



**TPAN's Aware
Affair**

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**Jinx's
Last Show**

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**Tom, Drew &
Gay Games**

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Women's bookstore celebrates 30 years

BY ROSS FORMAN

Their walk down Memory Lane has been a wild, emotional journey that, quite often, is more like driving along Rocky Road. But now Ann Christophersen and Linda Bubon—founders of Women & Children First Bookstore, 5233 N. Clark—have hit a milestone that very few in their industry can boast.

Their Andersonville store will celebrate its 30th anniversary Saturday, Oct. 3, with a gala at The Breakers at Edgewater Beach, 5333 N. Sheridan. The special guests will be cartoonist/author Alison Bechdel and writer Dorothy Allison.

"It seems very real to me and I'm flooded with memories," Bubon said. "We sat down a week ago and tried to come up with [a list of] key highlights [from the past 30 years] and very quickly we were at 12, so we stopped the list."

Christophersen added, "At the 25th anniversary, I felt surprised that it had been 25 years. And the 25 years didn't invoke as much reflection as the 30th [anniversary] is doing, and I'm not really sure I can account for it. Sure, 25 years is a long time, but there are a fair amount of independent bookstores that have been open for 25 years. But 30 years is a very rare club.

"One of the things to me that has been very interesting to think about is, all the change that we've seen over 30 years—from how much money we needed to open the business to how much more money we need today to keep our business

Turn to page 8

Heart of Gless



Sharon Gless—known for her roles on TV series such as Cagney and Lacey, Queer As Folk and Burn Notice—is a lesbian in Hannah Free, which debuts in Chicago Sept. 25. Read much more about Gless and film on pages 22-24, and online at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.

FALL 2009 THEATER PREVIEW

Cirque du Soleil's newest show, Banana Shpeel (left), and Carpenters Halloween are among this fall's local theater-related offerings. Find out much more starting on page 13.

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To order tickets, visit womenandchildrenfirst.com, call 773.769.9299,
or stop by the store at 5233 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60640

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Read about the re-emergence of the Halsted Street bar Scarlet on page 10.

Photo of Paul Cannella by Ross Forman



Openly gay U.S. Senate candidate Jacob Meister (above) talks about his background, sexual orientation and his opponents. See page 6.

Cover photos and credits (from top): Photo of Kristine W by Kat Fitzgerald (MysticImagesPhotography.com); Promotional photo of Jinx Titanic; photo of Tom Chiola and Drew Jemilo by Bret Grafton

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ONLINE INDEX

BOLLY GEE WHIZ!
 AIDS Legal Council of Chicago held a Bollywood-themed fundraiser at Sidetrack. See the photos online.
 Photo by Chasse Rehwinkel

WindyCity Queercast
ACTIVIST JIM PICKETT SHOW# 325
www.WindyCityQueercast.com

TO DEL AND BACK
 Scissor Sisters' Del Marquis talks with WCT's Jerry Nunn about his newest project.

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SKIN-FUL BEHAVIOR
 See photos of Northstar Healthcare's "Be Positive Event" (right) at Spin as well as images from "The Tudor Rose," a fashion benefit from Akira and Imerman Angels.
 Photo by Steve Starr

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Cleve Jones. Photo courtesy of Lawrence Ferber

Cleve Jones: 'Time to push for fed action'

BY CHASSE REHWINKEL

In preparation for the National Equality March in Washington, Oct. 10-11, organizer and LGBT activist Cleve Jones held a national press conference via telephone Sept. 14 where he stated that now was the time for the LGBT community to push for full federal equality.

"We are tired of these state by state, city by city, county by county fights that create impermanent victories," stated Jones. "It is now time to push for federal action."

Jones went on to describe the civil-rights movement of the early 1960s, where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. not only traveled across America through the small towns and cities but also to Washington D.C. to force the federal government to take action.

When pressed about proposed equal-rights bills that have been criticized in the past for

making too many concessions to LGBT rights, Jones stated that the march would not endorse a specific piece of legislature and that the march would only have one goal: to gain complete rights for LGBT individuals on the federal level.

Said Jones, "Every time we participate in one of these compromises we shoot ourselves in the foot and undermined our own humanity. This time we will push for the whole ball of wax."

In spite of Jones's passionate view of the march, the activist stated that originally he was against a public demonstration and that when people asked him about organizing such an event he would discourage them from these actions.

Jones said that following President Barack Obama's election he had "high hopes" that the LGBT community would make some important headway in gaining more rights on the national level.

However, after nearly a year of what he termed being pushed aside for "more important issues," Jones felt that a demonstration might be a great way to give the LGBT community more momentum on the federal stage.

So far, Jones, who has been touring the country in order to rally support for the march, has seen a large amount of public interest in the event, especially within the LGBT youth.

"I'm expecting big numbers," stated Jones. "I've been on the road for the last few weeks, attending rallies and town hall meetings and I've been very happy with all the support I have seen."

Jones also stated that the upcoming march will be better organized and be less costly than other recent demonstrations. He also assured reporters that issues like transportation and restrooms should not be a problem.

To find out more about the Chicago group planning to join the March on Washington, look up "LGBT Equality March: The Chicago Contingent" on Facebook.

The race to reauthorize Ryan White

BY BOB ROEHR

The Ryan White AIDS programs are set to expire Sept. 30 because of a sunset provision written into the last version of the law, unless Congress enacts a reauthorization of those vital services.

Energy and commerce committee chairman Henry Waxman, D-Calif., and health subcommittee chairman Frank Pallone, D-N.J., introduced a "discussion draft" for reauthorization of Ryan White a few days prior to a subcommittee hearing Sept. 9.

The draft was drawn from consensus recommendations signed on to by more than 300 community-based AIDS organizations, and comments from the Obama administration. It reflects only modest changes from the status quo.

AIDS advocates have been frustrated in trying to get anything more than vague principles out of the Obama administration. That was clear even at a special meeting between them held less than a week before the hearing, on Sept. 3.

"They didn't offer any information on their position" on reauthorization, said Carl Schmid of The AIDS Institute. "We were disappointed that they hadn't been more forthcoming." Their position on some issues was still unclear at the hearing itself.

In his opening statement Waxman said, "Today some half million Americans rely on the program for basic care, treatment, and support services. It's hard to imagine how patients, their families, and our states would be able to deal with the epidemic without this program in place."

Pallone added, the proposal to extend the program for three years "is very much a draft and I am interested in having conversations with [Republicans] as well as with the Senate in an effort to come up with a strong piece of legislation that can be passed by both chambers and be signed into law by the President.

Republican members at the hearing echoed that sentiment and it appears that overall bipartisan support for Ryan White remains strong.

One of the more contentious issues within the community and on Capitol Hill has been the "hold harmless" provision. Under the draft, it would protect areas first hit hard by the epidemic—cities like San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York—by limiting any decrease in funding to no more than 5 percent the first year, and nothing in the next two years.

Areas where the epidemic has hit harder over the last decade, particularly the rural South where the caseload continues to grow most rapidly, have complained that they are getting only a fraction of the funds per patient that the "first wave" cities receive.

With only modest increases in funding for Ryan White there has not been adequate resources to both protect appropriations for the cities and bring other regions up to spending parity. Organizations in the South have pushed for a distribution of existing spending to be more equitable.

"From our perspective [the draft legislation] is a great starting point," said Bill McColl, political director of AIDS Action, which was initially formed by city-based AIDS organizations.

While the HIV caseload may be increasing faster in some areas than others, it is not going down in any part of the country. "You build up a certain level of infrastructure that you've got to maintain," he said. The solution is to find more money, which is difficult in the current "culture of deficit."

After the hearing Schmid was optimistic that reauthorization would move forward rapidly. A meeting of House and Senate staffers to work through details was scheduled for the next day. But when it was canceled at the last minute he said, "That is not good news, I'm not as optimistic now."

Behind the cancellation was the surprise naming of Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, to chair the Senate health committee, left vacant by the death of Ted Kennedy. Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn., had chaired the committee during Kennedy's prolonged absence but he will remain as head of the banking committee.

Schmid believes that time will be lost as Harkin sorts out the committee staff situation and comes up to speed on some of the issues.

NATIONAL ROUNDUP

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Melissa Sue Robinson, a transwoman, is running for mayor of Nampa, Idaho, according to a PinkNews.co.uk item. So far, Robinson has said, this campaign has been calm—unlike her mayoral runs in Lansing, Mich., which she said involved a lot of transphobia. Robinson is running against incumbent Mayor Tom Dale; the election is in November.

James Reid, a gay man, has alleged that **park officers harassed him and a male friend at the Iwo Jima Memorial in Arlington, Va.,** according to the Washington Blade. Reid said that he and his friend were talking on a bench for approximately 45 minutes and were apprehended by the officers allegedly because they left the park seven minutes after the closing time of midnight. One officer said that police were patrolling the park because of complaints that men were committing "lewd acts" there.

Lambda Legal has urged the U.S. government to end a ban on foreign HIV-positive individuals from traveling to the country or living in it, according to PinkNews.co.uk. The ban was enforced in 1987 and, in 2008, President George W. Bush signed the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief Act (PEPFAR), which allowed poz individuals to enter the U.S. However, seropositive people still cannot enter until the Department of Health and Human Services figures out what to do next.

In Texas, Fort Worth gay bar Stampede was severely damaged by a fire Sept. 10, according to a Dallas Voice item. Lt. Kent Worley of the Fort Worth Fire Department said that he did not believe that arson was involved in the fire, which caused approximately \$60,000 in damage. Worley said the fire is probably electrical in origin because it started in an area with several plugs.

Former Miami, Fla., TV anchorman Charles Perez—who was fired from his station recently after filed a discrimination complaint against it—**will marry boyfriend Keith Rinehard Sept. 27 in Connecticut,** according to an On Top Magazine item. In his complaint, Perez contends that he was let go after his private life became public following allegations of domestic abuse against an ex-partner.

Almost half of military members released under "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (DADT) in fiscal year 2008 were non-white, according to a release from Servicemembers United. Data obtained from the Department of Defense showed out of 619 DADT discharges, 279 (just over 45 percent) were from racial- and gender-minority groups. Women also really were affected; while they make up about 15 percent of the military, females comprised 34 percent of those discharged.

At the U.S. Open tennis tournament, **a man was arrested after he ran onto the court at Arthur Ashe Stadium to kiss Spanish player Rafael Nadal** after the athlete's win over Frenchman Gael Monfils Sept. 8, according to CBSSports.com. The fan—Noam U. Aorta of Queens, N.Y.—was arrested for interfering with a sporting event, and will be charged with trespassing. Nadal said, "For me, it wasn't a problem. The guy was really nice. He said, 'I love you,' and he kissed me."

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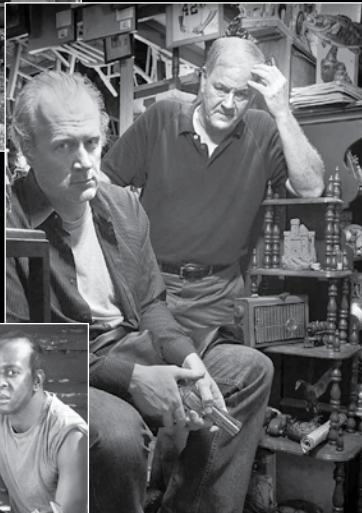
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SEASON GRAND BENEFACTORS



SEASON BENEFACTORS



Jacob Meister: Gay man enters Senate race

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Jacob Meister—an openly gay man who has practiced law in Chicago for nearly 20 years and has had government experience at the federal, state county and municipal levels—is a Democratic candidate for the Illinois U.S. Senate seat that will open in 2010, according to a campaign press release. The primary election will be held Feb. 2.

"I'm in the race because it's time to take back Illinois politics from career politicians and others associated with the city and state political machines," Meister said in the release. "It's time to send someone with a progressive vision and real-world experience to Washington to work for the people of Illinois."

Others vying for the seat currently held by Roland Burris include State Treasurer Alexi Giannoulas and former city Inspector General David Hoffman, both Democrats, and Republican U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk. Windy City Times talked with Meister and his campaign manager, Lowell Jaffe.

Windy City Times: Could you talk about your background a bit?

Jacob Meister: Sure. I worked at Capitol Hill for a number of years in the '80s, and then went to law school. I made the decision that I could do a lot more good practicing law than staying in politics. For the past 20 years, I've been practicing commercial/business law, in areas like banking, communications and transportation. I also had a very healthy *pro bono* practice. So now I come back to politics with a tremendous amount of experience.

WCT: I see—but why now?

JM: Honestly, I feel almost compelled to jump into this race. There are a number of good people who could have run; unfortunately, they didn't. And we had a very poor field of candidates that's not representative of our party—who I don't think will help Illinois' situation. There's a dark cloud over this seat, and we need to bring in someone from outside the system.

WCT: You said there were some good people who aren't running. You don't have to name those people, but what qualities do they have?

JM: I think progressives who do not have a cloud hanging over them [concerning] questionable character and who would've acted in the best interest of Illinois voters [would be good]. One of my campaign slogans is "A voice for Illinois"—and I really think that is what I bring. I don't have any associations with machines on the city or state level.

WCT: So you're not saying that if someone else enters the race who [has] those qualities, that you're going to drop out?

JM: No. I've decided that I'm going to be in this race because I feel very strongly about it. I've made the commitment to be in this race, and it's already September. I really don't see



Jacob Meister.

anyone jumping in, but I'm in it for the long haul.

WCT: Sexual orientation is not the defining issue for you, but it is an important part of you. I understand that you're working with several LGBT leaders and the Victory Fund.

JM: I've always felt that gay and lesbian issues are very important, and I've been involved with the community; I've done a fair amount of *pro bono* work with Lambda Legal, and have worked with other minority groups [regarding] racial and religious discrimination. I am in the application process with the Victory Fund.

WCT: Have you read the LGBT platform of one of your competitors, Alexi Giannoulas?

JM: I absolutely have. It's no coincidence that he announced his position when he did. He's known that I was getting into the race—and that enough about what I feel his motivation is; it's kind of a preemptive strike. He ultimately did the right thing, but he should have done it for genuine reasons, not political purposes.

WCT: This race is going to be particularly intense.

JM: Yes; it's going to be a very interesting race, and it comes at a particular time for Illinois because of the cloud that's hanging over this position. It's being carried widely, which is good.

Illinois has become somewhat of a laughing-stock. It's one of reasons that I feel motivated to jump into this race. We need to bring someone from outside the existing machines to clear up the reputation of Illinois in Washington.

WCT: What will be the biggest obstacle for you in this race, Jacob? Name recognition? Dealing with the machine?

JM: I've gotten a surprising amount of support from people within the political establishment, but I think name recognition is going to be very interesting. You have candidates who haven't held elected office before; then, you have Alexi Giannoulas, who has very high negatives. It's going to be a very interesting race from that perspective.

Certainly, it's an expensive race; I'm doing well out of the starting race, but Senate seats are notoriously expensive so I'll be looking for support from all quarters. I feel very strongly about the organization I'm putting together; we're doing it right. So I have to get my name out there and make sure I have the resources to do it.

WCT: Your Web site doesn't mention LGBT issues. Why is that?

Lowell Jaffe: The Web site that is up right now is basically a [temporary] folder. We're launching a different Web site that should be up this week. This [current] site was supposed to just have his announcement letter and a short overview of issues, but a more comprehensive Web site should be up [soon].

WCT: It just seemed strange that, even with the preliminary site, LGBTs are not included in the issue page.

LJ: When the official Web site, it will certainly be on there. [Note: The temporary Web site has been updated to include LGBT issues, according to a voicemail Jaffe left Windy City Times Sept. 14.]

WCT: Jacob, is there anything else you want to add?

JM: I'm not one who takes pride in getting negative about my opponents, but I think once people learn about their backgrounds—particularly David Hoffman's, and the work he did for William Rehnquist and Jacobs on the 2nd Circuit. I've always known him to be a neoconservative, and he's certainly worked for people who've handed down some discriminatory and racist decisions, including [those involving] anti-sodomy laws. I think people will realize that [Hoffman] is trying to pull the wool over their eyes.

See www.MeisterForSenate.com.

LGBTQ youth-housing program launched

BY SAMUEL WORLEY

The Uhlich Children's Advantage Network (UCAN) and Howard Brown's Broadway Youth Center (BYC) are launching an effort to find housing for homeless LGBTQ youth in the Chicago area. The campaign, called the LGBTQ Host Home Program, aims to identify adults who will provide housing to youth as they attempt to transition toward models of more stable and sustainable living.

Over the next couple of months, representatives of the Host Home program will hold community meetings throughout Chicago—on the South Side, the North Side and in Oak Park—in order to recruit adults who might be interested in opening their homes to LGBTQ youth. Following the meetings, adults will go through a 32-hour training in harm reduction, child development, anti-oppression and other skills they might need to house street-based youth.

In addition to the training, adults interested in the program are asked to have an extra bedroom in their house, be over the age of 25, provide references and be willing to undergo a criminal background check.

Though the program is tailored specifically to the needs of LGBTQ youth, UCAN's Laura Angelucci stressed that everybody—LGBTQ adults as well as heterosexual allies—is encouraged to consider supporting the program. "We're making it clear who these kids are," she said, adding that a queer identity is just one challenging factor among myriad—including drug use and mental-health issues—that the program aims to address.

"It's their path," Angelucci said. "[We're] trying to help them overcome the sort of obstacles that they're facing that put them on the street."

According to Angelucci, UCAN's vice president of administration, the idea for the program belonged to Bonnie Wade, who is now the associate director of the Host Home program. Angelucci said that though various social service providers have developed similar programs—UCAN itself has a variety of programs tailored to people of various ages interested in independent or transitional living—one with a focus on queer youth is rare. "It's never been done in Illinois," she said.

Angelucci said that youth will be recruited through BYC's drop-in services, and through agreements UCAN has reached with organizations like the Center on Halsted. The program is being run jointly with Howard Brown and BYC, a collaborative effort that Angelucci called "critical to our success."

Both venues, she acknowledged, see a lot of the same kids. In an interview with Windy City Times several months ago, Center on Halsted Executive Director Modesto "Tico" Valle noted the glaring problems of homelessness he sees every day as he gets to work: "When I pull into the garage here in the morning at seven o'clock, there's ten homeless kids waiting. They spend practically the day here, and then they sleep on the streets, and we start the day over again."

"I don't think there's going to be a lack of potential clients," Angelucci said. She said that the program asks that the youth make some commitment to "wanting to get back on their feet."

"They need to make a commitment to walk away from street life," she said. "They're really kind of leading the charge, because it is their life."

Once youth have been matched to homes, program administrators work with the kids to develop what Angelucci called a "game plan," which includes a timeline "based on the needs of the youth" that anticipates how long they'll spent in their host homes. "You have a window [of time] with some of these things," she said, "and you need to be able to hit your window."

In terms of the relationship between the youth and the people who will be housing them. Angelucci said, "it's about building relationships." She acknowledged that no matter the circumstances, living with people is "not easy." UCAN's role, she said, is to "be as supportive as we can."

"I don't want anyone thinking we're going to cure homelessness," Angelucci said. "We're in no way claiming to have the answer." Instead, she said, "we're excited that [this program is] going to be part of a larger solution."

"It's going to be a lot of work," she said, "but it's going to be fun."

Community meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 6, 6-8 p.m., at Gallery Guichard, 3521 S. Martin Luther King; Thursday, Oct. 8, 6-8 p.m., at Las Manos Gallery, 5220 N. Clark; and Tuesday, Oct. 13, 6-8 p.m., at a private home in Oak Park. Contact Bonnie Wade at wadeb@ucan-chicago.org or 312-738-5966 for more information.

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Greg Dell's path to making history

BY WILLIAM BURKS

A decade ago, Windy City Times became an inadvertent player in the history of the United Methodist Church (UMC) and the life of Rev. Greg Dell, then-pastor of Lakeview's Broadway Methodist Church, when it published a front-page news story with pictures of a commitment ceremony held at the church.

Dell, a pioneer in ministry to same-sex couples, had celebrated more than 30 "holy union" ceremonies before the September 1998 event that resulted in his trial and sentencing before a church tribunal.

As Dell described it in a 2007 interview, "Somehow, one of our more conservative clergy members read about that service, and brought a complaint against me that I had violated the Discipline, which is our book of law of the United Methodist Church. And, after some process of that complaint, it was brought to a church trial."

Dell called the trial "the most powerful thing in my professional life and in my life as a Christian. What I discovered very quickly it that I could get out of this whole thing if I would just agree to recant and promise not to do such services again. And I couldn't make that promise. As I said at the time, 'I can save my job, but I'll lose my soul, and I'm not willing to do that.'"

The trial reverberated nationally within the UMC and beyond. Once Dell was convicted, "most people felt [my sentence] would probably be a slap on the wrist. And in fact, the finding of the jury was that I would be suspended from pastoral ministry indefinitely, or until one of two conditions were met: either I would recant and promise I wouldn't do such services, or the rule itself was changed. I wasn't going to recant. I'd



Fred Phelps protest outside Broadway United Methodist Church in 1998. Outlines/Windy City Times archives

made that decision earlier." Nor did he expect the UMC policy against same-sex unions to be changed any time soon.

Upon appeal, the sentence was reduced to a one-year ban from ministry. During that period, despite the ban, Dell tells of being "invited—sometimes at risk to the pastors involved—I was invited to preach. I think I preached 50 times during that one year, which was more than I would have preached if I'd been at Broadway during the year, but preached and spoke to a significant number of GLBT and GLBT-allied organizations, all age groups, all racial groups, all identities, and all across the country. I discovered a couple of things: one is, that there is a passion for people who are involved in the struggle for justice that doesn't go away because of simple defeats."

Dell's bishop subsequently re-appointed him pastor of Broadway UMC, where he served until

his retirement in 2007. But his experience and witness inspired others. "His ministry inspired me to return to pastoral ministry," said Rev. Kevin Johnson. "Greg did a lot for bringing healing to people, and also justice. He would say to LGBT people, 'You are not only tolerated, you are celebrated.'"

With Johnson, Broadway UMC founded Bloom in the Desert Ministries as an extension ministry in Palm Springs, Calif., in 2002. That early "Church Within A Church" sought to provide ministry to LGBT and other minorities as a mainstream Protestant church in the Methodist tradition. Bloom in the Desert has also affiliated with the United Church of Christ (UCC), and defines itself as "an inter-denominational, inclusive, progressive-Christian, traditional mainline, liberal protestant church." Johnson sees the focus as being a model for churches so that others will say, "Hey, this can work, so we don't need to be afraid of changing."

As Dell and his wife, Jade, left Broadway UMC in 2007 when he retired on disability with Parkinson's disease, many neighbors stopped by as the church held a yard sale in the parsonage. CWAC Executive Director Cathy Knight said, "I was there, and I can't tell you how many people came up to them just from the street, just walking by, seeing that they were moving, who thanked them for who they were in the neighborhood, for the stand that they had taken. They knew that there was someone on their side at Broadway, in that house, and it was just so moving ... that people wanted to say, 'Thanks.'"

This year's "Journey to Justice" conference and banquet honoring Dell will take place at the Ramada Inn, 4900 S. Lake Shore, as part of a weekend conference on "The Journey to Justice," Sept. 25-26. Additional information is at www.cwac.us.

Read more about religion next week with a look at the recent Evangelical Lutheran Church of America decision.

Hall of Fame auction Sept. 22

The 17th Annual Hall of Fame Celebrity Auction—benefiting the 2009 Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame—will take place Tuesday, Sept. 22, at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted. The registration reception, silent auction, and raffle begin at 7 p.m., and bidding starts at 8 p.m.

The registration fee of \$10 includes one cocktail, hors d'oeuvres from J and L Catering, raffle tickets, an auction paddle and a \$10 credit on auction purchases.

Individuals, businesses and organizations wishing to donate or needing additional information may contact Bill Greaves at 312-744-7911, or the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame at 773-281-5077. Contributions may be sent to The Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame, 3712 N. Broadway, Box 637, Chicago, Ill. 60613-4235.

The 2009 Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony will be held at 6 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 12, in the Sidney R. Yates Gallery at the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington.

Submissions sought for award design

Open Door Clinic is seeking submissions for the design of the first Ryan White Humanitarian Award, which will be given at a dinner late next year. The award is named after the teen AIDS activist from Indiana who died in 1990.

A committee that includes White's mother, Jeanne White-Ginder, will choose the winning submission. The winner will be announced during the World AIDS Day 2009 breakfast.

The artist will receive a \$250 stipend for his/her idea and two tickets to the first award dinner. For more information please contact Lynne Kennedy at 847-695-1093, ext. 19, or at lynnek@opendoorclinic.org. For more information about White go to www.ryan-white.memory-of.com.

DR. ARSON MORRISON
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DR. TRACY DILLINGER
Clinical Psy.D. Alumna. As an air force colonel and the manager for safety control at NASA, Dr. Dillinger represents just one way careers take off for graduates of The Chicago School.

DR. HECTOR TORRES
Counseling. Faculty. As the head of The Chicago School's Center for Latino Mental Health, Dr. Torres helps students obtain the skills and experience they need to make a powerful difference in the Latino community.

JOHN FOWLER
Business Psychology. Student. With the help of The Chicago School, John Fowler landed an internship with Leo Burnett ad agency, where he helped build a global employee retention plan.

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NIH awards grant for AIDS center

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has awarded a consortium of Chicago-based institutions, led by Rush University Medical Center, a five-year, \$3.75-million grant to establish a developmental center for AIDS research, creating a comprehensive research infrastructure to spur basic science, clinical studies and translational research in the prevention, detection and treatment of HIV infection and AIDS, according to a press release.

The new center is one of only two in the Midwest—the other is in Cleveland, Ohio—and was the only developmental center funded this year. NIH has funded 20 such centers at major academic institutions across the country.

Wis. center gets AIDS grant

The Medical College of Wisconsin's Center for AIDS Intervention Research (CAIR) received a five-year, \$11.16 million grant from the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) to continue its HIV-prevention research, according to a press release.

CAIR is one of only five HIV behavioral research centers in the country designated by the NIMH, a distinction the center has held since 1994. Jeffrey A. Kelly, Ph.D., professor of psychiatry and behavioral medicine and director of CAIR since its inception, is the main investigator for the renewal grant.

Among other things, the center's future research will continue to focus on HIV prevention in population segments in the United States that continue to experience high disease incidence, including gay or bisexual men; drug users; and women at risk for HIV, especially racial and ethnic minorities who remain disproportionately impacted by AIDS.

Howard Brown gala Oct. 10

Howard Brown Health Center will hold its annual gala, "Bertha's Ball," Saturday, Oct. 10, at the Palmer House Hilton, 17 E. Monroe.

The benefactor reception will take place 6-7 p.m., while the gala will be 7 p.m.-12 a.m.

The gala's "Friend for Life" honorees this year are David Arzola, Designs for Dignity, and photographer (and frequent Windy City Times contributor) Kat Fitzgerald.

Tickets are \$300-\$500 each; see www.howardbrown.org.

BOOKSTORE from cover

running, and everything in between."

In November 1979, the two opened a small storefront on Armitage Avenue—Christophersen was 30 at the time, two years older than Bubon. Neither had experience as independent bookstore owners, just a load of excitement and drive.

"The early days, everything then was just thrilling; there was nothing that we couldn't do," Bubon said. "I think we overcame our own lack of experience with unbridled enthusiasm and energy."

Bubon was a former waitress when she joined Christophersen to open Women & Children First in an 850 square-foot facility. Christophersen had worked at a chain bookstore in downtown Chicago the summer before they opened, but she had no management skills or training.

"When we were opening, we called on a lot of people," for help and advice, Bubon recalled. They sought advice for everything—from how to build the shelves, to who could and would loan them a cash register, to the neighbor who designed the graphics for their first bookstore sign, on through to how to order books. "We really relied on the sales representatives from the book publishers to help us in how we order in the early days," Bubon said.

They also were aided by a feminist bookstore in Wisconsin: A Room Of One's Own. "That was a case of building on the foundation built by sisters [in the industry] who could offer a model and advice," Christophersen said.

Women & Children First is now in its third Chicago location, filling 3,500 square feet, their largest facility.

"There have been so many obstacles and so many memories over the years," Bubon said. "Heck, when we first opened, we used typewriters for inventory; there were no [personal] computers at the time. And eventually, I was not [interested] in [stepping forward] to modern technology; I was very happy with our manual inventory system. I knew how it worked and it was fine with me. The computer just scared me. I had all kinds of fears of [switching to a computer.] Ann worked me over, to get me to see that it would genuinely help us, make us smarter booksellers, so we could better manage our inventory."

They turned to computers in about 1985.

In the early 1990s, Chicago was blitzed with monster-sized chain bookstores; they, of course, had a huge impact on Bubon and Christophersen.

And in 2000, the duo faced major book-selling opposition from the Internet. By 2007, the chal-



Women & Children First co-owners Linda Bubon (left) and Ann Christophersen. Photo by Ross Forman

lenge came from the economy.

Today's biggest challenge is the advent of e-books.

But both would do it all over again.

"I really didn't know, at 28, that I would find the career of my lifetime and that I would find work that I feel I was born to do," Bubon said, fighting back tears. "I feel that I am so good at this."

"I feel like I am just a really good book seller. I don't know what else I could do that I would utilize all of my talents, such as, story-teller, which probably is my favorite thing to do. Doing this work is my life's purpose; it's not just a job. I have never once felt that I was not doing what I was meant to do."

"I feel enormously grateful that I found someone to do it with who has skills so different from mine, skills that compliment what I can do. I don't think I would have gotten through the first month [without Christophersen]. I was daunted at so many places along the way and so anxious. I think Ann really propelled us through the opening."

Bubon added: "I have a lot of friends who have very satisfying lives, friendships and relationships. But they never found work that occupied their sole and their imagination and creativity."

Said Christophersen: "It's just great to be in a business, in an industry that is just so fundamentally important to so many people."

So how much longer?

Bubon said maybe five more years full-time. Then, hopefully, she can just work part-time and not with primary ownership responsibilities. Christophersen now works at the store only one day a week.

"Part of the reason this is a great industry is: no one goes into it for the money [that you earn]; everyone does this because it's important to them. It's not a way to make a handsome living; we do it for the love of what we're doing," Christophersen said.

The 30th anniversary party will include cocktails, a buffet dinner, dancing, entertainment, a wine-tasting and a fund-raising auction. The after-party will be held at Big Chicks, 5024 N. Sheridan.

"I'm real excited," for the party, Christophersen said. "It will be a real festive night."

More about Ann Christophersen and Linda Bubon:

—**Favorite current book:** A Gate At The Stairs by Lorrie Moore (Christophersen) and Olive Kitteridge by Elizabeth Strout (Bubon)

—**Favorite author:** Alice Munro (Christophersen) and Margaret Atwood (Bubon)

—**Favorite local book:** Hard Time by Sara Paretsky (Christophersen) and The Short History of a Prince by Jane Hamilton (Bubon)

—**Most underrated author:** Gerda Lerner (Christophersen) and Lynne Sharon Schwartz (Bubon)

—**Special appearance:** The store hosted Hillary Rodham Clinton for a book-signing and they sold more than 1,100 copies of Clinton's books.

—**It's a fact:** They had 70 volunteers help them move into their current location in one day. "The customer loyalty we have is incredible," Bubon said.

—**Employees:** "Every single one of our employees over 30 years, whether they were here with us for a year or more, has had an impact on the store," Bubon said.

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7:30 p.m.
Barbara J. Berg, Ph.D
Sexism in America:
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Thursday, Sept. 24
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WORLD NEWS

Semenya still under gender microscope

BY SAMUEL WORLEY

The question of whether or not South African runner Caster Semenya will be able to keep the gold medal she won in Berlin last month remains uncertain pending the official release of results of a series of "gender verification tests" she recently was forced to undergo. Accusations that Semenya might have an unfair physical advantage among female athletes arose after her strong finish in last month's race; in response, the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) launched an investigation.

Although leaks of the results suggest that Semenya, 18, may have a condition that causes her to produce high levels of testosterone, the IAAF has said that it will not officially address the question until it has more time to analyze the results. Representatives have said that the body will make a decision in November.

Semenya dropped out of a race in Pretoria on Saturday; her coach said that she was "not feeling well."

Official policy of silence notwithstanding, the Semenya controversy has been characterized by leaks and rumors from the beginning: the very fact of the investigation itself, in fact, was supposed to be secret according to IAAF policy. The IAAF confirmed the investigation only after members of the media asked directly about its existence.

As for the results, what's more surprising than their anonymous leak to the Sydney Morning Herald—one of the initial media outlets to publish them—is that individual members of the IAAF seem utterly willing to speculate on

their implications. The IAAF's general secretary, Pierre Weiss, was quoted in a number of newspapers saying, "It's clear that she is a woman, but maybe not 100%."

Faced with the results of her daughter's tests—which included evaluations from a gynecologist, an endocrinologist, an internal medicine specialist, a psychologist, and an "expert on gender"—Semenya's mother tearfully told reporters, "What do you want from me, people? The process is not correct."

Cindi Creager, the director of national news for the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), told Windy City Times that the news reports were "unfair and premature speculation." GLAAD took particular issue with media labeling of Semenya as a "hermaphrodite," which Creager described as an "outdated, stigmatizing and misleading word, usually used to sensationalize intersex people."

She said that GLAAD was working to monitor media sources that cover the Semenya controversy, making sure to "correct problematic terminology and ensure that coverage avoids sensationalism."

Elsewhere in the media—and before the publication of the alleged results of her tests—Caster Semenya posed on for the cover of the South African magazine *You*, wearing a dress and made over with make-up and jewelry. "We turn SA's power girl into a glamour girl," read the headline. "Wow—look at Caster now!"

Read more news about LGBT-related happenings around globe online at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com. Among the items are:

- Italy's anti-gay crime wave;
- The police and a Budapest Pride march; and
- A queer-culture festival in St. Petersburg

QUOTELINES

BY REX WOCKNER

"WE'RE TRYING TO CHANGE THE STRATEGY OF THE MOVEMENT. We believe that the strategy that we have followed thus far—which was what made sense at the time and a strategy that was advanced by good, dedicated, hard-working people—is nonetheless a failed strategy. I am tired of fighting state by state, county by county, city by city for fractions of equality. I am tired of compromises and I am tired of the strategy that divides us from each other. It is time for us to unite across state boundaries in a truly nationwide movement to win full, actual equality, which can only come from the federal government. That's not my opinion. That's a fact. If we want to be equal under the law, we must now—as the great heroes of the civil rights movement of 1963 and 1964 showed us—turn our attention to the federal government." — *Veteran activist, AIDS quilt founder and Milk movie character Cleve Jones, a key organizer of the Oct. 11 National Equality March in Washington, D.C., to Bilerico.com, Sept. 4.*



We're trying to change the strategy of the movement"

—Cleve Jones

"I JOINED THE GAY LIBERATION MOVEMENT IN 1972. IF YOU HAD TOLD ME in 1972 that in the year 2009 I would be campaigning for the right to join the Army or get married, I think I would have started dating women at that time. I have no personal desire to get married whatsoever and I certainly have no desire to be a soldier. I'm old school, I'm from gay liberation. We wanted to end war forever and smash the patriarchy, and these are values I still hold dear, but I believe that any person who wants to get married should have that right, and I know that gay, lesbian and bisexual people serve with distinction in the Armed Forces and that when they are killed, supposedly serving our country in these wars that I personally do not support, their partners back home do not receive death benefits. So ... it's about the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution and the basic civil rights to which all people, including our people, are entitled." — *Veteran activist, AIDS quilt founder and Milk movie character Cleve Jones, a key organizer of the Oct. 11 National Equality March in Washington, D.C., to Bilerico.com, Sept. 4.*

"I THINK THE TIME FOR DECISIVE ACTION IS NOW. We see from the polling in Massachusetts, for example, that even the most vociferous opponents of same-sex marriage calmed down after the fact. You know, the state did not explode, did not burst into flames, did not slide into the Atlantic. Massachusetts seems to be doing alright, Canada is still functioning, the cornfields in Iowa are still growing, you know. So it just seems clear to me, that if you want that bold step, you want to do it early in the (Obama) administration, give the electorate the opportunity to calm down and deal with it (before the next election)." — *Veteran activist, AIDS quilt founder and Milk movie character Cleve Jones, a key organizer of the Oct. 11 National Equality March in Washington, D.C., to Bilerico.com, Sept. 4.*

"DESPITE ALL THE DIRE WARNINGS (ABOUT GAY MARRIAGE), THE SKY DID NOT FALL DOWN. ... In fact, Massachusetts divorce rates are now down to pre-World-War-II levels: 1940. So, awkwardly, it turns out gay marriage is a defense of marriage act." — *Lesbian*

MSNBC host Rachel Maddow on her show Sept. 3 following release of data showing that Massachusetts, which was the first state to legalize gay marriage five years ago, has the lowest divorce rate in the nation—and that the rate continues to drop.

"IT'S TRUE THAT WHERE WE'RE CONCERNED (OBAMA) HAS EXPRESSED no shortage of understanding and good intentions. To the NAACP, he said, 'The pain of discrimination is still felt in America ... by our gay brothers and sisters, still taunted, still attacked, still denied their rights.' ... It's as if he's daring us: showing us the door is open, telling us to come in and get him." — *Michael Joseph Gross writing in the September issue of The Advocate.*



Photo by Andrew Davis



"LOOK, I THINK IT'S (DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL) RIDICULOUS. Can you believe they spent—whatever they spent—\$150,000 to get rid of a valued Arabic speaker recently? And, you know, the thing that changed me forever on Don't Ask, Don't Tell was when I learned that 130 gay service people were allowed to serve and risk their lives in the first Gulf War, and all their commanders knew they were gay; they let them go out there and risk their lives because they needed them, and then as soon as the first Gulf War was over, they kicked them out. That's all I needed to know, that's all anybody needs to know, to know that this policy should be changed." — *Bill Clinton speaking at the Netroots Nation conference Aug. 13 in Pittsburgh.*

"WHEN GEN. COLIN POWELL CAME UP WITH THIS DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL, it was defined while he was chairman much differently than it was implemented. He said: 'If you will accept this, here's what we'll do. We will not pursue anyone. Any military members out of uniform will be free to march in gay rights parades, go to gay bars, go to political meetings. Whatever mailings they get, whatever they do in their private lives, none of this will be a basis for dismissal.' It all turned out to be a fraud because of the enormous reaction against it among the middle-level officers and down after it was promulgated and Colin was gone. So nobody regrets how this was implemented any more than I do." — *Bill Clinton speaking at the Netroots Nation conference Aug. 13 in Pittsburgh.*

"IT'S FASCINATING TO SEE WHAT'S HAPPENED IN THE GAY AND LESBIAN MOVEMENT IN THE LAST DECADE. How mindsets have changed, how civil rights have applied to relationships between gays and lesbians. It's just fantastic." — *Singer Melissa Manchester to San Diego's Gay & Lesbian Times, Aug. 27.*

—Assistance: Bill Kelley



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Scarlet rises from the ashes

BY ROSS FORMAN

Paul Cannella is excited for that next Peroni, knowing it will be cold, enjoyable, rewarding and oh-so-emotional. He'll share the moment—and maybe even a sip or two—with family, friends and strangers. It's been seven months since the last beer Cannella truly enjoyed.

On Feb. 26, the folks at Scarlet, 3320 N. Halsted, the Lakeview bar that Cannella owns, had its second-best night since he took over management of the bar in late 2007. It was Frat House Night that Thursday and it was simply a financial success—for Cannella and his entire staff.

He went to an after-hours bar that night, still elated from the Scarlet success that night, ultimately returning to his home in Lincoln Park at about 4 a.m.

Cannella was awake a few hours later, by choice, and, by 7:30 a.m., his cell phone was non-stop. Text messages and phone calls. Everyone was reaching out to the friendly, outgoing Cannella. He was told there was a fire at the locksmith located a few doors away from Scarlet, the former Gentry. Then Cannella was told that, in reality, the fire was in Scarlet.

Cannella jumped into action, first calling the bar's manager who lived upstairs. No answer. So Cannella walked his dogs and drove to the area, being forced to stop and park his car just south of Belmont Street.

He walked toward the fire and the walk quickly turned into a sprint.

"The first thing that crossed my mind at this point was, 'Did everyone get out?'" Cannella said.

It was an hour before Cannella knew for certain that all who lived on the two stories of apartments above Scarlet—three residents per floor—had survived, unharmed.

The building, though, was completely destroyed.

The fire started on the second floor, in a bedroom. The official fire department finding attributed the cause of the blaze: smoking in bed.

"It's a 100-year-old building, so it doesn't take much for it to go up [in flames] very quickly," Cannella said. "The second floor was nearly completely ruined by fire."

On the third floor, there was basically no fire damage [because of the fire's pattern of movement], but there was no roof; it had fallen through."

Cannella stood across the street, in the Sherwin Williams parking lot, completely devastated.



Paul Cannella with the only photo to survive the fire. Photo by Ross Forman

His dream was burning and he was helpless. He talked to his parents, Frank and Joan, on his cell phone.

Cannella couldn't stop crying. "It was hard [to watch]," he said, still fighting back tears seven months later. "I still remember looking up, seeing the fire, knowing that my dreams and, ugh, everything in my life was changing right there in front of me."

Cannella had resigned from his corporate job in January to run the bar full-time. His future that frozen February morning was, frozen in time.

The calendar inside his storage unit behind Scarlet is still on February. On Feb. 27, the date is crossed out and someone wrote "FIRE."

On March 2, the entire building was deemed a total loss, including the jobs of the 20 employees who called Cannella their boss.

"I've tried to think about [the fire's impact] many, many ways," Cannella said. "From the people who were impacted, it has to be 30-50 people job-wise, which includes employees, distributors, suppliers, etc. Hey, we were the No. 1 Red Bull buyer on the street and the No. 2 Stoli [purchaser]."

"It was a major [financial loss], a scary amount [of money lost]. It's hard to measure the total impact, but at least \$3 million, which includes loss of revenue, loss of building, etc. And that number probably is conservative."

The fire was a five-alarm blaze that required more than 3 million gallons of water to extinguish. "It was like a river coming out the front [door]," Cannella said. "We had no fire damage in Scarlet, just water [damage]."

The entire bar was destroyed, destined for

the trash dumpster—except for one photo and a couple pieces of stained glass. They will, of course, find a home in the new Scarlet.

Yes, Cannella and crew are coming back—bigger, stronger and more determined than ever. Scarlet will reopen in September.

"My immediate reaction [when it was deemed a total loss] was, 'How do you fix it? I immediately wanted to gut it so the bar could reopen ASAP. But it's not that easy of a process. They didn't know if this building was going to be re-certified,'" said Cannella, who also has had to deal with issues involving insurance, permits and much more. He only wishes he just had the stereotypical bar drama.

"I hope that I can learn from this and I know that the first beer [when Scarlet reopens] is just going to taste that much better," he said. "I just try to move forward and stay positive, always."

"If I had my choice of sitting back in the corporate world behind a desk, or doing this? Well, there hasn't been a single hesitation that I'd much rather do this, even with this life experience. As the saying goes: that which doesn't kill you makes you stronger."

Cannella is excited to reopen, to unlock the front door again, to hear the distinctive noise that the lock makes and, of course, hear the register again. He knows plenty of family and friends will be around that first week when the doors reopen, but it's the newcomers—the Scarlet rookies—who he truly wants to see. "That's when it will hit me," Cannella said.

"I think we're going to come roaring back. It's fun designing a bar, though I certainly wish it was under different circumstances. It was fun during the first remodel [in 2007], and fun now

too. This is a fun business."

And a new-looking bar, too, starting with the main entrance—which is now on the right side.

Scarlet will now be four feet larger in the front, extending all the way to the sidewalk. There also is a featured seating area in the front, dubbed Table One. This area will double as a stage at times.

In addition, there will be a large glass window to the outside. There will also be a den-like area in the middle of the bar, featuring classic furniture.

All of the mechanicals were moved into the basement, so another four or five feet were added in the back. And the rear bar was moved to the other side, the left side.

The main bar is larger and more functional. The DJ booth also is now larger, as are both bathrooms.

And capacity has increased by 30 percent to almost 1,000 square feet.

There also will be a new antique disco ball near the front and a 10-foot photo of a drag queen from the 1920s.

"We tried to take the best designs from the old bar, correct some areas, and make this a new and improved Scarlet ... with the same carefree, no-attitude-allowed bar," Cannella said.

There also will be free wi-fi in Scarlet, with coffee available during the afternoons, ideal for business meetings or study groups.

"People throughout the neighborhood and community really rose to the challenge, to immediately help those affected by the fire. There were fund-raisers at other bars, clothing donations, and so much more," Cannella said. "Bitter? Not one bit. I try to be positive in anything and everything I do in life."

"But this was a test, no doubt about it."

"There were times I didn't want to get out of bed, or do anything. But, I know that, when you get knocked down, you get right back up. If you're bitter, you're just not going to have a very happy life."

"No one was hurt; that's most important. Everything else is replaceable. That's all that matters. It certainly could have been worse than it was."

Cannella said the bar will have a themed party in the first month or so after it reopens to acknowledge the fire, including hot firemen and a charity element to the evening. "We want to acknowledge the fire; it's part of the history of this bar," he said. "The Scarlet people will see when we reopen will be a lot like the old, original Scarlet, with the same attitude [among employees and patrons]: no attitude and very welcoming for everyone [aged] 21 to 91."

"Everyone is welcome and will have fun."

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**DAVID
MIXNER**

March on Washington: Are you happy?

Many things have been written on whether one should march or not march Oct. 11 in Washington, D.C. Let me make it easy for you.

Are you really happy with the progress we have made over the last eight months with this Administration and Congress? Are you really happy with the progress we have made on the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA)? Do you think that the leaders of our political parties have embraced marriage equality and our God given rights, benefits and protections that come with it? Are you content, relaxed and happy with where we are at this moment in history in the struggle for freedom?

Think very carefully about the above questions. Then make plans to come to Washington, D.C., on Oct. 11 to march with thousands of your brothers, sisters and straight allies for freedom.

If you are like me, then most of you will be unhappy about any of the questions above. Almost *nothing* has been done in the last eight months by the president or Congress to take us dramatically closer to freedom. We are now hearing rumbles that we have to wait until after next year's elections to protect the Blue Dog Democrats' re-election. Then, I give you my word, we will hear after that how we have to wait until the president is re-elected because after all, if we don't, they will blame us if they lose. All sound familiar?

The time has come for the grassroots of the LGBT community in this nation to make a powerful statement against being used as a political football between the two parties. Can't promise you how many will be in Washington but can promise you if you are unhappy with our progress you will find at least thousands of others who feel like you do to march with you. The time has come to take a stand against the absence of progress and leadership. Don't let them take you for granted any longer. Don't buy into making others politically comfortable by delaying your freedom. Don't allow the "Oh Lord, Not Now" movement hold you back in your fight for freedom. Patience means sacrificing another day of living as not a free person.

Is that really acceptable to you? Are you willing to give up your social security rights, your immigration rights, your hospital visitation rights, your taxation rights, etc for one more year to make someone's political path more comfortable? Are you really ready to allow the silence of

our 'political allies' to take us one step closer to a system of gay apartheid in America? Are you willing to allow our youth to feel like second class citizens and live in shame one more day because of those who lack political courage?

The time is now to march, to protest and to stand up and be counted. If you can't make the march on Washington on Oct. 11, then help a senior or young person who can't afford to attend know the experience of standing together for freedom. Go to Facebook and urge all your friends to attend and to sign up at the National Equality March page on that site. Help raise money to get a bus or train from your area. If you can't make it, help spread the word and let all America know that you are supportive.

However, do everything you can to be in Washington Oct. 11. The National Equality March will be an experience you will never forget if it is just 2,000 or 200,000. Know why? Because at least we are taking a stand. Standing up for freedom in a horrible political climate. Letting our political allies know that patience, waiting or negotiating our freedom away are certainly not on our agenda! We want full equality and freedom now. Not tomorrow, not next week, not after the elections and not after everyone feels nice and warm and comfortable. We want it now.

See you at the National Equality March Oct. 11.

David Mixner—a civil-rights activist, writer and political strategist—blogs at www.davidmixner.com.


**EMMANUEL
GARCIA**

Missing the big O

On June 28, police raided Rainbow Lounge, a gay bar in Fort Worth, Texas. One customer was seriously injured. Although police initially claimed that the raid was justified and executed properly, protests from the gay community in Texas led the police and Texas's liquor board to conduct an investigation. The results showed that the police had, in fact, acted beyond the scope of their authority. According to the investigator's report, the officers had conducted the raid without their supervisor's knowledge, had failed to report the use of force that seriously injured one customer, and disrupted the operation of the business, all of which are prohibited by Texas state law. In the wake of this report, two officers and one supervisor were fired.

Despite this ruling, the discrimination against gay men by many of our nation's police officers has not subsided. Last week, similar complaints were being made from patrons at a gay bar in Atlanta.

I've always felt fortunate to live in Chicago, a diverse community that is in many ways very welcoming of gay men. Through participation in the Gay Games and the yearly Pride Parade, I've seen firsthand how many police officers are supportive of the LGBT community; however, I was reminded this week that we still have a long way to go to end the abuse of police power against our community.

Last week Oprah Winfrey shut down Michigan Avenue in Chicago to celebrate start of the 24th season of her talk show. It was a big moment for Oprah but also for the city of Chicago, with Mayor Daley and wife Maggie in attendance in the front row. The mayor, I assume, was happy to shut down the iconic street for Oprah, who was footing the bill for police overtime and sanitation crews. It was also yet another way for the city to prove that we can host large crowds of

people and have it be festive, or at least appear to be.

Local and national celebrities came out in force to support the event. Oprah's guests included the Black Eyed Peas, Jennifer Hudson, magician Criss Angel, James Taylor and me. Well, that prestigious group was all on stage, and I was going to be watching from the audience—or so I thought.

I didn't take the day off like some of the hundreds of people that I saw as I walked by on my way to work at 8 a.m. But, I did leave work early enough to walk past the staging area precisely when Oprah herself started taping the show. Yes, I got to see Oprah and the Black Eyed Peas! HELLOOOO CHICAAGOOOOOO. You get the idea.

I was observing the action along with dozens of other walking spectators, all trying to get a glimpse, when I had my own run in with an overly aggressive police officer. I was walking past the WGN Plaza when a police officer singled me out, called me towards him, and yelled at me to ask me where I was going. He was brash and was looking at me sternly. In my head—apparently that's the only way you can actually talk to a cop in Chicago—I was thinking, "Where do you think I'm going? There are hundreds, if not thousands of people of here! You see that Black lady over there? That's Oprah! I'm here to see her."

Instead of reminding him of the obvious, I just answered politely, "I'm headed that way and pointed north towards the large crowd of people." The cop yelled at me and my friend, "Get out of this area! Why don't you go through there," pointing towards the cramped crowd. "Good luck getting through there."

So, I did. I tried my luck and walked towards the crowd. I realized that there was no way I could walk past the massive gathering. I noticed a small group of people standing next to the building, just quietly observing the taping. I walked and stood next to the group; my friend followed. I didn't have a camera of any sort on hand, not even my cell phone. I was just watching, like everybody else.

After a couple of police walked past us without saying a word, the police officer who had yelled at me earlier spotted me and walked directly towards me. Completely overlooking the group next to me, he stood few inches away from my face to say, "I thought I told you to leave. Why are you here?" I just stared at him, completely

dumbfounded by his anger towards me. I said, "What about them?" looking at my friend and the group of people. He said they work here, and then turned to ask them to verify. My friend stepped in and said, "I don't work here," but this didn't seem to bother the cop. He looked directly at me and said, "I told you to leave. Leave now or I'll throw you in jail!" pronouncing every letter as he got closer to my face. I knew this wasn't the time or the place to argue, so I walked away, away from the crowds, away from Oprah, and away from the Black Eyed Peas. My friend followed. All he could say was, "He was a jerk."

I was angry. I wanted to go back and get his badge number, but I knew that nothing would come of it. I'm not the old white lady who loses her cat and gets a friendly police officer. I'm gay and Mexican. I don't mean to dog all Chicago police; in fact, I'm probably the first to defend them. I can only assume that his bias towards me was because I was "different" than the people standing next to me or my friend, who was both white and in a suit. I didn't belong there. Whatever the bias (race, gender or sexual orientation), who watches the watchmen?

After this incident, I know how then men in the Rainbow Lounge in Texas felt. Their opportunity to enjoy a special moment was destroyed because a few police officers overstepped their rights. In their case, their celebration of the 40th anniversary of Stonewall was ruined. In my case, I lost my shot to see Oprah's big show on Michigan Avenue. Like the men in Texas, I was powerless to do anything against the police officer, even though I was right and he was wrong. I missed my opportunity because he was out of line.

For the police in Texas, there were repercussions, but they came only after an enormous outcry from the gay community and a protracted legal battle. In my case, there will be no repercussions for the officer who harassed me. I could have filed a complaint or even initiated a lawsuit, but that wouldn't have changed the fact that I would have missed Oprah's big show just because some cop didn't think I had the right to be there. Had I tried to stay and watch the show, he would have found a reason to arrest me.

In short, I lost out because there is no one to police the police. This can be particularly damaging to the LGBT community, and I learned this the hard way Sept. 8.

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GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



Photo courtesy of Kevin Boyer

EURO-SPLASH

WCT talks with Kurt Dahl, the Federation of Gay Games male co-president, about the 2010 Games in Cologne, Germany (above). See page 32.

MOVIES

Gless in Chicago.
Page 22.

Photo by Hal Baim



MUSIC

Last dance.
Page 26.



PROFILES

How great
thou Art.
Page 26.

Photo by Steve Becker



FALL THEATER PREVIEW

Looking at
LGBTQ plays

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

What makes a gay play truly gay?

Some people insist on a major or supporting character who fits somewhere in the LGBTQ spectrum. For others, the sexual orientation of the playwright is a major factor.

Then there's the sensibility of the piece. Can a gay show ever be too campy?

Or should serious queer theater eschew fluff and examine historical struggles when it comes to today's fight for progressive equal rights?

Luckily, there's a bit of all of the above in many upcoming shows this fall season.

—**About Face saved:** We should be thankful that About Face Theatre dodged the bullet of economic failure. Its ongoing "Face the Future" fundraising campaign brought in more than \$200,000, and helped Chicago's only professional Equity company dedicated to LGBTQ theater to stay afloat.

Continue your support of About Face by attending its xyz festival of new work, running Sept. 21-Nov. 15 according to its Web site. On the docket is the world-premiere play *The Flowers* by Obie Award-winning playwright Adam Bock (*The Thugs*) at Stage Left Theatre. Also in the mix are showcase productions like *Float* by Patricia Kane (response for About Face's hit *Pulp*), plus an interactive wedding project called *Let Them Eat Cake* by legendary performance artist Holly Hughes (one of the notorious NEA four) and About Face's artistic associate Megan Carney. For more details, visit www.aboutface theatre.com.

—**The "Next" smash?:** Jason Southerland makes his mark as Next Theatre's artistic director by opening the 2009-10 season with *Boom*. It's the Chicago premiere of Peter Sinn Nachtrieb's quirky comic drama involving the end of the world.

Just when everyone should be panicking, a scientist is actively seeking out dates from personal ads in *Boom*. See what sort of cataclysmic coupling occurs up at that Evanston venue now through Oct. 11; see www.nexttheater.org.

—**Sister Suffragette:** With a company name like ShawChicago, you know that this professional Chicago theater company will be dedicated to works of critic/playwright/essayist George Bernard Shaw.

But ShawChicago also produces works by Shaw's contemporaries. Get to know the dynamic American ex-patriot actress and author Elizabeth Robins (1862-1952) when ShawChicago produces her 1909 drama *Votes for Women!*

Windy City Times' Fall Theater Preview

Robins offers a dramatized look at the suffragette movement from her own perspective as a suffragette herself. Hopefully, it will help inspire a few more activists to take up LGBTQ causes.

Votes for Women! runs Oct. 17-Nov. 9 at the Ruth Page Center for the Arts. Find more information at www.shawchicago.org.

—**Holding Court:** The late August Wilson's only Chicago-set play is his award-winning drama *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*. So it's natural that Court Theatre would capitalize on its previous Wilson successes with *Fences* and *The Piano Lesson* by producing Wilson's 1920s entry in his ambitious 10-play cycle documenting African-American life in the 20th century.

The real-life blues pioneer Ma Rainey was openly bisexual, and Wilson doesn't shy away from this fact in this compelling drama set entirely in a recording studio. There, Ma Rainey



Carpenters Halloween.

holds court and clashes with record label executives and members of her own band (particularly a hot-headed trumpeter named Levee).

The drama of Ma Rainey's *Black Bottom* (Sept. 17-Oct. 18) is followed at Court Theatre by pure comedy with Charles Ludlam's *The Mystery of Irma Vep* (Nov. 12-Dec. 13).

Mystery is a two-actor cross-dressing *tour de force* that spoofs all things gothic in horror novels. The show is the only work by the late gay founder of the influential off-Broadway Ridiculous Theatrical Company to enter the standard theater repertory. Find out more at www.courttheatre.org.

—**Sophisticated lad:** Actor/playwright/song writer Noel Coward epitomized British class, wealth and sophistication throughout most of the 20th century (an image he constructed despite his middle-class upbringing).

And though Coward never officially came out as gay during his lifetime (not wanting to disappoint the elderly matinee ladies who still fancied him), his sexuality was plain to see by many in the know. (How else to explain his hit song title "Mad About the Boy?")

Writers' Theatre in Glencoe gets cozy with the wit and brilliance of Coward in a new revue playing Nov. 17-March 21 in the intimate Books on Vernon backroom. **Oh Coward!** is devised by Roderick Cook and features direction by Jim Corti (responsible for Drury Lane Oakbrook's current smash hit *Cabaret*). Visit www.writers theatre.org.

—**Wonderful and off-key:** The first two shows of Northlight Theatre's season don't feature gay characters *per se*, but their camp quotient rates high on the lavender scale.

First up is the Chicago premiere of the off-Broadway jukebox musical *The Marvelous Wonderettes* (Sept. 17 to Oct. 25). The show's premise is simple: a high-school girl group performs Top 40 hits at its 1958 prom. The members' Eisenhower-era optimism matures by the second act, when '60s pop hits reflect their own life's disillusionments when they reunited for their 10-year class reunion.

Go for the frilly fashions and a beautifully harmonized trip down memory lane. But don't expect much lovely singing with Northlight's next show, the Chicago premiere of *Souvenir* (Nov. 12-Dec. 20).

—**Camp, plain and simple:** There are only a few more weeks to catch Hell in a Handbag Productions' *Poseidon! An Upside Down Musical* at the Chopin Theatre (closing Sept. 27). But there are two other similarly campy and over-the-top musicals arriving soon on the scene.

The Scooty and JoJo Show is reviving *Carpenters Halloween* again at Mary's Attic (Oct. 14-Nov. 7). It's Scott Bradley and Jonny Stax's truly scary coupling of John Carpenter's classic 1978 horror flick interspersed with classic songs by The Carpenters. See www.scootyjojo.com.

Then there's the world premiere of Jason Dabrowski and Calidonia Olivares' sick and wrong spoof of the musical *Annie* called *Annee Pocalypse!* for Hubris Productions (Sept. 18-Oct. 24).

It's all about "Little Whorin' Annee" singing and dancing her way through a nuclear apocalypse in order to find her sugar daddy. Thankfully, only audiences 21 and older will be able to see *Annee Pocalypse!*, since it plays in the bar Hydrate. Visit www.hubrisproductions.com.

Pick and choose from the above shows to find whatever floats your boat when it comes to seeing "gay theater."

Find out about upcoming so-called "straight plays" next week in *Windy City Times*.

FALL THEATER PREVIEW

Pizzazz a-plenty at big musical venues

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Elsewhere on this page, Mary Shen Barnidge is offering the pick of the litter when it comes to musicals in Chicago's off-Loop theaters this autumn season. My job is to fill in the blanks about musical theater in The Bigs. In Chicago's lively theater scene, any venue with 300 seats or more can be counted among The Bigs.

Without question, three musical events tower over all others with regard to their colorful appeal, one quite old, one brand-new and a third that splits the difference. The oldie is **Animal Crackers**, a 1928 Broadway show that starred the Four Marx Brothers (youngest brother Zeppo still was part of the act) just before they hit movie fame. Indeed, there is a film version of *Animal Crackers* with quite a cult following, but the complete musical is substantially different (longer and more songs). This revival is being presented by the Goodman Theatre, Sept. 28-Oct. 25 (with previews from Sept. 18). The score, by Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby, includes Groucho's famous ditty, "Hello, I Must Be Going," and his familiar theme song, "Hooray for Capt. Spaulding."

The brand-new show is the world premiere of **The Addams Family**, based on the famous cartoons by Charles Addams, which will have its pre-Broadway world premiere run at the Ford Center/Oriental Theatre, Nov. 13 (Friday the 13th, of course)-Jan. 10. Produced and developed by Chicago-based producer Stuart Oken, the show stars Nathan Lane as Gomez and Bebe Neuwirth as Morticia and features some of the most creative authors, designers and directors available today.



Rehearsal of *Animal Crackers*. Photo by Eric Y. Exit

The show that splits the difference is the world premiere (and another pre-Broadway warm-up) of a new Cirque du Soleil show that's theater-based rather than tent-based. **Cirque du Soleil: A Twist on Vaudeville** will debut at the Chicago Theatre, Nov. 21-Jan. 3. Vaudeville, of course, is that old variety show of 19th and early 20th centuries that died out during the Great Depression, but frequently is revived in modern form. Look for this one to be spectacular and colorful with plenty of music, although not a musical per se.

And then there are all the rest, enumerated here in chronological order.

The reliable and popular James Harms will star as don Quixote in *Man of La Mancha* at Theatre at the Center, Sept. 17-Oct. 17 (previews Sept. 10), with Erika Mac as Aldonza. Veteran producer/director William Pullinsi is staging the show.

The reliable, popular and gifted comic actor Ross Lehman will star as Edna Turnblad in the regional premiere of **Hairspray** (based on the John Waters film) at the Marriott Theatre in Lincolnshire, Sept. 30-Dec. 6 (previews Sept. 30), with direction and dance by the always-dazzling Marc Robin. Let's face it, for a show that isn't gay, you really can't get any gayer than *Hairspray*!

In October, **Cats** creeps back to town for the 961st time, playing the Cadillac Palace for one week, Oct. 13-18. Oh, well, if you must. For some, I suppose *Cats* still is the Cat's Meow.

The revitalized Drury Lane Theatre Oakbrook Terrace continues its lavish new producing policy with **Thoroughly Modern Millie**, Oct. 28-Dec. 20 (previews from Oct. 22). It's bright and imaginative new productions definitely now are worth the westward journey.

Mel Brooks's fans can make up their own minds about whether or not his musical adaptation of **Young Frankenstein** is any good when it plays the Cadillac Palace, Nov. 3-Dec. 13, with its original Broadway stars, Roget Bart and Shuler Hensley. The critics declared it not nearly as good as *The Producers*, even with book, music and lyrics all by Brooks. The Tony Awards ignored it as it limped through a relatively short Broadway run and now you can decide for yourself.

Finally, the dazzling pianist and musical impersonator Hershey Felder returns to town as author/actor in three signature one-man shows that will play in succession at the Drury Lane Theatre Water Tower Place. Fans will recall that Felder spent nearly a year at the Royal George Theatre with George Gershwin Alone (in 2004-2005) before debuting *Monsieur Chopin* here. In the last couple of years, Felder has added **Beethoven, As I Knew Him** to form a trio of shows, all staged by film director Joel Zwick. *Beethoven* kicks off the series, Nov. 13-Dec. 6, followed by *Chopin* Dec. 9-20 and concluding with *Gershwin*, Dec. 23-30. FYI: on Sunday and Monday nights, when Felder doesn't perform, Drury Lane Water Tower Place will present Peter Gallagher: *Don't Give Up On Me*, Nov. 22-Dec. 14. Gallagher will be in residence developing this new piece as a concert-cabaret presentation.

And, of course, for musical theater on the grandest of all possible scales, one cannot forget Lyric Opera of Chicago, which launches its seven-month-long 55th season with Puccini's **Tosca**, Sept. 26. The fall portion of the season also will offer Gounod's **Faust**, Verdi's **Ernani** (based on Victor Hugo's play), Janacek's **Katya Kabanova** and Lehar's **The Merry Widow** all opening before Christmas. Our town's Gary Griffin will direct the new production of *The Merry Widow*. All performances will be in the high Art Deco splendor of the Civic Opera House.

FALL THEATER PREVIEW

Snuggie theater: Musicals in small spaces

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The American musical was born during the age of romanticism—an aesthetic demanding lush panoramic fantasies enhanced by bright lights, massive casts and spectacular visual effects. And while such elephantine extravaganzas can still be found (the sun never sets on the Disney empire, you know), theatergoers who prefer looking at actors' faces without the aid of opera glasses will find the fall season offering a number of words-and-warble evening entertainments in cozy spaces.

—**The Little Musical that Started It All: The Fantasticks** premiered in 1960 at the 150-seat Sullivan Street Playhouse in New York's Greenwich Village with a cast of nine players and an orchestra composed of a piano and a harp, where it proceeded to run continuously for the next 42 years. The west stage at Theatre Building Chicago is slightly more spacious, but director Walter

Stearns promises that Porchlight Music Theatre's production, celebrating the romantic comedy's 50th anniversary, will retain the bittersweet coming-of-age story's delicate ambience.

"An intimate theatre provides a boutique experience," explained Stearns. "Having performers just a couple of feet away from the audience, or sitting in the seats with them, makes for a very communal experience. Our music is all acoustical, too, so the results should be raw, honest and beautiful." (It is currently running through Sunday, Nov. 8; call 773-327-5252 or visit www.porchlighttheatre.com.)

—**The Big Musical in the Little Room: Man of La Mancha**, based on the tales of Miguel de Cervantes, is renowned for its physicality—Don Quixote charging a windmill on horseback, for example, or rowdy muleteers rumbling in an innyard. But as Theo Ubique's stage at the No Exit Café has grown from a single platform barely larger than a bath mat to a promenade spanning the streetside wall, so have the productions essayed by this "cabaret theatre" expanded from low-budget revues to full-scale Broadway pageants rendered as exquisitely as Cornell boxes.

"In a limited space, you can't hide a mistake," says director David Heimann, "But when a show is really connected, the listener becomes part of the story, serving as a source of energy for the actors. This balance is what makes the [small theater] experience different from your antiseptic observational theatre and why our audiences keep coming back." (It opens Friday, Oct. 16; call 773-347-1109 or visit www.theoubique.org.)

—**The Little Musical in the Little Room: Gregg Opelka's C'est La Vie** (formerly *La Vie Ennuie*) enjoyed an extended run at Theatre Building Chicago in 2002. Light Opera Works' equity-cast revival stars Kelly Anne Clark and Jennifer Chada as Milles. Dominique and Fatiguée, two Parisian cabaret chanteuses, weary of chirping Edith Piaf covers for the tourists, who contrive to have their boss, um, detained in the bastille while they revel in sassy chansons like "You Gotta Be A Waif" and "Toujours, But Not Today."

"There's no question that our space for this production is much simpler [than the mainstage in Cahn Auditorium]—no bells and whistles, and the front row of audience only six feet away," said director/choreographer Rudy Hogenmiller. "But it's a cute, funny, charming show—with touching moments, too—and it has hummable tunes. Gregg has tweaked the script and score since the 2002 production—which none of us involved in *this* one has seen—so we're starting from ground zero on a very new show." (It opens Friday, Oct. 9, in the Evanston company's Second Stage facility. Call 847-869-6300 or visit www.light-opera-works.org.)

—**The Musical That Is Not a Musical: Ma Rainey's Black Bottom**, the third in August Wilson's suite of 10 plays tracing the history of Pittsburgh's Hill District and its African-American denizens, relies on the famous 1920s blues singer for its premise, with diva E. Faye Butler headlining in the title role and much of the action set in a recording studio, but this is less a "musical" than it is a play incorporating music into its story.

Ron OJ Parson, director of the production leading off the Court Theatre season, is adamant regarding this distinction: "When it opened on Broadway, many patrons anticipated a musical, and some of the producers wanted to make it a musical, but [August] Wilson was insistent on the *play* being the focus. So we're not working with dancers or any of that. Still, speaking from a dramatic perspective, most actors enjoy the closeness of the audience in tight quarters. This is what makes exciting theatre for both." (It opens Sunday, Sept. 27; call 773-753-4472 or visit www.courttheatre.org.)

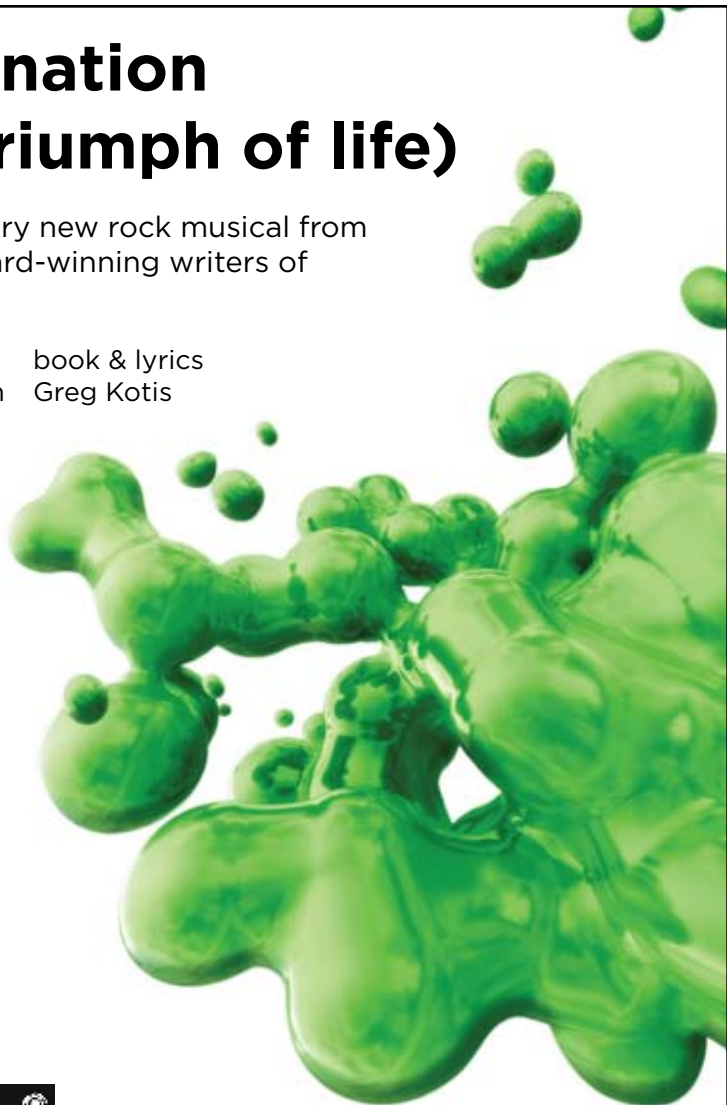
Small spaces also impose additional responsibilities on playgoers, who must curb their natural propensities for snoring, smooching, scratching, etc. But if you can remember to behave yourself and shut off your cell phone, there's a wraparound show out there waiting for you.

yeast nation (the triumph of life)

an evolutionary new rock musical from the Tony Award-winning writers of **Urinetown**

music & lyrics book & lyrics
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FALL DANCE PREVIEW

Dancin' Feats

BY ZACHARY WHITTENBURG

—Mikhail Baryshnikov and Ana Laguna, **Harris Theater for Music and Dance, Sept. 25-27:** Although he's made some of the most important creations of the past few decades, Swedish choreographer Mats Ek's dances have been all but absent from Chicago stages. That will change in a big way when Mikhail Baryshnikov and Ek's wife Ana Laguna bring "Solo for Two" (1996) and "Place" (2007) to life for three performances at the Harris. That in itself would make the program a highlight of the year, but Mr. Baryshnikov has generously decided to also dance two solos while he's in town—be advised that remaining tickets are going quickly. \$55-75 at 312-334-7777 or www.harristheaterchicago.org

—**Natya Dance Theatre, North Shore Center for the Performing Arts, Skokie, Sept. 26:** Hema and Krithika Rajagopalan's full-length "Shakti Chakra—The Energy Cycle" exemplifies the style of this Indian-American dance company and the Bharata Natyam technique at which it excels. \$30 at 847-673-6300 or www.northshorecenter.org

—**Nora Chipaumire with Thomas Mapfumo and The Blacks Unlimited, Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), Oct. 1, 3-4:** The MCA opens its wonderfully dance-heavy '09/10 season with the world premiere of lions will roar, swans will fly, angels will wrestle heaven, rains will break: gukurahundi. These exiled Zimbabwean artists—Chipaumire is a dancer and choreographer living in New York, while Chimurenga musician Mapfumo works out of Eugene, Ore.—seek to communicate and bring eloquence to the suffering plaguing their beloved homeland. \$10-25 at 312-397-4010 or www.mcachicago.org

—**Merce Cunningham Dance Company, The Dance Center of Columbia College, Oct. 1-3:** Along with the loss of Pina Bausch in June, Merce Cunningham's death in July saddened the performance world and sparked debate about how, in their absence, their art might live on. For the time being, MCDC retains its international touring commitments and thus will perform two programs at the intimate Dance Center theater as scheduled. Longtime fans of his genius and innovation will be there, and those who have never seen it live simply cannot miss it. \$38 at 312-369-8330 or www.colum.edu/dancecenter

—**Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Harris Theater for Music and Dance, Oct. 1-4:** Glenn Edgerton's first season as artistic director opens

with a world premiere by Jorma Elo, whose "From All Sides" the company debuted in 2007 and "Double Evil" San Francisco Ballet brought last fall. I'm a big fan of Elo's movement: Liquid, precise and individualized, it looks like the world we live in. A hot new relationship between HSDC and the Art Institute is also worth keeping an eye on—once a month beginning Sept. 24, Hubbard Street's dancers and staff will appear at the museum for a variety of events. Fall series tickets are \$25-90 at 312-334-7777 or www.harristheaterchicago.org; visit hubbardstreetdance.com for more information.

—**Links Hall 30th Anniversary Celebration:** This storied space at 3435 N. Sheffield has barely had a day off since 1979—home to everything from workshops and rehearsals to dance, theater, music and cabaret, it offers its floor to a local and global network of artists from dawn to well past dusk. Great shows are on the venue's calendar all season long, but Oct. 2-3 the grind will be put on hold for 30 consecutive hours of performance and partying. For a detailed schedule, call 773-281-0824 or visit linkshall.org.

—**Miami City Ballet, Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, Oct. 2-4:** George Balanchine's American reimagining of ballet has spawned a regiment of companies and each gives his legacy a different spin. Since 1985,



Mikhail Baryshnikov (right) and Ana Laguna. Photo by Bengt Wanselius

Miami City Ballet have put the most daring and athletic aspects of his choreography up front. Artistic Director Edward Villella, the boxer who became a Balanchine star in the '60s, has chosen "Symphony in Three Movements" and the earlier of two Valse Fantaisies to represent his mentor; extending the show in both historical directions are Swan Lake's smoldering Black Swan Pas de Deux and Twyla Tharp's "In the Upper Room." \$30-89 at 800-982-2787 or ticketmaster.com/auditorium

—**Luna Negra Dance Theater, Harris Theater for Music and Dance, Oct. 9-10:** Live music from pianist and Ravinia CEO Welz Kauffman, singers Michelle Areyzaga and Paul Corona, and Grammy winners Turtle Island Quartet and Paquito D'Rivera are just a few enticements to attend Luna Negra's 10th Anniversary gala on Oct. 9; the other reason is this company's stable of dancers and endless reserve of energy, which you can also see on a regular program the following night. Tickets are \$25-55; visit www.harristheaterchicago.org or call 312-337-6882 for more information.

—**Hedwig Dances:** Also celebrating a birthday—its 25th—is Hedwig Dances, whose members are working in multiple media over the next few months with a two-day, free festival of dance cinema Oct. 13-14, an engagement at Links Hall Oct. 23-25, and the premiere of Artistic Director Jan Bartoszek's film "Arch of Repose" at the Music Box Nov. 11. Pick up the details at hedwigdances.com.

—**Joffrey Ballet, Auditorium Theatre at Roosevelt University, Oct. 14-25:** An evening-length Othello by Lar Lubovitch opens the Joffrey's season with music by Eliot Goldenthal, an Oscar-winning composer who scored this summer's Public Enemies. The ballet is receiving its Chicago premiere from the company—it originated at American Ballet Theatre in 1997—giving our balletomanes a chance to weigh in on Lubovitch's polarizing depiction of Shakespeare's Moor of Venice. \$25-145 at 312-739-0120 and www.joffrey.com

—**Lucinda Childs: DANCE, Museum of Contemporary Art, Oct. 15-17:** The amazing complexity of this stage piece, which synchronizes a film by conceptual artist Sol LeWitt with live dancers visible through the scrim it's projected upon, has been painstakingly rebuilt. It visits the MCA over a weekend also including its annual gala and a solo piano performance by Philip Glass, who created the score for DANCE's 1979 premiere. \$40; details at www.mcachicago.org

—**Lucky Plush Productions, The Dance Center of Columbia College, Oct. 22-31:** Choreographer Julia Rhoads is marking her multidisciplinary company's first decade with a new work, "Punk Yankees," which mines Lucky Plush's rich repertory and research into the issues of authorship and authenticity erupting not just around dance, but all forms of art. Tickets are \$24; call 312-369-8330 or visit www.colum.edu/dance-center. Visit www.stealthisdance.com for more on the process behind the piece.

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THEATER REVIEW

Rollin' Outta Here Naked

Playwrights: Logan Conner, Keith Emroll, Michael Kunc and the ensemble
At: Vaudezilla at Gorilla Tango Theatre, 1919 N. Milwaukee
Phone: 773-598-4549; \$15
Runs through Sept. 26

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Straight men who are obsessive fans of The Big Lebowski will be in hog heaven with Vaudezilla's burlesque show Rollin' Outta Here Naked. But if you've seen Joel and Ethan Coen's 1998 cult-classic film, you'll be surprised at how there is something for everyone in this witty burlesque take-off.

Vaudezilla reaches back to burlesque's roots by spoofing The Big Lebowski with a series of comic sketches and celebratory strip numbers (which are more of an homage than a spoof).

If you've never seen The Big Lebowski (and you must in order to understand anything that



Rollin' Outta Here Naked. Photo by Oomphotography.com

happens in Rollin' Outta Here Naked), it's essentially a *film noir* comedy. But instead of using a hard-boiled L.A. gumshoe, the Coens utilized an aging stoner hippie (who goes by the moniker of "The Dude") to encounter all the weird and nefarious *noir* types.

Vaudezilla doesn't offer a coherent storyline, but fans of the film will get a kick at the show's sketches. Writers Keith Emroll, Logan Conner

and Michael Kunc (the latter two, respectively, double as "The Dude" and the assistant Brandt) depict scenes that are not in the film. For example, we get to see a hilarious scene where The Dude and his buddies order at In-N-Out Burger.

These scenes could be different from the film due to concerns about copyright infringement. But they ultimately show how Vaudezilla isn't just going to parrot the screenplay's best lines.

But what makes Rollin' Outta Here Naked truly brilliant is the time and effort that has gone into the strip numbers. All the artists involved (costumers, choreographers and the performers) have done their homework and crafted ingenious film-inspired routines and outfits right down to the pasties and G-strings.

Fans of drag kings will be sure to get a kick out of "Maria May I's" lascivious take on John Turturro's bearded pedophile bowler Jesus Quintana. Equally fun is "Wham Bam Pam's" military take on the Vietnam veteran Walter (complete with beard and fat padding to emulate actor John Goodman).

On the femme side, "Red Hot Annie" is hilarious and such a tease playing Julianne Moore's feminist conceptual artist. "Donna Touch" is also wonderful as the ditzy porn star wife Bunny.

And don't inform on "Bonny Bads" to Peta, since her extremely clever take on the castrating German nihilists incorporates a real ferret into her routine.

For gay men and straight women, Rollin' Outta Here Naked will be all about the costumes and comedy. Lesbians and straight guys will get the extra titillation from all the lovely female flesh.

But, really, Rollin' Outta Here Naked is for anyone who has ever enjoyed The Big Lebowski. Vaudezilla's burlesque is loads of quirky fun.

FEATS from page 16

—Gus Giordano Jazz Dance Chicago (GJDC), Harris Theater for Music and Dance, Oct. 23-24: Philadelphia-based company Rennie Harris Puremovement is a beloved and critically-acclaimed group that consistently exercises the full potential of hip-hop dance theater. GJDC is originating a new work by Harris for its fall series, MOVE!, that will be presented alongside a broad variety of premieres and favorites. \$15-60 at 312-334-7777 or www.harristheaterchicago.org

—Anna Halprin/Anne Collod & guests, MCA, Nov. 5, 7-8: Anna Halprin's busy and beautiful Parades & Changes shocked and energized the New York dance world on which it dropped in 1965; Anne Collod is a French choreographer who for some time has been cherry-picking modern masterpieces to keep alive through meticulous reconstructions. Their cooperative revival "parades & changes, replays" is a project marrying past and present in the eternal spirit of creativity—don't miss it. \$25 at 312-397-4010 or www.mcachicago.org

—River North Chicago Dance Company, Harris Theater for Music and Dance, Nov. 7: Yet another anniversary, River North's 20th, kicks off with Artistic Director Frank Chaves' repackaging of company calling card "Reality of a Dreamer" with Sherry Zunker, his former creative partner turned entertainment industry mastermind. Monique Haley's unapologetically carefree (and lovely) "Uhuru" also returns, along with other works. \$30-65 at www.harristheaterchicago.org or call 312-337-6882

—Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet, Auditorium Theatre at Roosevelt University, Nov. 14-15: Hubbard Street fans should take note of this New York troupe's first Chicago appearance under Benoit-Swan Pouffer's stewardship. Its generous and brave artists will bring work by Crystal Pite, Didi Veldman and Jo Stromgren—powerhouse dancemakers all—to the Auditorium's vast stage.

These shows merely scratch the surface of all that's going on this autumn. Some you'll hear more about in future issues include:

—Peter Carpenter's My Fellow Americans, Hamlin Park Fieldhouse Theater, Oct. 8-9 and 15-16

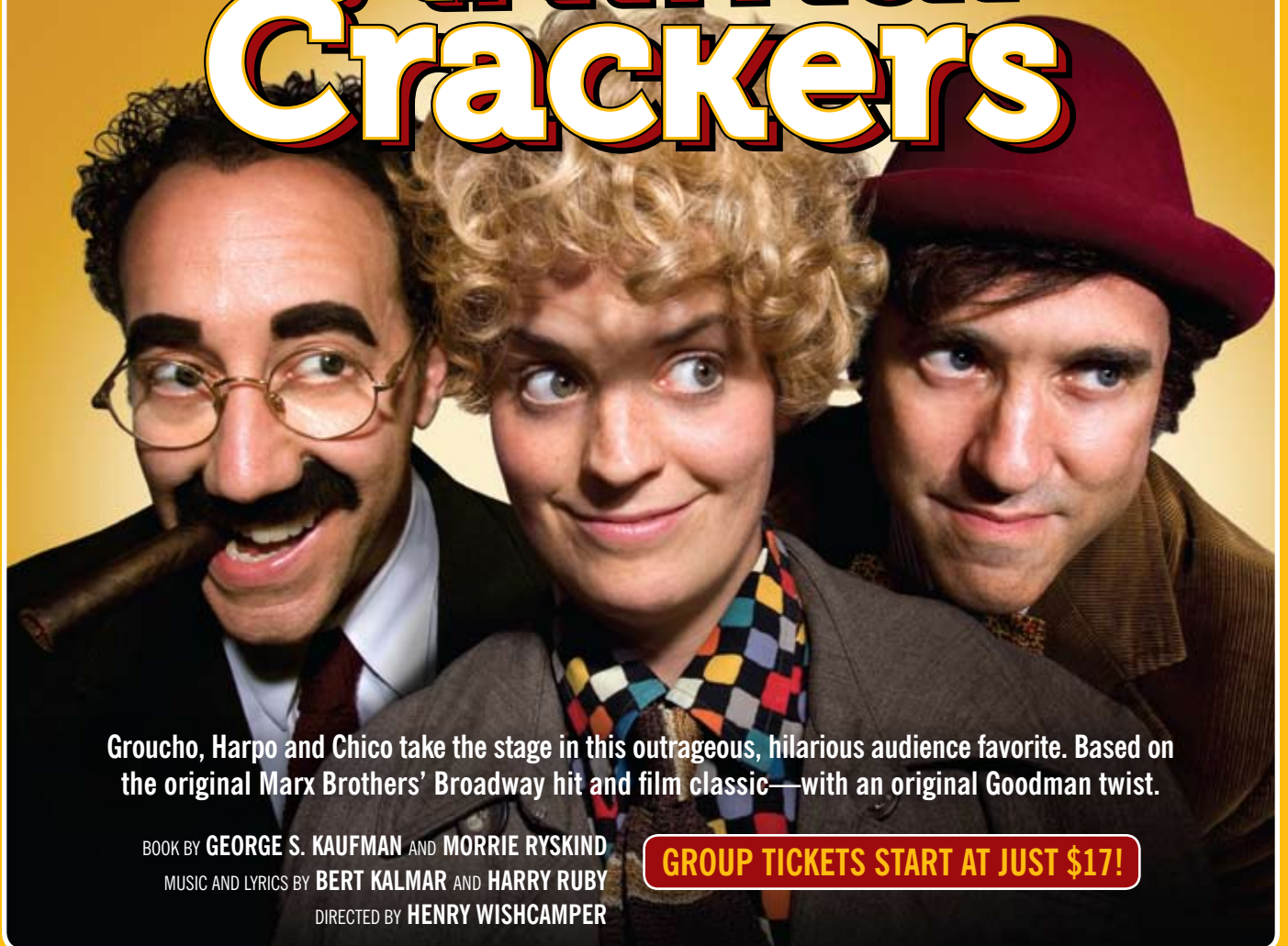
—Winifred Haun & Dancers, Ruth Page Center for the Arts, Oct. 9-10

—Molly Shanahan/Mad Shak, Alverno College, Milwaukee, Oct. 24

—Same Planet Different World Dance Theatre, Links Hall, Nov. 19-21

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The Night Season. Photo by Craig Choma

THEATER REVIEW

The Night Season

Playwright: Rebecca Lenkiewicz

At: Vitalist Theatre at the Theatre Building, 1225 W. Belmont

Phone: 773-327-5252;

\$25-\$20 seniors, students

Runs through: Oct. 17

BY CATEY SULLIVAN

If we had to pick a least-favorite stereotype from among the (oh, so very) many that litter the theatrical landscape, the adorable yet irascible/wise yet kooky/fiercely independent yet childishly needy senior citizen would be near the top. You know this tired caricature: She's the cute-as-a-button oldster whose willful eccentricity is actually rich in warm-hearted wisdom. In this elder wise fool's headstrong ways are life lessons that the story's unhappily clueless younger folk could benefit from, if only they'd open their callow eyes to the radiant enlightenment grandma

has to offer—before it's too late.

To spend two-plus hours traffic on the stage with such a woman is to drown preciousness and twee. And that's precisely what defines Vitalist Theatre's Night Season. Directed by Elizabeth Carlin Metz, this is a rambling, sense-defying exercise in Emerald Isle sentiment and stereotype.

The dramaturgy explains that The Night Season is rooted in the turbulent romance between Maud Gonne and William Butler Yeats—not that you'd discern that from watching the thing unfold on stage. Rebecca Lenkiewicz's messy, genre-spanning dramatic tragic-comedy plays more like an exercise for beginning thespians in Emoting 101. In a plot that lacks both lucid form and organic development, everybody on stage gets to indulge in major actorly moments, crying out in loneliness, laughing with wild abandon and/or stumbling drunkenly through an existential heartbreak or three.

All of which might be tolerable if the characters at hand were rooted in anything resembling authenticity. They are not and do not.



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Eric Simonson

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In 1914, renowned mystery writer Sir Arthur Conan Doyle invites four guests to his English country home. Each visitor has a connection to the infamous Piltown Man, purported to be the missing link between ape and man—or is it all a big hoax? Swinging back and forth through time, *Fake* confronts the mysteries of the human condition: the tensions between science and religion, logic and mystery...and doubt and faith.

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Amid a set inexplicably framed by doors stacked from floor to fly space, we meet three Irish sisters (Hello Chekhov!), their drunken Irish Da (who likes to quote—wait for it—King Lear) and the movie star shooting a film about—but of course—Yeats.

The narrative sprawls like a jellyfish that can't quite control the direction of its ooze: By the time plucky, 70-going-on-six grandma (costumed in preciously nonconformist layers of woolens) starts waltzing on the beach (and, of course, teaching the youngsters a thing or two about *joie de vivre* in the process), we'd long since stopped caring about any number of dead-end narrative threads. A prime reason not to care is the lack of narrative sense on display. Why, for example, does the movie star move in with the sisters for the length of his film shoot? Because the plot requires it, that's why. He sleeps with one sister. He stops sleeping with her. Fraught monologues ensue. And we should care, why?

In all, audiences would be better off renting Finian's Rainbow. At least that show doesn't pretend to be anything other than the treacle that it is.

THEATER REVIEW

The Wild Party

Playwright: adapted by Isaiah Robinson

from the poem by Joseph Moncure March

At: Silent Theatre Company at

Prop Thtr, 3504 N. Elston

Phone: 773-544-1749; \$15

Runs through: Oct. 2

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

One steamy summer night, two small-time vaudeville entertainers dwelling in the city's bohemian quarter during the Jazz Age—the “sexually ambitious” Queenie and her ill-tempered paramour, Burrs—decide to have a party. Their guests are the people we expect to find at such events, doing the sort of thing such people do, until tragedy strikes, as it invariably does in parables of this kind.

In another age, this romanticized portrait of tawdry “fast-life” fringe society would have been circulated on broadsides, titled something along the lines of “A Sadde Tayle of Jealousie.” In our own century, it has inspired two musicals, a movie and countless popular songs. But what led Joseph Moncure March's ballad-length poem to be banned in several cities upon its publication in 1928 was its explicit descriptions of its lurid milieu: An “ambisextrous” soft-shoe dancer, say, or the femme fatale whom, “Women adored her/Less often, a man/and the more fool, he/She was Les-bi-an.” And don't forget our author's blatant announcement of the moment when “the party began to reek of sex.”

For this multidiscipline performance piece, the Silent Theatre Company departs from the early cinema reproduction that is its stock-in-trade. Instead, Isaiah Robinson recites Moncure's rhy-

CRITICS' PICS

Alas! Alack! Zorro's Back, Quest Theatre Ensemble, through Sept. 27. This melodrama features messy makeup, over-the-top acting and a script that should be used to wrap hamburgers. But that's exactly what is needed for this family-friendly show that embraces all the simplicities and silliness of the genre. SCM

All My Sons, TimeLine Theatre at Greenhouse Theater Center, through Oct. 4. An extraordinary production that illustrates why—in a just world—TimeLine would be able to purchase the Greenhouse Theatre Center. With the possibility of infinite extensions, the company would be unstoppable. CS

The History Boys, Timeline Theatre, through Sept. 27. The term can't last forever, so don't wait any longer to meet the prep school lads and professors ready to teach you everything you ever needed to know about educational opportunities and upward mobility in England during the 1980s. MSB

The Light in the Piazza, Marriott Theatre, through Sept. 20. Adam Guettel's passionate score embraces opera but never strays far from Broadway in this version of the tale of young love in 1950's Italy and the parents who must mediate. Wonderful cast! JA

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge
Morgan and Sullivan

ing couplets, voicing both omniscient narrator and all speaking characters, while accompanying himself on piano from a corner of the stage. As he does so—playfully breaking with text on occasion to remind us, for example, that “gay” Mae is “not ho-mo-sexual gay, but 1920s gay, which meant she was happy!”—the actors parade the various characters in vivid detail, replete with a visual sensuality that lends the requisite sweat to such observations as “Some love is fire/Some is rust/But the fiercest, cleanest love is lust.”

Lindsay Marks (aka Lady Jack) delivers a charming and charismatic performance as the statuesque Queenie—besides directing her fellow players in some razzle-dazzle hoofing—while Dan Howard embodies a suitably smoldering Burrs and Bryson Engelen acquires himself admirably as the slumming rich boy whose chivalry determines their fates. But it's the company's ensemble execution, with every aspect and every actor firmly focused in the scene—whether tangled in a writhing orgasmic knot on a studio couch, or cheering on a bout of fisticuffs—that upon the evening's conclusion, awakens (almost immediately) a desire to experience the whole 90 minutes a second time.




The Wild Party.

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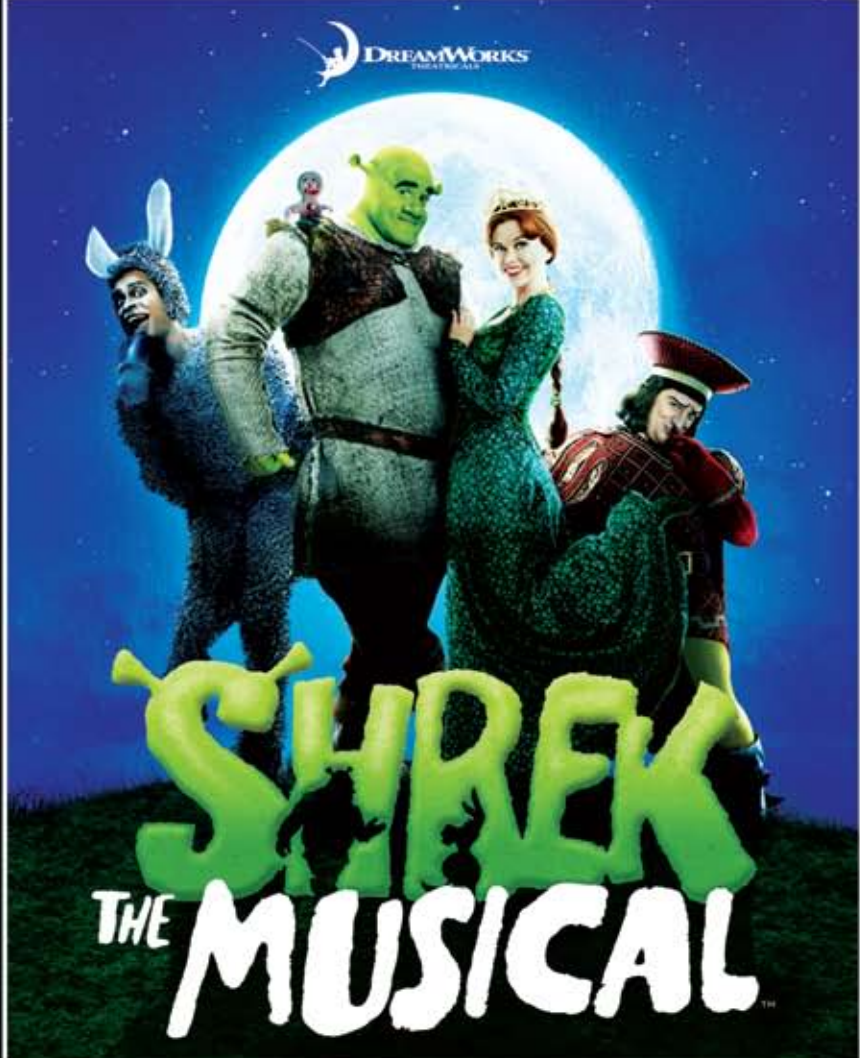
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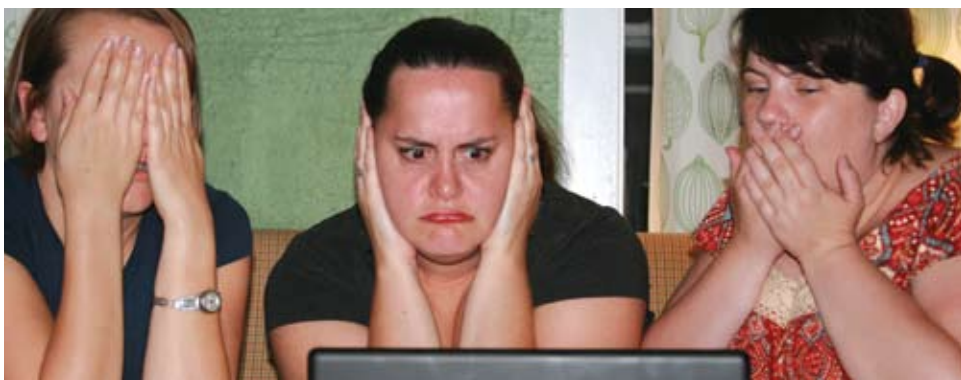
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My Life with Craig. Photo by Liz Goodson

THEATER REVIEW

My Life with Craig

Playwright: Sadie Pfannkuche, Amy Sumpter and Kendra Stevens
At: Stockyards Theatre Project at Ginger's Ale House, 3801 N. Ashland
Phone: 773-936-7896; \$10
Runs through: Sept. 19

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

If you've never availed yourself of the online marketplace known as Craigslist (I haven't), you won't be likely to do so after hearing the personae of The Unmentionables—a mousy librarian enamored of cuddly sex seeking like-minded partners, an apartment-renter searching for a roommate and a cautious young lady who shuns the service altogether—relate their Alice-like adventures in that particular cyberWonderland.

What distinguishes well-crafted monologues from simple girlish confidences (or—spilling gut being a gender-neutral pastime—good-ol'-boy bull sessions) is the degree to which the speaker addresses audience members who may be uninitiated in the experiences they propose to share. Illustrating this principal is Amy Sumpter's lec-

ture on efficient procedures for interviewing potential cohabitants, which speaks to both the internet novice and the carpal-tunnel veteran by being written largely in the second person—e.g., “you” do this or that—with only occasional forays into personal reminiscence, and delivered in the listen-up-this-is-for-your-own-good tones of a drill instructor.

Sadie Pfannkuche's recitation of provocative e-mail headlines and her evaluation thereof in the course of her trawl for a touchy-feely quickie, on the other hand, not only covers a topic already discussed, deconstructed and dissed *ad nauseam*, but her decision to acquaint us with her stratagems while dressed in a kewpie-doll dress and hair-bow, enhanced at one point by an onstage hair-restyling into even more babyish pigtails, lends an unintentionally creepy edge to her autopedophilic fantasies. Kendra Stevens, by contrast, is wholly unconcerned with her audience's level of empathy, since her case for *not* using Craigslist is based in a fundamental fear of strangers. To someone for whom a ride along a bicycle path is fraught with risk generated by homicidally negligent fellow citizens, the prospect of inviting the attention of anonymous predators is unthinkable.

The popular specter of the—eek!—faceless-psycho killer is invoked a little too frequently, pushing the evening dangerously close to slum-

SPOTLIGHT



A young British sculptor's artistic future and love life get thrown into hilarious disarray when a blown fuse plunges his London flat into darkness (but in full view of the audience) in Peter Shaffer's critically acclaimed 1965 farce **Black Comedy**. Piccolo Theatre revives this one-act vehicle (which provided the 1967 Broadway debuts of Michael Crawford and Lynn Redgrave) alongside a series of sketches inspired and originated by the comics Dudley Moore, Peter Cook, Hugh Laurie and Stephen Fry. Black Comedy plays 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 3 p.m. Sundays until Oct. 31 at the Evanston Arts Depot, 600 Main, Evanston. Tickets are \$15-\$25; call 847-424-0089 or visit www.piccolotheatre.com. Photo courtesy of Piccolo Theatre

ber-party shiveries. But don't underestimate this trio (on their opening night, joined by burly-girl Paris Green, providing the curtain-raiser), appearing under the sponsorship of the Stockyards Theatre Project. Any performers willing to mount their show in a room flanked by soccer fans in full cheerleader mode boasts far more mettle than their confessions would have us believe.

THEATER REVIEW

Mistakes Were Made

Playwright: Craig Wright
At: A Red Orchid Theatre, 1531 N. Wells
Tickets: 312-943-8722;
www.aredorchidtheatre.org
Runs through: Oct. 18

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Ya' wanna' see acting? Beg, buy and borrow tickets to *Mistakes Were Made*, an arduous near-monologue featuring Michael Shannon in a dazzling display of contemporary histrionics. For those who've seen Shannon through the arc of his career—from riveting 20-year-old eccentric to commanding thirtysomething stage and screen presence (and still eccentric)—it's a thrilling return to his storefront Chicago ensemble home.

Playing 10-15 years older than he actually is, Shannon portrays theater producer Felix Artifex (meaning “happy artist”), who is on the verge of producing a big Broadway world premiere about the French Revolution with an A-list Hollywood star or two. Felix's office—with no air conditioner—indicates he's seen better days (Tom Burch, scenic design), yet he still has the clout to put movie stars on hold. As Felix works the phone, his deal comes thisclose (sic) to triumph, only to collapse under the increasing weight of his lies, shadings and hedging. Meanwhile, his money goes south in an abortive international scheme involving sheep dip—I kid you not—in Iraq.

Craig Wright's cagey, funny, driving and compelling play is 12-15 minutes longer than it needs to be—hey, it's a new work—but the language is rich. Wright's poetic screeds and vivid invective are more colorful than Mamet's because Wright goes beyond four-letter words (although there are plenty). Felix is “the guy who cast Suzanne Somers as Medea. This was before the Internet, when having an opinion still mattered.” How can you not sympathize with a man who describes a Broadway show as a “razor-edged pyramid balancing on my eyeballs?” Or calls up the image of “an origami Winchester Cathedral?”

Shannon flatters, cajoles, sweet-talks, pleads, browbeats and abuses the various folks at the other end of his multi-line phone as his world melts down. Not for a moment do Shannon's

one-sided phone conversations sound false or forced, thanks to Wright's astute script and Shannon's delivery. The audience always intuits the words and emotions of the unheard speaker at the other end. As directed by Dexter Bullard, Shannon is cucumber-cool, unrushed and unforced at first, calmly choosing which phone line to answer and what attitude to take. Before our eyes, we see panic grab Felix by the balls and desperation fever his thoughts. We sympathize with Felix as he compromises his own passionate good intentions because he ruins it for himself more than for anyone else.

Wright's plays often are directly or indirectly political. Here, Wright shadows the Iraq War, as the title suggests. Felix producing a Broadway play is like the U.S. going into Iraq without a Plan B or exit strategy, justified by an ever-heavier net of lies, and denying responsibility for collateral damage (the sheep dip fiasco). But leave politics to me; just go for Shannon's performance.

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Jeff Awards Oct. 19

The 41st Annual Jeff Awards ceremony—which honors excellence in professional theatre produced in the immediate Chicago area—will be held on Monday, Oct. 19, at the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts, 9501 Skokie, Skokie.

A pre-show appetizer buffet will take place 6-7:30 p.m., and the awards ceremony begins at 7:30 p.m. Advance purchase tickets, which include the ceremony and the pre-show buffet, are \$75 (\$55 for members of Actors' Equity Association, United Scenic Artists, Stage Directors and Choreographers Society and The Dramatists Guild of America). See www.JeffAwards.org.

Apple tree suddenly closes

The board of directors for Highland Park's Apple Tree Theatre (ATT) and Eileen Boevers Performing Arts Workshop have announced that after 26 years of award-winning theatrical productions and providing 40 years of educational programming to thousands of North Shore students, it is closing its doors, effective immediately, according to a press release.

The release also stated, “The decision to close was not made without a great deal of soul searching, and only after exhaustive efforts to explore every possible avenue of financial support. ATT wanted to keep the doors open and the wonderful services and traditions alive. But it was not possible. Like many not-for-profit performing arts organizations in America, ATT is heavily dependent upon public giving and financial support.”

KNIGHT AT THE MOVIES

The Wizard of Oz at 70; ...Meatballs; 9; Film note

BY RICHARD KNIGHT, JR.

MGM's 1939 motion-picture adaptation of the beloved children's book *The Wizard of Oz* is turning 70. To celebrate the anniversary of this unassailable classic (that film critic Pauline Kael once described as being "nearly critic proof") Warner Home Video is presenting a newly restored, hi-def version of the movie in theatres one night only Wed., Sept. 23 (wizarDOFoz.fathomevents.com). This visually stunning, restored 70th-anniversary version will then be available (in both standard and Blu-ray formats) on Tuesday, Sept. 29, in a two- or four-disc version (with 16 hours of bonus footage!) that Warners is dubbing the "Ultimate Collector's Edition."

The fuss over the anniversary of *The Wizard of Oz* is understandable for a variety of reasons—historical as well as commercial—and it's a celebration that will certainly resonate with Our People. The movie and Judy Garland's performance in the title role have influenced the older segment of the gay community, and Dorothy's story—her "outsider" status in barren, bland Kansas, where no one understands her, her immediate acceptance by a host of other outsiders, etc.—has long entered the fabric of the lives of everyone in the LGBT family.

MGM's film version is literally a part of gay history. Asking if someone was a "friend of Dorothy" was a way for gays to safely seek out their own kind or discuss their betters in mixed sexual company without fear of reprisal. Historians date this coded slang term back as early as WWII. The euphemism is still commonly used on cruise ships (talk about irony!) in their lists of daily activities as a discreet way for LGBT passengers to meet socially.

It's not just the 1939 film but the familiar and influential Oz story itself that continues to hold queer audiences in thrall. Out writer Gregory Maguire's best-selling novel *Wicked* led to the phenomenally successful stage musical (with a score by out composer/lyrics Stephen Schwartz, to boot) that is now being adapted into a film. The story of Dorothy and friends has inspired many other queer artists—from Rufus Wainwright's heartfelt rendition of "Over the Rainbow" to Geoff Ryman's intricate novel "Was" to Alan Cumming's performance in *Tin Man*, the Syfy (formerly Sci Fi) channel's award-winning miniseries.

So what kind of impact has *The Wizard of Oz* had on the life of this queer film critic? I'm not sure I can ever put into words the powerful spell that the movie has cast—and continues to hold—over me. I can only write that after having seen literally thousands of movies it remains my unequivocal favorite and that I've told my husband that when I die my memorial service should conclude with a screening of the movie—or I will haunt him from Oz!

Two other fantasy films, both animated and both pitched at kids of all ages, are aiming for some of that Oz immortality. Although neither



The
Wizard
of Oz.

Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs, which opens Sept. 18, nor the postapocalyptic *9*, which is already in theaters, has much hope of attaining such a lofty reputation, both are delightful entertainments. *Cloudy*, in particular (which like *Oz*, was adapted from a bestselling children's book), is a laugh-out-loud winner.

It's the story of Flint (voiced by SNL's Bill Hader), an intrepid young scientist who struggles to win acceptance from his father and thinks when he invents a machine that dispenses cheeseburgers, ice cream and other kid-friendly foods from above, that he'll finally get it. Instead, Flint and his fellow citizens, who are counting on him to restore their economy with his invention, get more food than even a glutton could wish for.

The movie, which has a lot of delightful repeat gags, has the look, feel and tongue-in-cheek humor of Pixar's *The Incredibles* but comes from Sony's animation division, is wonderfully inspired and will probably be anathema only to vegetarians.

9, on the other hand, while equally visually inventive (it's perhaps the first animated steampunk film) is less solidly a kids' movie. The rage-against-the-machine story follows a group of nine tiny rag dolls with mechanical parts (called stitchpunks) who wander around a postapocalyptic world. (The Brothers Quay are an obvious influence on writer-director-animator Chris Acker.) Plucky #9 (voiced by Elijah Wood), the sweet-voiced new member of the group, decides to fight back against the big red-eyed machine (reminiscent of Sauron, the dark lord in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy) that is trying to destroy him and his fellow stitchpunks.

The movie has breathtaking visual sequences but is a little too familiar and thin in plot and character department to elevate it much beyond its animated forebears, although it does have one achingly sweet moment. This is when the stitchpunks, in a triumphant moment, find a Victrola that plays a scratchy recording of Judy Garland singing "Over the Rainbow." As Judy's impossibly lush voice wafts out over the post-

industrial junkyard that Earth has become in this calamitous vision of the future, it's a bit comforting to think that even in a devastated world devoid of mankind, something hopeful that the masterful *Wizard of Oz* inspired will endure.

Film note:

Queer Cinema 102, a five-film event with local gay film critics that focuses on offbeat camp "classics"—the horrible, the perverse, the hilarious and the fabulously bad—continues Monday, Sept. 21, with *Desperate Living*, John Waters' hilarious 1977 lesbian camp crime thriller with Mink Stole; Edie Massey; the 300-pound Jean Hill; stripper Liz Renay; and a host of other "sexual deviants" and outcasts. The screening, hosted by Chicago Free Press film critic Gregg Shapiro, 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 an audience Q&A will follow the screening. HannahFree.com is helping to sponsor the series. Further information is at www.queerfilmsociety.org.

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

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Gless takes charge on 'Hannah Free'

BY JORJET HARPER

In November 2008, Emmy-award-winning actress Sharon Gless came to Chicago to star in a low-budget independent film called *Hannah Free*, produced by her friend, acclaimed Chicago lesbian dramatist Claudia Allen, and journalist Tracy Baim.

Gless is well known for her roles on Showtime's *Queer As Folk*, FX Network's *Nip/Tuck*, and for the BBC action miniseries *The State Within*, but she is perhaps still best known for her seven-year starring role, from 1982 to 1988, as Detective Christine Cagney in the police drama *Cagney & Lacey*, the first television drama series ever to feature two females as lead roles. On *Queer As Folk*, Gless played proud PFLAG mom Debbie Novotny, but to the delight of her legions of GLBT fans, in *Hannah Free* she would be starring in her first out lesbian role.

At the time, Gless had just concluded shooting the third season of the TV action adventure series *Burn Notice*, a USA network hit. Gless went from filming the glamorous big budget Miami-set spy drama to starring in a deeply personal, intimate story dealing with issues of aging and lesbian relationships.

Gless has strong feelings about *Hannah Free* and was eager to take on the title role. "*Hannah Free* is a very unusual, very intimate story—and it's a story that really needs to be told," said Gless. "And I think for everybody who worked on it, it was a labor of love. Nobody's in it to get rich. In fact, a third of the people working on the film did it gratis. It's very touching, and it's worth it. I've always believed that for an actor, your initial intention is to entertain. But if you can educate also, that's a really nice thing."

Gless was also impressed at how smoothly the shooting went: "We were working in very,

very small rooms, and nobody got on anybody's nerves; each department let the other one do their job. The more the filming went on, the more I felt it—there was a lot of respect, as everyone saw the story unfold. And we were working under very severe conditions: we only had three weeks to do this whole feature in."

"I started my career late," recalled Gless. "I worked behind the camera for years, and didn't even admit that I wanted to be an actress until I was 26." Once she set her sights on that goal, however, it didn't take long for her to be noticed. By the following year, 1972, she had signed a long-term contract with Universal Studios. At that time Universal was the largest television studio in the world, and as a contract player Gless guest-starred on many popular shows of the day, including *McCloud* and *Emergency*, landed a recurring role on *Marcus Welby*, and also appeared in miniseries and TV movies. She starred in a series called *Faraday and Company*, and appeared on *Switch* for three years alongside Robert Wagner and Eddie Albert. Then the studio system was dissolved and, she said, "I walked into *Cagney & Lacey*, and it change my life and my career."

"*Cagney & Lacey* was a groundbreaking show, but we didn't know it at the time. I don't think we had any idea that it would become what it became. It was enormous, and it was quite heady to be part of it." Gless and her co-star Tyne Daly, between them, won the Emmy for Best Lead Actress in a Drama for six years in a row—a record that is still unbroken not just for dramas but for a show in any major awards category.

With two women stars, *Cagney & Lacey* had a huge fan base among lesbians. "The lesbian following was quite extraordinary," said Gless. "Judging from the mail, it was *Cagney's* character that attracted the lesbian audience, and



Sharon Gless in *Hannah Free*. Photo by Hal Baim

I'm so grateful. The gay community has kept me going, all my career, since then. I think *Cagney* is still the best, most complicated woman ever written for television. She was troubled, she had attitude, and she was boyish. I insisted that all my jackets come from men's stores. It wasn't intentional to attract the gay and lesbian audience, it just did. And I enjoyed that, it was fun for me. But it wasn't planned that way."

Some years after her popular successes, Gless found that the choice TV offers had dwindled. "I started doing theatre. I hit 50 years old, I went into menopause, I quit smoking, and put on sixty pounds. So nobody was really interested in hiring me." One of the stage plays Gless did was in Chicago at Victory Gardens, in Claudia Allen's *Cahoots*. She also met drama coach and agent Peter Forrester, who sent her a script, saying, "You're perfect for this part." When Gless read it, she recalls, "Well, I flipped." It was the part of waitress and PFLAG mom Debbie Novotny in *Queer As Folk*. "It was so daring I knew it was going to be trouble, and I love trouble. I got the job." As a result, Gless's career again went into high gear. "It changed my life. And since *Queer As Folk*, I haven't stopped working."

Respect for the work of Claudia Allen was the main reason for Gless's participation in *Hannah Free*. "I've had the great pleasure of doing Claudia Allen's work in three different forms," Gless recalled during filming. "In 1994, Tyne Daly and I did *Deed of Trust* for radio here in Chicago. Then in 2000, Claudia invited me to come do *Cahoots* on stage. And now here I am doing *Hannah Free* on film. I love *Hannah*," says Gless. "She isn't anything like Christine Cagney but she's got the same feistiness, the same independence, and a little immaturity. She's a tough one, but there's a sadness to her that appeals to me. I love that she traveled all over the world, but she'd always come home to Rachel. I love the fight in her—and that's really what this story is about. It's about the whole lifetime of these women, from the time they're ten years old, but the thrust of it is *Hannah's* fight to get into the room to be able to say goodbye to the love of her life. And the daughter won't let her in."

Gless pointed to *Hannah Free's* relevance to the issue of Proposition 8, which forbidding gay marriage, but added, "Claudia wrote this years and years ago, before any of this was an issue on the political forefront. It's amazing that, tragically, Proposition 8 passed in three states while we were shooting *Hannah Free*, which is a little piece of that story. But it's more than that, too; it's a love story. And I do believe love wins."

Gless remains a featured actress in *Burn Notice*, which has been renewed for a fourth season. The first season of *Cagney & Lacey* (1982) has been released on DVD and is also sometimes

shown on classic television channels. So viewers are able to see Gless not only in her current role as Madeline Westin, the mother of Jeffrey Donovan's "burned" ex-spy character, but in her quintessential, Emmy-winning role of Christine Cagney. And now, they can discover yet another facet of Gless's extraordinary, versatile talent, as the witty, cantankerous and moving lesbian character *Hannah Free*.

Hannah Free will have a one-week limited engagement in Chicago Sept. 25-Oct. 1 at the Gene Siskel Film Center of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 164 N. State. Tickets to each screening are \$10/general admission. Other ticket prices are \$7/student and \$5/Film Center members. All tickets may be purchased at the Film Center Box Office, 164 N. State St. Both general admission and Film Center member tickets are available through Ticketmaster, 800-982-2787, www.ticketmaster.com, and all Ticketmaster outlets. The Film Center and its Box Office are open 5-9 p.m., Monday-Friday; 2-9 p.m., Saturday; and 2-6 p.m., Sunday. For more information about the Film Center, call 312-846-2800 (24-hour movie hotline) or 312-846-2600 (general information, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday), or visit www.siskelfilmcenter.org. A special 7 p.m. Sat., Sept. 26 show will feature Sharon Gless and the cast and crew, followed by a gala; tickets are \$100 and can only be purchased by emailing info@hannahfree.com or call 773-387-2394.

Jorjet Harper was an extra in *Hannah Free*, and some of her paintings can be seen in the film.

Wendy Jo Carlton: 'Free' and the mystery of love

BY JORJET HARPER

Independent feature *Hannah Free*, filmed in Chicago in November 2008, held its gala worldwide premiere in San Francisco on the evening Pride Day 2009, to an enthusiastic, sold-out crowd. *Hannah Free* is about a lifelong lesbian love, based on the popular play by Claudia Allen. Rosie O'Donnell was on hand to introduce the film and, after the screening, the film's star, Sharon Gless, answered questions from the audience. She was joined onstage by screenwriter Allen, executive producer Tracy Baim, other principal cast members, and *Hannah Free's* director, Wendy Jo Carlton. Recently Carlton spoke with WCT about the making of the film.

Jorjet Harper: How did you get involved in the *Hannah Free* film project?

Wendy Jo Carlton: I've been an independent filmmaker for about 20 years, and have written and directed many shorts in different genres—narrative, comedy, documentary—that have screened in festivals on television and I also have a couple screenplays under my belt. I came to direct *Hannah Free* because I had worked with Tracy Baim, the executive producer, on a couple other projects, the *Chicago Gay Games* DVD, and recently the living library that is the *Chicago Gay History Project*. (www.chicagogayhistory.com). In the course of interviewing hundreds of LGBT folks in the area, I met the playwright Claudia Allen and then the three of us, Tracy, Claudia, and I, decided to make a lesbian feature film in Chicago, adapting *Hannah Free*, one of Claudia's popular plays.

JH: As the director, what was the experi-
See next page

boom

By Peter Sinn Nachtrieb

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Hannah Free director Wendy Jo Carlton.

ence of making Hannah Free like for you?

WJC: Directing Hannah Free was a bit like going to a carnival at night. It's exciting and and then overwhelming, and at first you the impulse is to go on all the rides and play all the games. But then you realize you have to be home by midnight and you don't have enough money anyway. So it becomes clear what really matters to you are the water rides, the dart games, the bumper cars and the corn dogs. Later on you forget about the tummy ache or the argument over who gets to drive on the way back, and instead you remember how colorful it was, how great the warm air felt on your bare skin, and how good it was to be on another adventure with your friends.

JH: What is the movie's central theme, in your view?

WJC: For me, Hannah Free is about the power and the mystery of love. And ultimately it's a triumph of the human spirit. Hannah herself is a sexy, real woman who also represents all the beautiful, brave queer women and men who've insisted on living their truth and loving who they are and whomever they want for as long as there have been human beings.

JH: What was it like to be directing a power actor like Sharon Gless?

WJC: I was intimidated, of course. I first time I called her, before she got to Chicago, I told her I was nervous because she has worked for so many years with many directors. I had a crib sheet on my desk with notes for me to remember while talking to her because I didn't want to sound too eager and of course I had business to discuss. But after she said hello, I introduced myself and blurted out that I was nervous. And Sharon said, "I don't want you to be nervous, but I tell you what, I'm pretty nervous too." Sharon was gracious and generous, on set and off.

JH: What, if any, difficulties did you encounter during filming?

WJC: This was an independent, low-budget film, and we had very little time from start to finish, which meant little room for mistakes regarding the cohesion and emotional arc of the story. There was a lot of pressure, and I knew I had to trust my instincts. I made a lot of creative decisions—whether it be casting, wardrobe, locations, camera movement or soundtrack—by trusting my gut, which was informed by my experience as a filmmaker for many years but also by close study of Claudia's great story.

JH: While you were directing, did you have some guiding principle or some goal as to how you wanted the film to be perceived?

WJC: It was important to me to portray Hannah and Rachel not just as young lovers but as older lovers as well, two women who share a deep emotional connection but also a passionate physical and sexual connection. And not to just imply that, but to show their attraction visually, cinematically. Most mainstream feature films don't show older couples sharing physical

affection and sexual attraction for one another. Whether they are straight or queer, we just don't see many older characters in bed together or see older people kissing and being sensual together onscreen. I think it's sexy and fun and life-affirming.

JH: Why do you think the relationship between these two women is so memorable?

WJC: Most long-term romantic relationships, regardless of orientation, wax and wane in the lust department. What's great about Hannah and Rachel is that theirs is the kind of great love affair that has sustained its passion and lust over decades, the kind of fantastic, enduring attraction and love that is celebrated and pined for in straight films all the time.

JH: If there is a political message embedded in the film, what do you think it is?

WJC: In addition to the story being about the letting go of someone we love, which we all experience at some point in life, I think the film really helps put a human face on the issue of equal rights and human rights for every U.S. citizen. The Proposition 8 that passed in California is unjust and wrong. It makes me very sad and upset that we live in a culture where people are allowed to vote on who should remain second-class citizens. If we allow majority votes on civil and basic human rights, women and Blacks still wouldn't have the right to vote.

JH: And what impact do you think the film will have, out in the world?

WJC: I hope the film continues to serve as a cultural force that can influence people, queer

or straight, young or old, to do the right thing when the time comes, whether that means putting someone else's needs before your own or refusing to go along with the dehumanizing of others, especially others who are different from you.

I think this film is very entertaining, sensual, and provocative as a story of a great love affair. It's universal and will engage viewers regardless of sexual orientation. Hannah is a dynamic, sexy, flawed, passionate human being and who can't relate to that? And Sharon Gless and the rest of the cast are such a pleasure to watch in every scene.

JH: Now that the film has premiered, do you have any further thoughts about its creation?

WJC: It was incredibly rewarding to work with such a great cast. The cast was the largest I've worked with in my career thus far, and they are all so talented and professional. So it pushed me as a director to not only have to decide what each scene meant to me at its core, but to also articulate that interpretation very clearly to the actors. I think being a good director also means listening to actors and working with them to create consistent emotional threads for their characters throughout the film.

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Jinx Titanic exits with a bang

BY DAVID BYRNE WITH TONY PEREGRIN

Jinx Titanic never ceases to amaze me. This year he released the country album *I Want Some Sun* under his real name, John Kamys. He also made a well-received documentary on Haiti called *Stirring Water*. Now the outspoken and devilishly handsome rocker is going out with a bang again with another send-off concert at Jackhammer, 6406 N. Clark, on Fri., Sept. 18, before he heads to Ireland for graduate school.

On a late summer morning I met Titanic for coffee. He was running late because he was researching which fireworks were illegal in Illinois. Even jaywalking in the Gold Coast simply wearing T-shirt and jeans, the burly showman commands attention. When Titanic speaks, he is feverishly passionate about his projects and hopes the audience shares his enthusiasm.

On the eve of waving goodbye once again, Titanic has his sights on a rebirth abroad: "I am hoping to start up the Irish version of *Super 8 Cum Shot*. I am not kidding, the guys already know. If you know any musicians in Ireland get in touch."

Last year with his then final concert, Titanic was collecting toiletries to bring along for a return trip to Haiti. This was tied in with the critically acclaimed documentary *Stirring Water*, which Kamys directed and scored.

Stirring Water (J'agite de l'eau) is moving. The archaic medical conditions and primitive schooling are captured here, but also are the country's beautiful landscape, delicious foods, arts, culture and pride. There is no narration or subtitles, so it gives a sense of life in the poorest country in the western hemisphere.

Translator and guide John Marc Bazil provides insights. Sadly, the "Haitian Sensation" was murdered six weeks after filming.

Stirring Water made its debut at the 11th Annual Washington D.C. Independent Film Festival earlier this year. "It played in the train station in Washington; it was really great. This is my first venture in filmmaking. The fact that it was accepted somewhere is really amazing," Titanic said.

The film's title originates from a Haitian proverb, "I stir water to make butter." The 15-minute

film will be available this fall at johnkamys.com.

100% Pure Class: The Very Best of Jinx Titanic & *Super 8 Cum Shot* is out now on iTunes and CD Baby. All of the songs from *Super 8 Cum Shot* Volume 1 & 2 are present, including the live favorite "Check Your Nuts." "Oops You're Dead!," "I Lied" and "Get out of My Bed" were newly recorded for this 23-song retrospective. They fit in perfectly.

A collection of rarities is on the horizon. Titanic added, "The band will come full circle with *Found in Trunk* (2009): *Good and Bad Demos*, *Live Junk & Oddities*. It is fun, it is all set to go. I am just waiting to get it on iTunes. It is 20 songs of all the stuff that did not fit on the records, including experiments like a hip hop mix of 'Trade' and an electronic version of 'I Love a Boy.'"

With a laugh, Titanic justified the bargain price of *Found in Trunk*: "It's cheap! It's only \$5.99 with 20 tracks on it. You can buy it and if you only like a few tracks you can throw out the ones you don't like."

Although Titanic is best known for his punk-cum-pop queer-party anthems like "Everybody Loves a Muscle Boi," *I Want Some Sun* shows a drastic change. Titanic's "There's a Porn Star Shining Down on Me" and a fantastic cover of "Trouble of the World" reveal soul in his vocals. But having the man behind Jinx Titanic record country music? The transition and the new theme are natural. Here, he is more Johnny Cash than Garth Brooks.

I Want Some Sun has been in the works for seven years. Kamys sounds broken down on "Is It Wonderful to See Me Again." But on the title track and "Sunflower," the backing vocals brings to chorus to a new level. Try not to find the similarities to Cash on "I'm Your Emergency." (The album can be previewed at www.myspace.com/johnkamys.)

Titanic cannot conceal hinting at a certain excitement brewing with the upcoming *Back to School Show*. "We haven't played 'Oh Daddy' for like 3 years. Yes, we are pulling out the good stuff. Also we are going to premier the Jinx Titanic karaoke videos for "You Make Me Wanna Cum," "Everybody Here Wants to Fuck You," "Homo Go Home" and "All Night Yeah Yeah."

This all seems like a lot, even Titanic realizes this, "Just when I think I have a plan, I realize I don't have one anymore."

With *Stirring Water* and *I Want Some Sun*, it is great to see Kamys branch out into other arenas. However, it will be most entertaining to see all of the stage antics in store for the upcoming concert. Titanic promises a new song will be unveiled on the 18th.

Actor Slash Model, Lezbobo the Clown and The Stewed Tomatoes will be special guests at the show. DJ Sky will be spinning.

Jinx Titanic & Super 8 Cum Shot's Back to School Show will take place at Jackhammer, 6406 N. Clark, on Friday, Sept. 18, at 8 p.m.



Jinx Titanic.

NUNN ON ONE

Art Smith dishes on food, Oprah

BY JERRY NUNN

Chef Art Smith has prepared meals for everyone from Oprah Winfrey to President Barak Obama. *Windy City Times* visited his kitchen to find out what's cooking in Mr. Smith's life.

Windy City Times: Hi, Art! So you are originally from Florida, correct?

Art Smith: Yes that is where I met Jesus, my partner. It's where I worked for the governor of Florida and also for Oprah when she lived down here.

WCT: How did you meet the painter Jesus Salgueiro?

AS: I was looking for a florist and Maria Shriver Schwarzenegger expressed to Oprah that the best place in town was called "Pistils & Petals." I started buying flowers there. I saw this really adorable man with blue eyes that smiled at me and I smiled back. One time I was feeling sorry for myself and saying there was no love in my life. A dear friend of mine said, "Jesus loves you." I said, "Tell me something I don't know. Of course Jesus loves me!" But he was talking about Jesus the florist and I called him up and made a date.

WCT: What was your first date like?

AS: Well, Oprah lived on this island called "Fisher Island." So I took a ferry to meet him and when he got out of his truck, I asked him to marry me. I am sure he thought, "This guy is crazy!" We went and had pizza. We are now celebrating our 10th anniversary.

WCT: Congratulations!

AS: We have a pizza restaurant and a pizza oven in my backyard. Good pizza is like good love.

WCT: What do you like on your pizza?

AS: We like thin crust pizza with a little bit of tomato, cook that with cheese then throw on some arugula and Lucini extra virgin olive oil. That's how we eat it all the time, and we are very specific.

WCT: You are making me hungry.

AS: Oh, we also put on a little prosciutto but that's at the end. You don't really want to cook it.

WCT: What's your favorite thing to cook?

AS: My favorite thing to cook is dessert because everyone remembers it. When I was 21, I worked at Williams-Sonoma where these fancy ladies in the Gold Coast adored this southern boy that would teach them how to make a biscuit. I did dinner parties and that's how I met Martha Stewart and, eventually, Oprah.

WCT: How was cooking for Ms. Winfrey?

AS: I cooked for her personally for 10 years. It was no different than when I was working for the governor of Florida or other people that I had worked for. You are there for them personally or when they have guests. That's how it works. You are there to make life easier. That's how my life went.

WCT: How did you get along together?

AS: Both being from the South, we had a lot in common. I loved the food growing up; Oprah was happy that I thought nothing is more sacred than a bowl of greens and a biscuit. She said to me one time, "You have a spirit of a Black woman in you."

WCT: How was your experience on Bravo TV's Top Chef Masters?

AS: People loved that whole southern persona. We are taught to be charming in the South: "Bees are more attracted to honey."

WCT: Well, look at Paula Deen.

AS: Exactly; they don't care if there is a heart attack on a plate, they just love the fact that she gives a lot of charm. On *Top Chef* there was no sense of trying to booby-trap anyone. We



Art Smith (right) with partner Jesus Salgueiro at Macy's Glamorama last year. Photo by Kat Fitzgerald (MysticImagesPhotography.com)

really enjoyed the camaraderie with each other.

WCT: I work at a restaurant in Andersonville.

AS: So you know what I mean. We all get in the "weeds" (restaurant term for when someone is overwhelmed). Restaurants are a fragile business. One day you can be really popular and the next out of business.

WCT: Do you have any advice for budding new chefs out there?

AS: It is very important to get some good training, whether it's a culinary school or finding a mentor, someone that will take the time to teach you. Also, you need to look at who you are and what you are. Everyone has a gift. The more authentic that you are the more marketable and sellable you will be. I ain't Italian, I ain't French and I am not going to cook any of that. Yes, I make a pizza but it's not who I am. I think it's important to cook who you are.

WCT: You co-founded your own charity.

AS: It's called Common Threads. Jesus and I had been invited to New York after the terrorism attacks by Oprah to cook for the families. Jesus is a painter and I had written a best-seller called *Back to the Table: The Reunion of Food and Family*. I thought why can't a cookbook inspire people? We started "Common Threads" to show that we are really not that different and food is a beautiful way to get to know each other.

WCT: You have such amazing opportunities with your job.

AS: By a leap of faith, I met Charles Annenberg Weingarten who has a daughter to eat vegetables. A piece of broccoli gave the charity a million dollars. We are in four cities now, LA, Miami, DC, and Chicago. By cooking for all these people I have been able to do some good. Food is precious and personal. When you have taken care of people on that level, it's a sacred thing.

WCT: Do you love living in Hyde Park?

AS: I do. I love the fact that it's multicultural. It's everything that I believe in. It's wall-to-wall activists!

WCT: Do you have a favorite restaurant in Chicago?

AS: I love Paul Kahan, so The Publican and Blackbird. Those are my favorites.

WCT: What other projects do you have on the back-burner?

AS: I am looking in Atlanta to open an Art Smith restaurant, [and] an opportunity to open one in South Africa before the World Cup games. The reason [is] that I spent a lot of time in South Africa at the Oprah school teaching cooking.

In the new year I am cooking for his holiness, the Dalai Lama. I would also like to see more Common Threads in different cities.

To keep up with Art Smith's busy life visit www.commonthreads.org and www.chefartsmith.com. For more with Art, see this week's issue of *Nightspots*.

SHARON GLESS IN HANNAH FREE

“Ms. Gless delivers a stellar performance that is gritty, poignant, and real.”
— *Huffington Post*



“Hannah Free is achingly beautiful, both in the rich, textured material and fine performances.”
— *Notes From Hollywood*

“Sharon Gless brings grit, authenticity and dimension to the title character. She commands the screen.”
— *San Francisco Chronicle*

“Hannah Free reminded me of Fried Green Tomatoes - only the women were allowed to be lovers in this! Sharon Gless dominates the film and is funny and touching and real.”
— *Greg in Hollywood*

**Meet Sharon Gless
Sept. 26**

Hannah Free in Chicago Sept. 25-Oct. 1

Gene Siskel Film Center of the
School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 164 N. State

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.

Tix thru the Film Center Box office or Ticketmaster, 800-982-2787, www.ticketmaster.com, and all Ticketmaster outlets. The Film Center and its Box Office 312-846-2800 (24-hour movie hotline) or 312-846-260, or visit www.siskelfilmcenter.org.

RIPE FRUIT FILMS PRESENTS SHARON GLESS IN "HANNAH FREE"
TAYLOR MILLER MAUREEN GALLAGHER ANN HAGEMANN KELLI STRICKLAND JACQUI JACKSON
Executive Producers SHARON ZUREK CLAUDIA ALLEN TRACY BAIM
Music by MARTIE MARRO Makeup Designer JILLIAN ERICKSON
Costume Designer IRIS BAINUM-HOULE Editor SHARON ZUREK Production Designer RICK PAUL Director of Photography GRETCHEN WARTHEN Written CLAUDIA ALLEN
Produced by WENDY JO CARLTON MARTIE MARRO SHARON ZUREK TRACY BAIM
Directed by WENDY JO CARLTON

www.HannahFree.com

80% Sold!

Special Event featuring **SHARON GLESS**
and the cast and crew of *Hannah Free*
\$100 Ticket to benefit the film. Limited number of seats!

Saturday, Sept. 26

- 7 p.m. Show at Gene Siskel Film Center
- Q&A following the film
- Chance to win autographed items
- Gala event at the Renaissance Chicago Hotel, One West Wacker, one block north of the Film Center. Includes: Hors d'oeuvres, wine, beer and soft drinks.

Tickets only available by emailing info@hannahfree.com with your contact info or call 773-387-2394. Space limited.



Screen dates & times:

Friday, Sept. 25
6:15 p.m. / 8:15 p.m.

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

Sunday, Sept. 27
2:45 p.m. ---SOLD OUT

Monday, Sept. 28 - Thursday, Oct. 1
6:15 p.m. / 8:15 p.m.



WHAT TO DO?

Wednesday, Sept. 16

23rd annual Entrepreneurial Woman's Conference starting with the Women's Forum Breakfast. 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Penny S. Pritzker will keynote at noon. Navy Pier, 600 E. Grand Ave. Register www.wbdc.org, or 312 853-3477, x 24

Advisory Council on Gay and Lesbian Issues monthly meeting, 6:30 p.m. at Affinity Community Services, 5650 S. Woodlawn. admin@affinity95.org or call 773-324-0377 affinity95.org

Anti-Defamation League Upper Midwest chapter will honor Abner J. Mikva and Newton N. Minow for their work to preserve the five freedoms guaranteed to every American under the First Amendment. 4th Annual First Amendment Freedom Award Dinner. 5:30 p.m. Chicago Hilton. www.adl.org/firstamendment

Chicago NOW's annual cocktail reception and fundraiser, Women Who Dared. Cocktail reception and silent auction. 6 p.m.-9 p.m. Flourish Studios, 3020 N. Lincoln, www.icanflourish.com. \$25 in advance or \$30 at the door; \$60 includes Chicago NOW Membership; \$10 for students. Tix at www.womenwhodared2009.eventbrite.com

Equality Illinois Annual T-Party. Celebration for Equality Illinois' transgender members, supporters and friends. 6 p.m.-9 p.m. Sidetrack, Glass Bar, 3347 N. Halsted Street.

Thursday, Sept. 17

Bill T. Jones and Arnie Zane Dance Co., world premiere dance theater event, Fondly Do We Hope...Fervently Do We Pray, inspired by the Lincoln legacy. Q&A with Bill T. Jones after. Ravinia Grand Season Finale. Pavilion Tix, Dinner, drinks \$49. 847-266-5100, www.ravinia.org

Divine Décor, Drinks with Benefits to benefit Chicago House. Renowned DJ Madrid. 6-9 p.m. \$30 adv at www.chicagohouse.org or 773-248-5200 x303 or \$40 door; Primitive (rare Asian art/furniture gallery) 130 N. Jefferson St.

Dr. Maya Angelou, celebrated poet, author, playwright, actress, professor and civil rights activist. Chicago Foundation for Women, 24th Annual Luncheon Speaker. Hyatt Regency Chicago. Sponsorships and reservations, Mariah Pearl Cunnick at mcunnick@cfw.org or 312-577-2827

NewTown Writers Fortnightly Writing Workshop 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. newtownwriters@yahoo.com for location

Friday, Sept. 18

World Music Festival city wide, multi-venue through Thursday, September 24. Half events are free, the rest \$15 or less. www.worldmusicfestivalchicago.org

cago.org

LGBT Mental Health and Chemical Dependency Care: Creating Sexual Health in Psychotherapy 1 - 5 p.m. 4 continuing education credits. \$75. Register at www.centeronhalsted.org "New & Events, SOGI Seminar.

World Music Festival city wide, multi-venue through Thursday, September 24. Half events are free, the rest \$15 or less. www.worldmusicfestivalchicago.org

Saturday, Sept. 19

Audition Call for 17th Annual Night of 100 Drag Queens Review. www.sidetrackchicago.com/events.html

Cake Chicago featuring De De, Ripley Caine and Somilia Rabee, Red Line Tap, 7006 N. Glenwood

Couple Protection Workshop & Resource Day. Panel discussion with Equality Illinois, Horizon Hospice, Lambda Legal, and Mulryan & York law firm and opportunity to create standard legal documents. 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Affinity Community Services, 5650 S. Woodlawn. admin@affinity95.org or call 773-324-0377 affinity95.org

Second Story Goes Sapphic, Serendipity Theater Collective goes Sapphic for a special Sappho's Salon edition of the Second Story reading series. Women & Children First Bookstore, 5233 N. Clark St., 773-769-9299 www.womenandchildrenfirst.com

Sunday, Sept. 20

BEHIV 3rd annual Massage Therapy Bar Day in Andersonville and Edgewater. 3 - 6 p.m. volunteers will sell raffle tickets and conduct drink/shot specials at Big Chicks, Crew, The Glenwood, Ravenswood Pub and Touché. Wrap-up party and karaoke 6 - 8 p.m. Star Gaze

Hamburger Mary's Stage, LGBTQ performers/artists of all genres and talents. 15 diverse acts will take the Spotlight stage. Door prizes and signature drink specials. www.HamburgerMarysChicago.com

West Suburban Gay Association, Cruise and Lunch along the Fox River in St. Charles on a paddlewheel riverboat \$6 adults. Meet at 1:30 p.m. Info 630-512-0100 or west_burbs_gay@yahoo.com

Monday, Sept. 21

The Queer Film Society's Queer Cinema 102 shows Desperate Living hosted by Chicago Free Press film critic Gregg Shapiro. Sponsored in part by www.HannaFree.com 7 p.m. \$5. Hoover-Leppen Theater, Center on Halsted

Tuesday, Sept. 22

Hall of Fame Celebrity Auction benefits the 2009 Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall

of Fame. Registration reception, silent auction and raffle begin at 7 p.m. Bidding starts at 8 p.m. Auctioneers are Circuit Mom, Amy Methany of Windy City Queercast, and Molly Callinan, Rock Goddess lead singer of "Catfight" Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St. www.gllhalloffame.org sidetrackchicago.com

Wednesday, Sept. 23

Ani DeFranco with Gregory Alan Isakov The Vic Theatre, 3145 N. Sheffield www.jamusa.com

Gay Reading Group in the SAGE area. Book for discussion is George Chauncey's Gay New York. 7:30 p.m. Room on the second floor of Center On Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted.

The Wizard of Oz 70th Anniversary Hi-Def Event, a special one-night only, nationwide in-theater presentation. Tix at www.FathomEvents.com and box offices. Locations at www.ncm.com/Fathom/Premiere/WizardofOz.aspx

Thursday, Sept. 24

Frank Solivan, master fiddler and mandolin-player, and Dirty Kitchen, 8 p.m. \$5. Heartland Cafe, www.heartlandcafe.indietickets.com

Terry Angel Mason author of Love Won't Let Me Be Silent, stories/poems about same-gender-loving relationships in the Black community, will discuss the book and answer questions. An Affinity Youth Leadership Institute initiative. Books available for sale. Affinity Community Service 5650 S. Woodlawn 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m. 773-324-0377 www.affinity95.org

Friday, Sept. 25

Church within a Church Movement program, Living in the Now: The Journey to Justice., through Saturday, Sept. 26. Friday night 6 p.m. reception and tributes to Rev. Gregory Dell who will receive the 2nd Gilbert H. Caldwell Justice Ministry Award. Ramada Chicago Hotel 4900 S. Lake Shore Dr. Register: www.cwac.us

Hannah Free, Chicago-made lesbian feature film one-week limited engagement through Oct. 1. \$10/\$7/\$5. Box office or 800-982-2787, www.ticketmaster.com. Gene Siskel Film Center of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 164 N. State. Also see Sept. 26 for info on gala, Sharon Gless, cast and crew attending.

Mikhail Baryshnikov in the Chicago premiere of "Three Solos and a Duet" with Ana Laguna, through September 27. Harris Theater for Music and Dance. www.HarrisTheaterChicago.org

Saturday, Sept. 26

Church within a Church Movement program, Living in the Now: The Journey

to Justice. 6 p.m. Award Banquet, Rev. Gregory Dell will be honored. Hyde Park Room. Keynote by Rev. Dr. Susan Thistlethwaite, Ramada Chicago Hotel 4900 S. Lake Shore Dr. Register: www.cwac.us

Hannah Free benefit screening and gala with Sharon Gless, director Wendy Jo Carlton, writer Claudia Allen, producers and crew. 7 p.m. screening and Q&A at the Gene Siskel Film Center. Gala follows, one block north at Renaissance Chicago Hotel, One West Wacker. \$100 ticket price for the evening. info@hannahfree.com or 773-387-2394

4th Annual Lakeview East Festival of the Arts, 10 a.m. through Sept. 27, 5 p.m. Broadway and Belmont

Laura Meyer, Elbo Room, 2871 N. Lincoln Ave. and Mon. Sept. 28 at Uncommon Ground, 1401 W. Devon. www.uncommonground.com

OUTsource, a career transition program for the LGBT community, second and third Saturdays, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.: Career Jump Start, 1 p.m.-4 p.m., Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted www.centeronhalsted.org

Sunday, Sept. 27

Center on Halsted's Annual Silent & Live Auction Brunch fundraising event \$50 www.centeronhalsted.org

Vital Bridges, Chefs and the City Culinary Series, brunches and activities to raise awareness, food and over \$5,000 for men, women and children living in poverty with HIV and AIDS. Hors d'oeuvres, sumptuous buffet, tasty drinks and a special party favor from Elaine Fosse's Favor of the Moment. \$75. Anteprema, 5316 N. Clark St., www.vitalbridges.org/anteprema

Saturday, Oct. 3

AIDS Run and Walk 7:30 a.m. Star Fundraiser Breakfast Begins, 8 a.m. registration. Grant Park, Columbus and Balbo. www.aidsrunwalk.org

Gerber/Hart Library annual benefit, "Making History: Riot, Revolution, Rights." Keynote speaker David Carter, author of Stonewall: The Riots That Sparked the Gay Revolution. Swedish-American Museum Center, 5211 N. Clark St. www.gerberhart.org

Indie/South music/arts exhibit, 5 to 9 p.m. through Nov. 15. Prairie Avenue Gallery, 1900 S. Prairie; 312-907-7909 mbaim@earthlink.net

Women & Children First's 30th Anniversary Gala with special guests Alison Bechdel and Dorothy Allison for a special evening celebrating Women & Children First's 30th year. Refreshments, auction, dancing into the night. Ticket information will be available soon.

Thursday, Sept. 17



BILL OF THE BALL

Bill T. Jones will be at Ravinia along with his dance company.

Photo courtesy Wexner Center for the Arts

Tuesday, Sept. 22



THE FAME GAME

The Hall of Fame Celebrity Auction will take place at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted.

Photo of Art Johnston and Chili Pepper from last year's auction by Yasmin Nair

Entertainment news

The documentary Hugh Hefner: Playboy, Activist and Rebel, claims that **the 83-year-old media mogul was an early gay-rights advocate**, according to Pinknews.co.uk. In 1955, shortly after founding Playboy, Hefner published a short sci-fi story, The Crooked Man, in which homosexuality was the norm and heterosexuals were persecuted. In response to angry letters, Hefner wrote, "If it was wrong to persecute heterosexuals in a homosexual society, then the reverse was wrong, too."

Actor George Clooney was confronted by a gay fan at the Venice Film Festival, according to E! Online. Clooney was answering questions about his new film, The Men Who Stare at Goats, when a man stripped to his underwear and asked, "I am gay, George, and I think I am in love with

you. ... Please take me. May I kiss you, please. Just one kiss?" Clooney apparently turned the man down, saying, "It's hard when you take a big chance and it doesn't really work."

Talk-show host Ellen DeGeneres, 51, will replace Paula Abdul on American Idol, according to People magazine. DeGeneres will start after the audition round, which features celebrity guest judges such as singers Mary J. Blige and Victoria Beckham. DeGeneres said Sept. 9 that "I'm going to have a day job and a night job. This is so exciting for me."

X-Factor, a Marvel's Comics' series, features a same-sex kiss between characters Rictor and Shatterstar in the latest issue, according to Advocate.com. **It's one of the first gay kisses in a mainstream comic.** However, writer Peter David said that, regarding Rictor's sexuality, "I don't see the point at this juncture in spelling it out—not because of any sense of homophobia

or anything like that but out of a sense that I think it's more entertaining and more thought-provoking if we keep it ambiguous."

POSSIBLE PLOT SPOILERS AHEAD! Rumors are running rampant around the set of Sex and the City 2, according to Advocate.com. Us Weekly has reported that Big (played by Chris Noth) and Carrie (Sarah Jessica Parker) actually split—but she discover she's expecting. Other publications are reporting that Carrie's gay friend, Stanford (Willie Garson) will marry Anthony (Mario Cantone). The film is slated to premiere next May.

Jodie Foster may be single again. According to a SheWired.com item, Foster's girlfriend, Cynthia Mort, has reportedly left Foster to take up with former partner Amanda Demme. And to show just how linked Hollywood can be, Demme is the niece through marriage of Jonathan Demme, who directed Foster in Silence of the Lambs.

Swayze dies

Actor Patrick Swayze died Sept. 14 after a lengthy battle with pancreatic cancer, Fox2Now.com reported. He was 57.

Swayze was diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer in 2008; the disease spread to his liver.

The actor is best known for the movies Ghost and Dirty Dancing, and he received Golden Globe nods for both. According to IMDB.com, he was most recently on the TV series The Beast. Swayze was also in many other movies, such as Donnie Darko and To Wong Foo Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar, in which he played cross-dresser Vida.

Swayze is survived by Lisa Niemi, his wife of 34 years.

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

REAL ESTATE

FOR SALE

OUT OF TOWN

SAUGATUCK RIVERFRONT SITE: 2-acres overlooking the Kalamazoo River & 400-acre wetland preserve. Near wine country, Lake Michigan beaches, marina, golf courses, gay-friendly towns. Secluded, quiet area. **\$180,000. More land available. 616-566-0538.** (09/16/09-4)

NEW ORLEANS UNIQUE TOWNHOME Seventh St - corner famous St. Charles Ave - steps to Mardi Gras parades, streetcar, minutes to French Qtr, universities, warehouse/arts district, Superdome, CBD -2000 sq ft - 3 BR, 3 1/2 baths, liv & din rms, front/rear balconies, laundry, 2 off street parking spaces, carport, elec iron entrance gate, patio opens to pool, sec guard, on-site mgr. Bright, airy, bay windows, French doors to balconies & patio, wood flrs, walk in closets, ample storage. **\$490,000 - Call 504-897-2226 for info/photos.** (09/09/09-2)

FOR RENT

HOUSE

BEAUTIFUL VICTORIAN HOUSE \$2300 REHABBED VICTORIAN: 3beds, 3.5 baths, dr, kit w granite counters & SS appl. fin. basement with bath & Laundry. Master bath, hardwood floors. Huge deck & yard. 2car garage. **847-563-8200; slb_solutions@hotmail.com** (09/23/09-3)

DUPLEX

GREAT FOR ENTERTAINING 1 OR 20. OWNER FINANCING AVAILABLE. Must see ultra modern low maintenance. Kolar River Bath, in Master BR, 5'X5' Steam Shower, heated floors in Master Bath, Granite custom maple cabinets, doors and trim. 2 BR, 2 1/2 bath, finished basement, Joliet West Side \$229,900.00. **For pics and more info www.Tezakrealestate.com; Jack Tezak 815-474-0118, Agent Owned (9/30/09-3)**

ONE BEDROOM

STUNNING NEW UNITS! BRAND NEW JR. ONE BEDROOM UNITS AT 4706 N. BEACON!: Granite Counter Tops - Limestone Bathroom - Huge Carpeted Bedroom Starting at \$800/mo Available NOW! **Call 773.404.9900 for more Information.** (9/2/09-1)

STUNNING NEW ONE BEDROOMS! Brand NEW Jr. One Bedroom Units at 5054 Winthrop!: Kitchen with NEW Italian Cabinets - Bathroom with Limestone Finishes - Central Heat/AC - Elevator Building! ** 2 Blocks to Lake, Shopping, & Dining** Starting from \$850/mo **Call 773.404.9900 for More Information.** (9/2/09-1)

UNBELIEVABLE RENT! - \$675 One-Bedroom: incld heat and water, five sunny rooms, hardwood floor, amply closet space, mini-blinds, on site engineer, controlled front door access, 24/7 laundry room- close to bus, "EL", and lakefront- 1351 W Touhy Ave- **Call Linda 773-764-9510 (9/23/09-4)**

LAKE SHORE DRIVE VINTAGE TOP FLOOR CONDO WITH FABULOUS VIEWS of Belmont Harbor, Park and Lake Michigan! Spacious 1 bedroom 1 bath featuring hardwood floors, original crown moldings and decorative fireplace with beautiful millwork. Separate dining room. Large room sizes. Loaded with closets. 773-348-1680; lodonnell@signaturerealtor.com, <http://chicagosold.com> (9/23/09-2)

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BILLY MASTERS

"I've watched since the beginning, and I've always been a huge fan. So getting this job is a dream come true. And think of all the money I'll save from not having to text in my vote."—Ellen DeGeneres on joining the cast of "American Idol."

OK, I was wrong. There, I said it—shocking those of you who think I'm either completely infallible or completely delusional. Obviously when I predicted that Paula Abdul would be back on "American Idol," I was as wrong as any of those psychics working for Dionne Warwick. Ellen DeGeneres will be filling the vacant judge's seat—and getting significantly more money than Paula was (to say nothing of a five-year contract). Personally, I think it's a good fit. She'll represent what fans think, she's nice, but has the backbone to go up against Simon Cowell. And she clearly knows a thing or two about the pop music scene. She gets my vote—but my heart belongs to Paula.

Every year I look forward to the Jerry Lewis Telethon with unnatural exuberance. This year, I believe the theme of the show was "bitter" with a side order of "hatefulness." I think it's common knowledge that Jerry Lewis ain't no walk in the park. This year, his on-camera outbursts were quite extensive, with his crew repeatedly taking quite a tongue-lashing (something I usually enjoy, but enough about my sex life). The highlight of the weekend had to be Charo's cover of "Don't Stop The Music" by Rihanna. But she didn't just sing it. There was a whole interpretive dance—some of it on stage, some of it on Jerry's lap, and some of it in the audience as she tried to drag people out of wheelchairs! You've got to see it to believe it—on BillyMasters.com, of course.

Since I was in Fort Lauderdale over Labor Day, I had to be at the Black Party at VooDoo Lounge because the featured performer was my buddy, Deborah Cox. The diva looked fabulous and sounded even better, giving the capacity crowd a mini concert. When we caught up after the show, I was thrilled to hear she's returning to Broadway. One of my fondest theatrical memories was seeing Deborah in "Aida." She's waited for the right vehicle, and it's come along—she's signed on as the lead in "Josephine," an original musical about Josephine Baker. The show is being written as we speak and aiming to hit Broadway in early 2011.

Public displays of same-sex affection are running rampant in Europe. George Clooney was at the Venice Film Festival taking questions at a press conference when he got more than he bargained for. One reporter appeared very nervous and George, being no fool, said, "I know what the question is." The guy then exclaimed, "I am gay George." As the man wrestled to get out of his clothes, George said, "Here it comes." The guy continued, "I am in love with you George. Please take me. Choose me, George. Please, George, may I kiss you? Just one kiss." At that point, the organizers ushered the guy from the proceedings. Good-natured Clooney just gave that Cheshire cat smile and said, "It's hard when you take a big chance and it doesn't really work. It's a good try, though. You know, the tie looks good." Happily, the whole episode was caught on a video we'll post on BillyMasters.com.

That untalented Robert Pattinson is running into his share of same-sex fans. "There's a few male 'Twilight' fans. More and more guys ask me for autographs in fact. Unless they're only doing it to sell them on eBay." Sigh....these boys are always the last to know.

Our "Ask Billy" question is from someone quite enamored with "True Blood." Kevin in San Diego says: "I miss you in Gay and Lesbian Times, but glad to be reading you online. Do you know anything about Allan Hyde [who played 'Godric'] on 'True Blood'? It seems like he's history, but I hope

not." My San Diego fans are incredibly important to me and I want you all to know that if I'm not in your paper, it is not my choice. You might want to contact the powers that be—while you still can. As to "True Blood," that show sure has its share of hotties. Regarding Allan Hyde, the Danish actor does appear to be gone...but not forgotten. Your query forced me to get out there and find some photos to post—which I did. I also found a short film he did in Denmark called "Sidste Kys," which is kinda difficult to explain. He plays a tormented young man who is naked, erect, ashamed, and holding a cheese grater. That's never a good combination—dick in one hand, cheese grater in the other. Before anything icky happens, you can see it all on BillyMasters.com.

Could it be that a certain sudsy siren of the Sapphic persuasion is with child? Well, yes and no. You see, there's not a chance she'd allow a man down there. And carrying a child yourself is such a 90s lipstick lesbian concept. Instead, she went the Deidre Hall route and hired a surrogate (in fact, that's a damn good comparison). While the surrogate is carrying our daytime diva's egg, she's been mum about the sperm donor. We hear it's her best friend—that equally cagey same-sex lovin' guy who's her confidant, on screen and off. Keeping it all in the family.

When our blind item ain't so young but still restless, it's definitely time to end yet another column. Can I just toot my own horn for a second? Assuming I can reach it, that is. Every week I tell you people to check out www.BillyMasters.com. Well, I am thrilled to say that you actually listen to me—and in record numbers. Over Labor Day weekend, people came out in droves and our numbers went through the roof. I can officially say that while other sites are waning



Deborah Cox takes on another diva: Josephine Baker.

in popularity, we're busier than ever—and it's all thanks to you. And me, of course—this is a two way street. It ain't no "Project One Way." No siree! So, more than ever I want to remind you that if you've got a question, just drop a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before Allan Hyde turns up on the Food Network! Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

TPAN: Being 'Aware'

The HIV/AIDS agency Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN) hosted its major gala event called the "Aware Affair: Ultra Lounge." Styled as a 1960s lounge, the "Aware Affair" was held at the Billboard Factory, 4011 N. Ravenswood, which kept with the theme by boasting a classic car display and a top-floor VIP lounge bar called "The Mile High Club."

The entertainment was highlighted by a performance from award-winning pop star Kristine W., who sang songs off of her new album Straight up with a Twist.

Over 400 patrons were expected to come, bid at the silent auction and show their general support for one of TPAN's biggest fundraising events, including Congressman Mike Quigley, Representative for Illinois's 5th district, who was an honorary co-chair for this year's festivities.

"Considering these tough economic times we are living in the continued efforts by groups like TPAN in the community are critical," Quigley said. "I just want to thank the supporters of

groups like TPAN, now more than ever we need their dedication to these causes."

The gala also acted as an award ceremony, honoring individuals who had been particularly instrumental in helping TPAN advocate for those living with HIV and educate the community on safer sex practices. Text by Chasse Rehwinkel; photos by Kat Fitzgerald (MysticImagesPhotography.com)



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Holding Kurt about Games

BY ROSS FORMAN

There was, initially, interest from 14 cities to host the 2014 Gay Games. Four of them actually expressed interest in sending in letters of intent to bid, and three did: Cleveland, Boston and Washington, D.C.

The winner will be announced Sept. 29 in Cologne, site of the 2010 Games.

The Federation of Gay Games (FGG) received three very strong bids, according to Kurt Dahl, the FGG male co-president and vice president of host relations. "The voters will determine which bid is best for the Gay Games movement," he said. Each FGG board member has one vote and each full member organization of the general assembly has two votes. The winning city is scheduled to be announced at 6:30 p.m. Cologne time.

"It is very exciting [period now in the LGBT sporting community]," said Dahl, 48, who lives in Joliet. "We have three very good bids that have been submitted and so we within the FGG are looking forward to some great presentations. The general assembly has been heavily involved in reviewing the bid and asking follow-up questions. A great deal of work has gone into the process and I can't wait till we are able to announce the winning city."

Then the spotlight truly shines on Cologne, which must follow the successful 2006 Games held in Chicago and do so in the worst worldwide economy in decades.

"The crisis has an effect on sponsor deals as many potential sponsors are holding back at the moment," Dahl said. "However, as more people register and we can show the sponsors the benefits that GGVIII [Games Cologne] and the FGG can provide, we will start to see sponsors signing on. As far as participants are concerned, the registrations numbers are on target. We believe



Kurt Dahl.

strongly that the FGG and Gay Games have a lot to offer to sponsors around the world. The thousands of participants and spectators since 1982 are a very loyal population and would support any sponsor tenfold.

"Cologne is a great and welcoming city. The people that are working on GGVIII have done a great job thus far and are working hard to put on a fantastic Gay Games. I love being in Cologne and look forward to spending time in Cologne in September for the FGG annual meeting and then again next year for GGVIII."

Dahl is now in his first year of a two-year term on the FGG board. He ran for the vice-president position and won. Then, last January, the co-president resigned and he was appointed acting co-president until the next meeting of the general assembly which starts Sept. 27.

The female co-president is Emy Ritt. The two serve as the liaisons between the FGG and the host of Gay Games VIII, which has the responsibility for hosting the games. "I meet periodically with Games Cologne personnel, to ensure the games are [on] track and [to] address any issues," said Dahl, who is the Vice President & Senior Risk Manager for Harris NA (Harris Bank).

Dahl's partner is Jeff Clark.

Windy City Times: What does it mean to you to be a part of the FGG, especially since the Gay Games mean so much to so many?

Kurt Dahl: For me it is an honor to be affiliated with the FGG and the Gay Games movement and legacy. When I first volunteered to help Chicago in its bid for GGVII, I had no idea that I would some day be the Co-President of the FGG. I truly feel honored.

WCT: What do the Gay Games mean to you?

KD: To me the Gay Games mean being able to break down barriers and allowing me to be who I am. The Gay Games allow me to do my personal best, knowing that I have the support of everyone participating in the Games.

WCT: Which Gay Games have you participated in, and in which sports?

KD: Gay Games VII in Chicago in 2006, and I participated in swimming and softball.

WCT: What was your role/responsibility in 2006?

KD: I was the treasurer and on the Board of Chicago Games, Inc., the host organization of GGVII. I was the one signing the checks and making sure the ticket money was locked up safe and sound each evening. I also was busy delivering ice to the venues and a whole host of other duties during that hectic, but fun-filled week."

WCT: What was your favorite 2006 Gay Games memory?

KD: [It was] the Closing Ceremonies, when I watched the FGG flag handed off to the Cologne team. I cried like a baby [at] what we all had accomplished in those few short years.

WCT: What did the FGG and/or Cologne 2010 learn from the 2009 World Outgames?

KD: We are still analyzing the results and are waiting for the final report to be issued. As always, every event must be ready to adapt in the face of unexpected challenges, such as the recent worldwide financial crisis.

WCT: Given the bitter feelings between Gay Games and the Outgames in 2006, were you surprised the two organizations are now so friendly?

KD: Both organizations are listening to the community's request for one quadrennial international sport and culture event.

WCT: So, do you think the Gay Games and the Outgames ever will merge?

KD: Both organizations are listening to the community's request for one quadrennial international sport and culture event.

WCT: Give me one prediction about Cologne 2010.

KD: The people attending GGVIII and Cologne will be blown away by what Cologne will have to offer. I also am predicting that my husband's softball team will take gold in their division.

More about Kurt Dahl:

—**Hobbies:** Reading and traveling with Jeff

—**College:** DePaul University (1983, Bachelor's Degree in accounting; 1993, Master's in finance)

—**Little-known facts:** "I have two children (from my first marriage): Andrew, 23, and Ashley, 19," Dahl said. "And, I have been in banking for 32 years."

Chicago women stopped in World Series

BY ROSS FORMAN

Mic's Girls entered round-robin play in the annual Amateur Sports Alliance of North America (ASANA) Softball World Series, held Sept. 1-6 in Madison, Wis., as the No. 2 seed, the highest seed earned by any of Chicago's seven tournament teams.

Their first opponent that Thursday after was none other than Mood Swingers, another Chicago-based team.

Mic's Girls won the intra-city showdown 6-4, but that was their last win in the all-women's six-day tournament. They lost their next two—

first to eventual B Division champion Houston Blaze and then to the Rebels New Moon.

Mood Swings won its next game, in the Loser's Bracket, defeating the No. 1 seed, Aftershock, 7-1. Mood Swings was, though, eliminated in their next game: a 13-4 loss to Swank KTD Edition.

The Nubians also played in B Division, but they lost their first two round-robin games and were eliminated.

"One of the things I noticed [in Madison] was the camaraderie among the Chicago teams and the support and cheering for each other. I think a lot of new friendships were made," said Jen Hostetler, women's softball commissioner for the Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA).

Chicago's three representatives in C Division also did not fair much better in round-robin play. The Chicago Diesel Daisies and Raw Energy each lost their first two and were eliminated. The Chicago Breeze won a Loser's Bracket game over the Austin Angels, 12-0.

LSD defeated Play 4 Fun 7-2, in D Division play, but then lost its next two.

"I saw some amazing plays," in Madison, Hostetler said.

The 2010 ASANA Softball World Series will be held in Las Vegas.

Here's a look at the top three teams in each division in the annual ASANA Softball World Series:

—**B Division:**

- 1st: Houston Blaze
- 2nd: Rebels Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
- 3rd: Urban Mo's—San Diego, Calif.

—**C Division:**

- 1st: Hot Properties Twin Cities Minnesota
- 2nd: RAW Phoenix Arizona
- 3rd: Pilsner Passion—San Francisco, Calif.

—**D Division:**

- 1st: Gamma Lite—Atlanta, Ga.
- 2nd: Outfielders—Madison Wis.
- 3rd: Cause We Can Twin Cities Minnesota

Blackwolves win opener

BY ROSS FORMAN

The Chicago Gay Hockey Association (CGHA) kicked off its seventh season on Sept. 9 in a new league and loaded with new players on its roster.

But these Blackwolves continued their winning ways.

The Blackwolves defeated Team Orange 7-2 in the Men's Recreation Division at the North Shore Ice Arena in Northbrook.

Defenseman Joe Head, a newcomer to the team, led the way, scoring three goals. Team captain Tony Tiet added two goals, including the first goal of the game. CGHA founder Chuck Jacobson had a slapshot goal and Randy Manis also scored. Goalie John Adams had 19 saves.

"We started the new season with a bang, which was nice," said CGHA President Ryan Ruskin. "The current roster consists of a variety of players and abilities, including many new faces along with players who have been with the organization since the first game back in 2002.

"For the first game, we had a full roster of players, but we are still accepting additional players, both for full- and part-time. For more information about joining the CGHA—as a player, volunteer, fan, or anything else—please contact team captain, Tony Tiet." (Tiet can be reached at tonytiet@gmail.com.)

The club is planning several practice sessions for the fall, as well as bar parties and more. "We hope to see you on the ice, in the stands, or out on the town with us soon," Ruskin added.

The Blackwolves current 12-game season in Northbrook ends in December.

For more information on the CGHA, visit www.chicagogayhockey.org.

17th annual

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Lead Singer, Catfight

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Proceeds from the auction fund the 2009 Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and Reception on Thursday, November 12 in the Sidney Yates Gallery of the Chicago Cultural Center. For more information visit www.GLHofFame.org

GLHF HALL OF FAME, DOI, SIDETRACK, LIFE, SKYY VODKA, CENTER FOR GAY, LESBIAN & BIPOLAR, Napleton's AUTOMOTIVE GROUP, Exelon, CIRCUIT, TREASURE ISLAND, SUPERBOWL, J&L, Halls, BB

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Here are just a FEW of our dozens of people who contribute to the editorial side of WCMG: **Windy City Times, Nighspots, Windy City Queercast and QueerTVNetwork.com**

Windy City Media Group was named Best Gay News Source by The Chicago Reader.



Yasmin Nair

has fulfilled multiple roles for Windy City Times—including book reviewer, news reporter, photographer and op-ed columnist—since 1995.



Rex Wockner

has reported news for the gay press since 1985. His work has appeared in more than 300 publications in 38 countries.



Kat Fitzgerald

is a photographer and self-described “energizer.” She has been in photography for the past 25 years.



Emmanuel Garcia

has been writing for Windy City Times since 2003. He is also an editor at Windy City Media Group’s queertvnetwork.com.



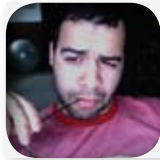
Tracy Baim

started work in Chicago LGBT journalism in 1984. She co-founded Windy City Times in 1985.



Andrew Davis

is the managing editor of Windy City Times and Identity and has written for Outlines and Windy City Times since 1995.



Kirk Williamson

started with Windy City eight years ago as a sales rep and is now also managing editor of Nighspots, art director and a popular nightlife photographer.



Bob Roehr

has more than two decades of news journalism experience and is a Washington, D.C.-based correspondent focusing on politics and health issues.



Scott C. Morgan

is a freelance theater editor and has been a writer and a theater critic since 1996.



Amy Matheny

has been speaking for Chicago’s LGBT community since 1998 when she co-hosted the popular LesBiGay Radio. She founded Windy City Queercast.



Richard Knight, Jr.,

is the cinema writer for WCMG and knightatthemovies.com, and has more than two decades of experience as a cultural performer and writer.



Lisa Keen

has been covering the gay political beat for 30 years, delivering exclusives on individuals in all aspects of government, including President Barack Obama.



Mel Ferrand

has worked as a columnist and photo-journalist for Windy City Times for over a decade.



David Byrne

is the music columnist for Windy City Times: he has written the column Pop Making Sense and has interviewed various musicians for several years.



Tony Peregrin

has been a freelance entertainment/culture journalist and senior writer for Windy City Times since 1998.



Mary Shen Barnidge

has been a self-described “mercenary Chicago poet for 10 years, mercenary Chicago drama critic for 20.”



John Fenoglio

is Windy City Times’ newest addition and is a writer, reporter, new-media enthusiast and photographer who has interned at NBC.



Jonathan Abarbanel

is a member of the American Theatre Critics Assn., has reviewed for Chicago Public Radio and is an adjunct professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago.



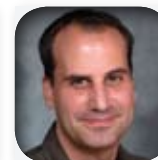
Jen Parelo

is a long-time columnist for Nighspots and a published author.



Ryan Kolodziej

has been a nightlife photographer for six years with a special affinity for drag photography.



Jerry Nunn

has become an exciting adult film reviewer with his Nighspots column From the Booth and does star interviews in his Nunn on One column in Windy City Times.



Steve Starr

has photographed numerous celebrities and events, and has been writing his Starrlight column for over a decade.



Colman Domingo

is a series regular on the LOGO series The Big Gay Sketch Show and lends his theatrical flair to Windy City Queercast.



Catey Sullivan

is an award-winning critic who has been writing about Chicago theater since the local premiere of Angels in America in 1993.



John D’Emilio

is a pioneering historian of sexuality and the author or editor of six books, including a prize-winning biography of civil-rights leader Bayard Rustin.



Lawrence Ferber

is an entertainment and travel scribe who has contributed to Entertainment Weekly, The Advocate, New York Magazine, OUT, The Village Voice, Time Out NY and more.



Owen Keehnen

is a Chicago-based fiction writer and journalist whose work has been published in numerous periodicals and collections worldwide.



Jim Edminster

is a long-time Chicago writer and has covered the media world for Windy City Times for more than a decade.



Ross Forman

has written about the local and national LGBT sports scene for more than five years and has also written for such publications as USA TODAY and the Chicago Tribune.



Zachary Whittenburg

is a dancer and choreographer who covers the Chicago dance scene from the inside and has written for numerous publications since 2006.



Alexandra Billings

is an actress, singer, teacher, writer, blogger, activist and former radio host whose extensive theatre work has taken her across Chicago and to Los Angeles.



Billy Masters

is a comedian, personality and award-winning gossip columnist who has been syndicating his weekly column worldwide for the past 13 years.



Marie J. Kuda

is a long-time community writer, historian and archivist. She has written articles and columns for Outlines and Windy City Times for more than 20 years.



Jean Albright

served in the U.S. Air Force for 20 years, including writing for Stars & Stripes. She has worked for nearly 15 years for WCMG as an editor and Web site manager.



grayson

has been an arbiter of snark for Nighspots magazine since 2001.



Stephen Rader

has received many awards for his work in Chicago theater. He is also exec. director of Season of Concern, writes a popular blog and co-hosts Windy City Queercast.

The above people, plus dozens more, give WCMG an unequalled combination of experience, connections and continuity.

www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com

GAY GAMES PROFILES

Tom Chiola
& Drew Jemilo

BY ROSS FORMAN

Tom Chiola and his partner of 15 years, Drew Jemilo, have one simple goal for the 2010 Gay Games in Cologne, Germany: To finish with a smile on our faces, said Chiola, president of the Alliance of Illinois Judges (www.TheAIJ.com) and the first openly gay candidate elected to office in Illinois (Circuit Court Judge, 1994).

The residents of Andersonville (or Mandersonville, as Jemilo calls it) will be competing in the 5K and 10K road races.

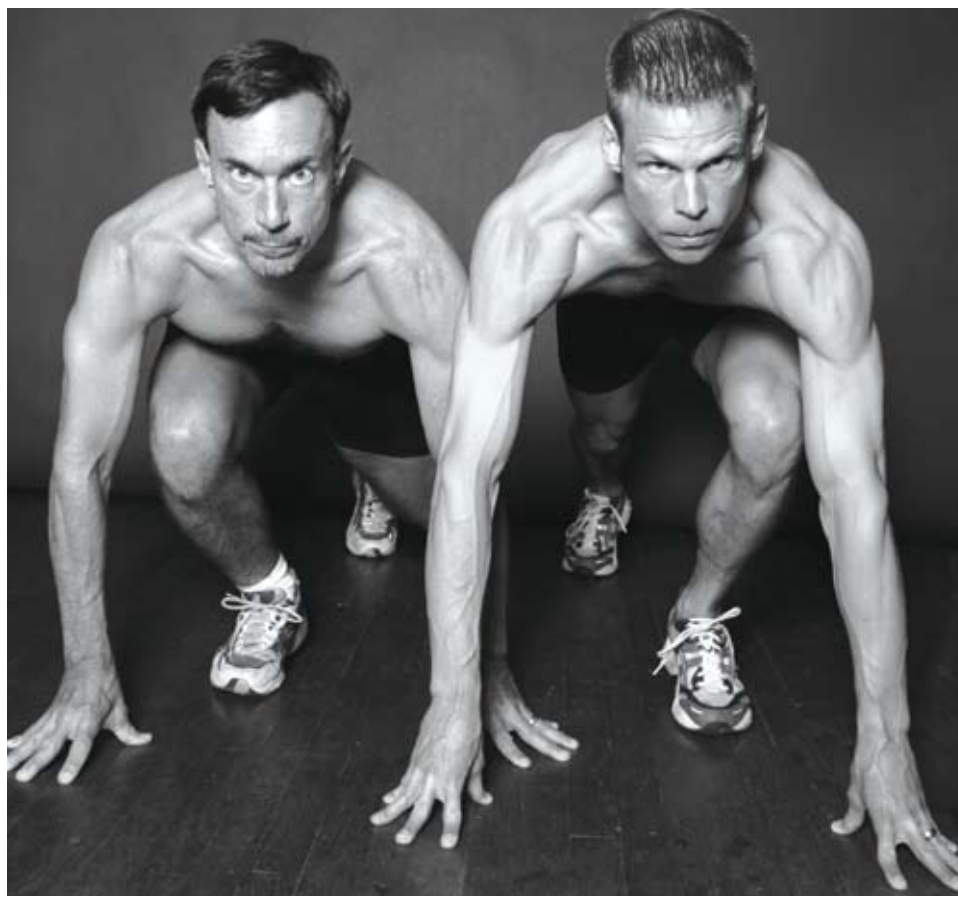
"The Gay Games are a wonderful experience, a supportive environment where the most important thing is to do the best you can do. The feeling of community is so overwhelming and heartening [at the Games]. Meeting people from around the world is incredible," said Chiola, 57.

Both have Gay Games experience and medals of honor. Chiola ran the marathon and competed in bowling in Vancouver in 1990. He competed in the triathlon and in swimming events in New York City in 1994. And in Chicago in 2006, Chiola again competed in the triathlon. His bowling team won the silver medal in 1990. Jemilo competed in the triathlon in Chicago in 2006 and he jokes that he won, "The Mother Teresa Gold Medal for Cheering Others On."

"I have always made great friends through sports groups like Chicago's gay volleyball league and the Chicago Razors triathlon group," said Jemilo, 43. "I look forward to expanding that [while in Cologne] to people from around the world."

More about Tom Chiola and Drew Jemilo:**—Job title:**

Tom: Judge, Circuit Court of Cook County
Drew: Software Methodology Consultant for his own company, FastFrontier.com

—High school:

Tom Chiola (left) and Drew Jemilo. Photo by Bret Grafton

Tom: Griffin (Springfield, Ill.), Class of 1970
Drew: St Laurence (Burbank, Ill.), Class of 1984

—College:

Tom: Illinois State University (1974); University of Illinois Law School (1977).

Drew: University of Illinois School of Engineering (1988)

—Reflections on the 2006 Gay Games in Chicago:

Tom: "I had the worst triathlon of my life, but it was incredible to see all of the participants from around the world enjoying our beautiful city."

Drew: "There were two special parts for me. One was becoming part of the Chicago Razors, the triathlon training group formed by Bill Toeper. The other was the opportunity to photograph several events through the support of Tracy Baim."

—Hobbies:

Tom: Running, biking, swimming, weightlifting, theatre and hiking

Drew: Teaching Spin classes, photography, running, hiking, traveling off the beaten path, and discovering new music

—Superstitions:

Tom: Stepping on the lines on the ball field

Drew: None

—Little-known fact:

Tom: "I was a summer musical theatre 'star' at the Springfield Muni Opera during high school and college."

Drew: "I was a child-prodigy puppeteer at the age of 8 and a claymation artist at the age of 12. However, I became a normal human once I hit puberty."

—Greatest sporting accomplishment:

Tom: Finishing my first marathon and triathlon

Drew: Receiving a few medals in the annual Proud to Run races over the years. The 40-somethings are the most competitive.

—Favorite sports teams:

Tom: Chicago Cubs and the University of Illinois basketball

Drew: Fleetwood Mac ... oh, wait, does that count?

—It's a fact:

Tom: He is a member of the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame; a former race director for Proud to Run; a former board member of CMSA and softball commissioner; an organizer of first *pro bono* legal project for people with AIDS in Chicago; a volunteer for Open Hand Chicago (now Vital Bridges); an organizer of International Gay Bowling Organization Tournament in Chicago; and a lobbyist for gay rights in state legislature.

Drew: He was one of the founders of the Big Gay Cocktail Club, a group which has been raising money for GLBT organizations over the past decade. He also loves to travel, most recently backpacking solo through Guatemala and Nicaragua. "I was fortunate to have Tom's total support," Jemilo said. "Unfortunately, he is heavily attached to showering once a day." Jemilo has also "stepped out of corporate America this past year to start my own consulting company, FastFrontier.com."

Gay Games exceeds
1,700 registrants

The organizers of the 2010 Gay Games in Cologne, Germany, announced Sept. 14 that more than 1,700 athletes and artists have now registered to participate in the quadrennial sports & cultural event next July and August, according to a press release.

Participants from more than 30 nations have already signed up, including many from Eastern European countries where many who are openly gay or lesbian are still persecuted. Participation by the host country Germany leads all other nations with registrations from the United States and The Netherlands following close behind.

See www.games-cologne.com.

AIDS Walk/Run
Oct. 3

There is still time to register for the AIDS Run & Walk Chicago 2009 at www.aidsrunwalk.org.

To participate alongside thousands of supporters Saturday, Oct. 3, in Grant Park, visit www.aidsrunwalk.org and click "Register Now." E-mail runwalk@aidschicago.org if there are any questions.

AIDS Run & Walk Chicago 2008 raised more than \$500,000.

To further support these local organizations, the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) will give 100 percent of all money raised by CommunityDirect teams back to the participating HIV/AIDS service organizations. In order to participate in the CommunityDirect Program, agencies must belong to AFC's Service Providers Council. For more information about CommunityDirect, contact Katie O'Malley at komalley@aidschicago.org or call 312-334-0946.

Nine to Twelve to
start 31st season

Nine to Twelve, the longest-running GLBT bowling league in the suburbs, will start its 31st season Saturday, Sept. 19, at River Rand Bowl, 191 S. River, Des Plaines, 9 p.m.-12 a.m.

The Nine to Twelve league bowls monthly on the third Saturday of each month from September through May. League members are invited to Hunter's after the evening concludes and receive a pass for free entry to the club.

Due to the success of the Nine to Twelve League, a second league—Nine to Twelve No Tap—began five years ago. The No Tap league bowls on the first Saturday of the month; it starts Oct. 3 and continues through May.

Interested persons should contact the league secretary, Rob, at retroactive1@comcast.net.

Gay powerlifter
golden again

Chris Morgan, the current Gay Games powerlifting champion, has won gold at the World Deadlift Championships, according to a press release.

He was lifting in the World Championship Single Event competition, held in Bradford, West Yorkshire, England, and made lifts of 200 kilos (440.9 lbs.), 230 kilos (507.1 lbs.) and 250 kilos (551.1 lbs.) to clinch the World Open title in the 82.5-kilo (181.9-lb.) class. Morgan also finished second overall amongst 120 lifters, narrowly missing out on the "best lifter" award that is presented across all weight classes.

Read more about Morgan at www.ChunkyMuscle.com.

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- Demographic reports also influence marketing investment. Virtually absent until recently, we now see a growing variety of products and services represented in gay media, celebrating our diversity. Ads keep LGBT publications and websites in business, serving their communities with independent news and information.
- Beyond simply advertising, though, these companies support us in many ways, including sponsoring community events and funding community-based charities in order to earn our loyalty.
- Taking an annual pulse on market trends through surveys helps demonstrate the LGBT community's growing power, and influences positive change.

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

He is a longtime advocate for and member of the LGBT community, and is involved in several charitable groups, community associations, and professional organizations.

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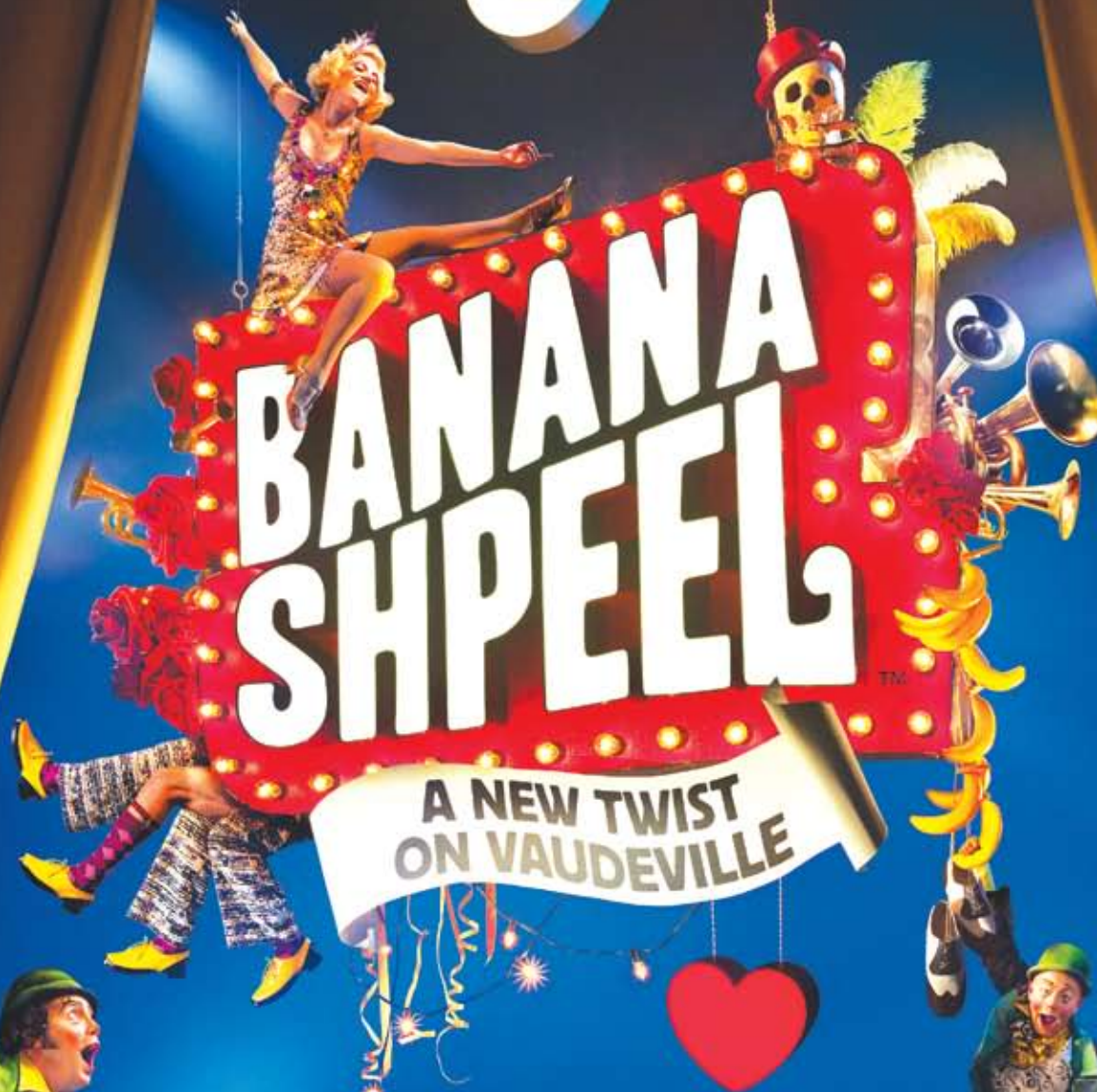
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