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus (CBGMC)—a coalition of concerned individuals dedicated to improving the health of African-American gay and bisexual men—will hold its fifth annual Lovefest Sunday, Aug. 30, 3-9 p.m., in Jackson Park, 63rd and Cornell.

For more information about this event and CBGMC, visit [www.lovethebrotha.com](http://www.lovethebrotha.com) or call Darius Mayfield, CBGMC's administrator, at 312-566-0285, ext. 12.

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## Gender JUST meets with Huberman

BY YASMIN NAIR

In June, Gender JUST (GJ), a local LGBTQA grassroots organization, organized a safe and affirming education community forum spotlighting Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and the specific needs of LGBTQ students. At that meeting, the group secured a promise from CPS CEO Ron Huberman that he would meet with the group within 60 days. [Full disclosure: This reporter is also member of Gender JUST.]

On Aug. 18, the two parties met at a meeting that GJ Leadership Councils member Sam Finkelstein and Eric Amaya described as a success. According to Finkelstein, the group went into the meeting with a focus on three areas related to LGBTQ issues: resources for students, training for teachers and ways to hold CPS accountable when either or both were found unresponsive to student complaints about harassment or concerns about safety. Describing the meeting as "a huge victory," he said that the group was "able to come to a [set of resolutions] that incorporated Gender JUST's plans and solutions."

GJ has been able to get Huberman's agreement to create, with CPS funding, an "intervention team." Said team would consist of students, parents and community organizers that overlooked issues related to student life for LGBTQ and other minority students or students harassed for any reason, on a district-wide level. This idea of an intervention team stemmed from an original GJ demand at the forum that CPS create an "accountability officer." Asked about the timeline, Finkelstein said, "We are going to start pulling that committee together within the next month. He wouldn't agree to making safe and affirming training mandatory for teachers, but we are not going to stop pushing for that."

Finkelstein said that the differences between GJ and Huberman stemmed from the different priorities at work: "His priority is academic, but we believe that affirmation and safety cannot be separated from academics." Finkelstein added said that the group wanted the CEO to issue a "Pride directive" to all students, staff and faculty reminding them that CPS was a safe and affirming place, but that Huberman made it clear that he didn't like "proclamations." Instead, the compromise is that Huberman will draft a letter that will go to all in CPS reminding them of the policies of safe and affirming education.

Gender JUST and Huberman are to meet again in six months, according to Finkelstein, to "make sure that the ball doesn't get dropped." In the meantime, he said, the group will continue to push for reform by asking for meetings with others in CPS, like CPS Board President Michael Scott. Finkelstein said that Gender JUST was "incredibly enthusiastic and cautiously optimistic" about this meeting and praised Huberman for

his preparedness before entering the meeting. "He had obviously looked at the materials [Gender JUST's proposals] beforehand and already gone through them with his legal team, so there was no delay in his saying he would have to consult with lawyers first."

Eric Amaya, a senior at Kelly High School and also a member of GJ's leadership council, also thought that "the meeting went very well," but that it only went half an hour instead of the expected hour. Amaya was especially excited about the fact that Huberman was receptive to Gender JUST's "Student Justice Handbook," meant to provide resources for all students "who feel lost, whether about pregnancy or about their sexual orientation." Amaya said that Huberman "seemed really supportive" and that the meeting was "a small step towards a big victory."

Windy City Times contacted CPS for this story, but did not get a response before the newspaper went to press.

## Parade attendee's case continued

BY ANDREW DAVIS

The case of Lawrence Perea, a Pride Parade attendee who was arrested for alleged reckless behavior, has been continued until Monday, Oct. 19, according to the Cook County State's Attorney's Office.

According to Michael Fitzpatrick of the Chicago Police Department, "a person was down" at 3507 N. Halsted on June 28, the day of the Pride Parade. Perea, of the 4200 block of North Sheridan, reportedly yelled, "Fuck the Chicago police" and made an obscene gesture. As police officers and firefighters approached the person who was down, Perea allegedly continued his rants and behavior, leading police (who thought he would impede their efforts to help the other person) to arrest him.

Perea, a member of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations' Advisory Council on LGBT Issues, was named one of Windy City Times' 30 Under 30 honorees in June.

## IVI-IPO sues over parking meters

The Independent Voters of Illinois-Independent Precinct Organization (IVI-IPO) and board member Aviva Patt have filed a complaint in Cook County Court, with the goal of overturning the city's privatization of parking meters, according to an organizational press release.

The suit seeks to have the court void the contract between the City of Chicago and Chicago Parking Meters, LLC. The complaint alleges that said contract is illegal because, among other things, "the city did not have authority to lease city streets and that the city cannot delegate police functions (parking enforcement) to a private company."

# QUOTELINES

BY REX WOCKNER

**"WHEN PUSH COMES TO SHOVE, WE (GAYS) ALWAYS GET PUSHED.** I want the chaos, the anger, the truth, whatever it is, to come out. Otherwise it's a big Kabuki dance in Washington, fund-raising letters about nothing. Who's willing to fast? Who's willing to get handcuffed? This president will actually care. The last one didn't. People like it when you appeal to their better angels. Because people want to be better. Most people do. They want to be appealed to." — *Rich Tafel, founding president of Log Cabin Republicans, to The Advocate, September issue.*

**"THE ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF PROPOSITION 8 ULTIMATELY COMES DOWN TO** no more than the tautological assertion that a marriage is between a man and a woman. But a slogan is not a substitute for constitutional analysis. Law is about justice, not bumper stickers." — *Lawyer David Boies writing about his and Ted Olson's bold lawsuit seeking to have Prop 8 struck down as a violation of the U.S. Constitution, in The Wall Street Journal, July 20.*

**"THEY (NOTRE DAME) GET UP AND THEY DO THIS LITTLE CHEER, LIKE THIS. YOU KNOW, THIS LITTLE FAGGOT DANCE.** ... Don't write that 'faggot dance.' I was misquoted. ... Go ahead, say 'faggot dance.' No. Please cover for me on that ... I'll deny it." — *University of Hawaii football coach Greg McMackin to reporters July 30 at the Western Athletic Conference media football preview in Salt Lake City.*

**"I WANT TO OFFICIALLY, OFFICIALLY APOLOGIZE.** Please don't write that statement I said as far as Notre Dame. The reason is, I don't care about Notre Dame. But I'm not a—I don't want to come out and have every homosexual ticked off at me. You know what I mean. Because I don't have any problem with homosexuals. But I apologize for saying that and I'd appreciate it if you wouldn't run that word. If you said dance, that's OK. But don't use the bad term that I chose, please. Thank you." — *University of Hawaii football coach Greg McMackin to reporters July 30 at the Western Athletic Conference media football preview in Salt Lake City.*

**"I'M COMMITTED TO DO WHATEVER I CAN TO USE THIS** as a life lesson and to learn from my

mistake. ... I've offended the gay and lesbian community and now I'm going to work with the LGBT community on campus to use this as a teachable moment for me and hopefully others." — *Hawaii football coach Greg McMackin a day later in Honolulu. As punishment for saying "faggot," McMackin was suspended for 30 days without pay, took a voluntary salary reduction, must do work with the LGBT community on campus and must make a public-service announcement about how words hurt, among other things. Part of the money from his salary reduction will pay for a GLBT student intern to conduct campuswide workshops in GLBT-awareness training.*

**"I COULD HAVE PROBABLY BEEN UNDER THAT LABEL (SEX ADDICT)** but I was more of a drama addict. Lots of drama (in my 20s). I really, really enjoyed a woman's touch. I enjoyed being intimately connected to another woman. And I enjoyed it a lot and with a lot of



**I could have probably been under that label (sex addict) but I was more of a drama addict.**

—Melissa Etheridge

different women. I just really liked it. I would think it was a beautiful, amazing thing that would make me feel good, and then in the morning, I didn't feel so good. There was a lot of dishonesty that came with it. If I had been really honest, I probably would have felt better about it. There was an emptiness that only I could fill, but I was looking for others to fill it." — *Melissa Etheridge to Los Angeles' Lesbian News, August issue.*

**"MORE THAN 15 HUNDRED PEOPLE ARE MARCHING** from a courtyard beside Sydney Town Hall amid hugs and kisses, designer clothes and hair products, to fight a serious battle for the right to marry." — *The Australian Associated Press perhaps should have resisted the urge, Aug. 1.*

—Assistance: Bill Kelley



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"Windy City Media Group generated enormous interest among their readers in this year's LGBT Consumer Index Survey. Out of approximately 100 print and online media partners who participated in the survey, Windy City was the best performing regional media in the U.S. Only survey partners with a nationwide footprint were able to generate a greater number of responses." —David Marshall, Research Director, Community Marketing, Inc.



WAYNE  
 BESEN

## Didn't we invade Afghanistan & Iraq to secure freedom?

In the not-too-distant past, most Americans couldn't tell a Pashtun from a cartoon; a Sunni from a Moonie; or a Kurd from bean curd. Then came 9-11, and we learned our very survival depended on securing freedom for people we barely knew existed. Exorcising the region's demons through democracy was so important, we were told, that America would pay for the effort in blood and bankruptcy.

Despite the bumbling and fumbling of the war effort, the bitter divisions in our country and the wheelbarrows of dough dumped in the desert, there was always the faint hope that a better Middle East might just emerge from the mess. And, whatever one thinks of the two wars, Saddam Hussein and the Taliban were real villains who were vanquished.

The idea, of course, was that once these monsters were slain, they'd be replaced with the sane. But, the monsters have multiplied and Sasquatch has morphed into a bevy of Bigfoots (or is it Bigfeet?). It appears that for all of our sacrifice—and that of the secular Iraqi and Afghanistani people—the crazies are back in control. Or, at least fanatics have instilled enough fear that "mainstream" Iraqi and Afghanistani politicians are tripping over themselves to

please and appease.

In Iraq, "extremism" is too mild a word to describe the acts of those who abuse gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. The situation is so hideously haunting that Human Rights Watch released a new report this week titled, "They Want Us Exterminated": Murder, Torture, Sexual Orientation and Gender in Iraq."

According to the report, the post-Saddam sadists "practice grotesque tortures, including gluing men's anuses shut as punishment." Human Rights Watch spoke to doctors who said that hospitals and morgues have received dozens of mutilated bodies, living and dead.

"Murder and torture are no way to enforce morality," said Rasha Moumneh, Middle East and North Africa researcher at Human Rights Watch. "These killings point to the continuing and lethal failure of Iraq's post-occupation authorities to establish the rule of law and protect their citizens."

The New York Times reports that in Afghanistan the law has been quietly revised to give Shiite men the legal right to starve their wives if their sexual demands are not met and that Shiite women must obtain permission from their husbands to even leave their houses, "except in extreme circumstances."

President Hamid Karzai—our pro-Western buddy—signed the law and sold out the country's women. He did so to gain the support of Sheik Muhammad Asif Mohseni in this week's presidential election. This is the same pedophile-promoting sheik the Times reports is angry that Parliament had introduced a provision that banned men from marrying girls under the age of 16.

Frankly, I don't give a damn whether Karzai gets reelected. But, I do care about the rights of women. It is incomprehensible to waste American lives fighting the Taliban to protect a regime that looks an awful lot like the Taliban. If

women are not equal partners, let's pack up and leave.

As far as national security, we could use the money saved by our swift exit to buy a new fleet of missile-equipped drones, which will keep Al Qaeda from operating terrorist camps in the open. The rest of the funds could be used at home to support healthcare, pay down the national debt or provide a one-time tax rebate to cash-strapped Americans. Sorry, but if Karzai can only offer Taliban-lite, I rather disengage and keep the pocket change.

The Obama administration needs to straighten out this fiasco or risk an erosion of public opinion. The American people will simply not support an Afghanistani government that treats women like stray dogs in Michael Vick's dog pound.

Of course, the current situation traces back to President George W. Bush. The president's zealotry made it difficult for the United States to identify spoiled spirituality as the root of our problem. Consumed by his own theological excesses, he was the wrong messenger to articulate that America was fighting for open, secular societies that allowed personal and religious freedom.

A battle still rages against fanatics who share a twisted view of faith. Yet, we continue to bury our heads in the sand and imbibe on the collective delusion that women's rights and gay rights are peripheral issues that can be bargained away for the "greater good."

Lands that won't respect the rights of minorities, in the name of religion, will continue to be God-awful places that land the United States in tumult and turmoil. I pray we have a grander strategy than merry-go-mullah, which swaps dictatorial despots for deranged demagogues. If Iraq and Afghanistan won't embrace modernity and freedom for all of its citizens, let's get out now and let Allah untangle the ugliness.

## LETTERS

### Tunney business

My office has received a number of calls from concerned constituents about the two most recent attacks that took place Aug. 19. We have had ongoing safety issues in the Belmont-Sheffield Area for years and have been working closely with the police to mitigate the problems and build solutions. It is my belief that we have the resources to handle the issues of loitering, prostitution, drug dealing and, more recently, robberies; however, sufficient resources are not on the street during the midnight shift when these crimes are being committed.

During my tenure as alderman, I have consistently worked with the police to identify this area as a hot spot for criminal activity, installed police cameras at the major intersections, improved lighting on residential and arterial streets and have stimulated positive economic development in the area. These are some of the most effective tools to fight crime.

Most importantly, I want to ensure that all of my residents are kept safe at all hours of the day. Please be alert when walking late at night and avoid walking alone. Call 911 whenever you see suspicious activity on the street, and give the best possible description to the call taker, including an address.

My office will continue to work with police, CAPS and residents. We are setting up additional safety seminars and CAPS meetings to address these issues and we have been on several late-night walks with police and residents. Information is also regularly updated at www.44thWard.org and through e-news blasts.

I am committed to doing all I can to address these issues and am confident that working together with the community, businesses, police and CAPS we can improve safety in this area.

—44th Ward Alderman Tom Tunney

### Message in the music

Michael Rapino  
 President and Chief Executive Officer  
 Live Nation, Inc.  
 9348 Civic Center Drive  
 Beverly Hills, Calif., 90210

Dear Mr. Rapino:

Hopefully, you are aware that Live Nation/House of Blues has booked Buju Banton for a nationwide tour, including a Chicago stop Oct. 1. Banton is one of a handful of performers whose output has been labeled "murder music" for openly advocating the murder of lesbians and gays in the lyrics of their music.

House of Blues has faced protests before against its sponsorship of anti-gay "murder music"; yet, it apparently persists in thinking that LGBT people should "tolerate" those who call for murdering us.

House of Blues/Live Nation would never book Buju Banton or any performer who advocated killing African Americans or Jews, and rightfully so. Why, then, is it okay for House of Blues to hire a musician who calls for murdering lesbians and gays? Why the double standard?

When Live Nation purchased House of Blues several years ago, we wrote to your corporate office asking that reggae dancehall "murder musicians" like Banton not be booked unless and until these performers renounce their past behavior and promise no more murderous lyrics going forward. Banton first signed and then repudiated such an agreement. This is particularly an issue in his native Jamaica, where gays face a living hell due, in part, to performers like Banton who stoke the flames of an already dangerous situation by singing their murderous music.

Perhaps his most notorious "kill gays" song is "Boom, Bye Bye" in which Banton describes

shooting "battymen" (slang for a gay man) in the head, sometimes with an Uzi, an automatic weapon.

We call upon Live Nation management to do the right thing and cancel the Buju Banton tour. We will credit your company with the appropriate corporate response to irrational and murderous hostility toward lesbian and gay people. Should Live Nation not cancel Banton's tour, you will offer us no alternative but to go forward with plans to protest in as many cities as possible, including Chicago.

Sincerely yours,  
 Gay Liberation Network  
 www.GayLiberation.net

Note to readers:

We encourage those who are outraged by Live Nation's promotion of this viciously anti-LGBT tour that you contact Live Nation yourself and let them know how you feel about Live Nation's sponsorship of messages encouraging violence against LGBTs. You can call the Live Nation customer service line to complain at 800-431-3462, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday through Friday or e-mail them at CustomerService@LiveNation.com.

We encourage activists around the country to mount their own protests against murder music performances in their cities. Here is a list of Buju Banton's 2009 concert tour dates:

Philadelphia (Sept. 12); Portland, Maine (Sept. 17); Charlotte (Sept. 23); Raleigh (Sept. 24); Norfolk (Sept. 25); Richmond, Va. (Sept. 26); Detroit (Sept. 30); Chicago (Oct. 1); Denver (Oct. 6); Aspen, Colo. (Oct. 7); Salt Lake City (Oct. 8); San Francisco (Oct. 10); Tallahassee, Fla. (Oct. 11); Jacksonville, Fla. (Oct. 12); San Jose, Calif. (Oct. 13); Charleston (Oct. 14); Los Angeles (Oct. 14); Las Vegas, Nev. (Oct. 15)

## GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



## TRUE 'COLOR'

The Color Purple will be at the Arie Crown Theater Sept. 2-6. Read an interview with star Fantasia Barrino below.

## THEATER

'High' note.  
Page 12.

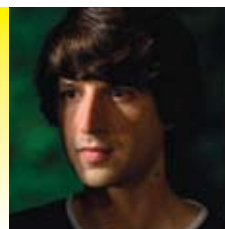
Photo by Johnny Knight



## MOVIES

Woodstock market.  
Page 14.

Photo by Ken Regan



## SPORTS

Sky way.  
Page 22.

Photo courtesy of Bill Sherbondy



## NUNN ON ONE: THEATER

## Fantasia's colorful life

BY JERRY NUNN

Fantasia Barrino rose to fame with the third season of American Idol in 2004, winning the title. Since then, she has been the first artist to debut at number one, has been nominated for eight Grammy Awards and is currently touring with the musical version of *The Color Purple*. Windy City Times discussed how her life really is a fairy tale.

**Windy City Times:** Hi, Fantasia. I am excited about *The Color Purple* tour coming to a few select cities—and Chicago is one of them! Tell our readers about your road to playing the role of Celie.

**FB:** Miss Celie—I speak about her because she has become a friend of mine, you know. She's close to me now. I have been playing her for going on two years. First of all, I had never done Broadway. I had never seen a Broadway play. I used to ride by when I was doing live shows or going in and out of J Records. I was so curious because they would show parts of it outside on the screen and I loved the movie.

One day, when I was going up to see Clive Davis, he invited me to the show. I got on my new pumps and went to see it. I was blown away! The singing, the acting, the production—it was just like the movie and beautiful. Afterwards, Scott, the founder of the show—his group took me out to eat, and they were cool, Jerry, they were bubbly and they were nice. Him and Gary Griffin, who worked with me on acting, sat me down and after dinner they pulled out this paper. And the picture on the paper was a big marquee with my name on it. And I go, "This is so pretty. Can I have this?" And Scott said, "Yes, you can have it if you be my Celie."

**WCT:** How did you feel?

**FB:** I thought, "Why did they pick me?" I have



Fantasia Barrino.

never done Broadway. I had only acted in my Lifetime Channel movie where I played myself. I thought, "Why me?" I said, "Are you serious?" And they said, "Yes, we think that you are our next Celie." I told them to give me a couple of days because I don't like to jump into anything. I went home and thought about it. After reading the script, I knew why they wanted me to play it. I related so much to the part.

**WCT:** Do you see Celie in yourself with your struggle against education?

**FB:** The thing that I found out about Celie and about me is something I have to clear up. Once I put my life story out there I knew there were going to be people that say some things or crack some jokes. When you put your business out there in the streets, there will be people that don't agree with some things or think they are funny. I put it out there to be a testimony to so many people's lives that have been through the same things that I went through, including Celie. It's been going on for years. However, I

am not a dummy. I dropped out of school in the ninth grade. That was a decision that I made—a poor decision, but something I chose to do. With Celie, she was not a complete dummy, either; her sister taught her some things before she left. Her sister wanted to be a missionary so she sent her letters, Celie could read her letters because Nettie had taught her. Celie learns a lot through her journey. I can relate to her so much. I can go into her shoes and speak to what she would say. I know it sounds crazy, but she is me.

**WCT:** Well, what about the whole lesbian aspect? [Barrino laughs.]

**FB:** You like it better in the play?

**WCT:** Well, it is much more [closer] to Alice Walker's book in the musical version, as opposed to the Steven Spielberg version, don't you think?

**FB:** They don't speak that much about the whole relationship. I don't think [Celie] was a lesbian—it was that Shug Avery was the first one who showed her what real love was. She experienced love through this woman. [It was] her first kiss that meant something. Even if it had even been a man, Celie would have been blown away by that: "Oh my God! This is love? This is what I have been hearing about? This is why Mister has been running around the house trying to look all clean for Shug because he loves her!"

**WCT:** Are you going to be in the musical movie version?

**FB:** Well, there's a lot of talk about it. I pray and hope. I would be honored to do it. We have had a lot of great Celies, including Miss LaChanze, who was the founder of it, won a Tony and blew everyone's socks off. It would be a challenge. I've been doing the part this long. She's become my sister, doggone it, so I might as well!

**WCT:** Has Whoopi Goldberg seen you in the role?

**FB:** No, she hasn't. I would probably be nervous and tell them not to tell me if she came.

**WCT:** Your third CD is coming out in 2010, correct?

**FB:** Yes. I miss my music so much. That's, of course, my first love. I am ready to put out my album. I have so many things to talk about. I have been away for a while. I will always be an open book with my life, but I sing from my soul. I sing what I go through and I put it all out there. There are so many people that love that, who want to hear some encouraging stuff. They want to hear the real deal. This album will have nothing but the real stuff on it. How I am as an artist now and how I have grown. I guess that's what makes us artists.

**WCT:** What can you tell our readers about it—any special guest stars or producers?

**FB:** I have worked with a lot of great people [such as] KP, which is the young guy who did "Green Light" with John Legend. I have got some Cee-Lo on my album, whom I loved right away.

**WCT:** I also heard Missy Elliott is on the CD.

**FB:** Yes! I always have to work with Missy because she gets me all the way. It's going to be good, it's going to be different. It's going to be a new Fantasia, who has grown. I have become 25. Yes, that's young, but I have been through some things. I have a daughter that's about to be eight years old. I am enjoying my time on Broadway but I am ready to get back to my music.

**WCT:** And you are doing a reality show surrounding this new album?

**FB:** Yes, I call it a VH-1 documentary. It's about my family and my life. What happens when the lights go off, me being a mother, going back to school to get my diploma—I want everyone to see that. I want that to reach a lot of young people. School right now is my biggest message because I dropped out and it was a silly mistake that I made. I want to be an example for people's lives. Before you know it, I am going to be a Delta. That's my goal to pledge Delta, after getting my diploma and going to college.

**WCT:** I don't know how you do it all.

Turn to page 14

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The Basic Program of Liberal Education



The UNIVERSITY of CHICAGO

Graham School of General Studies

## THEATER REVIEW High Fidelity

Playwright: music by Tom Kitt,  
lyrics by Amanda Green, book by  
David Lindsay-Abaire  
At: Route 66 Theatre Company  
at Pipers Alley, 1608 N. Wells  
Phone: 312-664-8844; \$29.50-\$39.50  
Runs through: Oct. 11

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Pity the rock-pop musical with the misfortune to open on Broadway within three days of Spring Awakening. Tom Kitt, Amanda Green and David Lindsay-Abaire's adaptation of the 2000 film, based on the 1995 Nick Hornby novel, boasted catchy Top 40-inspired warbles featuring electric bass and hand-held microphones, but no prettified Great White Way pageant could have matched the take-no-prisoners fury of Duncan Sheik's anthem for Victorian teenage rebels. Route 66 Theatre Company, however, thinks High Fidelity deserves a second chance and, to that end, has revived it in the cozy Pipers Alley space occupied for the last 15 years by Tony n' Tina's nuptials.

Our heroes are three schleps united by their obsessive love of music. It is Dick's refuge from a boisterous world, Barry's bludgeon for defending his superior artistic judgment and, for Rob, the owner of "the last real record store on earth" where they congregate, his armor against the female rejection he feels is his inevitable lot—a self-fulfilling prophesy that has sent his latest girl friend fleeing to the arms of a New Age sybarite. But at what stage of maturity does adolescent anomie evolve into creepy-old-guy regret?

All right, so it's not Chekhov. What Kitt and Green (who would later have a hit with Ragtime) offer us are on-target replicas of popular music as defined by those who live for, with, and by the artificially-amplified sound track to their empty days: a Springsteen impression, of course, and a country honker extolling Lyle Lovett, but sharp-eared listeners will also detect melodic references to (among others) Elton John, Pat Benatar, Kenny G., Aretha Franklin, Melissa Manchester, punk, rap and heavy metal. There's even a Jim Morrison-styled poem that abruptly segues into

## CRITICS' PICS

**The Light in the Piazza**, Marriott Theatre, through Sept. 20. The massive Italian scenery may be missing, but this sophisticated 2005 musical by Adam Guettel and Craig Lucas benefits from being in such close proximity to the super-talented cast. SCM

**Moonshiner**, Jackalope Theatre at EP Theater, through Aug. 30. A lean production budget can't disguise the surprisingly mature artistic proficiency reflected in this drama of American Realism by a deceptively young Chicago author. MSB

**Road**, Ka-Tet Theatre at Stage Left, through Aug. 29. A new, young troupe debuts with stunning ensemble work in this look at a 1980s Northern England industrial town on the skids. It's a somewhat-pointless ramble of drink, sex and music—but very entertaining. JA

**Sodomites!!! A Musical of Biblical Proportions**, Annoyance Theatre, through Sept. 11. A charmingly sacrilegious show that sharply (and hilariously) questions why an arcane and bizarre biblical story holds so much sway in justifying discrimination against the LGBTQ community.

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge  
and Morgan

a mellow Philly-soul benediction.

Stef Tovar, Michael Mahler and Jonathan Wagner, playing the socially inept comrades, lead a 15-member cast fitting snugly on the former T&T bandstand, navigating amplifiers, instruments and sound equipment with feline grace under the deft direction of Peter Amster, most of the actors doubling as session performers to facilitate a flow of scene changes bringing the evening home in a brisk two and a half hours (with a break for refueling at the on-site bar). If you ever rocked out on air-guitar or crooned to your hairbrush in the privacy of your own room—and who hasn't?—this show's for you.

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Cinema Writer,  
*Windy City Times*

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*Time Out Chicago*

#### Monday, September 21

*Desperate Living*  
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Lorca in a Green Dress. Photo by Tom McGrath

**THEATER REVIEW**

**Lorca in a Green Dress**

**Playwright:** Nilo Cruz  
**At:** Halcyon Theatre, 4754 N. Leavitt  
**Tickets:** 773-413-0453;  
**www.halcyontheatre.org;** \$10-\$20  
**Runs through:** Oct. 3

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

We defeated Hitler and Mussolini in WWII but fascist dictator Francisco Franco survived. The Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) victor held power until his death in 1975. Arguably, he defeated Communism in Spain but the cost was social and intellectual repression and economic impoverishment. In 1936, Franco's minions murdered Spain's leading poet and playwright, Federico Garcia Lorca, as much for his open homosexuality as for his views. Lorca joined no political party, but his writing challenged Spain's Neanderthal social codes and sexual hypocrisy. Only recently has Spain acknowledged the gay gene of its great national laureate, dead at just 38.

Cuban-American author Nilo Cruz—also a gay poet and playwright—conjures Lorca's history and personality in this language-rich but not-altogether-successful play. Cruz places Lorca at the moment of his death, finding himself in Limbo where he is confronted by five aspects of his own life/personality including Lorca as a Woman and Lorca in drag (hence, the play's title). He doesn't know he is dead, and the task of his alter egos—prodded by a vicious general—is to help his transition.

It's a highly problematic conceit because throughout Act I Lorca is a passive figure. He merely reacts to what is done around him rather than controlling or initiating the action himself, while the others provide lengthy exposition. Act II is far stronger as Lorca actively chooses to go back among the living as a ghost before accepting his death. Yes, it seems to borrow from Our Town, but it works. And one wonders why they all don't kick the general in the balls. They're already dead, what can he do to them?

It's difficult to fault the performers (as viewed at the final preview) even as they struggle to breathe life into sometimes-stiff material. Carlos

Rogelio Diaz is passionate and intense as Lorca, striking his deepest notes with Miguel Nunez as sensual Green Dress Lorca and Greg Wenz and Nilsa Reyna who play aspects of Lorca and also Salvador and Anna-Maria Dali. Cruz supports his rather artificial premise with some Brecht-like use of songs and dance, which are well-executed in this production and add a great deal. Mike Cuchna is the authentic Flamenco guitarist/singer and Terri Lopez the dancer. Director Juan Castaneda keeps his three-quarter round staging fairly simple but effective in a production without elaborate design elements. One flaw is that some moments of dialogue are so softly spoken and conversational that one can't hear them.

Lorca is an important literary and gay figure. This play and the recent film Little Ashes (about Lorca, Dali and Luis Bunuel) reveal much about Lorca but little, I fear, about his plays and poetry, which remain too-seldom seen or read by English speakers, although Halcyon has produced Lorca's Yerma.

**Correction**

In last week's issue of Windy City Times, there was an extra paragraph attached to the end of the review of My Fair Lady. The review should have concluded with the sentence "But the chemistry between Sandys and Ford is reason alone to make your way to this woefully short-running show."

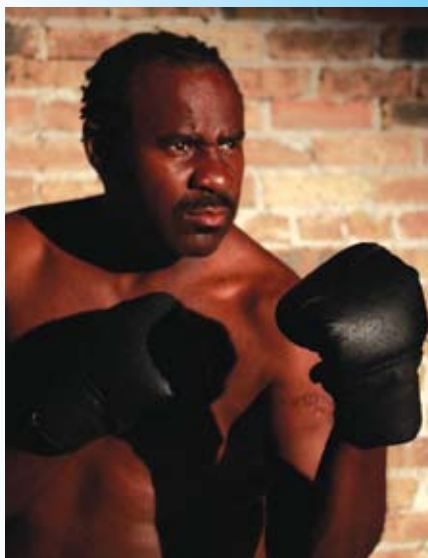
Windy City Times regrets the error.

**Online This Week:**

—Ekphrasis  
 —Culture/Clash  
 —The Tragedy of Jennifer...

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

**SPOTLIGHT**



Silent Theatre is back in town with three shows in repertory. Along with a new staging of The Wild Party and its spin-off, The Wild Party Variety Hour, Silent Theatre offers up Joseph Moncure March's multimedia piece **The Set Up**, which is loosely based upon the story of the first black heavyweight boxing champion, Jack Johnson. The Set Up plays 8 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays and 7 p.m. Sundays Aug. 28-Oct. 4 at PROP Thtr, 3504 N. Elston. Tickets are \$15; \$10 for students and seniors. Call 773-544-1749 or visit [www.silenttheatre.com](http://www.silenttheatre.com). Photo courtesy of Silent Theatre



**SHARON GLESS IN HANNAH FREE**  
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"Sharon Gless brings grit, authenticity and dimension to the title character. She commands the screen." — *San Francisco Chronicle*

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**Hannah Free in Chicago Sept. 25-Oct. 1**

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Sharon Gless (Queer as Folk, Burn Notice, Cagney & Lacey) stars in the drama Hannah Free, a film about a lifelong love affair between an independent spirit and the woman she calls home. The film is the story of six decades in the life of a lesbian partnership.

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

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**Saturday Sept. 26**  
 3:15 p.m.  
 5:00 p.m.  
 6:45 p.m.  
 8:30 p.m.  
 Special 7 p.m. screening followed by Q&A with Sharon Gless, cast and crew, followed by a gala party, tickets only thru 773-387-2394 or [info@hannahfree.com](mailto:info@hannahfree.com)  
**Sunday Sept. 27**  
 2:45 p.m.  
**Monday Sept. 28**  
 6:15 p.m. / 8:15 p.m.  
**Tuesday Sept. 29**  
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# KNIGHT AT THE MOVIES



Taking Woodstock. Photo by Ken Regan

## Taking Woodstock; Passing Strange; film notes

BY RICHARD KNIGHT, JR.

Aging hippies and rock-music enthusiasts may go to Ang Lee's new movie, **Taking Woodstock**, hoping to trip out on footage from the fest's legendary music performances. But Lee's new movie, a wry, endearing comedy is only about the festival in a peripheral sense. Working again with screenwriter James Schamus and a new cinematographer (Eric Gautier, responsible for the breathtaking *Into the Wild*), Lee returns to his favorite theme: the desire of a repressed Everyman to break out; to stand societal conventions on its head and the sweet bliss that happens when he finally does. In this case, his leading character, Elliot Teichberg (played with equal parts equanimity and sly winsomeness by hot

young comedian Demetri Martin in his first starring role) just happens to be gay and there is a beautiful symmetry between Elliot's personal coming out and the cultural coming out that was happening for young America that Woodstock came to represent.

Lee's movie is based on the memoir of Elliot Tiber—a young Jewish interior designer living in Manhattan who was saddled with the responsibility for the upkeep of the broken down Catskills "resort" owned by his tough, shrewish mother (Imelda Staunton, who is tremendous) and his mostly silent, put upon father (Henry Goodman, who does much with his still-waters-running-deep part). Lee sets the sardonic tone at the outset when he gives us a tour of the

crummy motel set amidst the sleepy hamlet of upstate New York circa summer '69. Lee is aided enormously by a roster of expert supporting actors (Emile Hirsch, Jeffrey Dean Morgan, Eugene Levy, and Bette Henritze among them) who portray the eccentric, often cranky characters inhabiting the area.

Down to their last three months from an indulgent bank officer with foreclosure in sight, Elliot, as head of the local township, seizes on the opportunity to grant the Woodstock organizers the permit to hold their music festival and in the bargain, use the motel as the group's headquarters, erasing his parent's huge debt. Overcoming protests from the locals and after paying cagy land owner Max Yasgur (Levy) \$75,000 to rent his farm, a sea of humanity begins pouring into the area.

Something akin to a boom town develops and Elliot is torn between wanting to join the spirited revelry of the invading hippies and his responsibilities. Lee captures this (and mirrors the Woodstock documentary) by utilizing split screen, judicious use of a sea of extras and computer effects to create the masses. Elliot's warring desires are immediately apparent to Vilma, a militant, unapologetic drag queen with a lot of insight (hilariously played by Liev Schreiber in a standout performance) who shows up and takes on the job of security for the overrun motel. Vilma knows that Elliot is gay and that he's dying to act on his desire for a hot construction worker he's met. (The two have bonded over a Judy Garland record.)

Vilma advises Elliot to give himself permission to burst open the closet door on both his sexuality and convention—"I know who I am. That makes it easier for everyone else doesn't it?" and eventually Elliot does.

The message of the festival and the era looks prescient in retrospect—this "make love, not war" mentality was a call to arms—not just to straight America but to gay Americans and everyone else, too. The idea of everyone coming out and acting on their true desires, following their dreams must have been utterly intoxicating and Lee's film joyfully manages to capture this small moment in cultural history in all its feel good glory. *Taking Woodstock* is great fun. In many ways it's like the ultimate coming out story—what a glorious weekend that must have been!

It's not really surprising that Spike Lee, after seeing the mesmerizing Broadway rock musical *Passing Strange*, powered by the creative talents of musician-songwriter-performer Stew, the musical's subject, narrator and central focus, would want to film it. Stew's story—a tale of a Black man growing up in the '70s in Los Angeles with a yearning to break the bonds of a stifling mother and his middle class upbringing who is

inspired by a closeted homosexual choir director to strike out for Amsterdam and Berlin, there to find all manner of adventures on his journey of self-discovery a "quest for the real"—is an offbeat doozy. And the musical's staging—with the musicians right onstage with Stew presiding over them—and a quartet of amazingly versatile musical actors enacting Stew's tale—is simply but powerfully presented (it's really both musical and rock concert in one). Lee filmed the last two performances of the musical (which won the 2008 Tony for Best Book of a Musical) in front of the audience and then another performance so his cameras could come in close and catch intimate and glorious moments alike (we also see some backstage activity). The result is a rousing, emotional roller-coaster that's a must-see not just for fans of rock musicals but those with an eye (and an ear) for something unusual—compellingly so. The movie *Passing Strange* is available on demand from a variety of cable systems.

### Film notes:

—**Queer Cinema 102**, a five-film event that focuses on offbeat camp "classics"—the horrible, the perverse, the hilarious and the fabulous—bad, chosen and hosted by gay film critics—continues Monday, Aug. 31, with Gore Vidal's 1959 screen adaptation of Tennessee Williams' *Suddenly, Last Summer*. Katharine Hepburn, Elizabeth Taylor, Montgomery Clift and Mercedes McCambridge star in this over-cooked, over-literate tale of "decadent perversion" that's chockfull of hilarious homo subtext. The screening, which I'll be hosting, will take place in the Hoover-Leppen Theatre at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, at 7 p.m. Admission is a suggested donation of \$5 at the door and enthusiastic audience participation is encouraged! HannahFree.com is helping to sponsor the series. Further information is at [www.queerfilmsociety.org](http://www.queerfilmsociety.org).

—John Cameron Mitchell's *Shortbus*, one of the most thought-provoking, sexy and hilarious movies about sex between folks of all persuasions—my choice for 2006's best LGBT movie—will be shown at Chicago Filmmakers, 5243 N. Clark, Friday, Aug. 28. There will be a social hour that starts at 7 p.m. with the screening to follow at 8 p.m. The evening will be in support of Reeling 2009, Chicago's gay and lesbian film festival which will be held Nov. 5-14. See [www.chicagofilmmakers.org](http://www.chicagofilmmakers.org).

Check out my archived reviews at [www.windycitytimes.com](http://www.windycitytimes.com) or [www.knightatthemovies.com](http://www.knightatthemovies.com). Readers can leave feedback at the latter Web site.

## CULTURE CLUB

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### FANTASIA from page 11

FB: I don't, either! But I am an Energizer Bunny. My voice is being heard and people are listening. I am doing everything that I have ever wanted to do. I am a rebel; when you say, "no," I am going to say "yes." You say, "blue," I say "green."

WCT: Well, now you say "purple."  
[Laughs]

FB: Before I did *The Color Purple*, I did *gay Pride* in LA, the biggest one. I had so much fun and I left the message. The message was live your life. Let nobody stand in the way of your destiny and control who you are. We all are different people. We all love different. We all see it different. So I believe in living my life and going after everything that God has for me.

WCT: I just got goosebumps. Well, you have tons of gay fans here as well.

FB: Heyyy. Make sure you tell everyone that I said, "What's the T, baby?"

"Shug Avery (is) Comin' to Town" along with the Celie and the rest of the cast to the Arie Crown Theater, 2301 S. Lake Shore, Wed.-Sunday, Sept. 2-6. Tickets are \$49.50 to \$85 each; call 800-745-3000 or visit [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).

# Glamorama is 'Papi'-licious

BY EMMANUEL GARCIA

Glamorama—the fashion show that features music—once again brought its stunning visuals and sounds to the Chicago Theatre, 175 N. State, Aug. 21. The event, produced by retail giant Macy's, benefited the Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC), specifically the organization's efforts to build "the world's largest" Ronald McDonald House in downtown Chicago.

So how do you sell tickets for an over the top fashion show? Well, you bill a Grammy award winning R&B singer like Ne-Yo, invite the biggest diva, the fabulous Miss Piggy, and feature sexy models in Papi underwear.

An introductory video played various stories of everyday people using services by RMHC. The organization has plans to open the largest house here in downtown Chicago in 2012. Michael Lepen who was in attendance with a group of friends said he was at this years event because he supports "Ronald McDonald House, a wonderful charity, what they do is incredible."

Others, like 17-year-old Tabitha Cortez, 17, were there to see singer/songwriter Ne-Yo. "I really enjoy listening to his music, I like his voice, it's [a] very calm voice," said Cortez, who came from the suburb of Lombard with her family.

The fashion show opened with a brief introduction by legendary muppet Miss Piggy, wearing Marc Jacobs to introduce the first collection of the night by the same designer as models sashayed to RuPaul's "Cover Girl" (not to be mistaken for his other hit song, "Supermodel"). It wasn't long before Ne-Yo was on stage, looking dapper in his signature suite and fedora, singing his hit song "Miss Independent."

Later, male and female models came together for the Robert Cavalli line Just Cavalli, as the designer put both sexes in biker looks with studded ripped jeans and leather boots.

The jazz trio The New Standards covered Britney Spears' "Toxic" in a sensual rendition of silk fabrics and cream colors by Sportmax. The barrette is definitely a fall accessory to look out for; multiple designers featured the headpiece.

Latina singer Jady Maria, still relatively unknown, performed her latest single, "Good Girls Like Bad Boys." The beautiful Nashville native of Puerto Rican descent is mostly known as a model who has been featured in Herbal Essence commercials.

This fashion party seemed to be for gay men and straight women. Sure, there were some things for the ladies who like ladies, but seeing Ne-Yo serenade his hit song "Closer" wasn't enough for a finale. The show concluded with the song "It's Raining Men" by the Weather Girls while male models wearing only Papi underwear briefs, flexed under a rainfall—a visual for the senses. It was all in the name of fashion, of course.

Other lines and designers featured included MaxMara, CNC Costume National, Jean Paul Gaultier, Philosophy di Alberta Ferretti and Sonia Rykiel.

**Photo by Kat Fitzgerald (MysticImagesPhotography.com); see more online at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com and in next week's issue of Nightspots.**

**Go to [www.QueerTVNetwork.com](http://www.QueerTVNetwork.com) to view video of Macy's Glamorama 2009.**



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PROFILE

# Michael Tupac- New car sales manager

BY GAYWHEELS.COM



Michael Tupac. Photo courtesy of Gaywheels.com

—**Name:** Michael Tupac  
 —**Place of birth:** Los Angeles, Calif.  
 —**Age:** 24  
 —**Occupation:** New car sales manager  
 —**Employer:** Casa Automotive Group—Casa de Cadillac, Saab Sherman Oaks, Subaru Sherman Oaks, Kia Sherman Oaks  
 —**Year, make and model of your first car/truck:** 1995 Infiniti G20t 5 speed, Black on Black. I still miss that car. I totaled it when I was 17 after driving it for about a year on Santa Monica Blvd. I rear ended some tourists from NYC in a Buick rental (I was only going 15 mph so nobody was hurt). It was a bone head move on my part because I was in afternoon rush hour traffic, but the all new 2003 BMW 745i had just launched and there was one next to me with rainbow license plate frames so I was trying to see if the guy driving was hot ... LOL. Unfortunately, I never got the chance and since I wasn't out yet I told my parents I was looking at the all new 03 Porsche Cayenne on the showroom floor of the Porsche dealership I happened to be driving by. My Dad still tells people that story as an example of how much I love cars! Oops! Guess now he knows the truth!

—**Was being gay ever an issue at any of your jobs?** Nope, nothing ever to my face ... maybe its because I'm in Los Angeles?

—**If you had one piece of advice to give to a gay person wanting to work in the auto industry, what would it be?** Don't let being gay discourage you. In fact embrace it. Manufacturers and most dealerships understand the importance, loyalty, buying power and trend setting ability of the gay community. Just be yourself and passionate about cars and you will be successful. For example my dealership has had a booth at LA Pride the last 3 years, we have also donated the Saab 9-3 Convertibles in past years for the Pride Parade. Most recently this past June we sponsored an event with the help of Subaru of America at a bar/lounge in West Hollywood to premiere the all new 2010 Subaru Legacy. We raffled a new Legacy off to benefit the Trevor Foundation.

—**OK, here is the fun part—If you had \$25,000 and had to buy a new car, what would it be and why?** VW GTI with DSG. I had a 2006.5 Reflex Silver one and still miss it! I even got one of the fast dolls for being one of the first 500 owners of the mark VI GTI

—**Same question but bigger budget—\$50,000:** BMW 335i: Perfect balance, slick shifting 6-speed, classic coupe proportions

—**If money was no object and you had to drive it every day:** It'd be a 2010 CADILLAC CTS-V—record-setting lap at [Nurburg] Ring; it's essentially a Corvette ZR-1 motor and room for five ... plus, even though it looks badass, it's under-the-radar because it's a Cadillac and not a typical BMW M or Mercedes-Benz AMG.

—**What is your favorite car of all time and why?** It is not sold in the US but the Audi RS6 wagon. Room for 4 in total luxury and comfort, AWD traction 0-60 in under 4.5 seconds with a turbo Lamborghini V10 and room to haul more than enough cargo for weeks touring every major ski resort on any continent.

—**If your car/truck could talk, what would**

it say about you? Slow down, stop driving aggressively ... oh, and take that limo tint off your windows; I'm tired of getting pulled over for it!

—**Finally, why do you want to be featured on Gaywheels.com?** It's a great opportunity to promote a fun and exciting industry and encourage other enthusiasts.

See [www.gaywheels.com](http://www.gaywheels.com).

## Electric cars coming in '10

Chinese auto company BYD plans to have all-electric sedans in the United States in 2010, according to CNET News.

BYD plans to offer a few hundred of one of its most advanced cars in the U.S., the five-seat e6. The \$40,000 vehicle takes seven to nine hours to fully charge.

Initially, "government agencies, utilities and maybe some celebrities" will have the first shot at purchasing the car, company chairman Wang Chuanfu told the Wall Street Journal.

## Texting banned in Illinois

Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn has signed into law a measure that will prohibit motorists from sending text messages while driving, the Chicago Tribune reported.

The law, which will take effect Jan. 1, 2010, will ban text messaging, e-mailing, downloading ringtones and instant-messaging. Drivers will still be able to use GPS devices—and can text emergency/accident reports. Users can also text if traffic is stopped and the car is in park or neutral.

Violators will be fined \$75. Three tickets in a year could result in the loss of the driver's license.

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# BILLY MASTERS

"Angie and I will not be getting married until George and his partner can legally do so."—Brad Pitt expresses his support for gay marriage, and manages to once again imply that George Clooney is gay. I haven't decided—is this still funny, or is it getting old?

I've got a shallow, hypocritical group of fans, and I love every last one of you. It was almost like clockwork—many of the same people who chastised me (and other less scrupulous scribes) for daring to report about the sexcapades of Dustin Lance Black were quick to ask if I had stills or even the video of Eric Dane's similar oeuvre. It's like my friend the elementary school teacher says—it's all fun and games until someone gets a broken leg (she works in a tough district).

But since you asked ... two years ago Eric Dane and his wife Rebecca Gayheart enjoyed an evening with former Miss Teen USA Kari Ann Peniche. Along the way, everybody lost their clothes, drank some wine and perhaps took just a wee bit of "cold medicine." All three play cameraman, until Rebecca gives up saying, "I have to lay down too—I'm very high." She later says, "I have to say, I'm not like a huge advocate of drugs ... for whatever reason." Dane spends a good amount of time walking around fully naked and, well, let's just say he's a swinger! However, no sexual activity takes place on the tape—perhaps due to their impaired state. In fact, Dane's lawyer goes out of his way to say, "This is not a sex tape. At most, it's three people wanting to have sex."

Kari Ann claims the video was shot in her Studio City apartment with her own camera. At one point, Rebecca says, "You have to erase everything before you make your movie." She may have erased it from her camera, but it did end up on her hard drive until it was allegedly stolen by a roommate (this is becoming an epidemic)! Kari Ann claims the thief was her "Celebrity Rehab" galpal, country singer Mindy McCready! Allegedly, the ladies had a fight about money and \*poof\* the hard drive vanished! However, McCready claims Peniche was the one who stole the drive. No matter, the video vanished and a pow-wow took place between Kari Ann, Rebecca and Eric last month. They all agreed to give Eric the sole rights to the tape, which makes sense, since he's the only one anyone would really want to see naked. Or is that just the people who frequent BillyMasters.com?

After our last report on Oscar-winner Dustin Lance Black, some new details regarding his sex tape came to light. First, to the best of Black's knowledge, he was in a monogamous relationship with Jeff Delancy, his celluloid partner. Back then, Delancy was not yet doing webcam shows—in fact, he didn't even own a webcam! And we can confirm that DLB most certainly did not know he was being videotaped during the tryst—at the end of the video, he finally notices the camera and very clearly demands it be turned off. So there!

Last year, Joey Arias was once again the toast of NYC with his new show "Arias with a Twist." And his co-stars? Puppets! Yes, real puppets—courtesy of acclaimed puppeteer, Basil Twist (get it?). I'm told that the melding of these two art forms was so sublime that the show kept extending—it soon became the hottest ticket in town (it's soon headed to Los Angeles). One of the people who came to visit was Paul Reubens, who Joey had worked with on "Big Top Pee-wee." After the show, Paul took Joey aside and said he was so inspired by the show that he had to get back on stage and bring Pee-wee out of retirement. He went home that night and devoted himself to finishing a new stage show,

which leads directly into our next story.

Yes, Paul Reubens is resurrecting Pee-wee Herman! "I've put part of him away for a long time but part of him has always been here with me. I think it will be like riding a bike—which is not a bad analogy for Pee-wee, by the way." And he's going back to his roots. Pee-wee was born on the stage of the fabled Groundlings Theatre in Los Angeles back in 1981. "The Pee-wee Herman Show" then moved to the Roxy for five months before touring the country and landing at Carnegie Hall, doing two films and a TV show. That's a helluva ride. This time around, Pee-wee will be at the Music Box Theatre in Hollywood starting on November 8th. He'll be joined by some friends—Miss Yvonne, Mailman Mike, Cowboy Curtis, Jambie the Genie, Chairry the talking chair, and Pterri the pterodactyl. Where will this all end up? Reubens has plans for a new film. "I have a movie script that's based on my CBS TV series, and I thought this would be a great way to get that made." I smell a puppet!



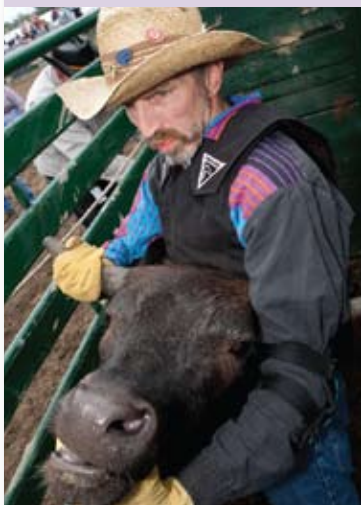
**In addition to playing a doctor on TV, Eric "McSteamy" Dane must also be a plumber. He sure was swinging some pipe in that video with Rebecca Gayheart and Kari Ann Peniche.**

Gay fave Megan Mullally is appearing in Odyssey Theatre's production of "The Receptionist" alongside my *bon ami* Jennifer Finnigan. (I'll be going on Sept. 18.) While promoting the play, she dropped a bit of a bombshell—she has obtained the rights and is proceeding to develop a Broadway show based on her popular Will & Grace character. "Karen: The Musical" won't happen for a couple of years. "The idea is that Karen decides she is going to do a Broadway musical for a variety of hilarious reasons." At least one character from W&G figures prominently in the plans. Even money is on "Jack," but please include "Rosario!"

This week's "Ask Billy" question is another shallow one from a loyal fan. Robbie in Baltimore writes: "I've been hearing about this nude photo of Jamie Foxx circulating. Every time I think I've found it, it's been deleted—or cropped at his waist. Can you find it?"

Can I find it? Honey, it's my screen saver! I have to say, I enjoy when a celeb in a sex scandal basically says, "Yeah, it's me—what's it to

# Back in the saddle



Fine weather and a sporting attitude accompanied Windy City Rodeo 2009 on Sunday, August 23 at Six Guns Ranch & Arena in Crete, IL. The rodeo included 13 events, a popular dance tent, vendors and entertainment. Photos by Steve Becker (Beckermedia.com); see more online at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com) and in next week's issue of *Nightspots*.

**BILLY** from page 20

you?" In Fox's case, he added that the photo was connected to some upcoming movie (not likely), and threatened legal action against any site posting the material. So, I'm *not* going to tell you to go to BillyMasters.com. No, no, no. Don't go there expecting to see any of the adult material mentioned in this column. Go there for the writing, the wit, to support moi, and for other surprises.

When my computer screen is going to Black (literally), it's definitely time to end yet another column. I'm in the final countdown—one

more week in Boston. Next stop? The Filth2Go Beach House in Fort Lauderdale for two weeks. Trust me, after the summer with my family, I need a vacation. What if you wanted to see all the gossip that's fit to print—including some of the stuff we leave out of the print version? Just go to [www.BillyMasters.com](http://www.BillyMasters.com)—seeing is believing. If you believe that I respond to all of your questions, drop a note to [Billy@BillyMasters.com](mailto:Billy@BillyMasters.com) and I promise to get back to you before Pee-wee rides a Big Top! So, until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

The Honorable *Jan Schakowsky* and the Honorable *Mike Quigley* with co-chairs *Todd Armbruster*, *Doug Ferguson*, *Scott Silverman* and *Josh Titus* cordially invite you to attend

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# Candice Dupree: Reaching for the Sky

BY ROSS FORMAN

The Chicago Sky is having its best season in team history, teetering on a playoff berth. Candice Dupree also is having her best season.

Of course, both go hand in hand.

Dupree is the team's leading scorer (15 points per game) as the Sky (13-13, as of Aug. 20) are battling to survive in the Eastern Conference wars of the WNBA.

"We're doing pretty well so far. This, obviously, is the best team we've ever had," said Dupree, 25, a forward who attended Philadelphia's Temple University. "We're close to making the playoffs, but the Eastern Conference is pretty tight, so we just have to keep winning. Overall, so far so good."

Especially for Dupree, who ranks No. 1 in the WNBA in minutes played and defensive rebounds, and she's second overall in the league in total rebounds.

"I think I've stepped up my game; I've extended my range from the last three seasons," she said. "I've worked on shooting the 3-pointers a little more while I was overseas [during the off-season], and am trying to be more of a vocal leader versus just a statistical leader on the team. It's a role that [Coach] Steve [Key] talked to me about, along with [team president/CEO] Margaret [Stender], and it was something that I knew had to happen at some point. It is only my fourth year in the league, yet I'm already considered one of the veterans on the team, so it was just time to make that jump. And it's been a pretty easy transition for me. At first I was a little hesitant, but I adapted quickly."

The 6'2" Dupree, a three-time All-Star, has scored 20 or more points in eight games this season, including a 28-point effort in July at Seattle. She also has grabbed 10 or more rebounds eight times this season, including 14 against



Candice Dupree. Photo by Ross Forman

Minnesota Aug. 15.

"A lot of people would say I'm a finesse player, that I make the game look so easy, effortless," she said. "This year, I'm trying to be more aggressive on both ends of the floor, and a goal of mine is to [record] a double-double in every game. And not just 10-10, but 20-15 or something like that." [A double-double is double-digit points and rebounds in the same game.]

"I think we have all of the pieces of the puzzle now—outside shooters, post presence, athletes who can run the floor, and more. So it makes the game a lot more exciting, entertaining."

And what about life off the court?

"I'm pretty boring," she said, laughing. "When I'm not playing, on off days, I just hang out; I'm an Internet junkie. I don't watch a lot of TV. I'm very family oriented; my mom [Patty] is my best friend and I talk to my twin sister [Crystal] every day, same with my younger sister [Shayna]."

But she's not surfing Facebook or Twitter.

"Yes, I'm on Facebook, but I'm not obsessed

with it. I've had it for years. I'm not a Twitter or MySpace person," she said.

Instead, Dupree hits ESPN.com, WNBA.com, NBA.com, CNN.com and various celebrity gossip Web sites.

Chicago is a very nice city; there's a lot of stuff to do here, places to hang out," she said. "I haven't shopped much of late, though I do like to shop for sneakers."

Incidentally, she owns about 50 pairs of sneakers.

**Coming next week: A profile on Chicago Sky All-Star Jia Perkins**

**Also, don't forget that the Chicago Sky is hosting a "PINK OUT" at the team's Breast Health Awareness game Friday, Aug. 28, against the New York Liberty at the UIC Pavilion, 1150 W. Harrison, at 7:30 p.m. All fans are encouraged to wear pink to the game to show their support for those affected by breast cancer. See [www.wnba.com/sky](http://www.wnba.com/sky).**

## Teams wrap up softball seasons

BY ROSS FORMAN

It must have been their superhero powers.

Green Lantern was the No. 10 seed for the D1 Division playoffs of the Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA) open (primarily men) softball season, which culminated Aug. 23. And they ended up winning the title, edging Broadway Cellars Crush. The Sidetrack Bears were third in D1.

"Green Lantern was the biggest shock [of the playoffs]," said Jack Neilsen, the league commissioner. "Overall, I thought the playoffs were great, a fitting end to a wonderful season."

The CMSA softball season featured 46 teams, its most ever, and about 700 players, also a CMSA record. The CMSA softball league is the largest in the nation.

In other playoff action:

—The Sidetrack Blues defeated Cattle Call Beef 11-6 to claim the C1 Division crown, highlighted by a grand slam from outfielder Chris Grasshof. Infielders Jeff Book and Mike Hendricks had exceptional defense for the Beef. Hunter's was third in C1.

—Fat Cat defeated Hamburger Mary's Chargers 8-7 to claim the C2 Division title, while Caesar's Killers finished third. Mary Byrne had a home run for the victors, while Mike Pelter, Matthew Eck and Craig Nichols also had exceptional playoffs.

—Steamworks claimed the C3 Division crown with a victory over Club Escape Phoenix.

—Cattle Call won the championship in the D2 Division, while Hydrate Heat finished second and the Spin Bobcats came in third.

The CMSA women's softball league also wrapped up its 2009 campaign Sunday, with games played at the Waveland Fields.

"We had a great day for the playoffs and the [playoff] games were very competitive," said Jen Hostetler, league commissioner. "Overall, it was a great season, arguably the most successful season we've had in a while."

The CMSA women's league featured 44 teams and about 780 women.

Here are the divisional finals:

—**A Division:** Mic's Girls defeated Joie De Vine.

—**B Division:** Raw Energy defeated Swingers.

—**C Division:** Closet Babes On Broadway defeated Straycats.

—**D Division:** Sponge Monkeys defeated Ladykillaz.

## Rollers take on Baltimore Aug. 29

The Windy City Rollers All-Stars will host Baltimore's Charm City Roller Girls Saturday, Aug. 29, at UIC Pavilion, 525 S. Racine, at 7 p.m.

However, prior to the Windy City All-Stars game, Chicago's new "B" team—The Second Wind—will take on Cleveland's Burning River All-Stars in the preliminary bout at 5:40 p.m. Corpo Dance Company is the halftime entertainment.

General admission tickets are \$20 each and VIP passes are \$40 each; see [www.WindyCityRollers.com](http://www.WindyCityRollers.com), Ticketmaster, the UIC box office or any WCR roller girl.

## Spike'd: Volleyball is a real drag

BY ROSS FORMAN

The actual volleyball was secondary Sunday at the second annual Spike'd, Chicago's only beach cocktail party & drag volleyball extravaganza hosted by—and benefiting—the HIV/AIDS-services agency Chicago House.

It was way more about lipstick and, um, just looking pretty.

Four teams competed in the volleyball action, including the "Southern Baptist Bitches," who ultimately were the champions, defeating the "Jon Benet Ramseys." Thankfully, the sun shone throughout, so no outfits were ruined.

"It was a fantastic event and I think everyone really had a great time," said Rev. Stan Sloan, CEO of Chicago House.

The event raised more than \$5,000 and more than 150 attended.

The "Jon Benet Ramseys" were honored as the Best Dressed.

"The event grew leaps and bounds over last year; it really was great," said Jeremy Hilborn, manager of special events for Chicago House. "I'd love to see more people come and enjoy the event. There seems to be a misconception that, if you don't play volleyball and you're not into drag, then it wouldn't be a fun event. That's anything but the case; there's the beach, great food, great music, cold drinks, hot boys and something to laugh at on the sidelines. I really hope a lot more people come to it next year."

The event chairmen were partners Paul Trout and Andrew Edeker.

**See more photos of Spike'd online at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).**



### UPCOMING GAMES

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