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WINDY CITY TIMES

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

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Last meeting of council emotional

BY KATE SOSIN

In a City Hall board room that had been nearly empty in past months, members and past members of Chicago's Advisory Council in LGBT Issues (ACLGBTI) crowded into an emotionally charged final meeting of the council Dec. 14.

ACLGBTI expires Jan. 1, 2012, and will be replaced by a council on women and LGBT issues. Also departing is LGBT city liaison Bill Greaves, whose position was cut in the 2012 city budget.

ACLGBTI and other advisory councils protested the changes to their councils in past months, but with the budget now approved, members of ACLGBTI wrapped up

old business with resignation, sadness and anger.

"We've done good things," said Chair Beth Kelly. "That work has largely been dismissed by the current administration. I think that is a mistake."

Council members reminisced about their achievements in past years—the passage of gender identity protections in Chicago, the continuation of the Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame, helping with the 2003 meningitis outbreak among LGBT Chicagoans and the honoring of a 7th grader who wrote an essay on LGBT rights.

"I believe despite what happened, our community is a lot more powerful, a lot more vibrant, and there are a lot of good things ahead for us," said longtime member Robert Castillo.

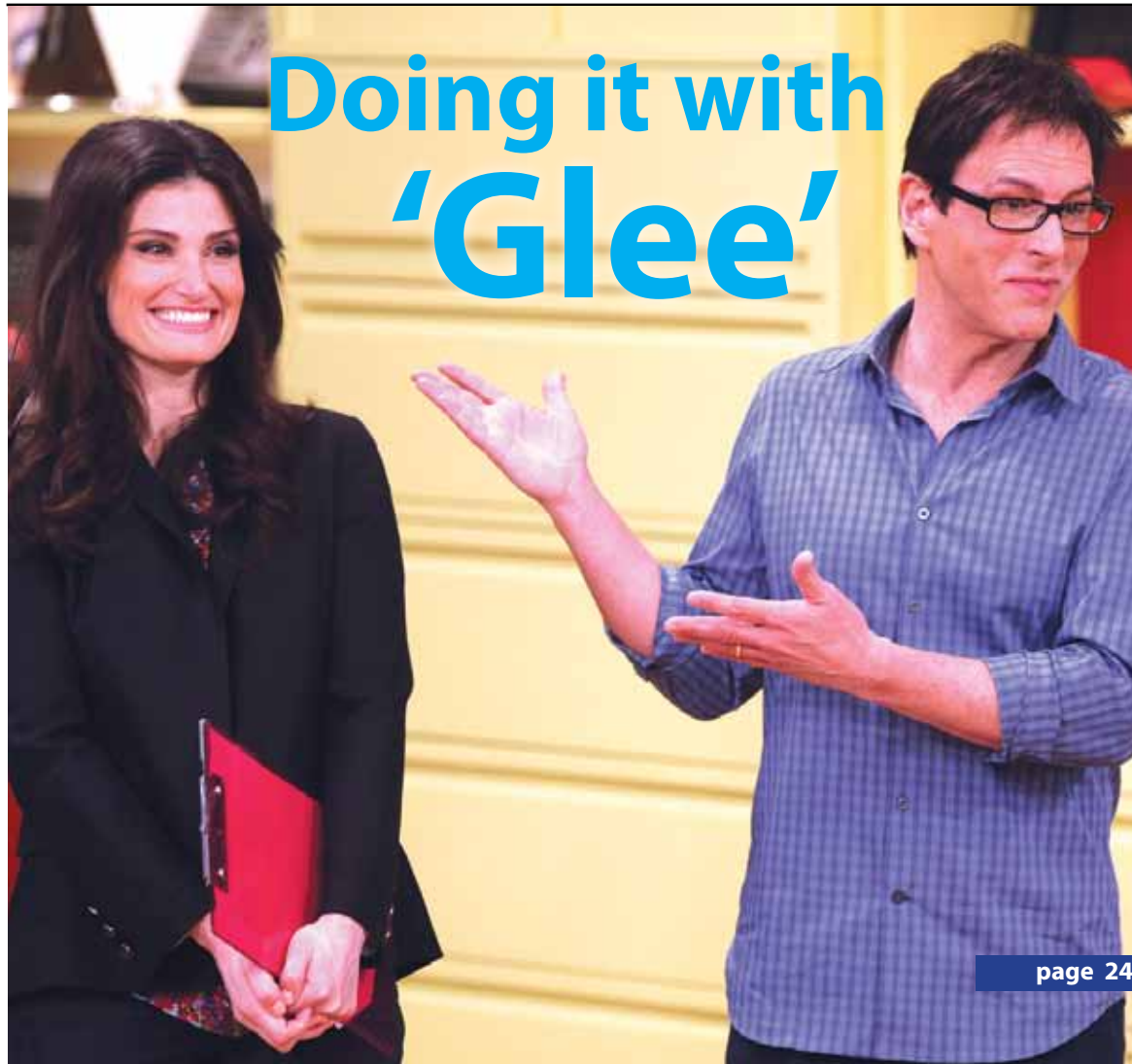
Mona Noriega, director of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations (which oversees ACLGBTI) and a prominent LGBT activist herself, attended the first half of the meeting and thanked members for their service.

"I think we have accomplished a lot, and I look forward to doing more, and I just wanted to say thank you," Noriega said.

The city awarded members with large framed certificates.

Three new councils will replace the old structure. In addition to the Council on Women and LGBT Issues,

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As the casting director of TV's The Glee Project, Robert J. Ulrich (above, with Glee co-star Idina Menzel) was one of those responsible for new talent in Glee's current season. The man involved in such other shows as Drop Dead Diva and CSI: Crime Scene Investigation talked with Windy City Times about his background and The Glee Project's future on page 24. Photo courtesy of Oxygen

Pantry important part of Lakeview LGBT community

BY STEVEN CHAITMAN

With its main location just north of Boystown (at 3831 N. Broadway St.), Lakeview Pantry has been a nonprofit mainstay in Chicago's geographic LGBT community, a local magnet for those looking to volunteer their time or money to have an immediate impact on the lives of the hungry. Members of the LGBT community take part in the pantry's operation at every level from full-time staff to volunteers to clients. For all of them, Lakeview Pantry does more than provide a vital service, but a safe space welcoming of all people.

Open since 1970, the pantry distributes grocery bags containing two weeks worth of groceries to 2,800 clients per month with the help of as many as 140 volunteers per week and 10 full-time staff members. In addition to grocery distribution through its North Broadway and 1414 W. Oakdale Ave. locations, the pantry provides clothing and household goods, a home-delivery service, case management services and more.

Yet, judging by the large murals painted on the distribution area walls, the bouquets of flowers and the mere fact that the pantry is described as a "client choice model," it's clear that Lakeview Pantry values the quality of the experience for all who must rely on it.

"One thing we like to say is how we do our work is as important as what our work is," said Executive Director Gary Garland.

During distribution days (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) on North Broadway, staff and vol-

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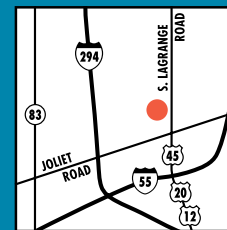
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Photos on cover (left, from top): Photo of Gavin Creel by Emily Sopha; photo of Joe Murray; photo of the Rev. Al Sharpton by Hal Baim; picture of Jessa Hinton by Adam Bouska; photo of David Tutera courtesy of weTV

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I HEAR A SYMPHONY

See photos from the Lakeside Pride Symphony Orchestra's recent concert (left) at Center on Halsted.

Photo by Susan Mattes



Read an interview with Diego Rocha, who was recently ousted from the reality show Project Accessory.

Photo courtesy of Lifetime



Financial guru Phil Sitar offers his wisdom in two timely articles about taxes and life insurance.

Photo courtesy of Phil Sitar

ANN AID

Read about state Rep. Ann Williams' breakfast and see photos of out exec Richard Turner's honor.

STRONG ENOUGH

Read Charlene Strong's powerful editorial on the Penn State scandal—and her own abuse. Also, read letters from readers regarding the Hyatt and unions.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

This week's entertainment round-up includes items on Christopher Meloni, 'Work It' and award nominations.

plus
DAILY BREAKING NEWS

HAPPY HOLLIDAY



Read roundups of concerts by Tori Amos, Morrissey and Jennifer Holliday (above).

Photo by Jerry Nunn

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Local gay Catholic challenges N.Y. archbishop to debate

BY CHUCK COLBERT

The leader of a LGBT Catholic advocacy group has challenged Archbishop Timothy Dolan of New York to a debate on gay marriage.

The Chicago-based Rainbow Sash Movement (RSM) invited Dolan, who is also president of the U.S. Catholic bishops' conference, the church's official lobbying arm, through a Dec. 7 blog entry posted on the organization's web site.

Rainbow Sash's executive director, Joe Murray, said the offer to debate extends to Dolan for a meeting with him "in the public square at any Catholic university in the United States."

"Such a debate will not only be informative, but could highlight reason over homophobia," RSM board of directors said.

The National Catholic Reporter (NCR) reported that the archdiocese was aware of the invitation but that Dolan was unlikely to accept.

"You don't invite someone to dialogue by resorting to cheap *ad hominem* attacks on the person with whom you wish to debate and posting that invitation on a blog," Kate Monaghan, assistant communications director for the New York archdiocese, told NCR.

She added, "The movement states that it is interested in 'a mature exchange of ideas' but by employing the following, stating that Archbishop Dolan is an 'accomplice' in 'soul murder,' 'more comfortable taking cheap shots from his ivory tower,' 'lacks courage' and will likely meet the request with 'arrogance,' you run contrary to the very nature of your appeal for civil, respectful dialogue."

In response, Rainbow Sash posted a sharp rebuke. "Debating is a discussion, as of a public question in an assembly, involving opposing viewpoints," wrote the RSM board of directors. "A dialogue is an exchange of ideas or opinions on a particular issue such as gay marriage, with a view to reaching a amicable agreement or settlement. Dolan has shown by his previous mean spirited comments on gay marriage that he is not interested in a respectful dialogue process. That is why we are now calling for a debate."

Reached by phone, Monaghan said, "No further comment is necessary. But thank you for asking."

During a telephone interview, Murray said that "the memory of my deceased lover," who died last April, prompted him to challenge Dolan. "We had looked forward to taking advantage of civil unions here in Illinois."

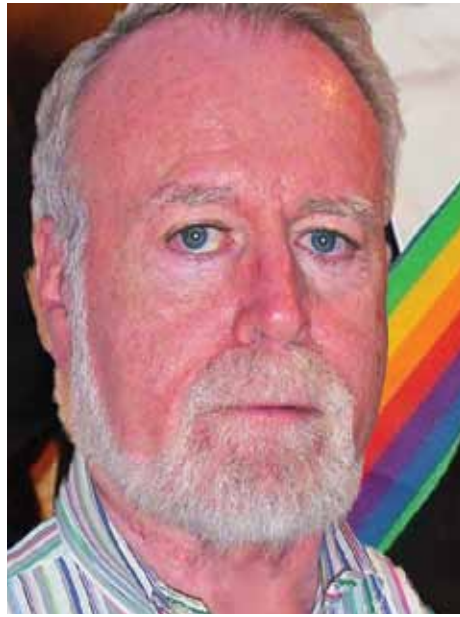
Civil-unions legislation, however, did not take effect until June 1, with Chicago's Cardinal Francis George and the Catholic Conference of Illinois opposed to the new law.

In a change of tactics, Murray also said the time for "dialogue" has passed. "We've moved beyond asking for respectful dialogue, which we have requested for years on our blog."

"We need to move to a new level of engagement," said Murray. "We need to engage the bishops as adult human beings and hold them accountable in public for things they say about the LGBT community."

Last spring, for example, before New York legalized same-sex marriage, Dolan said on his blog, "To tamper with [the] definition [of traditional marriage], or to engage in some Orwellian social engineering about the nature and purpose of marriage, is perilous to all of us."

The archbishop continued, "If the definition of marriage is continually being altered, could it not in the future be morphed again to include multiple spouses or even family members?"



Joe Murray.

In another blog posting Dolan wrote, "Last time I consulted an atlas, it is clear we are living in New York, in the United States of America—not in China or North Korea. In those countries, government presumes daily to 'redefine' rights, relationships, values, and natural law. There, communiqués from the government can dictate the size of families, who lives and who dies, and what the very definition of 'family' and 'marriage' means."

Over the years, the U.S. Catholic bishops indeed have stepped up anti-gay rhetoric and activism. For example, Catholic officials have sought to deny access to subsidized housing for gay and lesbian seniors, stopped providing foster-care and adoption services rather than place children with same-sex couples, and fired openly gay people from employment for reasons that have nothing to do with job performances. Children of same-sex couples have also been banned, in some cases, from attending parochial schools.

With the advent of same-sex marriage in the nation's capital, the cardinal archbishop of Washington, D.C., decided to stop providing health insurance medical benefits to spouses and dependents of all employees in the archdiocese rather than offering them to same-sex couples and their families.

And in opposing civil marriage for gay couples—from Maine to New York to Maryland, from Rhode Island to Minnesota to California and the District of Columbia—the bishops have spoken out from the pulpit, through multi-media campaigns, bulletin inserts, and homilies.

In a Sept. 20 letter to the president, Dolan said the Obama administration's decision to stop defending in court the Defense of Marriage Act, a federal ban on same-sex marriage, would "precipitate a national conflict between church and state of enormous proportions." Increasingly, the bishops say the religious liberties of those who oppose gay marriage are in jeopardy.

However, in a Nov. 14 open letter to Dolan, Marianne Duddy-Burke, executive director of Dignity USA, a national LGBT Catholic organization, referred the bishops' activities as "pastoral damage," adding, "These actions contribute to the continued flood of members out of our Church, and to diminishing commitment among those who remain."

On behalf of Dignity, Duddy-Burke suggested that the bishops begin "a conversation" with

LGBT Catholics, families, friends, "sisters and priests who minister with us, and theologians wrestling with questions that are important to our community and our Church."

To that aim, Duddy-Burke offered to identify persons to serve on a pastoral and advisory committee to engage the bishops' conference.

However, Dolan has yet to reply to her letter, Duddy-Burke said.

Other groups and individuals have attempted to engage Dolan and other members of Church hierarchy.

A year ago, Boston-based psychotherapist Charles Martel wrote to Dolan asking for conversation about same-sex civil marriage.

A graduate of Catholic University, Martel is a co-founder of Catholics for Marriage Equality.

Dolan responded in writing on Dec. 2, 2010: "It is not my practice to meet with advocates for change in matters of settled faith and morals."

In the same letter Dolan suggested that Martel request a meeting with Cardinal Sean O'Malley of the Boston archdiocese.

However, as Martel explained to Dolan in follow-up correspondence, dated Dec. 15, 2010—when the Massachusetts-based Religious Coalition for the Freedom to Marry (RCFM) asked, several years ago, for a meeting with the cardinal—the organization never heard back from him. A lay Catholic, Martel served on RCFM's board of directors.

Increasingly, the bishops and the laity are at odds about same-sex marriage. Two recent public-opinion polls—ABC News and Washington Post, March 18, 2011, and Public Religion Research Institute, March 22, 2011—show Catholic support among the laity for same-sex marriage ranging from 63 to 71 percent. Moreover, Catholic support in both polls is 10 percent higher than the national average and shows a more rapid acceptance of same-sex marriage rights by Catholics than most U.S. residents.

Meanwhile, asked about the Rainbow Sash challenge to Dolan, Francis DeBernardo said, "Any effort at dialogue is a good effort. It would be wonderful if Dolan met with any group."

DeBernardo serves as executive director of New Ways Ministry, a gay-positive educational and pastoral organization based in Maryland.

While he likes the venue of a Catholic college or university, DeBernardo added, "I am not keen on a big public debate. That would force Dolan into a position of defending. What we need now is changing hearts and minds."

ONLINE AT
WINDYCITYMEDIAGROUP.COM
NATIONAL NEWS

—LGBTs crash Michele Bachmann (left) event

—Sandusky attorney accidentally promotes gay-sex line

—Va. board bans same-sex adoption

"My ideal would be a town hall meeting where people could come and express their views to the bishops," said DeBernardo. "There are precedents for dialogue, but I don't know there are precedents for debate."

Spokespersons for the Washington, D.C.-based Catholics for Equality, however, say reaching out to Church leaders is futile. "[We] ha[ve] made no attempts to engage Archbishop Dolan, as we believe it's not a productive use of time or resources," said the organization's executive director, Phil Attey.

"For the past 40 years, progressive Catholic groups have spent countless hours and dollars attempting to educate and engage our hierarchy on LGBT issues and church policy—all in vain, as the Vatican and United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have ignored all such attempts, and if anything, have responded by levying even more heavy handed dictates on these issues," said Attey.

Catholics for Equality advocates political activism on behalf of the LGBT community. Accordingly, Attey said, his organization would "focus our efforts and resources on engaging Catholic citizens, elected officials and public policy makers who do allow pro-equality Catholics an audience and have the power to change the laws in our country which discriminate against LGBT Americans."

Former Czech President Vaclav Havel dead

Former Czech President Vaclav Havel has died at age 75, according to CNN.com.

Havel, a playwright-turned-political activist, spent four and a half years in prison for opposing Czechoslovakia's Communist government before eventually becoming president of that country, and of the Czech Republic when the country split in two in 1992.

A constant contender for the Nobel Peace Prize, Havel never won, but fought Communism around the world until his death.

He was also an ally of the LGBT community. According to liberalpastor.blogspot.com, Havel was pleased when the Czech Republic's Chamber of Deputies passed a domestic-partnership law several years ago.

Havel also had said, "I was most intrigued in the debate by the absurd ideology advocated by the Christian Democrats and [Civic Democratic Party co-founder Vaclav] Klaus, who argue that family should have advantages since, unlike homosexual couples, it brings children to life. This is the concept of family as a sort of calf shed in which bulls can inseminate cows so that calves are born."

Deportation case closed against lesbian couple

For the first time since the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Nov. 17 announcement that a national "working group" had begun reviewing all cases pending in immigration courts, Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) has closed a deportation case involving a married same-sex couple, according to StopTheDeportations.com.

Immigration judge Terry Bain granted a joint motion to administratively close removal proceedings against lesbian Monica Alcota, an Argentinian national, because "good cause has been established."

Alcota's lawyer, Lavi Soloway, submitted the request for administrative closure to ICE Chief Counsel in Manhattan Nov. 14. The request was based on her marriage to her spouse, Cristina Ojeda, who is a U.S. citizen; her roots in the community in which she lives and works; her activism against the Defense of Marriage Act; and the absence of any adverse factors.

Alcota and Ojeda issued a statement that reads, in part, "We are grateful that the government lawyers and the judge saw the humanity of our situation and respected our marriage. ... We must all continue to work to make sure no lesbian or gay couples are separated by deportation."

Same-sex marriage good for health

BY BOB ROEHR

Same-sex marriage improves the health of gay and bisexual men, even if they are not themselves married, according to new research conducted in Boston. It also reduces their health-care expenditures.

"We've known for decades that marriage is good for health and longevity among heterosexual men; this extends it to sexual minority men as well," said Mark L. Hatzenbuehler, a Columbia University researcher and lead author of the study that appeared in the American Journal of Public Health.

It looked at the healthcare records of 1211 gay and bisexual men who visited the Fenway Health clinic at least once in the 12-month periods both before and after the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts legalized same sex marriage.

The men "experienced a significant decrease in their medical and mental healthcare visits compared to the twelve months before the law changed. That resulted in a 13 percent reduction in healthcare visits and a 14 percent reduction in healthcare costs," Hatzenbuehler said.

The mean expenditure decreased by more than \$300, from \$2442.28 to \$2137.38. The decrease was particularly striking because it occurred during a period in which average healthcare expenditures increased by 8 percent a year in the United States.

Looking at the most common reasons for visits to the clinic; there was a decrease in visits for general medical care, hypertension, and sexually transmitted infections. On the mental health side, there was a decrease in diagnoses of depressive, anxiety and adjustment disorders.



Mark L. Hatzenbuehler. Photo courtesy of Hatzenbuehler

Perhaps surprisingly, one did not have to be married in order to benefit. The 40 percent of men in a partnered relationship and their single peers showed similar gains.

Hatzenbuehler attributes it to lifting the social stigma of marriage discrimination that affects both groups of men. Social discrimination contributes to stress and anxiety, which negatively affects the physical and mental health of those who experience that discrimination.

Attempts to overturn the marriage decision were still ongoing during the second year of the

study. It is tempting to hypothesize that these activities served to perpetuate a sense of discrimination and stress, and that even greater health benefits might be seen at a later time point after those right wing challenges were completely laid to rest.

Hatzenbuehler agreed, but pointed out some of the difficulties of conducting longer-term research. Among them is a weakening causal link between the timing of the court decision and the observed effect.

"Because of the uncertainty [during that first year], you might expect an increase in anxiety

disorders. But the fact that we are finding a reduction strengthens our case," he said.

The men in the study ranged in age from 18 to over 65, though most were 26-45. They were broadly representative of the gay and bisexual population in Massachusetts that has been found in other studies, but they were slightly younger and better educated.

Lesbians were not included in the study because there was an insufficient number with visits to the clinic at those two time points. However, he says previous studies suggest that the conclusions would hold true for them as well.

Federal judge rules in favor of Ohio lesbian in job-bias case

In Ohio, Shari Hutchinson, civil-rights attorneys Avery Friedman and Elizabeth Wells, and Tico Almeida of the national organization Freedom to Work, held a press conference Dec. 7 at the City Club of Cleveland to announce a \$100,000 settlement on behalf of Hutchinson, according to a press release from Freedom to Work.

Hutchinson was repeatedly denied promotions and discriminated against because of her sexual orientation while working for the Child Support Enforcement Agency for Cuyahoga County.

After Hutchinson's co-workers and managers learned that she is lesbian, they spread false rumors about her and repeatedly passed her over for promotions that went to significantly less-qualified applicants. Hutchinson filed a federal lawsuit arguing that Cuyahoga County's discrimination violated the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Neither Ohio law nor federal law bans workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation.

In response, the county's attorneys submitted papers, contending that gays and lesbians do not fall under the protections of the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution. The Honorable James S. Gwin of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio rejected the county's argument, criticizing the county's attorneys for arguing that "all of Hutchinson's claims must fail because sexual orientation is not a protected class, and thus does not merit the constitutional protection, under the Equal Protection Clause, that Hutchinson seeks."

Gwin allowed Hutchinson's case to go forward, and the settlement was reached on the eve of the trial.

Corrections

In an article in the Dec. 14 issue of Windy City Times, Joe Hollendoner's age was stated as 32. He is actually 30.

Also, in the entertainment Q&A with Kate Alabaster, Shaina Rae is mistakenly identified as a lesbian.

Windy City Times regrets the errors.

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An 'epic' year for marriage equality—maybe

BY DANA RUDOLPH
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

One leading advocate called 2011 an "epic" year for marriage equality. Was it?

While only one state—New York—enacted full marriage rights for same-sex couples, it was the most populous state to do so. Five other states also moved closer to marriage equality than ever before. Public opinion shifted dramatically towards supporting equality. Also, the Obama administration announced that it no longer considers a key part of the Defense of Marriage Act constitutional.

On the negative side, however, three states failed to pass marriage equality bills that had been introduced in their legislatures, and two states passed bills to put measures on their ballots in 2012 that will seek to ban marriage for same-sex couples under their state constitutions.

Despite the negatives, Evan Wolfson, president of the national Freedom to Marry group, said in an interview that 2011 was "an epic year of real transformation."

On the federal level, Attorney General Eric Holder wrote a letter to Congress in February, stating that the administration believes Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) is unconstitutional and will no longer defend it.

Section 3 of DOMA states that the federal government will not, for any federal purposes, recognize the marriages of same-sex couples.

Holder's letter said the administration believes laws disfavoring persons based on sexual orientation should have to pass the most stringent judicial review—heightened scrutiny. And it said the administration would argue so in two cases challenging DOMA in the 2nd Circuit.

LGBT legal advocacy group Lambda Legal, in its December "State of the Law 2011" report, called Holder's letter "game changing."

Wolfson said it represented "an immense historical shift."

Another sign of this shift, he said, was the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT)," the military's ban on openly gay servicemembers. DADT repeal will help fuel the marriage equality effort, Wolfson said, "because Americans are now going to see the women and men serving our country as openly gay members of couples and openly gay members of families."

On the state level, the biggest win in 2011 was in New York, where the legislature passed a marriage-equality bill in June. When Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed the bill, he doubled the percentage of same-sex couples living in states that allow them to marry. New York is also the only state to have passed marriage equality through a Republican-led legislative chamber, its state Senate.

Cuomo, by adding his vocal support to the bill, "put his political capital on the line," Wolfson said. His success prompted politico.com to call him a "national contender" and leader of the Democratic Party's progressive base. The Washington Post said his triumph made him "a first among equals when it comes to the jockeying for the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination."

"The freedom to marry went from being a perceived and presumed 'third rail' that politicians ran from to now being a pathway to political gain," said Wolfson.

Five other states came closer to marriage equality than ever before. Maryland for the first time passed a marriage equality bill out of a legislative chamber, its Senate, although the measure fell short of winning in the House. In addition, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois and Rhode



Evan Wolfson. Photo by David Shankbone

Island each passed civil-union legislation.

However, there were disappointments. In Colorado, a civil-union bill was killed on a party-line vote in the Republican-led House Judiciary Committee, after passing the Democrat-controlled Senate.

In Rhode Island, the civil-union bill disappointed many because a bill for full marriage equality had been on the legislature's agenda. It was dropped after it failed to gain enough support, despite large Democratic majorities in both chambers and Gov. Lincoln Chafee's promise to sign it.

LGBT groups were also disappointed with a provision in Rhode Island's civil-union bill providing extensive exemptions on religious grounds for those who don't wish to recognize those unions. Chafee himself said the civil union law "fails to fully achieve" the goal of providing same-sex couples with equal rights.

Two states saw progress in lawsuits that could lead to marriage equality. In New Jersey, marriage equality advocates have sued the state, claiming that the state's existing civil union laws do not provide them with full equality—an equality the state Supreme Court said, in October 2006, is guaranteed by the state constitution.

In California, a three-judge panel of the federal Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals heard oral arguments Dec. 8 on procedural matters related to the case to determine the constitutionality of Prop 8, the state's ban on marriage for same-sex couples. Regardless of the outcome, the case will almost certainly be appealed to the full 9th Circuit court and/or the U.S. Supreme Court.

Three states successfully played defense in 2011.

Iowa, New Mexico and Wyoming held firm against attempts to pass bills for ballot measures that sought to ban marriage for same-sex couples under their state constitutions. If passed, Iowa's bill would have taken away the right to marry that same-sex couples gained in 2009.

But there were some clear setbacks in 2011 as well.

North Carolina and Minnesota passed bills for ballot measures in 2012 that seek to ban marriage for same-sex couples under the state constitutions. Indiana and Pennsylvania started the process for such ballot measures, which could see further action in 2012.

In Maine, however, LGBT advocates gained enough signatures to place a measure in favor of marriage equality before voters on the 2012 ballot—although advocates in California and

Oregon decided to postpone such attempts and continue to build support.

These ballot measures could be impacted by what was perhaps the most significant win in 2011: a shift in public opinion towards support for marriage equality.

Support for marriage equality nationwide rose about one percent per year between 1996 and 2009, but jumped to a rate of five percent per year in 2010 and 2011, according to a July analysis of over a decade's worth of polling data by Joel Benenson, President Barack Obama's lead pollster, and Dr. Jan van Lohuizen, President George W. Bush's lead pollster. Freedom to Marry commissioned the study.

The average level of support for marriage equality was 41 percent in 2009, but 51 percent in 2011, based on four leading national polls—CNN-ORC International, Gallup, Pew, and Washington Post-ABC News.

Center awarded city HIV grant

BY KATE SOSIN

The Center on Halsted will be increasing its HIV-prevention services in 2012.

The organization has been awarded three prevention grants from the Chicago Department of Public Health, totaling \$390,109.

Center CEO Modesto "Tico" Valle said the organization was "elated" to receive the money.

Valle said that the money will result in five to six new hires at the center.

It is the second large grant the facility has secured for HIV-prevention work in recent



Modesto "Tico" Valle.

months. In September, the organization announced that it received \$1.6 million from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to expand services for African-American and Latino gay and bisexual men.

The latest round of grants is intended to target white MSMs (men who have sex with men), Latino MSMs and youth.

The money from recent grants has allowed the center to expand its testing hours to late nights and weekends, said Valle.

The funds also represent a shift in programming for the center, which, apart from administering HIV testing, had scaled back on such programs in recent years. According to Valle, the center lost approximately \$250,000 in funds five years ago with government cuts.

"We were testing more people than we could handle," he said.

The new money has allowed the facility to restore those programs and add to them, he said.

The center will be collaborating on prevention services with Affinity Community Services, Chicago House, the Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus and Northwestern University's IMPACT Program.

This change is driven in part by "overwhelming generational momentum," Wolfson explained, with almost 70 percent of voters under 40 supporting marriage equality.

However, the analysis also concluded that since 2006, support has risen 15 percent among seniors, 13 percent among Independents, and 8 percent among Republicans.

Additionally, it found that marriage equality supporters now hold their views as strongly as opponents, which was not the case in the past.

"The politics of the freedom to marry have changed dramatically, as has public support," said Wolfson.

All told, he said, the events of 2011 mean that "We now have real wind in our sails as we go forward."

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Nobel Peace laureates to convene in Chicago

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel has announced that Chicago will host the 12th World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates—the first such summit to be held in North America—April 23-25 at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

The summit is internationally recognized as among the most important annual events in the field of peacemaking, attracting hundreds of high-profile leaders and organizations from around the globe. Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and the Hon. Walter Veltroni, the former mayor of Rome, are co-chairing the event. Emanuel will serve as the summit's honorary co-chair.

Emanuel made the announcement at the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum alongside 2012 World Summit Host Committee members such as Robert Gallucci, president of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; Chris Kennedy, chair of the Board of Trustees, University of Illinois and immediate past president of Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc.; Kerry Kennedy, president of the Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights; Terry Mazany, president and CEO of The Chicago Community Trust; and Michael Sacks, CEO of Grosvenor Capital Management and vice chairman of World Business Chicago.

For more information, visit <http://www.nobelpeace-summits.org>.

National child-ID program goes digital

Robert D. Grant, special agent-in-charge of the Chicago office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), recently unveiled a new digital version of the paper child-ID kit as distributed by the National Child ID Program.

Established in 1997 in partnership with the American Football Coaches Association (AFCA), this nationwide program provides inkless fingerprint and DNA sample kits to interested parents, grandparents or guardians of minor children.

Grant said "This initiative is part of our efforts to help protect our nation's estimated 60 million youths. We encourage anyone with young children and who has a smartphone to download this valuable application today." At present, the application is only available for iPhones and can be downloaded, free of charge, from iTunes. A Droid compatible version will be available in early January.

See <http://www.childidprogram.com> for more information about the program. Traditional paper child-ID kits are also available to interested groups and organizations through the Chicago FBI's Community Outreach Program at 312-421-6700.

HBHC's new Brown Elephant campaign launched amid worker healthcare questions

BY YASMIN NAIR

Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC) unveiled a new campaign focused on its resale store, the Brown Elephant, Dec. 16. State Rep. Sara Feingenholtz, D-12th Dist., was on hand to help make the announcement at the North Halsted Brown Elephant location.

Called "Donate Shop Save Lives," the campaign seeks to remind customers that profits made by Brown Elephant go toward charity care. Jim Cobb, director of business development at HBHC, told Windy City Times that the store was being retooled to give it less of a thrift-store atmosphere and more of a retail environment.

The Brown Elephant, with three branches across the city and Oak Park, has continued to make profits for HBHC even in a difficult economy, perhaps precisely because it is a thrift store that offers discounted prices. This is confirmed on its own website: Although there are no numbers about actual profits, the site claims that "more than 740,000 items are sold" each year.

However, Windy City Times has heard persistent reports that this has come amid drastic cutting of staff hours so that only very few employees now have full-time hours and healthcare. When asked at the Dec. 16 event, Cobb put the figure of full-time employees at around nine. However, when contacted later for more details, he said he could not confirm the number and we would have to contact PCI, HBHC's public-



Jamal Edwards. Photo by Yasmin Nair

relations company (which has been handling all communications with WCT) for confirmation.

We have asked HBHC to confirm the number of employees who are full-time and enjoy healthcare benefits, what percentage of employees out of the total number and/or what number of employees out of the total number are full-time versus part-time.

Windy City Times also asked if there had been

a recent shift in numbers and, if so, when that shift occurred. At a November press conference, HBHC CEO Jamal Edwards had said, "We have had to make some changes in the staffing pattern of the Brown Elephant stores; we had a number of full-time employees at management level and supervisor levels. We do not have as many full-time employees any more at the sales associate level. That's unfortunate. Again, that's not a problem that I created; that's what we inherited and we're trying to fix. The fact that we can't provide insurance to all of our [employees] right now is not something that I'm proud of. That's something I'm determined to turn around, we can't do that without getting our finances in order."

HBHC has so far declined to give any numbers. In its latest written response, it said, "This

subject was addressed at the recent press conference for which WCT was in attendance. Like any retail business, the Brown Elephant has a mixture of full-time and part-time employees serving to meet the needs of the business and its customers. However, as a business with competition and aggressive competitors, there will be no further comment on the internal business management and business model that could harm the competitiveness of the Brown Elephant."

It was not made clear why giving numbers would harm the competitiveness of the establishment. It is also unclear how much could be generated in savings by cutting the healthcare of employees, particularly those who work for the retail outlet of a healthcare service provider.

Man gets 60 years for murdering gay businessman

BY KATE SOSIN

A man convicted of the 2008 murder of the gay owner of Lucca's Restaurant in Lakeview, was sentenced to 60 years in prison Dec. 15, according to the Cook County state's attorney's office.

David Sidener of Evansville, Ind., was arrested in October 2008 for the murder of Randall Hilderbrand, who was discovered bound and beaten to death in the basement of Lucca's Restaurant (now closed), 2834 N. Southport Ave. The restaurant had also been robbed.

Hilderbrand, 47, was an openly gay man. Police believed the two men were acquainted.

Sidener was found guilty of the murder earlier this year.

Mike Madigan has primary opponent

Chicago Latina Michele Piszczor has entered the Illinois State House District 22 Democrat primary race against Speaker of the House Michael Madigan, according to a press release.

Piszczor, 25—whose first involvement in politics was campaigning in Hillary Clinton's 2008 presidential campaign—said, "Mr. Madigan was elected 41 years ago. The 22nd district is way overdue for a change in proper representation."

She added, "Though I am running as a Democrat, it will be difficult to garner full support of the Democrat Party, since Mr. Madigan is the leader of the party in Illinois. I will, therefore, count on the support of individuals from all walks of life who are tired of the same old politics in Illinois to bring about the change we seek."

See <http://www.MicheleforIllinois.com> for more information.



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Gay attorney helps boxer face murder charge



Law partners Jon Erickson (left) and Michael Oppenheimer flank Semajay Thomas. Photo courtesy of Erickson

BY JAMIE ANNE ROYCE

Hollywood screenplay writers couldn't have created a better story: A teen boxing prodigy with Olympic dreams is accused of murder, then acquitted after a dramatic jury trial and goes on to win the USA Boxing National Championship six months later.

However, for Semajay Thomas, it's not a movie—it's his life.

At age 15, Thomas lived in Chicago's West Town next to a gang house inhabited by members of Satan's Disciples. The gang tried to recruit Thomas as a pre-teen, but he resisted drugs and organized crime, choosing to pursue his studies and his promising boxing career.

"Everybody in the neighborhood knew Semajay, and everybody knew that he was special. Even the gang kids would come to Eckhart Park and watch him train because he was something to see," said Jon Erickson, an openly gay man who is a partner at the law firm, Erickson & Oppenheimer, that represented Thomas.

Erickson & Oppenheimer specializes in criminal defense and civil-rights litigation, especially police misconduct, police brutality and false arrest. A third of the firm's clientele is gay and lesbian.

Erickson says Thomas was on his front porch when Reynaldo Ortiz walked by, taunting the gang members who were drinking on the neighboring porch. When Thomas sensed trouble, he went inside his home. Fifteen minutes later, Chicago Police found Ortiz beaten to death on

Thomas' street.

Several gang members pointed the finger at Thomas, and he was charged with first degree murder two weeks after Ortiz was found dead.

"I was ranked number one at the time. I won the Junior Olympics silver medal, I won the National Silver Gloves; for all that to be taken away from me, it was real devastating and a real burden for my family to bear," said Thomas.

While awaiting trial, Thomas spent 15 months at the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center, continuing to box by tying up his hands with ripped bed sheets and punching his mattress placed against the side of his cell.

"I started training in the facility, and everybody wanted me to help them train, to get them in shape, show them how to box," said Thomas. "The whole facility started to praise me, to help motivate me. And I started to motivate the younger kids by helping them keep their faith, help keep them positive, and [encouraging them] to follow their dreams. Life doesn't end here."

Very little physical evidence tied Thomas to Ortiz's murder. Thomas' DNA was not found on the victim's body, and his hands were not bruised or injured like they probably would have been if he had fatally beaten someone. According to Erickson, the murder charge against Thomas was based mostly on the eyewitness accounts given by the gang members.

"This is not unusual. Very often, there's not a lot more evidence in murder cases like this," said Erickson, who was quick to point out the pros-

ecutor and police followed the evidence where it led them.

During the trial, Thomas took to the stand to tell his side of the story. "It didn't take us long to realize Semajay was his own best defense," said Erickson.

Thomas was asked who the real killers were, and he hesitated, knowing that gang members would retaliate by attacking his mother and sisters if he named names, but risked conviction—and his Olympic dreams—if he refused. Thomas eventually said the first name of the Satan's Disciples leader, and the courtroom erupted.

"It was really something right out of a movie," said Erickson. "[Samajay's] mother fell to the floor because she knew what he was being asked to do, the choice he was being asked to make."

After 50 minutes of deliberation, the jury returned a not guilty verdict. Several jury members were in tears, and some of them even asked the judge for permission to hug Thomas.

"As someone who has done criminal defense for 20 years, never have I heard a juror want anything to do with a criminal defendant, but

that just tells you the kind of kid Semajay is," said Erickson.

Thomas wasted no time, pursuing his boxing ambitions the next day. "I was released and I got right back in the gym," said Thomas. "I started back training and sparring. I kept telling everybody I was going to make it to the Olympics."

Thomas and his attorneys have maintained the bond formed throughout the trial. "He's become our kid," said Erickson. "He still comes to the office at least once a week and we sit and talk, find out how he's doing in school."

Six months after Thomas was released, Erickson escorted him to the U.S.A. Boxing Championship, where Thomas took home the 2011 title for the light welterweight division of 141 pounds. Thomas hopes to repeat this victory in February, so he can qualify for the 2012 U.S. Olympic team.

"He's got this spirit about him that's unbreakable," said Erickson. "That's why he'll go all the way."

Quinn, cardinal talk civil unions and abortion

BY KATE SOSIN

Gov. Pat Quinn sat down with Cardinal Francis George and Illinois Catholic bishops Dec. 16 to talk civil unions, abortion rights and solutions to poverty.

The relationship between Quinn and the bishops has appeared strained this year. The meeting comes just a month after the bishops chided Quinn for presenting an award at a luncheon for pro-life group Personal PAC.

In a statement by the bishops released to Windy City Times, the bishops suggested that they took issue with Quinn speaking openly about being Catholic while at the same time disagreeing with official stances of the church.

"It is a matter of personal integrity for people who call themselves Catholic to act in a manner that is consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church," read the statement. "In addition, since he holds a highly visible and influential position, the Governor's statements about conscience or other matters of faith can affect many other people for whose spiritual care bishops are responsible."

LGBT Catholic organization Rainbow Sash Movement said that its inside sources at the meeting reported that Quinn responded that he represented all the people of Illinois, and that he would speak for more than just the Catholic position on issues of abortion, civil unions and gay adoption.

"Clearly the meeting showed that the Governor's office was open to listening to the many voices that make up the citizenry of Illinois," Rainbow Sash Movement wrote in a statement. "Cardinal Francis George and the

Bishops of Illinois could learn a great deal from Governor Quinn's open-door policy."

According to Quinn, the meeting focused on poverty.

"A lot of the discussion was how we could work together to fight poverty—help the people who are less fortunate and need a helping hand," Quinn said in a statement released to Windy City Times. "Getting people jobs, helping people who don't have enough food to eat, that's what the church's social mission is all about. And I'm well versed."

Augie & C.K.'s founders' reunion in May

Augie & Cary will hold their first-ever reunion May 12, 2012, at the L26 Restaurant and Lounge in the Chicago South Loop Hotel, 11 W. 26th St., 7 p.m.-3 a.m.

They started Augie & C.K.'s, a lesbian bar that ran during the 1970s and '80s. It was at 3726 N. Broadway, Charlie's present location.

All raffle proceeds will go to breast-cancer awareness.

Rooms are available at a discount when you call 312-225-7000 and mention Augie & C.K.'s. For more information about lodging, call 773-507-6378 or email martinez-victoria@sbcglobal.net.

LGBT Narcotics Anon. meetings at Haymarket

Narcotics Anonymous meetings for LGBT individuals will take place Mondays 8-9 p.m. at Haymarket Center, 20 N. Sangamon.

For more info, call Anthony Oltean at 312-208-4021.

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Rev. Al Sharpton at PUSH event



The Rev. Al Sharpton (left) and the Rev. Jesse Jackson at the Rainbow PUSH event. Photo by Hal Baim

BY TRACY BAIM

Rev. Al Sharpton, a longtime activist who now hosts a show on MSNBC, was the featured guest at Operation PUSH's Saturday morning broadcast from Chicago Dec. 17. The sermon he gave was part of a monthlong series of events marking PUSH's 40th anniversary.

Rev. Jesse Jackson Sr. also addressed the crowd, speaking about the importance of re-electing Barack Obama president of the United States, even if there are differences of opinion with how he governs. The alternative, he said, would push back civil rights and other forms of progress more than 50 years.

The Supreme Court will take away affirmative action and other things, Jackson said, adding that the right wing has "one play" and that is to destroy the ship to sink the captain. They are laser-focused on defeating the president, Jackson said, and that would mean many setbacks.

Sharpton was glowing in his remarks about the work Jackson and PUSH have done in 40 years. He said that Jackson helped nationalize the civil-rights movement, staying in the north to work on change here. He noted that Jackson and Martin Luther King Jr. were often the outsiders, with even some Black leaders not supporting their efforts. But Sharpton said Jackson

persevered, adding, "The face of Black America changed because of Jesse Jackson's contributions."

Sharpton's rhetoric was in fine form as he attacked Newt Gingrich and other Republicans in their attempts to destroy the social safety net, including social security. "It's not about Obama, it's about your mama," Sharpton said, adding



The Rev. Willie T. Barrow. Photo by Hal Baim

that the right wing wants a weak federal government so they can go back to a state-by-state limitation of civil and voting rights, "and put a ceiling on our children's ambitions."

"It's not about a personality, it's about a principle," Sharpton said when discussing his support for Obama. "We must continue to struggle beyond our differences."

Also at the event was Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn, who gave Jackson and PUSH a proclamation marking the 40th anniversary.

In the audience was Rev. Willie T. Barrow, who received loud applause for her lifelong work on civil-rights issues.

Earlier this month, also part of the 40th anniversary, Rev. Jackson hosted a special World AIDS Day program.

The theme of PUSH's Martin Luther King Day breakfast event Jan. 16 is "Dr. King the Occupier." As Jackson said, "We've been occupying for a long time."

City of Chicago wants LGBT greeters

Chicago Greeter is seeking friendly, enthusiastic and knowledgeable volunteers to join the program in 2012.

Nearly 200 Chicagoans regularly volunteer their time through the Chicago Greeter program, reaching visitors from all 50 states and more than 90 different countries. Greeters highlight various neighborhoods and interests for visitors on two- to four-hour excursions. They show off their knowledge of local history, ethnic heritage, architectural highlights, culinary hotspots, public art, LGBT Chicago, family-friendly destinations and more.

To learn more, visit <http://www.ChicagoGreeter.com>.

PASSAGES

John Davis

John Davis, a former emergency services associate with the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC), Dec. 10 after a long battle with HIV, according to AFC's website.

Before Davis joined AFC, he worked as a case manager for the Woodlawn Organization and later for the Alliance for Community Empowerment. He was an activist who participated in local, state and federal advocacy activities.

He worked as an emergency services associate on the housing team in 2007 before leaving for health-related reasons.



John Davis. Photo from AFC website

AFC stated, "Davis will be remembered as a relentless and courageous advocate for those with HIV/AIDS, particularly on Chicago's South Side."

"John was very client-centered, always hustling for his clients," said Michael Grego, Ryan White Part A and Department of Rehabilitation Services case management coordinator for AFC. He had known Davis when they were both case managers.

Grego added, "He was always asking questions. That's what I remember about John—always wanting to know what impact things would have for people living with HIV/AIDS."

Visitation took place Dec. 16 at A.R. Leak Funeral Home, 7850 S. Cottage Grove Ave. The funeral service was Dec. 17 at Liberation Church, 6810 S. Ashland Ave. Condolences can be sent to Tobitha Johnson, Davis' sister, at 14812 S. Michigan Ave., Dolton, Ill., 60419.

Former Joffrey dancer dies

Mark Goldweber, a leading classical dancer with Chicago's Joffrey Ballet in the 1970s and '80s, died on Dec. 9 of lymphoma in Salt Lake City at 53, according to the New York Times.

Most recently, he was ballet master at Ballet West and director of Ballet West II in Salt Lake City. Goldweber won much acclaim as the Blue Skater in Frederick Ashton's ballet Les Patineurs while he was with the Joffrey.

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Local gay attorney gets national honor

BY ROSS FORMAN

Toby Eveland, the chairman of the Illinois State Bar Association's Diversity Leadership Council and an associate in the litigation practice of law firm Arnstein & Lehr's Chicago office, has been selected one of the "Best LGBT Attorneys Under 40" by the National LGBT Bar Association.

He was honored earlier this year in Los Angeles.

"I was incredibly honored," to be selected, he said. "The fact that the National LGBT Bar Association chose to recognize me in a group of 40 attorneys from across the country for our professional and civic contributions actually was quite humbling."

Eveland, 34, who is single and lives in Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood, is the immediate



Toby Eveland. Photo courtesy of Sheila Owens

past chair of the ISBA's Committee on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI).

The National LGBT Bar Association established this award to recognize LGBT legal professionals under the age of 40 who have distinguished themselves in their field and demonstrated a profound commitment to LGBT equality. There were 40 honored in 2011, Eveland said.

"One of the things that made the award so special was, two of my dear friends who also are attorneys here in Chicago were recognized, too," Eveland said. "Sharing the experience with [fellow attorneys] Jordan Heinz and John Litchfield made it all the more special." (All three are former Windy City Times 30 Under 30 honorees.)

Eveland also serves on the Board of Directors for several prominent organizations, including the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC), Equality Illinois and the Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN).

"I learned [about] volunteering early on from my mom," Eveland said. "She taught us that, if you're passionate about something, you have to get out there and donate your time, donate your talents and donate your resources."

"I am very committed to making sure that we have full equality for the LGBT community. I'm very committed to making sure that we win the fight against HIV and AIDS, and eradicate the stigma that's associated with the disease."

Eveland has a 9-year-old dog, Beulah, which he got from the Chicago K-9 Rescue Foundation. Eveland is a devout sports fan, especially his beloved Alabama Crimson Tide football team. He also enjoys college basketball and NASCAR.

Eveland has run the Chicago Marathon three times, most recently in 2010. He also has participated in multiple sports through the Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA).

in the Alachua County (Fla.) health dept. According to the release, Ferguson "has knowledge, ambition, generosity and talent all working together." He currently attends Santa Fe College, and plans to major in business.

Also, YPS has announced the launch of SERVE, its national program for African American LGBT youth in the military ages 18-25. YPS, in collaboration with 12 local and national military support groups, has been working to develop resources, support and services for African-American LGBT youth who serve the country, on any level and location.

During its initial launch in January, SERVE will accommodate 50 young people. All of the funding for SERVE comes from private donations.

For more info or to donate, email YouthPrideCenter@gmail.com.

COUNCIL from cover

there will be a Veteran Affairs council and one on "Equity" which will combine councils pertaining to African-American affair, Arab affairs, Asian affairs, Latino affairs, immigration and refugees.

ACLGBTI members questioned Noriega on the future advisory council. According to Noriega, all who want to be on the new council will have to apply by requesting an



Bill Greaves' emotions show during the last meeting. Photo by Kate Sosin

application from the Commission on Human Relations. New advisory council members will serve just three-year terms, with a third of each council rotating off or re-applying every year. (In the past there was no term limit.)

Noriega told Windy City Times that current council members can reapply but that the city intends to appoint new candidates. She added that there will be a greater push for diversity on the advisory councils.

ACLGBTI, which failed to achieve quorum in November, voted through motions that had been left waiting due to lack of attendance. Largely, those initiatives centered on sending letters stating the positions of the council, including a resolution supporting recent U.S. advocacy on international LGBT Issues.

For many, the final meeting represents the end of an era in which LGBT people were highly visible in city government. For others, the end of ACLGBTI is the natural progression of time, as ACLGBTI contains some members who have served for decades.

For Greaves, the meeting was the culmination of 11 years of service.

"I'm ready to move on," Greaves told the council through tears. "I'm relieved, but it's not a moving-on I will ever forget."

Greaves became emotional as he recalled how he came out to his family when took on

the director's position.

ACLGBTI has faced significant challenges in the past few years. Lack of attendance often prevented the group from reaching quorum and therefore from being able to vote. A basic letter of support an LGBT activist requested from the council in September took until December to complete and vote on.

"One big reason for ACLGBTI's troubles in achieving a quorum at meetings was that, for years, City Hall has delayed processing applications for membership on ACLGBTI," member Bill Kelley told Windy City Times. "ACLGBTI wouldn't get any new members, but some old members would lose interest and seldom attend. On the books, the total membership remained the same, so the quorum requirement remained the same, but those of us remaining active had more trouble in meeting the requirement because we had fewer active members to draw on."

The council has also been hampered by a lack of funds. Earlier this year, the city pulled all of its remaining financial support for the Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame (GLHF), sending council members scurrying to raise money for the November induction ceremony.

The fate of GLHF is on many minds now that ACLGBTI is ending. ACLGBTI members are in negotiations with Noriega on how to keep it alive. As an entity, GLHF is technically owned by the city. In practicality, however, those who run and fund it won't have municipal ties come January.

"I believe in the Hall of Fame," Noriega assured council members. "I want it to work."

To keep GLHF running, Greaves and Kelly copied more than 450 city files on inductees. The files contain everything GLHF needs to continue, Greaves said.

It is not yet clear if other files containing historical record of ACLGBTI will also be copied. The city must legally hold onto all of the original files as a matter of public record, and ACLGBTI records are so extensive that copying all of them would be a massive undertaking, according to Greaves.

The Dec. 14 meeting ended with tears and speeches from council members, thanking each other for their service and vowing to stay in touch.

Member Kevin Smith spoke of the ways in which his time on ACLGBTI allowed him to advocate as an out gay Black man, while Catherine Sikora recalled life for transgender people before gender-identity protections were in place.

Others simply expressed their gratitude for their time on the council.

"I realize tonight that contrary to what I might have thought earlier, I am going to miss our monthly meetings," Kelly said.

YPS elects national president, starts military program

Youth Pride Services (YPS), a national organization engaging LGBT youth of color, has elected Chris Ferguson as its national president, according to a press release.

YPS began in Chicago as the Youth Pride Center, a South Side organization predominately serving LGBT youth of color. YPS reaches out to LGBT youth of color in cities and towns where they do not have access to an LGBT center. More than 1,500 young people have joined YPS through the organization's website.

The organization started with more than 40 prospects for the position. Ferguson, 17, was the first young male to be an HIV counselor



Chris Ferguson. Photo courtesy of YPS



The council poses at the last meeting. Photo by Kate Sosin

Elmhurst College student on her HRC award, activism

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Elmhurst College senior and out lesbian Ally Vertigan became the first person from her school to be honored with the LGBT College Student Award at the Human Rights Campaign Chicago's annual gala, which happened Nov. 12.

The event was held at the Fairmount Hotel, where Vertigan, along with Orbitz (Corporate Equality Award) and actress Piper Perabo (Allies for Equality Award) received their awards.

Vertigan was planning on volunteering at the gala until she learned she was going to be an honored guest for being a positive role model for members of the LGBT community and for promoting acceptance of LGBT individuals during her college career.

An active member of Elmhurst Queers and Allies (EQUAL), the college's LGBT organization, Vertigan, in her role as chair of the committee developed, publicized and organized the "Big Gay Gathering." Said gathering is an annual event where they invite high school students who are involved with their gay-straight alliances to network and participate in educational programming.

Of her award, Vertigan said it was really exciting, especially since she had never attended a big awards banquet until that night. Describing the night, Vertigan said she was humbled and noted how beautiful the decorations were as well as how kind and welcoming everyone was. Vertigan thanked HRC, the people who nominated her at Elmhurst College, her religious community within the United Church of Christ, her parents and her girlfriend (who was also in attendance) during her remarks.

"The Human Rights Campaign award speaks volumes about the impact she has had on our campus and on LGBT awareness and inclusivity in general," said Dean of Students Eileen Sullivan, who nominated Vertigan for the honor. "Ally's recognition is an indicator that those outside of the College recognize both her good work and the culture of appreciation here, which we hope will become synonymous with Elmhurst College," Sullivan remarked.

A Spanish and religion double major, Vertigan said she hopes to become an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ so she can do ministry either as a preacher every Sunday or working at a non-profit or specifically within the LGBT community. Vertigan's future career plans will continue the work she has already done as an LGBT activist at her school. Over the last few years, Vertigan notes that she has honed her speaking skills while also standing up for



Ally Vertigan at the HRC gala. Photo by Kat Fitzgerald

her values, sharing her feelings without fear and answering questions from anyone who asks.

As for her personal heroes, Vertigan counts two people: her best friend and a female pastor (who is a married and straight) from a youth program that Vertigan participated in when she was 15 years old. The pastor, Vertigan said, "was the first real authentic woman I saw in a leadership position especially in the church."

Her experiences at Elmhurst, Vertigan said, have been overwhelmingly positive and that positivity created a safe environment for her to come out after her freshman year. "After I came out I realized nothing changed including my relationships with people," Vertigan said, adding, "I started to go to EQUAL meetings to get to know people in my own community which was really cool. I also realized that there was more to me than my queer identity so I had the courage to explore more of myself and figure out what my values were. Elmhurst is really a safe place to come out because of the open, accepting and supportive environment here."

To those who want to get involved in social justice causes her message is to do research, know your resources, ask questions and make connections including sending e-mails to people you don't know to get the ball rolling. The key thing Vertigan said, was to put yourself out there so people will get to know you and what you can contribute. Also, Vertigan shared that "every individual has the right to be happy and pursue their dreams."

To find out more about Elmhurst College and their LGBT organizations and programs, visit <http://public.elmhurst.edu/about/lgbt>.

Hyatt protests heating up

BY KATE SOSIN

In a fight that has dragged on for more than two years and embroiled the LGBT community, the clash between Chicago-based hotel chain Hyatt and hospitality union UNITE HERE Local 1 appears to be growing in hostility.

Hotel workers have been calling for a boycott of Hyatt properties in Chicago for over a year, but talks hit a rough patch at the end of November when workers accused Hyatt of threatening to cut off their health benefits. The union protested Hyatt over the issue for the second week in a row on Dec. 15.

LGBT activists have become tangled in the controversy as the International Mr. Leather (IML) competition is slated to be held at the Hyatt Regency hotel, the second time since the start of the boycott. Some LGBT organizers have accused IML of crossing a picket line, while IML organizers insist that they must abide by their three-year contract with the hotel and that no other available hotel is large enough to host the event.

According to UNITE HERE, workers could lose their health benefits at the end of February if contract negotiations do not wrap up. UNITE HERE has already settled contracts with other local hotels.

Hyatt claims that the deal it is offering the union guarantees Hyatt-paid healthcare.

"Even though there has not been a union contract in place for two years, Hyatt has paid 100 percent of health-care premiums during this time," the hotel said in a statement. "Local 1 leadership of UniteHere is the only obstacle standing in the way for our associates to receive wage and benefit increases."

Hyatt has claimed in the past that UNITE HERE is using its fight with Hyatt in Chicago to solicit membership in other cities, and that the union has refused to accept a deal with Hyatt similar the ones it settled with other hotels.

UNITE HERE has said that the sticking point with Hyatt remains a lack of commitment to provide safer conditions for housekeepers and an agreement not to subcontract jobs.

State House bill aims to promote sex education

BY KATE SOSIN

Advocates of comprehensive sex education are backing a bill that would require schools to teach about contraception and abstinence.

State Rep. Kelly Cassidy is calling on her colleagues to pass House Bill 3027, which would mandate that schools teach comprehensive sex education in grades 6-12.

Chicago ranks second in the nation for rates of Sexually Transmitted Infections amongst 15 to 19 year olds," Cassidy said in news release. "We have a responsibility to our children to give them all the information they need to remain safe, and the status quo is not working."

Currently, schools that teach sex education are required to discuss abstinence as a means of preventing sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy. The new bill would require that those programs teach young people how to use contraception in addition to teaching about abstinence.

The proposed program stresses abstinence, and it allows parents to opt out. It also does not apply to private or religious schools. Lastly, schools that do not teach sex education are not required to adopt the curriculum.

The bill is intended to provide medically accurate standards to schools, said Anita Banerji, the public policy director of the Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health.

"It would be an opportunity for students to receive that information across the board," Banerji said. She added that in many cases, youths do not know that condoms can prevent sexually transmitted infections in addition to substantially decreasing chances of pregnancy.



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Suburban group provides support to LGBTQ youth

BY STEVEN CHAITMAN

Outside of Chicago and in the more rural and conservative communities, the resources for LGBTQ youth grow more and more scarce. Since 1996, Youth Outlook has been a major community partner in DuPage, Kane and DeKalb counties as the only organization solely dedicated to serving LGBTQ youth.

Known as the Questioning Youth Center up until fall 2008, Youth Outlook primarily offers drop-in programming one night a week in the



Nancy Mullen. Photo courtesy of Mullen

major areas it services. Currently, drop-in programs occur in DeKalb on Monday nights; Naperville on Tuesday nights; and Aurora and Sterling on Thursday nights. A transgender youth program called Transcend takes place once a month.

Youth Outlook has also become increasingly involved in area schools. They regularly reach out to gay-straight alliances (GSAs) to get the word out, particularly to those who are busy after school, don't have the means to get to drop-ins or simply haven't come out yet.

In the last year and a half, Youth Outlook has worked even more closely with school districts to provide education around LGBTQ youth issues to both students and faculty. At present, they are working with middle schools for the very first time to create GSAs for their students.

Executive Director Nancy Mullen said, "In the past, middle schools haven't felt the need to address this issue, but now that kids are coming out younger they are rallying behind students who have made steps to come out."

Mullen is Youth Outlook's only full-time staff member. She works with a handful of part-time staff and a couple interns; the rest is accomplished with the help of more than 40 volunteers each month.

Nick Kinner, 21, is a former teen participant who has now become one of Youth Outlook's many vital and enthusiastic volunteers. He mostly runs programs and attends occasional speaking engagements. Kinner became involved in 2005 when Outlook came to speak to his

school's GSA; he had come out as trans at the age of 12 and was looking for more support.

"People tend to focus on sexual orientation instead of gender identity, so going to that group and hearing Youth Outlook, I realized I still needed support," Kinner said. "A lot of kids were great and we talked about lot of topics, things I would not have gotten through GSA or school at the time."

Kinner says he was one of two transgender teens involved in the organization when he was involved as a participant. Now the Naperville group alone has 10.

With youth ranging across the LGBTQ spectrum and also the economic spectrum, Youth Outlook is tasked with serving a range of needs.

"The challenging part is trying to find programming that interests all sets of people," Mullen said. "We have youth coming out of affluent communities versus the farming communities and their interests and expectations about Outlook can be vastly different."

Sometimes it's just a chance to relax and be one's self, but many drop-in programs tackle LGBTQ issues. This past year (and recently renewed for 2012), the organization received funding from the Elton John AIDS Foundation to run an HIV prevention program to be implemented by the youth themselves. Mullen said it's important that Youth Outlook be about, for and by the youth.

"Youth get excited about any opportunity to get involved in something that gives them additional knowledge that their friends don't have," she said.

The decision to change from the Questioning Youth Center to Youth Outlook occurred in a similar fashion. Focus groups had revealed the splits between out and proud teens and those who had not yet come out, and some confusion existed over whether QYC stood for "Questioning" or "Queer" Youth Center. The participants, staff and Board of Directors all settled on a name that encompassed all LGBTQ youth while emphasizing the youth-driven nature of the organization.

"Until the point comes when all of our youth are safe, we need to take steps to protect them," Mullen said.

School districts such as District 428 in DeKalb have realized the need to make their schools safer for LGBTQ students. Mullen and Youth Outlook worked with the district to create and implement parent education and staff training programs with added emphasis on the middle schools. This included training for school athletics coaches, tips for working with diverse families and having PFLAG as a resource at parent-teacher conference nights.

District 428 Assistant Superintendent Lindsey Hall said that there were virtually no roadblocks to implementing the programming and stressed that it comes from the top down.

"There has to be leadership to say this issue is important enough to talk about and that happened here," Hall said. "We feel so lucky to work with Nancy and her willingness to come in and be so available as a resource. This happened because Youth Outlook is so available."

Youth Outlook hopes to increase its reach and visibility in the community. Short-term, plans to reopen the Geneva drop-in are in place for after the first of the year.

For more information on Youth Outlook, visit <http://youth-outlook.org/cms>.

PANTRY from cover

unteers warmly greet clients (and by name if they're a regular). As they wait to select the food items they want in their bags, classical music plays in the background. For many, especially the 9 percent who are homeless, it will be the only human interaction—or even eye contact—that they will have all week.

"Nobody wants to come in here to get food," Garland said. "They're hesitant to come in; it's not an easy thing and what we try to do is make it as respectful and humane as possible. We want to make sure people walk out of here with as much dignity as they walked in here with and that takes a lot of work."

As one would expect, since the recession hit in 2008, the amount of people who need to sum up the courage to walk through the pantry's doors has increased. Upwards of 25 percent more clients have needed the pantry's

mended to her by local human-rights church aChurch4Me.

The LGBT community has also long been active in financially supporting Lakeview Pantry. The Chicago Spirit Brigade has twice donated the proceeds of one of its performances to the pantry including this past summer's Pride Parade. The Man of the Month contest at Charlie's Chicago, in which the winner chooses a beneficiary, has also helped. Even one of the pantry's active volunteers, Bob, who married his partner of 16 years recently, chose Lakeview Pantry as one of four nonprofits that he requested guests to donate to instead of bringing gifts.

Garland says that Lakeview Pantry has roughly 4,000 financial supporters, but just as common as organized donations are the spontaneous ones. Children have come in with piggy banks and people regularly leave food items at the door. The donations come



The staff at Lakeview Pantry. Photo by Steven Chaitman

services over a three-year basis and over half of all clients are first-timers.

"The reason we have a mural out in the front and lots of colors is to make sure people know this is a safe place, this is not a cold and unfriendly place," said Erin Stephens, the pantry's director of volunteers. "We want you to feel welcome and at home and safe. And that's for the volunteers too—it's just safety for everyone."

For the pantry's three newest staff members, it's also a safe and open workplace. Bertram Rodgers and Christina Wright are two former volunteers who were recently hired to work on the development/fundraising side of the pantry's operation. Rodgers came aboard in July and Wright started working just about eight weeks ago. Both are openly gay and said that they felt like they belonged right away.

"The whole culture is a very welcoming culture," Rodgers said. "I think it's conducive to more productivity because you're having fun doing what you're doing."

Stephens, who jokes that she's outnumbered in her own office as she shares a bedroom-sized workspace with Wright and Rodgers, also said that the volunteers run the gamut and that there's no segmentation—everyone interacts and works together. She said she was particularly proud when Eva, a transgender woman in transition, felt comfortable volunteering after the pantry was recom-

in all forms and sizes and make up 60 percent of the pantry's funds. That generosity has allowed Lakeview Pantry to function without a mainline source of federal funding.

"I get emotional when I see the dollar amounts that come in," Rodgers said. "When you live in a cold urban area, people can be so cold, but I think those donations are a reflection of the true human spirit."

Wright said that with one dollar, the pantry is able to buy 10 of the 1.4 million pounds it distributes annually. Also, 90 cents of each dollar goes directly to programming efforts.

For those interested in volunteering, Lakeview Pantry is particularly in need of drivers for Saturday home delivery. Russian-speaking volunteers are also at a premium as a large percentage of clients speak very little English. Help is also needed at times sorting donations as well as with organization and cleanup. As Bootstraps, the case management program, continues to grow, the pantry is also open to having volunteers help shape what that will look like.

"It can be a little thing like a book club, but you just gave that person something in their day that was stable and secure and so maybe they'll have a little more trust the next day that the world won't fall apart," Stephens said.

For information on volunteering at Lakeview Pantry, visit <http://www.lakeviewpantry.org/volunteer.html>.

a
GAY *in the*
LIFE

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY ROSS FORMAN



Executive Director
Geof Brown



Geof Brown, living and working in Indianapolis 10 years ago, went to a bar with a friend one night and met a friend of his friend named Joshua.

A few weeks later, when Geof and Joshua were on one of their first dates, they got into some of the pertinent questions, including what was each other's surname.

Joshua said his was Brown.

Geof, naturally, laughed.

"It's just one of those bizarre things," Geof said. "People laugh about it all the time, or at least ask questions about our [same] last name. Even my parents were a little freaked out about it at first."

However, come Feb. 24, Brown and Brown will celebrate their 10th anniversary together.

Joshua, 30, is an account manager at C.H. Robinson. Geof, meanwhile, leads an association for fundraising consultants, a position he's held since last February—and, he said, "I really like it."

Brown also has been a charity fundraiser away from the office, so to speak. He raised about \$1,700 for the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) this summer while training for the Chicago Marathon, his first 26.2-mile run, through AFC's Team to End AIDS (T2) endurance-training program.

"The fundraising was what actually scared me," when I registered with T2, said Brown, who will run the Los Angeles Marathon in March—another T2 fundraiser for AFC.

Joshua isn't the long-distance runner like Geof, although they did participate in several three- and four-mile runs together this past summer. However, Joshua seemed to complain after each, Geof joked.

"It's good that there are [interests] of mine that he's not into, and vice versa," Geof said.

Joshua was totally supportive of Geof during the Chicago Marathon. He even managed to cheer for Geof at four different spots along the route.



the stats

Name
Geof Brown

Age
33

Hometown
Fort Washington, Md.

Job title
Executive director,
The Giving Institute

Relationship status
Partnered

Hobbies
Running, cooking, working
out, traveling and sports.

Pets
Dog: Missy, an American
bulldog-pitbull mix,
adopted from Chicagoland
Bully Breed Rescue

Schooling
Graduated from the
University of Maryland

Cubs or Sox?
Cubs

It's a fact
Although he's an East Coast
native, Brown said he hasn't
even thought of returning.
"I'm in love with the
Midwest."

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Journalist addresses AIDS in South Africa

BY ERICA DEMAREST

Leading South African journalist Jonny Steinberg spoke at Northwestern University Dec. 1 as part of the school's World AIDS Day programming.

With several books under his belt and a teaching position at Oxford University, the former Rhodes scholar has emerged as a prominent voice on the AIDS pandemic. South Africa has one of the highest HIV prevalence rates in the world.

During the hour-long presentation, Steinberg shared stories from Lusikisiki, a rural South African village where he's spent years reporting. He focused on the somewhat surprising ways antiretroviral therapies have altered South African society.

"What people make of treatment when it arrives plays such a large role in shaping what it comes to mean," Steinberg said. "And what it comes to mean plays a role in determining who wants it and who doesn't want it, who comes to get it and who doesn't."

As little as a decade ago, Steinberg said, most South Africans had never even heard of treatments. Now, 1.6 million people use the lifesaving medications.

Young women have been significantly quicker to adopt antiretrovirals than older males, the traditional patriarchs in South African villages. Women account for about 53 percent of HIV-positive individuals, but as many as 70 percent of those on treatment are female.

Steinberg said reactions to new technology are always highly gendered. In this particular case, women are more comfortable with healthcare since they frequently access it for family and childbearing concerns.

"Many men only come forward when they're desperately ill," he said.

It's common for women to form female-led support groups. Members share medical knowledge, and many have even gone on to enroll in healthcare-related diploma classes or seek work in the state government.

"Being HIV-positive has become a source of a career," Steinberg said, "and not just any career, but one with middle-class trappings, one that will elevate many women considerably, taking her away from her village and into a city or town, and most important, free her once and for

all from all the men's gifts."

Trading sex for money or gifts is a common practice for many poor women, and the situation has gotten worse as the economy's crashed. Female villagers see support groups as a source of independence, and many males feel isolated from the matriarchal assemblies.

"Antiretroviral therapy has created a feminized path of upward mobility," Steinberg said. "And women want to keep this path a feminine one. They don't welcome male competition; if they share it, they may lose it."

Despite shifting social dynamics, Steinberg is hopeful that more South Africans will adopt antiretroviral therapies in the future. The country has already begun advocating preventative measures such as male circumcision and early treatment.

Still, stigma poses a threat.

"Shame is unbelievably corrosive," Steinberg said. "When shame gets hold of a person, you'd rather die than be alive, than be exposed. You stay at home, and your body literally rots when there's treatment a mile away. ... People choose to die ... because they're gripped by shame."

Associate Professor Doug Foster, who facilitated a Q&A session with Steinberg, said media is partly to blame. He remembered first learning about AIDS while living in San Francisco in the 1980s.

"You didn't hear about this disease from the media. You heard about it word-of-mouth," Foster said. "It would've mattered tremendously to tell people in very straightforward terms: semen, blood, vaginal fluid, infected needles ... instead of [using vague terms like] 'bodily fluids.'" When the media did report on AIDS, Foster said, it mischaracterized the disease.

"Larry Kramer and other activists were the first to raise the possibility that what was being reported as a marginal story with a marginalized population could potentially kick into something much bigger," Foster said.

Thirty years later, an estimated 60 million have been infected, and 30 million have died. Foster praised Steinberg for reporting on the disease with incredible depth and understanding as many around him ignored it, citing 'AIDS fatigue' and diminished newspaper sales.

University President Morton Schapiro voiced hope that other journalists and activists would continue to focus on HIV.



Jonny Steinberg. Photo by Marc Zarefsky, courtesy of Northwestern University

"What worries me about this 'AIDS is losing' and 'AIDS-free generation' [talk] is that it really belies the facts," Schapiro said. "The fact is: AIDS is everywhere. In certain parts of the world, it's even growing. If there's anything that worries me about all this successive celebration, it's that we might get complacent. As soon as we get complacent, the nightmare of AIDS ... is

going to return."

Steinberg spoke in the McCormick Tribune Center Forum at Northwestern's Medill School of Journalism. His 2008 novel *Sizwe's Test: A Young Man's Journey Through Africa's AIDS Epidemic* was named one of *The Washington Post's* Best Books of 2008.



Scott Schoettes.

ASK LAMBDA LEGAL HIV criminalization

BY SCOTT SCHOETTES

Dear Ask Lambda Legal,

I'm HIV-positive and recently heard about someone getting incarcerated after a sexual encounter, all because of his HIV status. Can this really happen?

Thirty years after the discovery of HIV, the medical field has learned a great about the virus, its transmission and effective treatments. Unfortunately, the legal landscape has not changed as quickly, and people living with HIV are vulnerable to outdated statutes that specifically target them.

Ending HIV criminalization in the United States is a priority for Lambda Legal; these laws unfairly subject people with absolutely no intent to harm anyone to criminal sanctions usually reserved for truly egregious offenses. In addition, criminal laws based on a person's HIV status send an inaccurate message regarding

prevention responsibility, create a disincentive to getting tested, and may actually discourage disclosure of HIV status.

Thirty-nine states have HIV-specific criminal statutes or have brought HIV-related criminal charges resulting in more than 80 prosecutions in the United States in the past two years alone. In *People v. Allen*, a Michigan man living with HIV was charged under the state's anti-terrorism statute with possession of a "biological weapon" after an altercation with a neighbor—prosecutors equated his HIV infection with "possession or use of a harmful device."

Lambda Legal assisted in convincing the court to dismiss this charge, but other prosecutions continue to result in convictions. For instance, a man with HIV in Iowa—who had an undetectable viral load—was sentenced to 25 years after a one-time sexual encounter during which he used a condom. You can learn what laws are in place in your state on our publications page at http://www.lambdalegal.org/publications/fs_hiv-criminalization.

HIV criminalization is particularly concerning for groups that are disproportionately affected by HIV. In 2008, one in five of men who have sex with men in 21 major U.S. cities were infected

with HIV, and nearly half were unaware of their infection. In 2009, African Americans composed 14 percent of the U.S. population but accounted for 44 percent of all new HIV infections. In the same year, Latinos accounted for 20 percent of new HIV infections in the United States while representing about 16 percent of the total U.S. population. In 2008, in California, 6.8 percent of transgender people were HIV-positive, and transgender African Americans in California had an infection rate of nearly 29 percent.

Lambda Legal has aligned itself with the Positive Justice Project (PJP), a working consortium devoted to ending the abusive application of criminal statutes against people living with HIV. Along with PJP, Lambda Legal is working toward passing the REPEAL HIV Discrimination Act, federal legislation that would require a review of all federal and state laws, policies and regulations regarding the criminal prosecution of individuals for HIV-related offenses.

If you have any questions or feel you have been discriminated against because of your HIV status, please call our help desk at 866-542-8336, or see <http://lambdalegal.org/help>.

Scott Schoettes is the HIV project director for Lambda Legal.

Amy Maggio looks back on early AIDS era

BY AMY MILLER

When some people think of AIDS activists on the frontlines in the 1980s and 1990s, they probably picture gay men. Understandably so, because they were disproportionately affected by the disease. But, in fact, there were lesbian voices just as loud and just as vital.

"I think you certainly saw a lot of women and lesbians getting involved and helping to support the community," said Amy Maggio, who came out at age 30. "Many women and lesbians took up the mantra of providing leadership and support to provide services to the gay community because, unfortunately, men were dying."

Originally from New York, Maggio had a large impact on Chicago's HIV/AIDS organizations. Her work was in the streets, where she marched with ACT UP and passed out condoms in bathhouses; and it was in the boardrooms, where she helped raise millions of dollars for the city's largest LGBT and AIDS non-profit agencies. You'd be hard-pressed to find an LGBT organization in Chicago that Maggio hasn't influenced in some way: Chicago House, the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC), Equality Illinois and the Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN) are just a handful of examples. In a broader scope, she served as chair of Chicago's HIV/AIDS Prevention and Planning Council and as a steering committee member for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National HIV/AIDS Prevention Marketing Initiative.

In 1985, Maggio came to Chicago via DeKalb, Ill., and quickly became aware of what at the time was being called "gay cancer." Close friends of hers were dying and she saw that immediate responses were desperately needed. People with AIDS sometimes lacked basic necessities like food and shelter. Very ill, without income and all-too-often cut off from their biological families, LGBT friends and community members came together to serve a caretaker role; they became a second family. Activists started organizing from the ground-up.

Maggio was part of a small team of volunteers to form Chicago House; it was the first organization in the Midwest to provide housing to people with HIV and AIDS. Chicago House has since ex-

panded to provide not only housing programs but also case management, social services and HIV prevention programs. "We had to scramble really hard to find services for people. Hospice services, housing services, Meals on Wheels, Open Hand ... all became involved as a result of 'Now what are we going to do?'" said Maggio of the sense of urgency the LGBT communities felt at the time.

As social-service agencies were quickly forming in response to the AIDS crisis, Maggio became passionate about enduring their sustainability. She joined AFC in 1987 as their first development director. Now one of the nation's leading organizations in the fight against HIV and AIDS, it was at that time just a tiny office, with a handful of staff members, housed in Children's Memorial Hospital.

Under Maggio's five years of leadership, AFC launched the first event that sparked what would be a long tradition of AIDS organizational fundraising: The Show of Concern. Held at the Chicago Theatre, it was the first large-scale gala to raise money for AIDS with corporate sponsorship; Phil Miller, then-president of Marshall Fields, was on AFC's board. It also grabbed the attention of celebrities—Angela Lansbury was Mistress of Ceremonies. That evening alone raised an unprecedented amount of money—more than a million dollars each for the American Foundation for AIDS Research (AmFAR) and AFC.

After five years at AFC (also serving as acting executive director), Maggio went on to help lead the way of HIV prevention as executive director of STOP AIDS/Chicago in 1992. Their harm reduction methods—talking openly and honestly about the realities of gay sex and non-monogamy, educating those who were HIV-positive about preventing transmission, and testing in bathhouses—were very controversial at the time.

Maggio had been very active in the feminist movement, especially at the University of Illinois in DeKalb, where she fought for the Equal Rights Amendment and worked with the National Organization for Women (NOW). Maggio knew what it was to rise up as a community and to overcome differences; she challenged NOW to

talk about lesbian issues at a time when they were seen as a threat to the battle for heterosexual women's rights.

As an outspoken woman in leadership positions in a community dominated largely by men, Maggio navigated two worlds. There were definite divisions between the gay and lesbian communities, especially in the upper-echelon of donors and executives. You could say she used her immersion in gay male culture to build bridges between the two. "If you ask [women] to get involved, and you give them a blueprint for how they can do that in small ways, which translate into big ways, then they'll show up and they'll do it," said Maggio. "If women aren't in leadership positions, then who's going to ask them?" Gender divisions weren't the only hurdles Maggio faced. With many organizations competing for a limited amount of resources, conflict, she said, was inevitable.

"For people working in HIV, in the professional community, there was always tension, stress and competitiveness over what agency was going to get what funding and who was going to provide what service," Maggio said. "Anytime you're in a leadership position you're going to get that."

Jessica Halem, former executive director of the Lesbian Community Cancer Project (LCCP, now the Lesbian Community Care Project, a program of Howard Brown Health Center) saw Maggio as a mentor. "Amy gave me great advice about dealing with the ups and downs of leadership positions within the queer community," Halem said. "She is someone who is dedicated to the big picture and willing to see the hard work through. I really admire this about her."

That dedication showed. While going on to work in marketing and development for HIV/AIDS clinical corporations, Maggio didn't stop volunteering her time to the cause. She was a founding board member of IMPACT (a now-defunct LGBT political action committee), a board member of the National Victory Fund and she chaired events for Equality Illinois, Lambda Legal, About Face Theatre and PFLAG.

Looking back on the early days of HIV/AIDS and the tremendous progress that has been achieved, Maggio has mixed feelings. She said she worries that sustainability of outreach and



Amy Maggio. Photo by Hal Baim

education efforts are at risk. She even goes so far as to say that a second HIV/AIDS crisis isn't unfathomable. Maggio believes without the fear factor of the "death sentence" that AIDS was in the 1980s and early 1990s, things like secondary infections and illnesses are less visible and therefore may not be taken seriously. She does acknowledge the achievements of her generation and admits her contributions. "I have tremendous amount of pride," she said.

For her decades of work, Maggio's peers and the city of Chicago have formally recognized the lifelong advocate; she was given the first-ever Charles E. Clifton Leadership Award from TPAN and she was inducted into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame in 2009. Something that meant a great deal to Maggio was when long-time colleague and friend (and major Chicago philanthropist) Michael Leppen named the lobby of the Center on Halsted after her, through a donation in her name.

"The gift of the lobby was given as a gift of gratitude for her mentorship and friendship these past many years," Leppen said. "Amy has always been on the forefront working with HIV/AIDS issues, whether as an employee for an agency, a donor to cause or a good friend to those afflicted by HIV/AIDS."

Maggio, now 62, lives in Edgewater and currently serves as executive director of the Spina Bifida Association of Illinois.

THE LEGACY PROJECT

AIDS at 30



LEIGH BOWERY
(1961 - 1994)
Australian
Performance
Artist

Growing up a chubby and bullied outcast in the dreary suburbs of Melbourne, Leigh Bowery spent much of his youth devouring the British fashion magazines that inspired him to move to London in 1980 and become a fashion designer. Instead he became his own greatest creation. Combining dance, dandyism, music, and outrageous fashions (of his own design) Bowery lived as a piece of performance art. His extreme appearance was based on the continual distortion of his physical form. This tendency, combined with a blatant queer narcissism, made him a star of the gay and polysexual club scene. Smart, well read, and interested in all forms of artistic expression, Bowery was an ideal candidate to transform the underground world. In 1985 he hosted London's outrageous and notorious club night, 'Taboo' — the wild, edgy epicenter of young and fashionable London. Taboo closed in 1987 when hard drugs and HIV decimated the underground scene. Bowery continued to perform with several concept bands, was featured in a show at d'Offay Gallery as living sculpture, and became his own greatest masterpiece. His groundbreaking style influenced an entire generation of artists and designers such as Vivienne Westwood, Alexander McQueen, David LaChapelle, John Galliano, The Scissor Sisters, and Boy George. He is also credited as a major factor behind the new Romantic music movement that became popular in London during the 1980s. Leigh Bowery died of AIDS related meningitis on New Year's Eve of 1994 at the age of 33. Despite his brief life, his greatest legacy was the lesson to be found in taking the pain of being an outsider — then owning, exaggerating, and ultimately reclaiming it as the ultimate badge of power.

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THE LEGACY PROJECT

AIDS at 30



KEITH HARING
(1958 - 1990)
Gay U.S. Artist

After studying at the Art Centre in Pittsburgh, Keith Haring moved to New York to attend the School of the Visual Arts in 1978. Owing to a number of influences he developed a unique graffiti inspired method of drawing, inventing an intricate calligraphic cartoon style. Wanting to involve the public with his art he began creating murals and recurring images (such as 'radiant baby' and 'barking dog') which he surreptitiously painted on subway station walls across New York City. Also evident in Haring's early work was his homosexuality, reflected in his signature 'primitive images' engaged in suggestive encounters. Striking a chord his style became symbolic of the tribal undercurrents permeating metropolitan life. His work received much notice and launched his meteoric rise in the American art scene of the 1980s. By the end of 1984 he had gained international recognition. He became politically involved by designing posters for Free South Africa (1985), painting a portion of the Berlin Wall (1986), and having his work become emblematic of the AIDS activist movement in the U.S. Commercially, Haring worked for such high profile clients as Swatch and Absolut Vodka. In 1986 he opened his own retail outlet, The Pop Shop in New York, which sold T-shirts, posters and buttons. Similar to how Andy Warhol helped define the 1960s, Keith Haring gave form to the 1980s; for although his work was characteristic of the era, it remains popular today as a clear example of the diminishing line between consumerism, popular culture, and fine art. Haring died of complications due to HIV in 1990. He was 31.

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Activist and artist Jim Carey:

Looking back at the life-changing moment of testing HIV-positive

BY ROSS FORMAN

Jim Carey was an undergraduate student at The Ohio State University in 2005 when, as part of a class assignment, he had to rewrite an existing behavior change intervention.

Carey chose to encourage people to get an HIV test.

"I hadn't been tested for several years, so I thought it would be a great idea to get a test," Carey recalls. "That way, I could tell everyone it was easy; you get your results in 20 minutes, etc."

"When the doctor led me back to the exam room to disclose my results, I was relieved when the door was opened and the room was empty. I thought for sure, if I was positive, a social worker or counselor would be waiting. The doctor had me sit down and said, 'I have bad news ... your test was negative.'"

Confused, Carey asked how that was a bad thing.

The doctor also looked confused, and then corrected himself.

"I'm sorry ... I meant, you are positive," he told Carey, who was shocked.

"My first reaction was, this couldn't possibly be my test. But once the test was confirmed, I was devastated. I was one semester away from graduating college and I didn't know how I would go on and finish. But, I did. In fact, I went on to achieve straight A's for my final semester and graduated with honors."

Carey has never forgotten that crushing moment. He always remembers the date—Nov. 15, 2005—and everything associated with the day that changed his life.

"When I was first diagnosed, I didn't know how to tell anyone for a few months," Carey said. "Of course I told my amazing partner Kevin immediately, and he was, and still is, my rock. I wouldn't be where I am today without his support." Carey has been in a relationship with Kevin for more than nine years. Kevin is HIV-negative.

"Gradually, I began to reveal my status to different people in my life," Carey said. "I have experienced every possible reaction from friends and family: sadness, love, anger, rejection, support, confusion and fear."

Now 35 and living in Chicago's Uptown neighborhood, Carey is a Training Specialist at the Midwest AIDS Training and Education Center (MATEC), a federally funded center providing AIDS and HIV clinical training and support to healthcare professionals. MATEC's mission is to enhance the capacity of HIV clinical services and improve quality of those services for people living with HIV in the region.

In addition to his training responsibilities at MATEC, Carey also works for Project WISH, the Chicago branch of the HIV Vaccine Trials Network. He is the community educator, so his role is to increase community awareness of HIV vaccine clinical trials in Chicago.

"While teaching at MATEC, I realized that one of the most important ways to combat the stigma of being HIV-positive is to be honest about my own status," said Carey, who grew up in Peoria and has been living in Chicago for five years.

"How could I expect others to be comfortable in sharing their status when I was selective regarding who I told? Being upfront, open and honest about being HIV-positive makes me feel better about myself, and I certainly hope it makes others realize there is nothing to be ashamed of. I am still surprised how many people in 2011 think that, by being HIV-positive,

they are being punished for whatever behavior resulted in their infection. My reaction to that is, 'HIV is a virus ... did you feel that you were being punished the last time you got the flu? The flu is a virus, too.' My answer is always, 'No,' and we're not being punished either.

"Reducing the stigma around being HIV-positive is now part of my lifelong goal. Honesty and communication are necessary components of any relationship—romantic, friendship, or otherwise. Even though disclosing my status in such a public manner seems a bit daunting at times, I do it with joy knowing that it may inspire another human being to do the same. I always compare coming out as HIV-positive to coming out of the closet a second time. Once again we are faced with rejection, discrimination and ignorance. On the flip side, we are also faced with our own humanity, kindness, love and support."

Carey is truly taking his HIV status to the world. He is presenting an art show of his works, all centered around living with HIV, at the Center on Halsted. The show opened in November and runs through Jan. 3.

"I am excited for the showing on many levels," he said. "First, living with HIV is not a walk in the park by any stretch of the imagination, but it's no longer the death sentence it once was, either. Expressing myself through my painting has always proved a great outlet for my emotions. Even when I was a child, I used to draw, color or sketch when I was happy, stressed out or emotional in any way. This habit carried over into my adult life. While I wasn't always a prolific painter, after being diagnosed as HIV-positive, I found a renewed devotion to my craft."

"I am thrilled to finally get to show all of Chicago my art work. Although I have never received any type of formal training in art, I have always dreamed of having my own gallery show. I have many friends who are also artists and every time they had their own show I thought to myself, 'I would love to have that happen to me someday.' Now is my opportunity, my time to shine. I get to show off my talents and get to show all of my friends exactly what I do in my free time."

Through art, Carey wants to educate about what it's like to live with HIV.

"I hope that, by offering my perspective on living with HIV, I can help alleviate the stigma and discrimination surrounding being positive," he said. "Even in the gay community, there is still a strong 'us versus them' mentality regarding HIV. A lot of people say, 'Doesn't everyone know better by now?' My response is, 'NO ... they don't.'"

"Education is always a great first step in any process, but, if you don't impart skills on how to change behavior, it simply won't happen. The example I always give when I am training new HIV Test Counselors is this: 'How many people quit smoking just because the Surgeon General put that warning label on the side of cigarette packs?' Not many. Most people know the dangers inherent in smoking, but, if you lack the skills to quit, it probably won't happen."

"I am hoping to show that, in living with HIV, I am doing just that ... LIVING. If I can show just one person that there is not one face to HIV, but many, then I have been successful."

"I would love to think that my show can inspire hope ... hope for anyone living with HIV, hope for an eventual cure, hope to bring the community together, hope that you can not only live with this virus, you can THRIVE with it. I often refer to this as making a positive a posi-



Jim Carey. Photo courtesy of Carey

tive. I might not have started painting again if I wasn't diagnosed. I have always been a fighter who refuses to give up. When most of my family rejected me for being gay, I kept fighting.

When I decided to go back to school, I refused to settle for less than the best in myself. Finding out I was HIV-positive was no different—I knew I had to find a way to let this make me stronger, and I believe I have. Everything we experience in our lives makes us who we are today. Living with HIV is no exception."

Carey said selling any of his artwork will be a bonus; he's more interested in educating and, even if it's just one person, making him/her feel comfortable with their HIV status.

"Seeing all of my pieces together in one space is always an emotional experience for me," Carey said. "I revisit where I was emotionally when I created each piece. It's also a gift to document my own growth by seeing older and newer pieces together."

Carey, who has earned a Master's Degree in public health, said one of his favorite presentations he delivers for work is titled, "Drawing on Our Past: Art Therapy and HIV." He then discusses his diagnosis, the creation of his art and hopes to instill hope in others living with HIV.

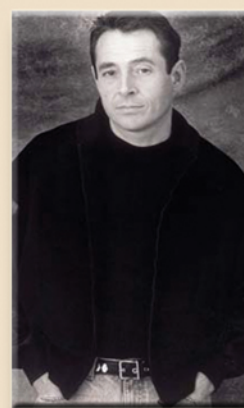
"HIV has opened my eyes to intolerance, rejection and disparity in my own community," Carey said. "Being HIV-positive has made me want to fight for those who are under-represented or unable to make their own voice heard."

"Professionally, I am determined that no one else will ever have an incompetent doctor or any other professional deliver their test results in an incorrect or insensitive manner. I believe that, living with HIV, lends me credibility as a Training Specialist, as I have a unique perspective from others who have just received the educational component. Having the education and the experience combined puts me in a unique position to represent both the community and healthcare professionals. Finding the intersection of these two populations may be the key to successful prevention and, eventually, a cure for HIV."

Voices of My Choices: The Art of James Carey runs through Jan. 3, 2012, Center on Halsted.

THE LEGACY PROJECT

AIDS at 30



PAUL MONETTE
(1945 - 1995)
Gay U.S.
Writer

Paul Monette's literary career was promising. He had done a couple poetry books as well several gay novels like *Taking Care of Mrs. Carroll* (1978) and *The Gold Diggers* (1979). He was a capable writer, but he had not discovered his voice. When AIDS arrived he found it. On the front lines of the epidemic he picked up his pen and began to capture the horror as it happened. When his lover Roger fell ill, Monette chronicled his agonizing demise – and his own fears – in *Borrowed Time: An AIDS Memoir* (1988). It received a National Book Critic's Circle Award nomination and won a Lambda Literary Award. That same year he released the poetry collection *Love Alone: Eighteen Elegies for Rog*. Explaining his profound productivity during this period Monette said, "When I got my diagnosis it was as if I suddenly had Big Ben inside of me. There was so much to say and I knew how little time there might be." In 1990 he released the critically acclaimed AIDS novel *Afterlife* (1990) and buried a second lover. In 1991 he wrote another well-received AIDS novel, *Halfway Home*. In 1992 Monette released the memoir *Becoming a Man: Half a Life Story* (1992). The uncompromising tale of his coming to terms with being a gay man went on to become the first gay/lesbian studies title to win the National Book Award. He followed this with his brilliant book of essays, *Last Watch of the Night* (1994). Sadly, the following year time ran out. In 1995 a major voice of the epidemic was silenced when Monette died of complications from HIV at age 49.

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Wally Henry:

Multi-sport fighter against AIDS

BY ROSS FORMAN

Wally Henry played basketball and football at DeLaSalle High School on Chicago's South Side, and never ran more than a mile—at least on his own. Still, he always admired Ironman competitions, which feature swimming, bicycling and running, and even watched them on TV whenever he could.

Then early last year, while riding the train, Henry spotted an ad for the Team To End AIDS (T2), the endurance-training program of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC).

Henry was hooked, immediately.

He registered for the 2010 Chicago Triathlon and trained with T2.

But the heat on race day turned the event into "hell" he said.

Swimming is his strongest event, and he was pleasant with that leg. The biking was so-so, he said; Henry had never pedaled that far. The running, though, well, that was tough, definitely impacted by the weather conditions.

Still, he finished in 3:19.23.

"I bragged for a couple of months," Henry said, laughing.

Henry raised about \$2,400 last year, though his goal was \$1,800.

"After the 2010 Chicago Triathlon, I immediately made up my mind to come back and [set a Personal Record time]. Sure, I finished the [2010] event, but I knew I could do better. My competitiveness took over," Henry said.

So, this past April, Henry registered for the 2011 Chicago Triathlon through T2—and kept registering.

"I looked at all of the [endurance-training] events that T2 offered and just figured, why not do them all?!" Henry said.

Ultimately, Henry registered for five of six endurance-training events through T2, including the Chicago Marathon on Oct. 9 and the Honolulu Marathon Dec. 11. (At the last minute, Henry was forced to withdraw from the Honolulu Marathon, despite fulfilling his fundraising commitment.)

Why do all those events? "Because I'm crazy," he said, laughing.

The lone T2 event that Henry did not do was the 100-mile ride from Wrigley Field to Miller Park in Milwaukee. "I couldn't ride 100 miles to see the Cubs; I'm a Sox fan," he said.

Henry, nicknamed Mookie, 30, lives in Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood. He is single, straight and works as a security guard.

Henry's goal for 2011 is to raise \$6,000 for AFC, and he's less than \$1,000 away.

"I've always wanted to help people, and this really gave me another outlet to help people," said Henry, who is HIV-negative. "One of the biggest things in the Black community now is HIV/AIDS. I kind of feel like a lot of people don't care [about the disease]. People are still having unprotected sex with random partners, not getting tested. For some who are HIV-positive, it is almost taboo in the Black community to talk about HIV/AIDS. Many who are HIV-positive are shunned within the Black community.

"I'm just trying to do something about it, to help the fight."

He has had to battle rumors about his charity-of-choice: Many people have just assumed he is HIV-positive because he supports AFC, Henry said.

"They don't realize that, even though I am HIV-negative, the disease still affects me, as it does almost everyone. It's in my area," said Henry, who trains with HIV-positive competitors with T2.

And with many gay runners, too.

"Triathlon is not a sport that Black people typically do. A lot of folks [in the Black community] don't even know what a triathlon is," Henry said. "Raising money for T2 and the AFC is, in my opinion, the best way I can go about helping the community and those impacted by HIV and AIDS. And it's been very rewarding for me personally. Knowing what I'm doing and the funds that I'm raising will help people affected by HIV/AIDS is very rewarding."

Cecilia Pina Boyd, team manager for T2, said that Henry's 2011 accomplishments are, "awesome, courageous and inspiring, with a side of crazy."

"I find it courageous above all because he is not only putting himself through a year of physical and mental training necessary for all five programs, but, he inadvertently stigmatizes himself raising money for this important cause," Boyd said. "In conversations I've had with Mookie, he expressed that he initially had a major challenge with his fundraising because, as a Black, straight male, he got a lot of questions and ignorant comments from his own friends



Wally Henry. Photo by Ross Forman

regarding his participation [with the] Team To End AIDS. People either automatically assumed he was gay or had HIV. Truth is, he is doing our programs to bring awareness and promote education around this epidemic that has a substantial impact on the Black community."

Henry is one of the top 10 T2 fund-raisers this year.

"I think he has been a great advocate through his Facebook and Twitter posts [for T2 and AFC], promoting [to] everyone to get tested and know the facts about this disease," Boyd said. "It is important to not only T2 and AFC, but to the Black community as a whole, to have advocates like Mookie."

"In a program that has high participation from the white, gay community, mainly from the North Side [of Chicago], Mookie has shown that a straight, Black man from the South Side of Chicago can not only do endurance events, but can also be a huge fundraising force in the T2 program. I hope that his participation this year encourages others from the Black community to

take part in Team To End AIDS in the future."

Henry admits he, "wasn't the type who'd roll down to Boystown and hang out at a bar there," but he certainly grew and matured about gay people.

"I wasn't homophobic," he said. "But being around and training with so many gay men, it has taken away my ignorance and naïve thoughts/perceptions of the gay community. That has really helped me."

Before last summer, Henry only knew a few gay men. Being openly gay also was a stigma to some within his walks in the Black community.

Henry said he truly cherishes the friendships he's made with gay participants in T2.

"I love those gays. They are characters," he said, smiling. "They openly talk [in front of me] about other guys, the same way I talk about women around them. We all get along very well."

Henry said he plans to return to T2 in 2012. In fact, he plans to compete in 10 or 11 endurance-training events next year.

Doctors without Borders pays tribute to people with HIV/AIDS in Africa

Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) has launched a music project, "Positive Generation: Voices for an AIDS-free Future," based on songs created by HIV support groups in Zimbabwe and recorded with Zimbabwean and international artists, including Estelle, Alejandro Sanz, Paula Fernandes, Oliver TUKU Mtukudzi, Karina Pasian, ten Zimbabwean choirs, and many others.

The music aims to raise awareness about the reality of HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa by highlighting how people on treatment can still live a 'positive' life. The project also highlights the importance of programs that prevent mother-to-child transmission of the virus, and warns of the consequences that current global funding shortfalls for HIV/AIDS programs would have on the lives of thousands of patients.

MSF is using music to raise awareness about

the virus in Zimbabwe, to educate patients and their families that they are not alone, to inform them that treatment can stabilize the illness, and to end stigmatization of HIV/AIDS patients. Support group choirs, largely made up of Zimbabweans living with or affected by the virus, offer an open, positive approach to HIV/AIDS education. Their testimonies and songs raise awareness about how to prevent the spread of the disease and encourage people to seek HIV diagnosis and treatment.

"With this project, we want to pay tribute to a generation of people who are living 'positively' with HIV. Their testimonies transmit positive messages and help fight stigmatization. With MSF's operational experience in HIV care since 2000, and the latest progress in HIV science, we know that an AIDS-free generation is possible if effective programs are implemented on the ground. We need to keep fighting to reach this goal," said Mari Carmen Viñoles, head of MSF's mission in Zimbabwe.

Through "Positive Generation," MSF aims to

bring attention to the recent progress made in the fight against HIV/AIDS, and to warn of the threats that could stop or even reverse progress. Recent research has shown that early treatment not only saves lives, but also has a significant impact on reducing HIV transmission and preventing new infections.

Zimbabwe, the country with the third highest HIV burden in Southern Africa, where 14 percent of adults (about one million people) and 150,000 children are currently living with HIV, has taken ambitious steps to improve HIV/AIDS services. Zimbabwe has seen positive results: currently 63 percent of those in need of antiretroviral therapy (ART) are receiving treatment, up from only 5 percent in 2006, and expanded ART coverage has reduced annual AIDS deaths by 42 percent since 2006.

This progress, which could mean a future free from HIV, is threatened by a lack of funding and program closures. Zimbabwe, like many other high prevalence countries, will require additional funding in the coming years, yet AIDS

funding is currently being cut back globally, as confirmed by the decision by the board of the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to cancel Round 11 funding.

The project "Positive Generation: Voices for an HIV free future," which includes a CD/book, a documentary, and a website, was launched internationally Dec. 1, 2011. The project is an MSF and Casa Limón production, managed and produced by the Spanish artists Alejandro Sanz, Antonio Carmona and Javier Limón, with voluntary contributions from musicians, composers and performers from around the world, such as the Zimbabwean Oliver TUKU Mtukudzi and Chiwonso Maraire, Juan Luis Guerra (Santo Domingo), Carlos Vives (Colombia), Paula Fernandes (Brazil), Estelle (UK), Ali Amr (Morocco), David Broza (Israel), Karina Pasian (USA), Tino di Geraldo (France), Estrella Morente (Spain), Carminho & Diogo Clemente (Portugal), Andrés Calamaro (Argentina), Iván "Melón" Lewis (Cuba), Miguel Campillo elbicho (Spain) and Ariadna Castellanos (Spain).

VIEWPOINTS

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

 Community Marketing, Inc.



TRACY BAIM

Building gay self-esteem through history

When I first started working in gay media, at age 21 in 1984, I felt like I was dropped into the middle of a war zone. At the time, there were fewer than 100 diagnosed AIDS cases in Chicago, but that number soon began to grow.

People I worked with, and covered as a reporter and editor at GayLife and then Windy City Times newspaper, would die within days or weeks of finding out they had AIDS. I would take a photo of someone—for example, Dr. Ron Sable or Robert Ford of Thing 'zine—knowing it would likely be the last image, and the one I would soon use with their obituary. Gaunt and weak, these men (they were mostly gay men I was covering) continued their activism up until their last breaths.

Later came inspired heroes Danny Sotomayor and Ferd Eggen, and thousands of others. It was an honor to be able to write about them, to make sure their lives were not forgotten.

Covering the community 365 days a year left little time for reflection. My main goal was documenting the LGBT community in every way I could, whether it was photos at bars, writing about benefits, doing news stories and features, or whatever else it took to write and photograph as much as possible, as it was happening.

A few years ago, after I helped organize the Gay Games in Chicago in 2006, I was pretty burnt out on the community—not just from the hard work, but also from the endless struggles against both external anti-gay forces, and internal power and ego struggles common within any movement.

To reboot my passion for LGBT issues and people, I launched the Chicago Gay History Project, interviewing some 200 people, mostly on video, and online now at <http://www.chicagogayhistory.com>. As a result of that, I also helped advise WTTW-TV on its Out & Proud in Chicago film project, and the network recommended me for the companion book published by Surrey Books in 2008, *Out and Proud in Chicago: An Overview of the City's Gay Community*. I also started to scan hundreds of thousands of editorial and photo files from the pre-digital era, to eventually post those online, too.

While keeping my full-time gig as publisher of Windy City Times, I realized there are different and important ways to make sure our LGBT legacy is not lost. The website is one way, and books (print and ebooks) are another. So I have worked on three other books: *Obama and the Gays: A Political Marriage*; *Leatherman: The Legend of Chuck Renslow*; and *Jim Flint: The Boy From Peoria*.

The last two, co-written with Owen Keehnen, came out this year. They document the lives of two very important gay Chicagoans. Both are controversial—but who isn't after a few decades of activism? But their stories were not well documented until these books, and there are hundreds of other Chicago LGBTs worthy of such documentation.

Lately, it also seems like we have had a jump in deaths of prominent Chicagoans and national leaders. This is just a perception, because the reality is that we lose important people every day. However, these recent deaths, of Chicagoans such as Lois Bates, Renae Ogletree, Paul Varnell, RJ Chaffin, Ifti Nasim, and Christina Santiago, along with national leaders Frank Kameny, Paula Ettelbrick and Barbara Grier, do force us to think about how we remember these people and their impact, in a way that can help and mentor future activists and leaders.

Like previous generations of civil-rights and human-rights activists, we are losing our LGBT heroes, not just to AIDS, but also to age. We need an LGBT project similar to what Steven Spielberg is doing for Holocaust survivors, making sure their stories are told before they die.

However, there is a different burden the LGBT

community has than most other communities. That burden is to find a way to share our history with the next generation of LGBTs. Most of us come from heterosexual families, and if we have children, the percentages are going to also be mostly heterosexual. Most LGBT kids these days will be raised in heterosexual homes. Even if they have great parents, they need to also find their community. Most likely, they won't find us through their grammar school, high school and even college textbooks.

I have always believed that one of the biggest problems facing our community is this lack of connection. If you think you are alone, even for a small part of your life (especially the impressionable younger years), your self-esteem can't help but be damaged. This is why we have so many other troubles facing us: substance abuse, risky behavior, suicide, etc. Low self-esteem, a lack of feeling empowered by your own history and place in the world, exacts a high toll on our community.

We need this sense of history, and if the schools won't provide it, we have to find a way to transfer this knowledge through our own courses, and our own online efforts. Our community-wide self-esteem depends on it.

When my mother, Joy Darrow, died in 1996, the one thing I lost forever was her actual voice. I have silent video and still photos, but I don't have her voice anywhere. Audio, especially accompanied by video, has a more powerful impact than any other medium in transferring our stories and our knowledge. Also, especially because LGBTs are mostly left out of the history books, we must make sure to tell our stories in a way the next generations will be able to relate to—and find online.

For information or to help document our history, email editor@windycitymediagroup.com.

Tracy Baim is publisher of Windy City Times. This post also appears on her Huffington Post blog.

For other history-related projects see The Legacy Project at www.legacyprojectchicago.org and Chicago History Museum's Out at CHM, <http://www.chicagohs.org>.

and I fit in. On the other hand, it has absolutely nothing to say about civil unions—contrary to what the bishops imply in their letter.

Concerning the cessation of adoptions and foster-care services through Catholic Charities: Sadly, children were not a first priority on the part of Catholic Charities and the Illinois Catholic Conference. Other considerations took precedence.

For the bishops to imply that the state is murdering children because of your pro-life and pro-choice positions is just as reckless as saying all the bishops were responsible for the clergy sexual-abuse scandal. Such generalizations might play well with certain radicalized elements among the bishops' base, but they are not a fair and just assessment of your position. Again, thank you for all the good you do for our state.

I wish both you and your family a wonderful and safe Christmas season.

Sincerely,
 Joe Murray
 Executive Director
 Rainbow Sash Movement

Hyatt speaks

Hyatt Hotels has issued its own statement regarding coverage of its employees. It reads as follows:

"Though UniteHere [which represents workers throughout the United States and Canada who work in the hotel, gaming, food service, manufacturing, textile, distribution, laundry, and airport industries] continues to indulge in inflammatory rhetoric, Hyatt Hotels Corp. continues to provide our associates at four Chicago-area hotels with health-care coverage. Even though there has not been a union contract in place for two years, Hyatt has paid 100 percent of health-care premiums during this time. Local 1 leadership of UniteHere is the only obstacle standing in the way for our associates to receive wage and benefit increases.

"It is well past the time for the leadership of UniteHere to come to the table and let its members vote on a new contract. Hyatt's offer includes a 12 percent increase in wages over the next four years; a 26-percent increase in healthcare, pension and legal contributions over the next four years; and guaranteed, Hyatt-paid healthcare.

"UniteHere has agreed to the same wage and benefits package with Hilton and Starwood, but refuses to finish negotiations with Hyatt in Chicago. Hyatt urges UniteHere leadership to do what is right for our Chicago associates and allow their members to vote on the wage and benefits increases they deserve."

Church and state

Dear Gov. Pat Quinn:

I am writing this letter to you in response to the Nov. 16 letter sent to you and co-signed by Cardinal Francis George of Chicago, and the other 11 bishops who make up the Illinois Catholic Conference.

Thank you for not only your support, but also your leadership in passing the Illinois Religious Freedom Protection and Civil Union Act. It was the right and fair thing to do.

Like you, I am a practicing Roman Catholic and understand that Catholic tradition has always taught us to face the goal of the Gospels while, at the same time, being grounded in the reality of complex situations that we live in. The primacy of conscience applies to both of us and the bishops. As the governor of Illinois and a person of faith, your internal forum must also be valued and respected. In my opinion, it is disrespectful of your personhood and your office for any to judge you in the media without first meeting with you. This is just good pastoral practice.

The issues of abortion and civil unions are matters of law in our state, and it's my hope that the bishops are not asking you to violate those based on their understanding of what Vatican II says. Vatican II also has great deal to say about the "Sense of the Faithful" and that is where you

LETTERS

GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



Photo by Christopher Burpee

STRING THEORY

Windy City Times reviews the theatrical production *Opus*, which focuses on a string quartet, on page 20.

DISH

Fowl play.
Page 28.

Photo by Andrew Davis



THEATER

'Schooner' or later.
Page 20.

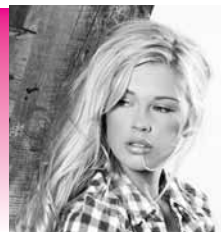
Photo by Peter Coombs



SPORTS

Hinton at things
to come.
Page 34.

Photo of Jessa Hinton by Rich Masuda



SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Full plume: Talking with 'La Cage' star Christopher Sieber

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Out actor Christopher Sieber, currently starring as Albin/Zaza in the national tour of *La Cage aux Folles* at the Bank of America Theatre, doesn't mind being known as someone who can step in at the last minute. It's something Sieber has done numerous times throughout his career.

"I guess I'm the go-to guy when they need someone quick," Sieber said during a telephone interview from Boston. Though Sieber has won plenty of acclaim for originating roles in musicals like *Triumph of Love*, *Shrek The Musical* and *The Kid* (based upon the 1999 Dan Savage book), he doesn't mind being a replacement.

For instance, Sieber was asked to step in for actor Mark Kudish on short notice in the 2002 Broadway musical *Thoroughly Modern Millie*. And when actor Douglas Sills (currently starring as Gomez in the tour of *The Addams Family*) dropped out of the musical *Spamalot*, Sieber replaced him as Sir Galahad among many other roles with limited rehearsal in New York before the show moved to Chicago in 2004 for its out-of-town tryout.

"I'm glad I'm the guy they go to," Sieber said. "I like that reputation."

Sieber's most recent replacement triumph came this past March when Jeffrey Tambor (*Arrested Development*) withdrew from the role of Georges in the 2010 Tony Award-winning revival of *La Cage aux Folles*. Seemingly out of the blue, Sieber was courted by the show's book writer,

Harvey Fierstein (who was then starring in the production in as Albin/Zaza), to come to the rescue.

Sieber was supposed to attend a Sunday matinee of the musical Chicago, since he was slated to go back into the role of Billy Flynn. But when Sieber went to the box office, they instead directed him to see *La Cage aux Folles* and told him to meet with Fierstein after the show.

Since Sieber is a long-time friend of Fierstein, he thought it was just a nice gesture. Instead, Fierstein asked him point blank whether or not he was going to play Georges—even though it was the first time Sieber had ever heard of the offer. Of course Sieber said yes.

"That was a Sunday. The deal came in, we negotiated it Monday, we closed it Tuesday, by that Thursday I was in rehearsal and the following Friday I was in the show—so seven days," Sieber said, relishing the chance to finally appear alongside Fierstein in a Broadway show and to see the performance choices of a writer playing a character he helped to create.

Both Fierstein and Sieber were offered their same *La Cage* roles for the tour. However, Fierstein was unavailable since he was working on the script for *Newsies The Musical* (headed to Broadway this spring) and collaborating with Cyndi Lauper on a musical version of the film *Kinky Boots*.

After Hollywood star George Hamilton agreed to appear as Georges, the tour's producers turned to Sieber to switch roles and play Albin. So in-



Christopher Sieber. PR photo

stead of just donning a sparkly tuxedo, Sieber now gets to go all out in full drag for Jerry Herman's famous songs like "A Little More Mascara," "The Best of Times" and "I Am What I Am."

"It's quite the role," Sieber said. "It's physically, mentally and emotionally exhausting... but it's also a lot of fun."

Now Sieber will be the first to say that he isn't a beauty and more of a "handsome" woman in drag. But Sieber jokes how he was "devastated" when his father saw him in his hometown of

Minneapolis and said, "Chris, I hate to say this, but you're not pretty."

Although much of *La Cage aux Folles* is farcical and splashy show biz, the musical also makes a strong case for gay relationships and parenting. When the tour launched this past October from Des Moines, Iowa, many people saw the symbolic nature opening in one of a handful of states where same-sex marriage is legal.

For Sieber, the message within *La Cage aux Folles* is near to his heart—particularly since he just married his longtime partner, Kevin Burrows, in New York this past Thanksgiving.

"For the conservative people who do see the show, sometimes it takes the entire first act to get them, and then by Act II we've got 'em," Sieber said. "It's kind of got a covert message where you leave the theater humming the songs and there's a message there... It doesn't matter who you love, it's that you love."

La Cage aux Folles continues through Jan. 1 at the Bank of America Theatre, 18 W. Monroe. Performances are at 2 and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 21, 23 and 28; 7:30 p.m. Dec. 22, 26, 27, 29, 30; 2 and 8 p.m. Dec. 31 and 2 p.m. Dec. 24 and Jan. 1. Tickets are \$32-\$100. Call 800-775-2000 or visit <http://www.broadwayinchicago.com>.

New York transfers

Lisa D'Amour's much-lauded 2010 drama *Detroit* was initially slated for Broadway following its world premiere run at Steppenwolf Theatre. But news broke earlier this month that *Detroit* instead will open off-Broadway at Playwrights Horizons in the fall of 2012.

A fall 2012 off-Broadway berth is also slated for the much-acclaimed drama *A Twist of Water* by playwright Caitlin Montanye Parris. The Chicago-set show, first produced by Route 66 Theatre, focuses on issues like gay adoption and the lack of hospital visitation rights by same-sex partners. According to a report in the Chicago Tribune, the show's original cast will hopefully reprise their roles at the non-profit New York company 59E59.

THEATER REVIEW

Opus

Playwright: Michael Hollinger

At: Redtwist Theatre, 1044 W. Bryn Mawr Ave.

Tickets: 773-728-7529;

<http://www.redtwist.org>; \$25-\$30

Runs through: Jan. 15

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

In most classical string quartets, the first violin is the showiest part. Even though the melodic lead flows between all four players, the second violin, viola and cello often are far less bright and forward.

So it is with *Opus*, in which playwright Michael Hollinger cleverly uses a string-quartet model to portray the fictional Lazara Quartet. The sometimes quick dialogue and more extended solo passages shift fluidly between the actors (aided significantly by Christopher Burpee's lighting design), but Elliot, the manipulative and dominating first violinist, is the showiest role. Familiar strains of Bach and Pachelbel ease the way for those untutored in classical music, while snippets of Bartok and Beethoven's String Quartet #14 (central to the play) appeal to musical cognoscenti. Whichever you are, Hollinger's play unveils some of the mysteries of making music and the passions of music makers, once you get over a few lurid (but amusing) sexual metaphors.

Using flashbacks to reveal what's happened before, *Opus* focuses on a week in which personal and professional intrigues threaten the future of the famous and successful Lazara Quartet. Seeding the story is the relationship between Elliot and the violist, Dorian, the quartet's co-founder and Elliot's longtime lover. When Dorian is forced out of the all-male group (and out of Elliot's life), a young female replacement is hired, although gender issues aren't the heart of the story.

Opus is trenchant, highly theatrical and entertaining, although Hollinger's foreshadowing of events is heavy-handed, several plot twists are predictable and he short-hands the characters. Running 85 minutes—twice as long as String Quartet #14—the play doesn't reveal enough about Elliot and Dorian to suggest why they stayed together so long. Also, we are told that Dorian is the quartet's most instinctively and brilliantly musical member, but we never are shown this aspect of his character.



Opus. Photo by Christopher Burpee

Fortunately, under director Jason W. Gerace, the capable actors develop much of the missing character exposition through physical work and subtext. Michael Sherwin has Elliot's prissy, selfish routine down cold. John Ferrick is amiable as Alan, the second violinist drawn to the new violist, Grace, played by Emily Tate as a gifted young woman who grows up fast. Brian Parry is sympathetically rock-solid as Carl, the cellist, a slow-to-anger family man who is pivotal to the denouement. Finally, Paul Dunckel as Dorian is soulful, slightly tortured and not as innocent as he seems. They are a fine quintet, a true ensemble. They don't play their instruments (miming to recorded music), but it's clear they've studied the music well.

Eric Broadwater's intimate ¾-round set is a gem: a mural of Beethoven presiding over four pedestals and quiet geometric patterns painted in warm brown and beige hues.

SPOTLIGHT



Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Marsha Norman and composer Lucy Simon adapted Frances Hodgson Burnett's beloved children's novel *The Secret Garden* into a three-time Tony Award-winning Broadway musical in 1991. See how Light Opera Works presents this musical that stresses the healing power of love and nature in a new production directed and choreographed by Stacey Flaster. *The Secret Garden* plays Dec. 26-Jan. 1 at Northwestern University's Cahn Auditorium, 600 Emerson St., Evanston. Performances are at 2 p.m. Dec. 26-28, 31 and Jan. 1; 8 p.m. Dec. 29-31. Tickets are \$32-\$92 and \$34-\$94 on New Year's Eve (there is also a handling charge per order). Call 847-920-5360 or visit <http://www.LightOperaWorks.com>. Photo by Rich Foreman



THEATER REVIEW

Penelope

Playwright: Enda Walsh

At: Steppenwolf Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted St.

Phone: 312-335-1650; \$20-\$78

Runs through: Feb. 5

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The chronicles of Homer recount how, while Odysseus was off fighting the Trojan wars, his wife, Penelope, was beset by, literally, hundreds of suitors looking to court the attractive, wealthy—and presumed widowed—matron. Though curious at their dogged pursuit, she evaded them by various stratagems, certain that her husband would return. He did, 20 long years later, to kill the would-be usurpers and reunite with his faithful spouse.

Irish playwright Enda Walsh channels Samuel Beckett in his take on the ancient myth, his portrait of the last few bird-dogging bachelors revealing them encamped on Penelope's backyard patio at the bottom of the now-dry swimming pool—sparser of hair and muscle tone in their scanty Speedo trunks and beach robes, but still stubbornly focused on their competition for the mistress of the house's favors.

If this were the sole substance of Walsh's play, what we'd have is a four-handed *Waiting For Godot*, or perhaps a *Prison-Without-Bars* play, its action centered on a carefully-selected cross-section of men, stranded with no occupation but to pass the time. Oh, but when an omen warns them that Odysseus is on his way home, they are spurred to action, each making one last desperate bid for Mrs. O's affections. The blustery Dunne woos her with Yeatsian poetry, the bookish Fitz bares his intimate thoughts to her, the swaggering Quinn schemes to eliminate his rivals and the meek Burns declares the simple act of love to be its own justification. We finish with one man dead (under enigmatic circumstances) and his companions resigned to their fates.

Steppenwolf's playbill offers some ideas (for

those of scholarly bent) as to the author's meaning—something likely to elude audiences after only a single viewing, since what commands our initial attention is Walsh's florid wordplay, along with the quartet of AARP pin-ups (at least three of whom have done the full-monty for Chicago playgoers in their Halcyon days) composed of Scott Jaeck, Tracy Letts, Yassen Peyankov and Ian Barford. Their aged beefcake physiques are thrown into sharp focus by Logan Vaughn's glamorous and silent Penelope, in much the same way as their characters' ambitions are granted urgency by the stacks of empty lawn-chairs attesting to those who abandoned the chase. Are our stubborn heroes foolish or steadfast in their devotion? Who can say, in the end, what constitutes a wasted life?



Penelope. Photo by Michael Brosilow

THEATER REVIEW

The Christmas Schooner

Playwright: book by John Reeger, music and lyrics by Julie Shannon

At: Mercury Theatre, 3745 N. Southport Ave.

Phone: 773-325-1700; \$30-\$49.50

Runs through: Dec. 31

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

When is a Christmas play not just a Christmas play? There's no denying that our McGuffin is an object irrevocably associated with the Christian holiday—we're not talking pagan Yule logs or spurious "Hannukah bushes" here—but the story inspired by its rites nevertheless encompasses themes transcending religious and cultural boundaries to address Americans united by their immigrant status, however many generations removed.

Our setting is not Europe or even fairy-tale New York City, but the coast of Lake Michigan, where in 1896, a ship's captain in Manistique, Mich., received a letter from his cousin in Chicago expressing the sorrow of their fellow German immigrants at the scarcity of the tannenbaums—Christmas trees—to remind them of the childhoods they left behind. The next year, Captain Stossel braves the winter lake waters to bring evergreens to the city. Over the objections of his wife, this dangerous voyage becomes an annual event, until the fatal day in 1912 that he and his ship

are wrecked off Bailey's Harbor in Wisconsin's Door County, leaving his bereaved family to decide whether they will continue his legacy, now thriving far beyond its ethnic origins (reflected in an Irish child's assertion that their tree is "almost as big as Mr. Sabbatini's").

After 12 years' residence in the barnlike auditorium that was the Bailiwick Arts Center mainstage, this likewise homegrown musical by John Reeger and Julie Shannon now resides in the cozy Mercury Theatre. The changes are evident: Jacqueline and Richard Penrod's Wagnerian scenic design has been compressed to fit the former nickelodeon's narrow stage, requiring additional music to facilitate clearance of the modules, and even body-microphones cannot fully overcome the echo generated by the room's exposed-brick walls. On the other hand, Eugene Dizon has assembled an eight-piece orchestra, complete with woodwinds and classical harp, making for a smoother sound to Shannon's intensely-varied array of distinctive melodies.

The most noticeable improvement, however, is the intimacy offered by the tunnel-shaped house, allowing actors filing up the aisles to make eye contact with individual audience members, reducing the distance of the emotional exchange at the heart of all performance. On the evening I attended, seasoned pilgrims and first-timers alike were palpably awash in empathy by the time we were sent on our way with, not only merry you-know-whats, but gentle exhortations to "pass the love along."

THEATER REVIEW

A Christmas Story, The Musical!

Music and lyrics: by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul, book by Joseph Robinette, based on writings of Jean Shepherd and 1983 film

At: Chicago Theatre, 175 N. State St.
 Tickets: <http://thechicagotheatre.com>;
 800-745-3000; \$35-79
 Runs through: Dec. 30

BY STEVEN CHAITMAN

Christmastime brings with it a bevy of annual comforts, and these traditions are perhaps the most stubborn when it comes to film and theatre. In an ordinary universe devoid of holiday cheer, annually producing A Christmas Carol and The Nutcracker along with 24-hour marathons of A Christmas Story would be deemed lunacy—yet, we voluntarily re-experience them every year.

To earn a place on that list of holiday traditions is to ascend to a sort of Yuletide nirvana, something that producers ironically desire and exploit. In that sense, A Christmas Story, the Musical! was inevitable, but either a special place in the hearts of so many (or a Christmas miracle) seem to have saved it from the fate of a completely hackneyed film-to-stage adaptation. The book honors the film's most iconic moments and young music/lyrics duo Benj Pasek and Justin Paul mostly enhances the classic story with catchy Broadway-safe tunes.

The trouble with reimagining any revered source material is the potential to be torn to shreds due to constant comparison. Joseph Robinette, who has adapted a number of treasured children's stories for the stage, successfully identifies the key scenes of the 1983 film that would cause anarchy if overlooked or mishandled. Tony Award-winning director John Rando (Urinetown) and the artistic crew bring them



A Christmas Story, the Musical! Photo by Carol Rosegg

to life with a sensitivity as if divinely ordained with the task, and without sacrificing staging practicalities either.

Pasek and Paul see these classic scenes as opportunities for musical expansion, even if they end up like the lyrically benign number "A Major Award," the old man's joyful revelry in his prized fishnet stocking-leg lamp. As unnecessary as the song seems, its genesis coming a beloved movie moment (and involving choreography with some 20 duplicate lamps) makes it one of the show's biggest crowd-pleasing numbers.

Small tangents in the film, such as Ralphie's daydreams, make for the most ideal musical embellishments. Ralphie's Wild West fantasy of saving his family thanks to his BB gun actually makes for the show's best number, "Ralphie to the Rescue"—enough so that it's reprised twice in the second act. Clarke Hallum, as Ralphie, is

a joy, as is his unfaltering and pristine young voice.

However, the glue of it all—and rightfully so, considering it takes the movie from good to great—is the narration. Park Ridge native Gene Weygandt brings the precise humor of actual narrator Jean Shepherd and an added emotional wallop that expresses the nature of the story even better than the film does.

Outside of a few boring ballads for the sake of ballads and some other musical fluff, A Christmas Story, the Musical! has enough mirthful energy to warrant an annual Christmas tour at a Broadway level. With so many child-speaking parts and a large children's ensemble, it's not only family-friendly, but should also prove inspiring to kids' inner artists.

A tiny cringe of hesitation is to be expected when approaching a reworking of a classic, and

even the show's slightest nuances have the potential to disappoint, but most will find themselves surprised at what a touch of Broadway does to this Christmas staple.

CRITICS' PICKS

Burning Bluebeard, Neo-Futurists at Neo-Futurarium, through Dec. 30. Performer/playwright Jay Torrence and his skilled ensemble of fire-singed performers offer a haunting examination of Chicago's disastrous 1903 Iroquois Theatre Fire. It's definitely an eloquently theatrical warning to make you forever check the locations of fire exits and escapes. SCM

The Caretaker, Writers' Theatre, through March 25. You simply won't find a better staging of Harold Pinter's quintessential 1960 Comedy of Menace, set in a tough London hood where an old bum nearly comes between two vastly dissimilar brothers. Beautiful acting and direction. JA

A Christmas Carol: The Silent Bah-Humbug, Silent Theatre at NNWAC St. Paul's Church, through Dec. 30. Charles Dickens' famed 1853 novella of a miser's redemption with the help of several ghosts receives a wonderful silent-movie-style update complete with clever black-and-white make-up and costumes. SCM

Spring Awakening, Griffin Theatre Company at Theater Wit, through Jan. 8. Frank Wedekind's plea for sex education is a century old, but Duncan Sheik and Steve Sater's musical adaptation intensifies the tragedy of teen ignorance, just as the close quarters at Theater Wit heightens the intimacy. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

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KNIGHT AT THE MOVIES

BY
RICHARD
KNIGHT, JR.

The Artist; The Adventures of Tintin; film note

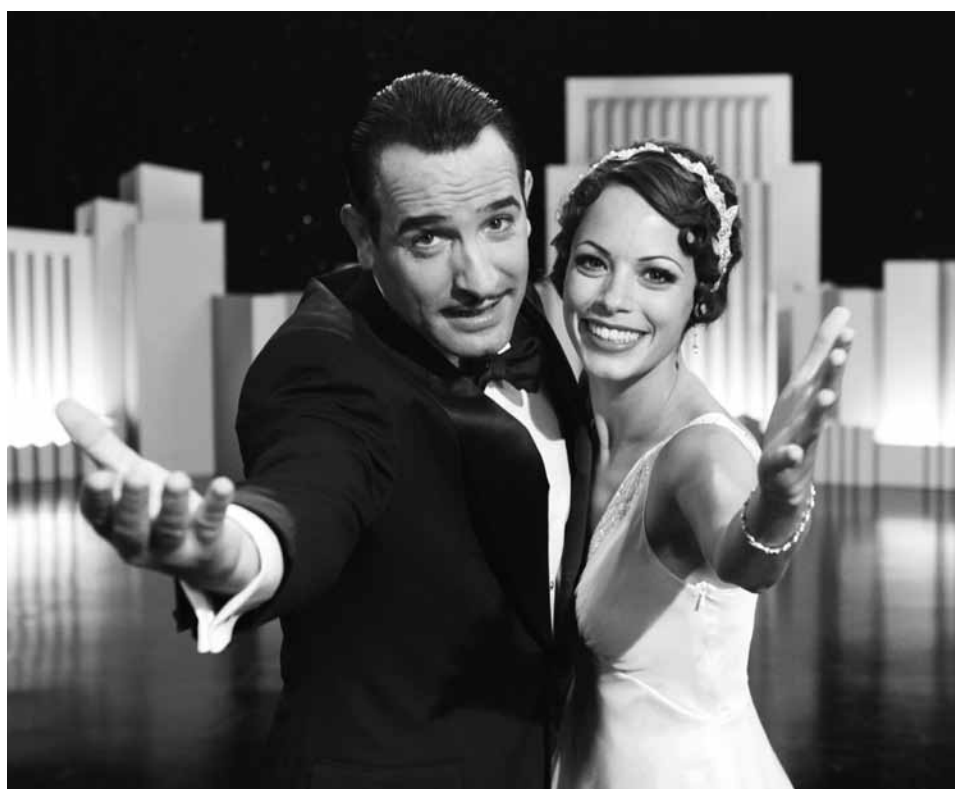
I'm in the midst of reading Brian Kellow's insightful biography of Pauline Kael. (An interview with Kellow about the book is coming up in our January 2012 movie issue.) Kael was the famously irascible film critic for the New Yorker who was renowned for championing passionate, exciting movies that lifted audiences out of their seats and defied expectations.

In her prime, Kael had the power with a rave review to turn a movie into a hit. However, with the age of the Internet—in which everyone's literally a film critic and those of us who have some experience at the job find their reviews reduced to stars, numbers, balloons, asterisks, or summed up with percentages at Rotten Tomatoes or Metacritic—can any critic hope to drive an audience to a theater?

That thought has been on my mind a lot with regard to **The Artist**. From the rapturous critical hosannas and awards that have greeted the picture months before its release, I'm obviously not the only one who has been yearning for a movie that reverts to a classic Hollywood formula for its inspiration. However, is it possible that wiser mainstream audiences—sapped by the onslaught of negative media and endless promotion of "reality stars," and both revved up and desensitized by violent, frenetic video games masquerading as blockbusters—will take this delightful silent movie, filmed in glorious black and white, to their tech-happy hearts?

I don't give a fig what the box-office numbers will be, but this is one time (okay, maybe not the only time) that I want you to listen to all those rave reviews (including this one). Drop your cynicism and see **The Artist**—a movie that is so old-fashioned from beginning to end that it's literally a breath of fresh air. French writer-director Michel Hazanavicius, along with stars Jean Dujardin and Berenice Bejo (Hazanavicius' wife), have wrought what is essentially a silent variation of *A Star Is Born*—this time without either the tragic majesty of the Garland-Mason version or the phony rock-'n-roll ickiness of the Streisand-Kristofferson '70s remake.

The Artist, rather, is an effervescent, melodramatic though gentle edition of the tale. It's 1927 and Dujardin, as matinee idol George Valentin, finds that his glorious career is suddenly a shambles thanks to the introduction of sound. This innovation in movies brings along with it a desire for new stars, and studio boss John Goodman is happy to provide them. During a chance meeting during the premiere of his last great success, George has accidentally met and fallen instantly for Peppy Miller (Bejo), whose moniker perfectly describes her zippy personality. In true *A Star Is Born* fashion, his career decline mirrors her rise. By 1932, broke, drunk, with even his loyal chauffeur (James Cromwell) gone and only his faithful pooch for company, George is near the end of his rope when Peppy reappears, offering a happy resolution to his career doldrums.



Jean Dujardin (left) and Berenice Bejo. Photo by The Weinstein Company

Dujardin, who may be familiar to audiences as the star of two French James Bond spy thriller send-ups (also directed by Hazanavicius) has the perfect matinee-idol good looks, happy-go-lucky grin, pixilated exhilaration of the period and the slapstick timing of Harold Lloyd. In addition, Bejo captures some of the innocent flirtation of the flapper stars like Anita Page and Ruby Keeler (rather than Crawford, who always seemed a little too knowing, even at the outset of her career). The affectionate tone, reminiscent of *Singin' in the Rain*, never falters and, not surprisingly, the cinematography of Guillaume Schiffman and Ludovic Bource's music score are essential components to the movie's zippy impact.

Hazanavicius has avoided the gimmicky traps a modern-day silent movie might imply. He and his talented cast and crew have, instead, wrought a movie that flickers with the intensity of some of those enduring silent classics that inspired it—and to which, if I don't miss my guess, it will join in that esteemed category.

The same energy is apparent at the outset of **The Adventures of Tintin**, director Steven Spielberg's latest action-adventure picture that also looks to Golden Age Hollywood for its inspiration. The movie, based on the comic books of the Belgian artist Herge, date back to 1929; for Spielberg, with his enthusiasm for Saturday-morning serials (previously explored in the *Indiana Jones* series), that must have proven irresistible. He has assembled his usual crack team and delivered a movie that utilizes the stop-motion animation technique with admirable results. It's basically an extended, animated variation on the Young *Indiana Jones* TV show, with much of that series' vibrancy and innocence.

The movie follows Tintin (voiced with assurance by Jamie Bell), a young (he looks to be about 19) investigative journalist who gets involved in an ever-spiraling web of mystery and intrigue. Accompanied by his faithful canine companion Snowy, Tintin is quickly immersed on a quest for buried treasure. Chased by master criminal Sakharine (voiced by Daniel Craig) and his henchmen, Tintin eventually picks up another accomplice to help him, the drunken sea captain Haddock (voiced by Andy Serkis).

The arrival of Haddock, with his thick Scottish brogue (which wears thin very quickly) and annoying drunken tantrums, has the effect of stopping the picture cold, and his arrival is also accompanied by one endless action set piece after another. Spielberg just can't seem to help himself and as the action sequences accumulate without a respite between, what had been

a bracing, adventure yarn for kids of all ages descends into a charmless, increasingly chaotic last half that leaves you feeling pummeled rather than enervated.

NUNN ON ONE: TELEVISION

David Tutera on weddings, parties and traveling

BY JERRY NUNN

Celebrity event planner David Tutera returns to WE tv with a brand-new season of *My Fair Wedding*. He is the author of seven books, with the most recent being *A Passion for Parties: Your Guide to Elegant Entertaining*. We talked about WE and weddings on a Wednesday for *Windy City*.

Windy City Times: Hi, David. Welcome to Chicago!

David Tutera: I love Chicago. I always say if I ever leave New York I would live in Chicago.

WCT: Let's talk about your career. You basically started from the ground up.

DT: I did. I started when I was 19. I seriously got into the business accidentally through a bat mitzvah, specifically; then I did a wedding; then the next thing I knew, I owned a business. It really was from nothing to something. It has been a long time. It has been 25 years. It has been quite the journey since doing client's events in the county of Westchester to New York to all over the country, now all over the world. I have written seven books and have product lines that I have developed and are very successful.

WCT: So you fly everywhere to do weddings all over the place.

DT: I'm leaving Dec. 26 for Durban, Africa. So when you say everywhere, I literally go anywhere!

WCT: Is it hard traveling and leaving your partner, Ryan Jurica?

DT: It is, but he is actually coming with me, we travel a lot together. It is one of the great benefits. Ryan and I have been together for 13 years. He works with me and for me in the company. He is a large part of the success of all of what we do. This is due to the fact that we do it together.

WCT: What was your personal wedding like?

DT: Ours was really great. We had 120 people

Film note:

—New Year's Eve for Movie Lovers: Get ready to set sail for the 4th annual Camp Midnight presentation of the camptacular disaster flick, 1972's *The Poseidon Adventure* on Sunday, December 31 at the Music Box Theatre (3733 N. Southport). This year, as in the past, Dick O'Day (my alter ego) will bravely captain our film going passengers on a pre-show voyage (beginning at 11 p.m.) that includes party favors, a champagne toast, comp drink ticket, '70s cruisewear costume contest (with prizes), and an interactive screening guide. As always, I'll be joined by David Cerda, artistic director of Handbag Productions, to provide running commentary throughout the film along with members of the Handbag theatrical troupe.

The screening of the film will be timed so that theater patrons and their celluloid counterparts will celebrate midnight at the exact same time. It will also feature original bonus material that Hell in a Handbag created. Also, we must be doing something right because a certain venue in Arizona has copied each campy element of our fabu-lush event for its own rip off *Poseidon NYE* although, unfortunately, they'll have to do without our inspired invective and creative sartorial splendor, not to mention our unique tackiness. <http://www.musicboxtheatre.com>

Check out my archived reviews at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com> or <http://www.knightatthemovies.com>. Readers can leave feedback at the latter website.



David Tutera. Photo courtesy of weTV

come in Manchester Village in Vermont eight years ago. It was pretty spectacular. It was an emotional weekend. We had four parties over the weekend, ending with a black-tie ceremony in a beautiful 17th-century church.

WCT: Your show is about surprise makeovers, correct?

DT: It is brides that have gone off track. They may not realize it. These may seem like good ideas but these half-baked ideas wind up being more of a mess. So I come in under three weeks and change everything. They have no control anymore and they don't know what it is going to be like until they actually show up at their own wedding.

WCT: So it is a lot of trust in you...

DT: Listen, I am not sure I could do it if I

Turn to page 25

MUSIC

Out Broadway star Gavin Creel makes 'Noise' with anthem

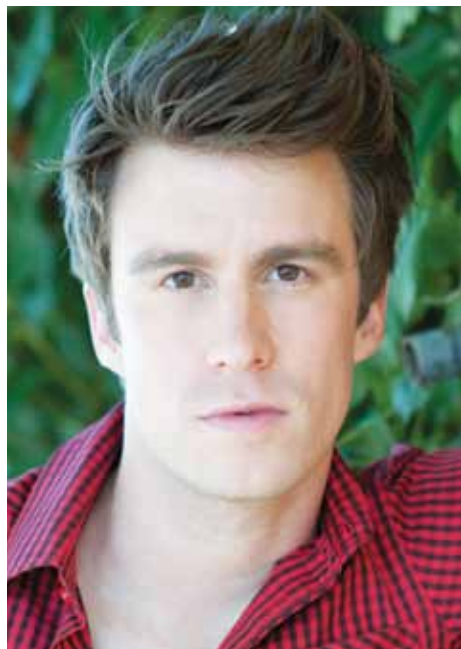
BY DAVID-ELIJAH NAHMOD

The video begins with Maggie Gallagher of the National Organization For Marriage speaking out against our equality. We are then treated to a clip of right-wing pundit Ann Coulter, who proclaims, "I want DADT in all of society." Then comes the most stinging rebuke of all: Margie Phelps of the notorious Westboro Baptist Church says gay people should all be put to death—and then the song begins.

"Noise" is a new gay anthem written and performed by Gavin Creel, a two-time Tony Award nominee. He's also an out, proud gay man. Creel, who co-wrote the song with Robbie Roth, is pissed. However, it's his own people who cause his brow to frown.

"Noise was born out of a frustration with the left," Creel stated in an email to Windy City Times. "More specifically, I was angry with my gay community. I am angry with the intense complacency that overwhelms us, except when there is an election or a kid kills himself after being bullied or someone dies of a horrible disease. I wanted to write a song that fired us all up, that called out to everyone—gay, straight, bi, trans, lesbian, EVERYONE—to speak out for gay rights: for equal rights, for human rights, with no shame, with total pride. That's how 'Noise' was born."

"I see this song not as mine, but as all of ours," Creel continued. "I want to find a way



Gavin Creel. Photo by Emily Sopha

to get it into the hands of every young kid out there who doesn't feel like the fight is worth it, who feels isolated and alone. I want the song to be on the iPods and computers of people who oppose gay rights, or who don't know what to think. We are not going to stay quiet until the

law protects each and every one of us equally."

Creel walks the walk, using his talents as a musical-theater performer to help provide a safe haven for LGBT families. He's a regular show-stopper aboard RFamily Cruises, the Cruise ship line operated by Rosie O'Donnell: "I'm proud to have been there on the very first RFamily Cruises. It was an event that changed my life completely. I was able to be with almost 2000 gay and lesbian families and watch them all just live and vacation in peace, as normal families can. It was something of complete beauty. It helped me to truly accept myself as a gay man and know that I am valid and perfect, just the way I am." Creel has been back to RFamily Cruises a number of times.

Creel, who recently starred as Claude in the Broadway and West End revivals of Hair, is also

a co-founder of Broadway Impact, an equality organization comprised of New York theater people: "Having a platform like Hair, which spoke so honestly onstage about acceptance and fighting injustice, made the offstage love riot we were beginning with Broadway Impact really possible."

Creel said that Broadway Impact is co-producing Dustin Lance Black's (Milk screenwriter) Proposition 8 play: "Someday, possibly soon, the US Supreme Court will hear this case and it could decide the future of full federal marriage protection for all citizens. Broadway Impact will not rest until that is a successful reality."

To hear "Noise" and to see the video, visit <http://www.GavinCreel.com>. For more on his activism, visit <http://www.BroadwayImpact.com>.

Sinfonietta tribute to King Jan. 15-16

Maestro Mei-Ann Chen and guest conductor Jeri Lynne Johnson will lead the Chicago Sinfonietta through works that celebrate the late Martin Luther King's fight for civil rights and his legacy.

The third concert in the sinfonietta's subscription season, "The Journey, The Dream" will be performed at Wentz Concert Hall of North Central College, 171 E. Chicago Ave., Naperville, on Sunday, Jan. 15, at 3 p.m. and at Orchestra Hall of Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, on Monday, Jan. 16, at 7:30 p.m.

Among the works to be performed are Zoltán Kodály's "Dances of Galánta" and Charles Ives' "Central Park in the Dark." The world premiere of "Harambee: Road to Victory," which jazz flautist Nicole Mitchell wrote, features the Apostolic Church of God Sanctuary Choir.

Single tickets for "The Journey, The Dream" range from \$35-\$45 at Wentz Concert Hall and \$26-\$96 at Orchestra Hall, with special \$10 pricing available for students. Tickets can be purchased by calling the Chicago Sinfonietta at 312-236-3681, ext. 2, or visiting <http://www.chicagosinfonietta.org>.



Nicole Mitchell. Photo by Lauren Deutsch

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Joffrey Dancers: Fabrice Calmels, Victoria Jaiani Photo by: Herbert Migdoll

NUNN ON ONE: TV

Robert J. Ulrich: Talking with The Glee Project's casting director



BY JERRY NUNN

Oxygen breathed new life into Fox's hit television show, *Glee*, bringing four new cast members onto the scene with the first season of *The Glee Project*. Contestants competed by singing, dancing and making music videos. Two winners tied for a seven-episode arc with characters tailor-made for them on *Glee*. Two runners-up each won a two-episode stint as well.

Robert J. Ulrich is a big part of the show as casting director for *The Project*. He has been the mastermind behind such television hits as *Drop Dead Diva* and *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*. *Windy City Times* sat down to have breakfast with Robert right after a huge two-day open call in Chicago for season two of *The Glee Project*.

Windy City Times: Hi, Robert. I heard after Chicago you are heading to do more open calls for the show in my hometown, Nashville.

Robert Ulrich: I am and very excited.

WCT: You get to hang with Alex Newell, the winner from last season at the casting call.

RU: Yes, Samuel Larsen was here in Chicago, Alex is in Nashville, Damian McGinty is in New York and Lindsay Pearce and Cameron Mitchell will be at the final callbacks.

WCT: I got to talk to them all before and after the finale. Alex was my favorite.

RU: He's wonderful.

WCT: I can't believe how well-adjusted he is, performing in drag at 18 years old.

RU: Especially since he hadn't theoretically come out until the show!

WCT: I was on the edge of my seat watching the finals.

RU: Me, too. I was there and until Ryan Murphy said the names I didn't know. He didn't tell anyone. Isn't that crazy?

WCT: He's a good secret-keeper.

RU: He is. Cameron quitting was dramatic and a lot of people didn't want that to happen. What is nice about the show is everybody had

favorites. You loved Alex. It wasn't a show where there was one favorite.

WCT: You have done so many shows, such as *Nip/Tuck*.

RU: My company does *Dexter*, *The Mentalist*, *CSI*, *In Plain Sight*, *Supernatural*, and *American Horror Story*. I did *Battle Star Galactica*.

WCT: Your hands are in everything.

RU: We do a lot. We are very lucky. I have been doing this a long time.

WCT: What is your background?

RU: I am from northern California—Modesto. It is famous for murder and mayhem but also Gallo wine. I was an actor in New York but not successful. I moved to Los Angeles when my wife into a contract with NBC many years ago. I have been there ever since. I have had my company for 22 years.

As far as my background to being able to cast *Glee*, I did musicals, I was a singer, I performed at Disneyland and I had a club act in New York. I was a music major for a year so I do love music.

WCT: You have been with *Glee* from the beginning?

RU: Yes, I cast the pilot.

WCT: Are there any divas on the show?

RU: No, everyone is pretty nice. They are very much a family because I think with *Glee* what happened was most of them had done nothing. For Chris Colfer the role didn't even exist. I brought him in to Ryan and there wasn't even a role.

WCT: Where did you find him?

RU: He just auditioned in my office. He literally opened his mouth and sang "Mr. Cellophane" which they put in the show. There was originally another character in the first episode so I had him read for that and Artie. I took him to Ryan and told him there is no part for him but he is so special. Ryan thought he looked like a Von Trapp so created a character on the spot.

WCT: And then he wins a Golden Globe. Go figure...

RU: I think so many of them were new and even the ones with success like Lea Michele weren't known in the television world. It became such a phenomenon and they all just bonded. They are all really nice kids.

WCT: Now with the *Glee Project*, did you come up with the concept?

RU: No; it was going to be a pilot but due to an acquisitions deal in getting syndication rights to Oxygen for *Glee* in 2013, the idea was born. But I think Ryan just wanted to expand the casting process and give people the opportunity to audition that would normally not have a chance. So it was not my idea and I didn't even



Robert J. Ulrich (right) and *Glee* star Harry Shum Jr. on *The Glee Project*. Photo courtesy of Oxygen

know I would be on the show until I showed up and they shot it. I am not kidding. I thought I was just casting the show.

WCT: Suddenly you are on camera!

RU: It was wonderful. I am really proud of it. It was so good, wasn't it?

WCT: I was attached to the cast from the pre-show!

RU: That was the casting special. I agree. They did that so beautifully. I will have to say it was completely real. They never made me say something I didn't want to say. I never had to pick someone I didn't want to pick. They obviously didn't make Ryan. As a result it was really real. That was why some people won multiple times on the homework or why Samuel was never in the bottom. Normally that wouldn't be the way a reality show would go.

WCT: Now with the second season of *The Glee Project* you are casting for *Glee* when [The Project] has not been renewed.

RU: It just hasn't been officially renewed. They usually don't get picked up until January. It was a unique thing when *Glee* was picked up two seasons in advance. That never happens.

WCT: How did the casting go in Chicago?

RU: Chicago was great last year and this year. Several people came out of it last year. I have to go back online and take those people—all the people that send in tapes—like Emily from New York last year. Then I combine them with the open calls. I pick 80 people and they go to the callbacks in L.A. It is just crazy; 80 out of thousands!

WCT: That is insane.

RU: I am sure there will be people from Chicago because there were some amazing people.

WCT: That's good to hear. They screen the people auditioning before they get to you, right?

RU: The way the open call works is I pick screeners and give them a whole tutorial in what they should look for. I tell them to err on the side of letting somebody through and then they send me people very night. I already have picked from the screening 300 definites so far. The screeners send the hopefuls they like onto me so yesterday I saw a couple of hundred people out of the people that they saw.

WCT: It is casting on talent, personality and

so many different things...

RU: Yes, it is different than a lot of shows I think because it is not just about being a good singer. It is also about being able to fit into that world of *Glee*. That is so much of it. It is being accessible and open. It is not just about the singing at all.

WCT: Dancing, too...

RU: Dancing comes into it at the callbacks. Zach Woodlee puts together choreography for them. Obviously Damian wasn't a dancer. Many of the *Glee* kids are not dancers. Like everything else is important but it is more important to be right for *Glee* and to have that appeal. I think there will be more dance auditions this season actually.

WCT: Any advice for people auditioning?

RU: The thing I always tell them is be yourself. We say that over and over on the show but it really is true. The second you try to be something else then you are not as interesting. On the *Glee Project* we are really looking for someone who can be comfortable enough with themselves that Ryan can see them and write for them. Some people at 18 know themselves and some don't. It is harder for others.

WCT: When does this season come out?

RU: I guess next summer again. We shoot in January. It might be a little earlier but I don't know.

WCT: You are still working with *Glee* right now as well?

RU: Oh, yes. I am so busy. There is so much going on in *Glee*. There is a new character played by Grant Gustin. I saw a tape of his and remembered him [because of] a role that he wasn't as right for. He was on tour for *West Side Story* so I came in on a Saturday and auditioned him. He starts tonight and is great. We are still auditioning people all the time.

WCT: *Glee* has changed television in some ways.

RU: I am so proud of it. I have been mainly casting dramas for 28 years. The opportunity to do *Glee* and get to work with singing has really been a blessing.

For more on the *Project* and how to audition, visit <http://thegleeproject.oxygen.com>.

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David Tutera (right) on *My Fair Wedding*. Photo courtesy of weTV

TUTERA from page 22

were on the opposite side. With the success of five seasons they know at the end of the day they have gone from not-such-great weddings—sometimes \$3,000 budgets—to several hundred thousand-dollar weddings and something fabulous. They get the whole experience, so that is what people love about the show.

WCT: Have you ever had a disaster where they just hated it?

DT: No. There have been challenges in the episodes leading up to the day of the wedding not wanting me to make the changes that I am doing, but the reality is that is the show and what they signed up for. It is not like they can have one change and not another. They have relinquished control to me. At the end of the day they know that was a good decision.

WCT: There are issues of the economy now that you have to deal with.

DT: Yes, it is a great show because people are very stressed about budgets and the economy. They want the fund for a big wedding. These girls have these struggles, just like the viewers at home are having. It is great to step into these fantasies that come true. It is a great payoff at the end.

WCT: Have you done a lot of gay weddings?

DT: Personally, I have for my company, yes, but for the show, no. I am hoping in season six that we embrace gay weddings. It is on the top of my list as a gay man myself, who did my own wedding. I think it is time to see more of it on television.

WCT: Gay weddings are happening more. That is another thing.

DT: They are happening more. You and I are aware of it because of who we are and what we do. It is time for people like myself to make it more aware that they are happening more and more. I think it is the responsibility that we have but not throwing it in the faces of people and making them uncomfortable but making it acceptable. It is one thing to read about it, but different to see it.

WCT: How is it working with celebrities such as Elton John and Barbara Walters?

DT: They are just like everyone else. They want something different but the challenge is the same. The thing with celebrities is they have less time to give you to make decisions. They always want something different that has never been done. Their expectations can be higher and the length of time that they are planning is typically shorter. It becomes a little more of a navigational process.

WCT: I saw you on *The View*. That looked fun!

DT: It was. I do that show all the time and they are a fun group. I was just on *The Talk* on

CBS with Sharon and Julie, then did *The View* a day later. Next week is Rachael Ray. It is fun to go out there and not just give my tips on wedding advice but on entertaining, which is my grass roots.

WCT: Now that you have done seven books, is there a book that you still want to write?

DT: I am actually in the process of working on three. The ones I really to do now are more about friendly advice, as opposed to doing the big entertaining blowouts. People really want to know what to do at home and truly afford it, as opposed to a once-in-a-lifetime experience, like a wedding or big celebration. I am working on more budget-friendly advice for everybody and anybody.

WCT: Do you think holiday weddings are good or bad?

DT: I think they are a terrible idea. If you invite me to a holiday wedding, odds are I am not going to go.

WCT: Where can people go for advice on holiday parties from you?

DT: My website is <http://www.davidthutera.com>. That will navigate them through my fashion, craft and jewelry lines. These are things that I have created for budget brides and budget people entertaining. They can look and feel fabulous without spending stupid amounts of money!

My Fair Wedding with David Tutera marches down the aisle Sundays. Visit <http://www.wetv.com/shows/my-fair-wedding> for listings and details.

Montgomery CD includes Billy Strayhorn song

Resonance Records will release *Echoes of Indiana Avenue*—the first full album of previously unheard Wes Montgomery music in more than 25 years—on March 6, 2012, which would have been Montgomery's 88th birthday.

Some consider Montgomery to be one of the greatest jazz guitarists ever. The album showcases Montgomery in performance from 1957-1958 at nightclubs in his hometown of Indianapolis, as well as rare studio recordings.

Among the songs here are renditions of Erroll Garner's "Misty" and openly gay composer/pianist Billy Strayhorn's "Take the A Train" as well as jazz standards "Darn That Dream" and "Body and Soul."

QUOTELINES

COMPILED BY KATE SOSIN

"IT COULD COME IN HANDY, THE GAYDAR GUN. I sent one to Michelle Bachman, and told her to aim it at her husband and see what happens. Just saying, have you heard him talk? Oh, dear lord."—*Rosie O'Donnell, on her show, Dec. 12.*

"BUT WHY ARE SO MANY OF THOSE WHO BELIEVE WHAT I BELIEVE HOMOPHOBES? Don't say it's biblical. Too many outdated, bizarre things are biblical, and we put them in the box of random things somebody managed to get into the text. More importantly, what is a reasonable response to those who serve the poor, hungry, homeless and mentally ill, but hate the gays? The people with the red kettles on my street remind me of the dilemma of Christian do-gooders this time of year."—*Rev. Winnie Varghese on the Salvation Army, posted to The Huffington Post, Dec. 14.*

"JOAN RIVERS MADE AN ABSOLUTELY RIDICULOUS COMMENT that there are no gay men at Occupy Wall Street, because we care too much about how we look, or whatever. She might just be trying to be funny, but it got on my nerves a little bit. When people say things like that, sometimes I want to be like, 'Oh my God, shut up. I know you're trying to be funny, but it's incredibly disrespectful.'"—*Occupier "Joey" to weareyouth.org, Nov. 11.*

"STRAIGHT MEN DID NOT FIND ME ATTRACTIVE ... I think they were scared of me because I was different. I've always asked, 'Why? Why do I have to do that? Why do I have to look this way? Why do I have to dress this way? Why do I have to behave this way?'"—*Madonna to Harper's Bazaar, in its December issue.*

"THE HIP-HOP COMMUNITY IS MOST LIKELY OWNED BY GAY, to be honest with you... so why wouldn't a guy come out and say 'I'm gay' and get that type of love? You know what I'm saying? Lady Gaga, I don't know if she's gay, but she's running with that gay shit for real, and she is winning."—*Rapper Fat Joe on VLAD TV, Nov. 7.*

"AS AN ACTOR, THERE'S SOMETHING VOYEURISTIC AND PERVERSELY SEXY about watch-

ing my husband [kiss someone else]."—*Kelly Ripa on watching her husband kiss a man on stage, to the New York Daily News, Nov. 16.*

"BUT CHAZ ALREADY GETS SO MUCH SHIT, and you know what? Just a couple of years after I came out, I was saying prescriptivist misogynistic nonsense too. I read a lot, I learned a lot, I spent time living as a trans guy in the world, and I came out the other side of that worldview. I didn't have a huge amount of fame or exposure when I came out, though, the way Chaz did, and didn't feel obligated to make myself a spokesman."—*Warren Beatty's transgender son Stephen Ira, on his blog, Nov. 17.*

"Straight men did not find me attractive ... I think they were scared of me because I was different.

—Madonna



"WHAT'S THAT? THAT'S A MAN PENGUIN? Oh my god. Then, what are these feelings? I know I'm human straight. Am I penguin gay?"—*Stephen Colbert, on the Colbert Report, Dec. 14.*

"AS IT STANDS, SETTING HOMOSEXUALS APART ENCOURAGES HOMOPHOBIA and all the people who would like to get rid of gays, whom they consider sick or degenerate, or, worse, a danger to their communities. If people are equal, it's more difficult to turn some of them into scapegoats. Everything should be done to stop the uneducated hate in our country. Think for a moment what would happen if everything created by homosexuals in the history of the world were removed by the delete button on that great computer in the sky. Do we want to live in such a world? Then for God's sake, get rid of the Defense of Marriage Act, which is already declared unconstitutional, and let us all be equal and free in 'the land of the free.'"—*Former Warner Brothers Television President Alan Shayne in the Huffington Post, Nov. 11.*

Mom: A Tribute to Mothers of LGBTs Windy City Times soliciting people for new photo book

CHICAGO—Mothers of LGBT individuals will be the focus of a new photo essay book from Windy City Times. The Chicago-based weekly newspaper is soliciting submissions from LGBTs in the Chicago area, or those formerly from Chicago, for this new project.

Just in time for the holidays, people can submit photos with their moms via email, Facebook or Twitter through Jan. 15, 2012. Windy City Times is looking for diversity in families. Once the winners are selected, a professional photo shoot will be done by Kat Fitzgerald of Mystic Images Photography (of the winning mothers with their child or children), so winners must be available in the Chicago area, although some additional photos may be used. Winners will also be asked to submit a 200-word essay about what

their mother has meant to them.

Depending on the reception for this project, other books may be done with fathers, or queer parents, but the focus of this first book is on mothers.

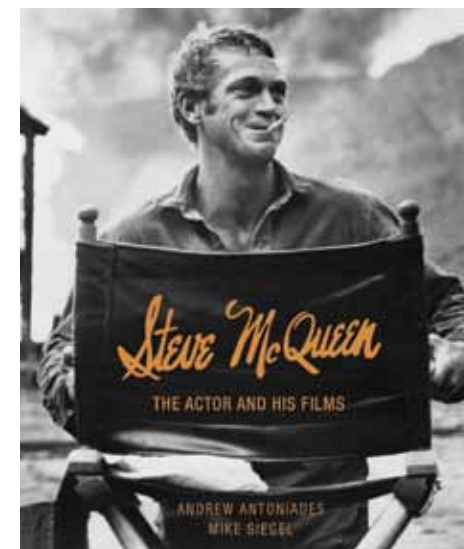
To submit, send photos of you with your mother to: <https://www.facebook.com/windycitymediagroup>, Twitter [windycitytimes1](https://twitter.com/windycitytimes1) or email editor@windycitymediagroup.com by Jan. 15, 2012. You can also submit a short essay about why you think your mother should be selected to be photographed with you. Families with multiple LGBT children are welcome to submit as well.

Images may also be used in Windy City Times newspaper.

Books and DVDs: Last-minute stocking stuffers

BY TRACY BAIM

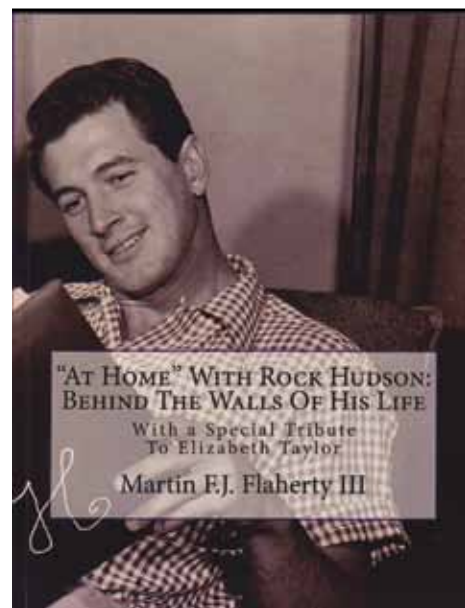
We have been writing about a wide range of books, DVDs and CDs this month, and here are a few more to add to your actual or virtual stacks of books or DVDs—or to give away to your friends and family.



Steve McQueen: The Actor and his Films by Andrew Antoniadis and Mike Siegel

I don't think I can even describe just how comprehensive this book is. Any Hollywood icon would love the comprehensive treatment that McQueen gets from these true believers. Published by Dalton Watson Fine Books (www.daltonwatson.com), it is 492 pages with a whopping 1,020 black-and-white and color photos. As the publisher states, this book "tracks his journey from juvenile delinquent, to Marine, to an aspiring actor breaking into Hollywood, until he became a global superstar and the highest-paid

actor of his era. Included are numerous behind the scenes tales of events that occurred leading up to and during filming, and fascinating insights into McQueen's acting techniques and motivations." This is a treasure trove of content, including candid photos and memorabilia. Antoniadis is a life-long McQueen fan and expert. Siegel is a filmmaker, film historian and the director of more than a dozen documentaries on classic films and directors of the 1960s and 1970s. This is an incredible book and would be great on your coffeetable. And it would probably stop a bullet should the need arise.



'At Home' with Rock Hudson: Behind the Walls of His Life (with a Special Tribute to Elizabeth Taylor) by Martin F.J. Flaherty III

This is a much more intimate and personal look at the life of a Hollywood legend. It is 312 pages with 508 images, and is a free-form writing style. From 1975 to 1985, Flaherty worked and lived side by side with Hudson. "I knew him as well as his closest of friends, better than most of his lovers," said Flaherty. "I've waited over 25 years to write this book. I was there when Rock Hudson met Marc Christian. I was the one to dress what we thought was a pimple on Rock's neck, and turned out to be Kaposi's sarcoma. I was the one who physically removed Marc Christian from Rock's home, when he wouldn't leave on his own. I was Rock's estate manager for the last 10 years of his life, I cared for him when he was sick, I was one of the few he trusted within his inner circle. It was my idea to start the letter-writing campaign to Rock's fans for contributions after his AIDS diagnosis; I was instrumental in the formation of what began as The Rock Hudson AIDS Foundation, later to become amFAR. ... These are not only the tales of the often bizarre occurrences of life at Rock's home, the Castle, but also

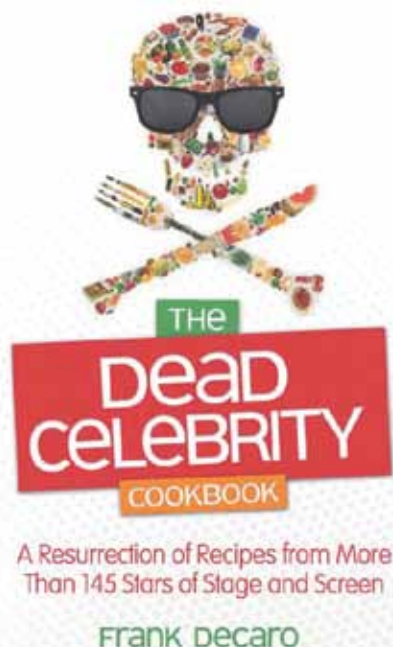
the anecdotes the screen legend related to me from the course of his life seen through my eyes—those of a normal, everyday working man—you will come to know the man, Rock Hudson, as I knew him, the courageous, compassionate, hilariously funny man who just happened to be my boss and good friend." Judge for yourself what this acting giant was like, through the eyes of one of those who might have known him best—near the end of Hudson's life. See www.rock-hudson-estate-collection.com.



Left: Rock Hudson from the book. Right: Elizabeth Taylor and Rock Hudson, another photo from Flaherty's book.

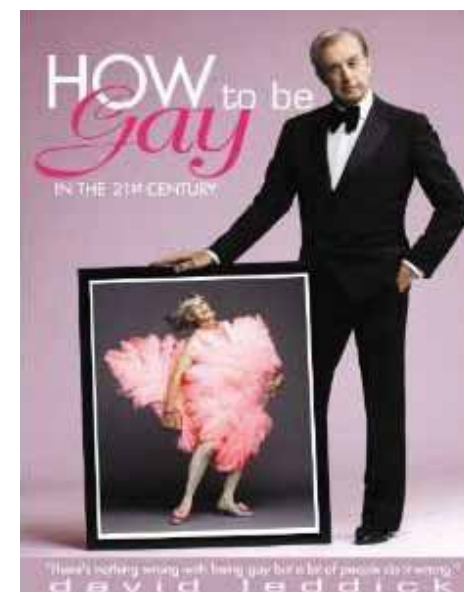
The Dead Celebrity Cookbook— A Collection Of Favorite Recipes Of Hollywood's Most Beloved Stars by Frank DeCaro

Frank compiled recipes from some of Hollywood's biggest names: Rock Hudson, Lucille Ball, Elizabeth Taylor, Sonny Bono, Liberace, Michael Jackson, John Denver, Frank Sinatra, Humphrey Bogart and Peter Falk, among others. "I love these dead celebrities! They're the stars I grew up watching, and they deserve to be remembered even if they were more talented on screen than they were in the kitchen," DeCaro said.



How to Be Gay in the 21st Century by David Leddick

Now for something much lighter than dead celebrities, how about an etiquette guide for those who just can't get gay "right." Leddick offers a fun and illustrated "how to" be gay, just like you might learn how to change a tire (but you won't find that in this book). Chapters include "Don't Get Married to a Women," "Should You Tell Your Parents?" (well-timed for the holidays), "Don't Be a Bitch," "How to Dress," "On Getting Older," "To Bar or Not to Bar," and much more. A cute last-minute gift idea.



Absolutely Fabulous: Absolutely Everything 9-disc DVD collection

This is one of those overflowing gifts for your Ab Fab friends, complete with a sensational package: a photo journal-style case with quilted cover and leopard-print bookmark. There are 36 episodes, three specials, and more than four hours of special features. Stars (and party hosts) Jennifer Saunders and Joanna Lumley as Edina Monsoon and Patsy Stone bring it all on in this raucous party-in-a-box. Stuff this in your stocking already!



Through the Door of Life: A Jewish Journey between Genders by Joy Ladin

This is a book coming out soon from University of Wisconsin Press. Jay Ladin was a father struggling with identity, eventually leading to gender-reassignment surgery. As a newly tenured professor at Yeshiva University, Orthodox Judaism's top institution, Ladin had other concerns—about career and religion. Now known as Joy, the author shares her story of pain and triumph.

Safe Spaces: Making Schools and Communities Welcoming to LGBT Youth

by Annemarie Vaccaro, Gerri August, and Megan S. Kennedy

This book looks at the challenges faced by LGBT youth through the personal narratives of more than 100 LGBT individuals and allies. There are action steps and reflection points to assist those dealing with difficult issues including bullying and suicide.

Keyata: Up on the Mountain by Violet H. Catches

The Lakxota, also known as the Tetons, are a Native American tribe and a part of the Sioux Nation occupying the Dakotas. They, like many Native American tribes, have a robust and colorful culture that is brought to life in this new book by Catches, a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe who learned to speak Lakxota as her first language. Catches believes we need to pass the teachings that flow from the physical life left behind to the future. The focus of the book is on Kiktopawingxa, a child who has the gift of recognizing former souls and their kinships.

BOOKS

Between the covers



BY AMOS LASSEN

Here are selected books that are either new or coming soon. Some of these I have been lucky enough to get advanced reader's copies for and have already reviewed, some are based on my own personal choice because of the author and some just look like books I want.

Voguing and the Ballroom Scene of New York (1989-1992) is by photographer Chantal Regnault, who spent several years photographing the scene that began in Harlem in the mid '80s, which spawned a national dance craze and made popular the term "polysexual." The vogue was more than a dance; it was a way of dressing and expressing self.

The Sixties: Diaries: 1960-1969 is the second volume of Christopher Isherwood's diaries, and it begins when the author turned 56. We are reminded of the bohemian atmosphere of California and we also hit Europe, India and Australia. We read when Isherwood met his lover, Don Bachardy, who was 30 years his junior, and learn of people whose names are a who's who in literature, acting and culture. We also learn a great deal about Isherwood himself and the politics of the period.

Icelight, by Aly Monroe, is set in England after World War II; the country is filled with corruption and money has little value. Harold Watkins, a gay man who had been convicted for "gross indecency," is found dead and it is suspected that he died by his own hand. Peter Cotton, a colonial intelligence officer, begins a quest to find out was responsible. He is drawn into the theater and politics, and learns some very dark secrets as he tries to find out what really happened.

Murder in the Irish Channel by Greg Herren—a new Chanse Macleod mystery—is again set in New Orleans. Herren really knows New Orleans and his descriptions are right on the button. (I know; I was raised there.) This time we have a missing person's case that is tied to the Catholic Church and the world of real-estate developers. Corruption in high places puts our gay detective's life in great danger.

In **Franky Gets Real**, by Mel Bossa, the title character had had a run of bad luck and his life has no direction. He needs to get away from the city, and he and four friends set off for a weekend of camping. Facing adulthood, the five friends discover new aspects of themselves, but Franky finds himself facing the biggest change of all when he discovers that one of the guys is what he has really been searching for.

Gay Men Don't Get Fat, by Simon Doonan, is a look at how we live. Doonan's idea here is that gay men are in actuality French women and that we really turn up our noses at almost everything. We love sexy underwear and we are firmly convinced that we are artistically brilliant, and are obsessed with our weight. This nonfiction look at our lives seems to have some new ideas that I am sure we will not all agree with.

Edmund White is a true gay man of letters

and he has two new books coming out in the next few weeks. The first, **Jack Holmes and His Friend**, is the fictional story of a friendship between Jack Holmes and Will Wright, and it looks at the sexual revolution from both gay and straight perspectives. Jack is in love but his feelings are not returned. White gives us a good look at New York City of the 1960s before gay liberation, and the way that Jack's and Will's lives come together. This is quite a look at U.S. society and a wonderful character study of two men with different sexual appetites. As much as White looks at sexuality, he also looks at sensitivity and this book has it all. Once again White cements his place in the literary world. In nonfiction White gives us **Sacred Monsters: Writings on Artists and Authors**, a collection of writings about artists and authors from John Cheever to Patti Smith, Henry James, Andy Warhol, E.M. Forster, Tennessee Williams and many others. I love this book for the insights it gives us and because of White's wonderful style.

Christopher Bram brings us a look at gay writers who have made a difference. His **Eminent Outlaws: The Gay Writers Who Changed America** is an amazing read as we go back to after World War II and see how gay writers changed not only what we read but how we read. Bram tells us that the first wave of major literary figures included Tennessee Williams, Gore Vidal, Truman Capote, Allen Ginsberg and James Baldwin. It was these men who set the stage for the future generations of gay writers and in that new generation are Armistead Maupin, Tony Kushner, Edward Albee and, of course, the man who has remained at the steering wheel of gay writers, Edmund White. Also, there are others in both waves, including the Violet Quill, which was a group of gay writers who demanded to be heard. While Williams, Vidal and Capote were good friends, that was not true for all of the writers, and there were intrigues and feuds.

For something completely different we have **Full Service: My Adventures in Hollywood and the Secret Sex Lives of the Stars** by Scotty Bowers, a tell-all memoir of sex with the stars and closeted Hollywood of the 1940s and '50s. Bowers spent 30 years going to bed with men and women, and he even arranged sexual liaisons for others. He gives names like Spencer Tracy, Vivien Leigh, the Duke of Windsor, Cary Grant and Edith Piaf. His "call customers" included Mae West, James Dean, Rock Hudson, Rita Hayworth, Errol Flynn, Katherine Hepburn and others. Here is a look at life before AIDS, when sex was everywhere and everyone partook. Written in wonderful style, this is not a book you will likely forget.

Finally there is a local book about a local hero by Tracy Baim and Owen Keehnen, **Jim Flint: The Boy From Peoria**, about the Peoria-born drag artist and businessman known in Chicago as "Felicia." The book is full of wonderful characters and takes us behind the scenes into the world of female impersonation. I am waiting for my copy and looking forward to the read.

Jim Flint

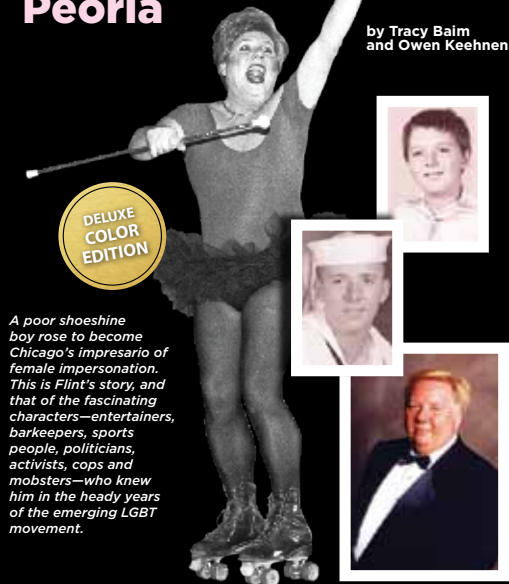
The Boy From Peoria

A new biography of Chicago's legendary Jim Flint

Jim Flint

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WEEKLY DINING GUIDE IN WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Porkchop

Porkchop, 941 W. Randolph St., certainly makes an impression.

When you walk in, you can't help but notice certain items, including a "curtain" of rusty saws, the mason-jar lights and the deer head. There are also utensil-filled mason jars on the tables and rolls of those paper towels you usually find in restrooms. The restaurant's Dominique Bellamy said that the decor of the restaurant, which opened in May, was meant to invoke a "farmhouse" feel.

Got it? Got it. The decor is not "mainstream," but how about the food and libations? Well, I have good news and bad news.

The drink choices are interesting; most of the mixed-drink offerings seemed to revolve around bourbon, which is fine if you're into that. That being said, said choices do seem to fit in with the vibe of the place. I had a standard lemonade, which was pretty good.

My dining partner and I then received a sampling of various items. (Curiously, despite the restaurant's name, we weren't given pork chops.) The items including fried pickles (serviceable) as well as pulled-pork and chicken sliders, which were solid.

We also received what Bellamy said was the restaurant's award-winning fried chicken. I thought it was pretty good. However, it was probably the most healthful fried chicken I'd ever consumed because it was hardly salted. I enjoyed that, but I could see a lot of people reaching for salt shakers as if they were lifelines.

The best item was at the end, when we (OK,



my eating partner) consumed the Maker root-beer float (vanilla ice cream with a shot of Maker's Mark bourbon). I had a spoonful, and I had to agree with him that it was sublime. Other items on the menu range from mac 'n cheese to baby back ribs to spicy catfish.

Unfortunately, I can't comment on the service—which has received mixed reviews from others—because we were the only diners there. (To be fair, I'm sure being there on a weekday afternoon had something to do with that.)

Porkchop also hosts music nights, but (in keeping with the decor) don't expect Lady Gaga tunes. The bands play everything from heavy metal to blues.

Diners are guaranteed an interesting time at Porkchop. However, like any adventure, there may be ups and downs.

Photos by Andrew Davis

Uncommon Ground's honor

Chicago's North Side Uncommon Ground, 1401 W. Devon Ave., has been named the "Greenest Restaurant in the Country."

On Dec. 13, Mayor Emanuel's office, the Green Restaurant Association and the Green Chicago Restaurant Coalition celebrated with Uncommon Ground for implementing 116 environmental steps making them a 4 Star Certified Green Restaurant in 2011.

In a statement released before the event, Emanuel said, "I'm proud to have in our City of Chicago the greenest restaurant in the country. Uncommon Ground is a great example of what our city can do and what our country can do, use water and energy more efficiently [and] grow more sustainable food, while boasting the world's most sustainable businesses."

Among the restaurant's green features are reclaimed wood amenities and the nation's first certified organic rooftop farm.

Among Uncommon Ground's previous honors are receiving the Governor's Sustainability Award (2010-11); winning the Mayor's Landscape Award (2009-11); and garnering the US-GBC Environ-motion Award (2009).

The restaurant's Lakeview location

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DVD REVIEW

Gigola

BY STEVE WARREN

Some things about the psychology of women, even lesbian women, are beyond the understanding of men, even gay men. At least that's my excuse for not knowing what the hell's going on in the last third of *Gigola*, when the heroine's actions defy rational (male) explanation.

The opening scene, in 1960, looks like a role-playing fantasy of a student and her headmistress, but it's supposed to be real. Georges (Lou Doillon) expresses her love for the older woman (Ana Padrão) who introduced her to Sapphic sex, and makes her give her a butch haircut.

Three years later the headmistress has committed suicide and Georges, now calling herself Gigola, is a key figure in the lesbian sector of



Gigola. Photo by Pierre Giubert

the Parisian demimonde. She pimps other women, including Dolly (Virginie Pradal), a chanteuse of questionable gender and sanity; and Dany (Marie Kremer), whom she makes over as Cora and steals from gangster Tony (Eduardo Noriega).

Gigola also rents herself out to wealthy older women, including very grateful Odette (Marisa Paredes) and Alice, a doctor who reminds her of her first love because she's played by the same actress.

A soft butch, Gigola dresses in a theatrical version of men's attire, which she doesn't remove during sex; however, it's not believable when anyone actually mistakes her for a man.

In her private life Gigola is closer to her mother (Marisa Berenson) than her father (Thierry Lhermitte), a compulsive gambler and opium addict who comes to her for money.

The movie starts going south when we realize there's sexual tension developing between Gigola and Tony, and really goes off the rails after that. By the end it's like you're watching an interactive drama where you get to choose which direction the story will take, but you're seeing all the choices played out.

Laure Charpentier makes her debut as a director and screenwriter with this adaptation of her own, nearly 40-year-old novel. While she's done a good job in some respects—she's assembled a fine cast and the period re-creation strikes some of the same chords as Woody Allen's *Midnight in Paris*—the story just dissolves into incomprehensibility ... at least from a man's viewpoint.

CRU members participate in 'Row a Soldier Home'

BY ROSS FORMAN

Eight members of the Chicago Rowers Union (CRU) participated in the "Row a Soldier Home for the Holidays" event, held Dec. 15 at Union Station. Over a 12-hour span, starting at 7 a.m., rowers from various area teams attempted to collectively row 11,190,000 meters—the distance from Kabul, Afghanistan, to Chicago.

The event, which the Lincoln Park Boat Club sponsored, was a fundraiser for the Wounded Warrior Project.

The CRU members rowed for a two-hour shift in the afternoon and then another two hours in the evening, amassing about 70,000 meters; the team's goal 45,000 meters. CRU raised about \$600 for the charity, surpassing its pre-event goal of \$450.

"It was good to be able to participate in something like this where it tied rowing into helping out the community," said Bill Moudry, CRU president. "It was a lot of fun, though quite physical. It basically was a two-hour workout, but just being there with other people, other teams and knowing that you're doing it for a great cause definitely made it motivating and enjoyable."

Moudry said the event was a great way for CRU members to experience community outreach on a first-hand basis, and that the team will consider sponsoring similar fund-raising projects in the future.

CRU members who participated were Craig Wu, Joshuah Thurbee, Travis Paul, Matt Fessenden, Cat Dial, Matt Honaberger, Kevin Camarata and Moudry.



Photo courtesy of CRU

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NEED LEGAL HELP? Pride Law, Andersonville's legal aid clinic for the LGBT community can help. Clinic hours every Wednesday, 5-8:00 p.m. by appointment only. **Call 1-866-703-5509 or send us an email at prideslaw@tsamislaw.com.**

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Mothers of LGBT individuals will be the focus of a new photo essay book from Windy City Times. We are soliciting submissions from LGBTs in the Chicago area, or those formerly from Chicago, for this new project.

Just in time for the holidays, people can submit photos with their moms via email, Facebook or Twitter through Jan. 15, 2012. Windy City Times is looking for diversity in families. Once the winners are selected, a professional photo shoot will be done by Kat Fitzgerald of Mystic Images Photography (of the winning mothers with their child or children), so winners must be available in the Chicago area, although some additional photos may be used. Winners will also be asked to submit a 200-word essay about what their mother has meant to them.

Depending on the reception for this project, other books may be done with fathers, or queer parents, but the focus of this first book is on mothers.

To submit:

Send photos of you with your mother to



www.facebook.com/windycitymediagroup



Twitter: [windycitytimes1](https://twitter.com/windycitytimes1)



or email editor@windycitymediagroup.com

DEADLINE: JAN. 15, 2012

You can also submit a short essay about why you think your mother should be selected to be photographed with you. Families with multiple LGBT children are welcome to submit as well.

Images may also be used in Windy City Times newspaper.

Celebrations

Share your special moments with the community in Windy City Times' new announcement section!

Holiday celebrations

Pat Ewing and Vernita Gray (couple at left) hosted their annual holiday party, and they accepted donations to help youth during the holiday season. Attending the celebration were state Rep. Kelly Cassidy and Mary Morten (right). Photo by Tracy Baim



BIRTH: Ilan Campbell Bayles Obejas

Ilan Campbell Bayles Obejas was born November 24 in Oak Park, IL to Achy Obejas (left) and Megan Bayles, who feel very lucky to have him.

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Wed., Dec. 21

Foster Care and Adoption—Children need you! Little City Foundation is in need of people willing to care for DCFS children in their home. Little City's foster care and adoption program serves children with special needs between the ages of 1-21. Little City holds an orientation every third Wednesday of the month. 1pm-3pm, 773-265-1671, ext. 228, Little City Foundation, 700 N. Sacramento Ave., <http://www.littlecity.org> (programs/foster care)

3-D Karaoke and \$1 Drinks Join Velvet Rope for \$1 drinks, dancing, and karaoke hosted by Lyndon! 5pm, 708-358-8840, Velvet Rope, 728 West Lake St., <http://velvetropeultralounge.com>

LGBTQ Cancer Support Group A networking/support group for lesbian, gay, transgender, and questioning people who have cancer. The event is offered free of charge by Gilda's Club Chicago and Live Oak. 6pm-7:30pm, 312-464-9900, Gilda's Club Chicago, <http://www.gildasclubchicago.org>

Holidaze Book Sale Thousands of books in over 50 categories; large selection of DVDs, CDs and records; many gift books for holiday giving. 6pm-9pm, 773-381-8030, Gerber/Hart Library, 1127 W. Granville Ave., <http://www.gerberhart.org>

Genderqueer Regular meeting; 7pm, Gerber/Hart Library, 1127 W. Granville Ave

What would you do for Andrew Christian Underwear \$1 Drink Night The title says it all. Give it all you got for some fresh skivvies, courtesy of one Mr. Andrew Christian. Hosted by Mercedes. Giveaways at midnight. Enjoy \$1 cocktails, and beer drafts and wine all night long! Free entry before 9pm, \$7 cover after; 8pm, Spin

WHITE OF WAY Tuesday, Dec. 27

The book Marcel Proust, by Edmund White (right), will be discussed at Gerber/Hart Library, 1127 W. Granville Ave.

Photo courtesy of White



Nightclub, 800 W. Belmont Ave., <http://www.spin-nightclub.com>

Thursday, Dec. 22

Home for the Holidays: Holiday/End of Year Support Group This is a brief support group for LGBTQ community; 7pm-8pm, Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

Drag Idol Chicago's newest drag competition. Audience decides who stays and who goes. Hosted by Kelly Lauren. Sign up with sean@hydratechicago.com. Winner of the 13-week competition will win a prize package worth over \$10,000, including \$1500 cash, a trip for two, a professional photo shoot and more. 9pm-11:45pm, Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted, <http://www.hydratechicago.com>

Holiday Bear Den and Vital Bridges Benefit Get your picture taken on Santa's lap. Bring canned foods, coffee, paper products, hygiene products, detergent and cleaning supplies (or \$\$, if you wish). Anyone who donates items will be given

a free holiday shot and a chance to win some fabulous raffle prizes. Also, everyone who attends will receive a coupon for a discount at our sister restaurant Tweet right next door. 9pm, Big Chicks, 5024 N. Sheridan Rd.

Frat House Thursday Join Scarlet as they host all frat guys and their fans. Scarlet ramps up the frat factor with a night of 40-ounce beer specials, HOT bartenders, cranked-up music and hottie high jinks! 21+ with ID; 10pm, Scarlet, 3320 N. Halsted St., <http://www.scarletbarchicago.com>

SIN Thursdays Hosted by Mistress Mercedes with the sexiest burlesque, fetish, and sideshow performers. Featuring Alt/Indie/Rock Videos with VJ Bobby Marley and all House with DJ Ron G on the Dancefloor; 10pm, Roscoe's, 3356 N. Halsted St., <http://www.roscoes.com>

Friday, Dec. 23

Mia Sherrington's Birthday Bash Celebrate Mia Sherrington's 26th Birthday with an amazing cast including Rainbow Starfish, Myka MyLeah, Elyse Giovanni, Destiny Valero, Nautica Towers, Lilly White Towers and Demii Cache Show starts at 11pm. 8pm, Stonewall Inn, 8143 W. 47th St., Lyons, <http://www.stonewallchicago.com>

Bi-Polar Fridays at @mosphere Bar Every Friday the ONLY place to be is @mosphere Bar in Andersonville for Bi-Polar Friday's. Hosted by Regina Upright; 10pm, 773-784-1100, @mosphere, 5355 N. Clark St., <http://atmospherebar.com>

Saturday, Dec. 24

Christmas Eve with Santa Free photos with Santa and holiday treats all night. 10pm, Touche, 6412 N. Clark St., <http://www.touchechicago.com>

Sunday, Dec. 25

Liquid Brunch Scarlet's Liquid Brunch is an all day Sunday Funday affair, complete with the city's best DJs, a slightly disheveled staff and lots and lots of champagne. 1pm, Scarlet, 3320 N. Halsted, <http://www.scarletbarchicago.com>

Christmas Day Beer Bust Bears football and movie night at 7 pm. 6pm, Touche, 6412 N. Clark St., <http://www.touchechicago.com>

Christmas football Bears vs. Packers at 7 pm. 6pm, Crew Bar & Grill, 4804 N. Broadway, <http://www.worldsgreatestbar.com>

ChristmaHanaKwanza-Oke ChristmaHanaKwanza-Oke bingo and karaoke. Drinks, prizes, and songs all night long. Special guest bingo host Bella Lamore. Join Bella as she brings you fun and prizes starting at 7pm. 6pm, Club Krave, 13126 S. West-

ern Ave., <http://www.clubkrave.com>

Monday, Dec. 26

Salsa Lessons with Anna Marie every Monday. Stick around for open salsa dancing. Bring your partner or come alone; 7pm-11:30pm, 708-358-8840, Velvet Rope, 728 W. Lake St., <http://velvetropeultralounge.com>

Recovery Over the Rainbow New Narcotics Anonymous sponsored/governed meeting, geared toward GLBTs and open to the public. Questions to Anthony Oltean; 8pm-9pm, Haymarket Health Education, 20 N. Sangamon

United House: A Night of Unity in House Music Join Hydrate Nightclub, Chicago-Pride.com, and host Cyon Flare for United House: A Night of Unity in House Music, featuring Resident House DJ Semaj; 9pm, Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted, <http://www.hydratechicago.com>

Live Band Karaoke with Amy Armstrong Every Monday night at 10PM in the Front Bar, hosted by the one and only Amy Armstrong; 10pm, Roscoe's, 3356 N. Halsted St., <http://www.roscoes.com>

Tuesday, Dec. 27

Pow Wow Tuesdays Bring your poetry every Tuesday. \$5 cover, food at 7:30pm, open mic at 8:30pm. 7:30pm, Jeffery Pub, 7041 S. Jeffery Blvd

Bottoms Up Bingo! Join Miss Tajma Hall every Tuesday as she hosts Bottoms Up Bingo! The balls start rolling at 9:30 weekly. 9:30pm-11:30pm, 708-358-8840, Velvet Rope, 728 West Lake Street, <http://velvetropeultralounge.com>

Drag Race with Frida Lay Chicago's only amateur drag contest, hosted by Frida Lay! A hit at Roscoe's since its premier in 2000. 10pm, Roscoe's, 3356 N. Halsted St., <http://www.roscoes.com>

Gay Men's Book Group Marcel Proust by Edmund White; 7:30pm, Gerber/Hart Library, 1127 W. Granville Ave

Wed., Dec. 28

Women's dodgeball sign-up party If you are a new player or are looking for a team, join CMSA for this dodgeball sign-up party. League starts Fri., Jan. 6 at Pottawatomie Park in Rogers Park. Email womensdodgeball@chicagomsa.org for more info. 6pm-8pm, T's Restaurant and Bar, 5025 N. Clark St., <http://www.chicagomsa.org>

\$1 Drink Night Enjoy \$1 cocktails, and beer drafts and wine all night long! Free entry before 9pm, \$7 cover after; 8pm, Spin Nightclub, 800 W. Belmont Ave, <http://www.spin-nightclub.com>

You're The Star Karaoke with Honey West Take your place in the spotlight as hostess, Honey West entertains throughout! An evening and a diva not to be missed! 9pm, Roscoe's, 3356 N. Halsted St., <http://www.roscoes.com>

Friday, Dec. 30

Hot Jockstrap Contest Sofia Saffire hosts the hottest contest in Uptown. First place \$100! Show up by 11 to sign up. No jock strap? Crew's got you covered. 9pm, Crew Bar & Grill, 4804 N. Broadway, <http://www.worldsgreatestbar.com>

"It's Britney, Bitch" All Britney all night with DJ Riley York. 9pm, The Call (Chicago), 1547 W. Bryn Mawr Ave.

Saturday, Dec. 31

New Year's Eve benefiting Equality IL Join Equality Illinois for an evening of celebration and revelry as they welcome in 2012! Champagne toast at midnight, noisemakers, and leis...plus amazing giveaways! This event sells out every year, so purchase your tickets today: <http://tinyurl.com/8ay6s56>; 7:15pm, 773-477-9189, Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St., <http://tinyurl.com/8ay6s56>

Viennese Pops New Year's Eve Champagne corks will pop, when New Philharmonic and Music Director and Conductor Kirk



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Happy holidays from
Windy City Times!

Photo by Mel Ferrand

Muspratt provide a special way to ring in the new with two performances of "Viennese Pops New Year's Eve with an International Twist" at the McAninch Arts Center at College of DuPage, 425 Fawell Blvd., Glen Ellyn, IL. 4pm-11pm, McAninch Arts Center at College of DuPage, 425 Fawell Blvd., Glen Ellyn

New Year's Eve Bash for a Cure Join Chicago Red Dress Party and host Derek Cutting, Tyler Powell and Eric Knee for a New Year's Eve Bash. Open bar, small bits and champagne will be provided. \$20 donation requested to benefit Chicago Red Dress Party, a non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness for HIV/AIDS and raising funds to support vital community organizations providing services to those affected by HIV/AIDS. Feel free to stop by before, after, or during your New Year's Eve adventures. No red dresses required, but it wouldn't hurt! 7pm, 3000 N. Sheridan Rd.

Hydrate NYE: Dance until the end of the world This New Year's Eve, surround yourself with great people, a fantastic venue, and amazing DJ's as Hydrate celebrates 2012. 8pm, Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted, <http://www.hydratechicago.com>; Tickets: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/209936>

Stonewall's Rockin' Eve See RuPaul's Drag Race star Phi Phi O'Hara, along with Miss Stonewall Mia Sherrington, Demii Cache, Amber Nyte, Myka Myleah, Camryn Styles and Chamilla Foxx. \$20 hosted bar 8-10 pm includes all-you-can-drink well and drafts, appetizers and access to VIP meet-and-greet. Sexy go-go boys and DJ Anthony Pacelli. \$10 cover; \$20 VIP. 8pm, Stonewall Inn, 8143 W. 47th St., Lyons, <http://www.stonewallchicago.com>

Roscoe's NYE 2011 Champagne toast, hors d'oeuvres, midnight balloon drop. \$25 cover. 8pm, Roscoe's, 3356 N. Halsted St., <http://www.roscoes.com>

Friday, Jan. 6

First Friday Networking Social Join Equality Illinois PAC for the super-popular monthly First Friday Networking Social. A big crowd always comes out for First Friday, so please stop by for the fun, cocktails, and prize drawings. For a \$10 donation to the Equality Illinois PAC, you receive two drink tickets and a ticket for a door prize drawing. 6pm-8pm, Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St., <http://eqil.org/events.html>

Thursday, Jan. 12

Kathy Griffin at The Chicago Theatre Live in concert, Griffin is a self-proclaimed "D-list celebrity", actress, stand-up comedian, media personality, and LGBT rights advocate. 8pm, Kathy Griffin, <http://www.livenation.com>



SHOW ME THE FUNNY

Thursday, Jan. 12

Comedian Kathy Griffin will be in concert at the Chicago Theatre, 175 N. State St.

Photo by Jerry Nunn

BILLY MASTERS

"Let me tell you something—nobody wants a homosexual child that will later on grow up and get discriminated against by someone like you. So watch out. When somebody doesn't like hot chocolate, God gives you three cups!"—Dra. Ana Maria Polo, host of my new favorite television program, chastises the mother of a child who may have gender-identity issues on Telemundo's daily courtroom show, *Caso Cerrado*.

It's the last few days of the year and people around the country—nay, around the world—are preparing to spend time with their loved ones ... or their families. I got myself in the holiday spirit by going to the 16th Annual Toy Box benefit in West Hollywood, Calif. All it takes to attend is to bring an unwrapped toy, which will be distributed to families affected by AIDS. Off I went to buy some plush toys and then headed to the party—late, as usual.

As I entered, I saw a woman I adore but have never met leaving. No, not Lindsay Wagner—I'd be too paralyzed with fear to approach her. This was Hollywood legend Dyan Cannon. So I yelled out, "Dyan????!!" in an overly familiar way that would imply we had coffee earlier in the day. She turns and sees a stranger running towards her with what appear to be the puppets from Rielle Hunter's bedroom! Dyan couldn't have been more lovely as I gushed that my life was changed by her film, *The End of Innocence*. (Don't try and find it—it's not on DVD.) This was a good opener because that movie was Dyan's baby—she wrote it, directed it, starred in it and even sang on the soundtrack. It was her Yentl! When I finally let her get a word in, she said, "Well then, you should really get my book, *Dear Cary*. You'd love it." "Honey," I say, now assuming we really are friends, "I already have it—the hardcover and the audiobook." There's nothing quite like hearing these stories read by a real-life movie star. I'm including both versions as "Billy's Holiday Gift Giving Suggestions". Either way, you can't go wrong.

Every year during the holidays, Broadway shows raise money for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. At the end of a six-week period, the totals are announced at the annual "Gypsy of the Year" event. This year, the highest grosser was Hugh Jackman. Not only was his show, *Back on Broadway*, open for half of the qualifying period, but in those three weeks he raised more than twice the amount of the number-two show—the Daniel Radcliffe-led *How To Succeed in Business*. When asked his fundraising secret, Jackman said, "You have no idea how much sex I've been having"—which many thought was a joke! Another way he's been raising money is by auctioning off things like his T-shirts or kisses at the end of each performance ... and there are plenty of people willing to pay. To date, he's raked in more than \$1 million, and hopes to raise the same amount during the next three weeks. Bravo!

In some sad news, it's been announced that Nate Berkus' daytime show will leave the air in May at the end of this season. But it's not completely unexpected since I've yet to find anyone who will admit to watching more than a single episode! With *Dr. Oz* and *Dr. Phil* both doing well in the ratings, Nate's cancellation makes him the first Oprah spinoff to fail—if you don't count *OWN*, of course.

Time for our final installment of "Billy's Holiday Gift Giving Suggestions." I've already told you about Dyan Cannon's book. So now we go to the Gaydar Gun. This toy has been around for a while but it got an unexpected boost when Rosie O'Donnell featured it on her show—which means dozens of you already know about it! In fact, it's entirely possible that more of you will find out about this gift from my column. The way it works is you point it at people and it will

announce their sexual proclivities in a variety of dishy quips that, frankly, I don't dare quote here. It's fun, it's cute and it's a perfect gift for the person who has everything. Rosie says she sent one off to Michele Bachmann. Ho, ho, ho, indeed. But we'll go one better—if you buy it at GayDarGun.com, use the coupon code "SEXY" and you'll get \$5 off!! See? Rosie didn't give you that!

I would hope by now you all know that Absolutely Fabulous will be returning for two Christmas specials and a third in time for the Olympics. The first special is slated to air in the States Jan. 8. Of course, you won't have to wait until then—we'll be posting the entire episode on Christmas Day on BillyMasters.com.

Our "Ask Billy" question comes from Hunter in Colorado: "I recently saw 'Onion News Network' and there was a mega-hot shirtless reporter talk about sex trafficking. I think his name was Brady. Can you track him down?"

Not only can I track him down—I know him. That was the very sexy Aaron Lazar, who graced



Nate Berkus gets ready to ride off into that television sunset.

the Broadway stage in *A Little Night Music* and *The Light in the Piazza* (replacing my other pal, Matthew Morrison) and appeared on the big screen in *J. Edgar*. IFC's "Onion News Network" is a TV news spoof, and Aaron plays their roving rugged reporter, O'Brady Shaw—who's kinda like their Anderson Cooper. The clip you're referring to is one of my favorites, as Aaron gets to show off his incredible body—something Anderson might wanna consider doing. We'll run the clip, and some sexy pics of Aaron, on BillyMasters.com.

When I'm waiting to see Anderson's ball drop, it's definitely time for me to end yet another column. Earlier today, my life was passing before my eyes. No, I wasn't dying—I was just reviewing the columns from this past year in preparation for next week's Year In Review. Of course, I could have just gone to www.BillyMasters.com, where you can find all of my columns since 1998. If you have any questions—like why anyone would want to read news from over a decade ago—send it along to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before Dyan invites me over for dinner! So, until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

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Jessa Hinton: Bisexual reporter is jill-of-all-trades

BY ROSS FORMAN

Jessa Hinton jokes that her business card is just her photo and her phone number. It doesn't list a job title, nor could it, unless she was, instead, handing out standard 8" x 10" sheets of paper.

After all, just consider some of her work:

—Miss July 2011, Playboy Magazine cover;

—Reporter, ESPN Top Rank Boxing;

—Teaming with Affliction clothing for the launch of the brand's new swimsuit line in February and a 2012 calendar;

—Brand ambassador for Milwaukee's Best beer;

—Poster girl for the PALMS Hotel & Casino national ad campaign; and

—Part of the popular NOH8 photo campaign.

Boxing and Playboy are the two most high-profile roles she holds.

"I enjoy boxing," she said. "The guys are really respectful. I haven't had any problems being taken seriously being a female host. I kind of have a cool job, a lot of people wish they had the job I do, especially a lot of men, so, I'm definitely thankful and grateful for where I am now."

Her dad, Ron Sandler, has been a longtime boxing fan whose all-time favorite was the late Joe Frazier.

Hinton, though, was more of a pro-wrestling fan as a youngster, growing up the oldest of five siblings in Valencia, Calif. "Just thinking about pro wrestling brings back good memories," said



Jessa Hinton. Photo by Rich Masuda

Hinton, whose favorite wrestlers were 'Macho Man' Randy Savage and The Undertaker.

Hinton, who now lives in Los Angeles and Las Vegas, admits her boxing gig is a dream job. "To do the interviews right after a fight, wow, there's nothing I'd rather be doing," she said.

However, that definitely brings nerves, she said.

"It's important for me to deliver exactly what the fans want to hear," Hinton said. "You only get about two minutes with each fighter, so I want to cover as much as I can," in that short period of time.

One of Hinton's boxing highlights to date was interviewing Manny Pacquiao after his fight against Juan Manuel Marquez. She was given about 10 minutes of time, while most others only got about two minutes.

"It's definitely extra pressure [being a female in a male-dominated industry]," Hinton said. "I have to prove myself more than any guy does. There are fans who watch this religiously, and yet I do eight or 10 different things as far as my career goes, so, to be able to keep up with [boxing] is really hard; there's something new every single day.

"The best part of the [boxing] job is the fans. Seeing the crowd go insane is awesome. The excitement they give off, it's such a high; it really is.

"The job really hits me when driving to the hotel [where the fight is being held] and to see all of the fans outside."

Hinton admitted her dad still calls her after every fight—to hear what she saw, what she thought.

As for her Playboy cover, Hinton said it "opened up a lot of doors."

"I knew it might be difficult to be taken as a serious host after you've done Playboy, but, for me, it's been a blessing," she said. "No one has ever made me feel uncomfortable; no one has ever made me feel like a typical girl. They really take me seriously, which is great."

Hinton was among the celebrities who attended the NOH8 Campaign's third annual anniversary celebration Dec. 13, at the House of Blues in West Hollywood, Calif. In addition, the City of West Hollywood proclaimed Dec. 13 "NOH8 DAY" with a proclamation from Mayor John Duran. This was the second time the city has issued such a proclamation.

"It was so cool; I was so happy to be there," said Hinton, who is openly bisexual, as is her sister, Jenna, 22, a dental hygienist in Long Beach, Calif.

"Growing up, I dated a couple of girls and didn't feel I was accepted. No one really gave me a hard time, but I felt they looked as me [differently] because the choices I made were different from how they chose to live their lives. Now that I have a voice, it's nice to be able to come out and say that, hey, this is how I was born; we aren't made [to be gay or bisexual at a certain age.] I always knew, since I was in junior high [school, that I was bisexual.] So, for me to date a man or a woman is my choice, and

everyone should have that choice."

Hinton reached out to the NOH8 campaign to participate, not the other way around. Her boyfriend, professional poker player Dan Bilzerian, also was photographed.

"That is a very personal cause and I'm so thankful that I did it," she said. "The photo is awesome."

Hinton's solo NOH8 photo hangs in her home, while the NOH8 photo of the two of them hangs in his home.

"That was our first [professional] portrait photo; that is a pretty strong statement," she said.

Hinton said her sexual orientation has never been an issue in the boxing world.

"A lot of women, particularly in Los Angeles, claim to be lesbian, but only for that night," she said. "Give them two shots of tequila and they are lesbian, but they don't feel like they could settle down with another woman [long-term.] I don't consider someone a bisexual if they can't settle down with a woman or a man. You're [then] either straight, or straight but curious.

"As long as I'm in love, I don't care if it's a man or a woman. I'm not concerned with race, gender, age."

Hinton said she will be filming an "It Gets Better" video over the Christmas holiday, and plans to release it in early 2012. Her boyfriend might participate, too, she said.

"There's no excuse for bullying, period," Hinton said. "I wish there were more people for [those teens who are bullied] to turn to talk to. All of these teenagers who are being bullied and then committing suicide, it's so sad; my heart breaks for them. I hope, when I have children, that they feel they can come to me and talk about anything—just as my parents were there for me."

Hinton said she plans to expand her role and support of the LGBT community in 2012. She is a member of Aid for AIDS Nevada but has not been to a gay pride parade yet.

"That's actually something I would love to go to," she said.

For more about Hinton, go to: <http://www.jessahinton.com>.



Jessa Hinton. Photo by Adam Bouska

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CO-SIGNERS ON DEBTS - THE RISKS INVOLVED

Q. I allowed my former lover to use several of my credit cards by making him an authorized signatory on my Visa and MasterCard accounts. I also agreed to co-sign a bank loan so he could buy a new car. I learned from the bank that he is behind on the car loan and the bank wants me to make the loan current even though I don't have the car. What are my legal rights and obligations?

A. If your former lover hasn't made the payments on the car loan there is also a good chance that he could use your credit accounts, leaving you legally responsible for payment of all those debts.

While you are going through the process of a separation from your lover one of the first things you should do is write to all your creditors where he is authorized to sign, close those accounts and ask for a new account in your name alone. Tell your lover you're doing it so he can write for his own personal account at the same time.

To make sure that your canceled accounts have in fact been closed get a copy of your credit report. If your credit report shows a closed account as open follow the bureau's procedures for reporting an error. They will then have to verify your claim with the creditor within a reasonable time (usually 30 days) and advise you of the results. If the creditor agrees that you did close the account, it will be so listed.

Regarding the debts that you co-signed for your former lover, the drawback to guaranteeing a loan is that the guarantor can be fully obligated for the entire loan amount—not just the portion due—if there is a default in payment of the loan. Because you co-signed on the car loan you are legally responsible to pay the loan if your former lover fails to make the payments, even though you don't have use of the car.

There could also be a problem if the bank repossesses the car. Usually when a bank repossesses a car for non-payment, they will sell the car, trying to get the highest price possible. If the sales price is less than the amount due on the loan there is a deficiency. You, as guarantor of the loan, will be liable to pay that deficiency.

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Lesbian baseball player dies

Mabel Holle, a member of the All American Girls Professional Baseball League and a women's sports activist, died in Lake Forest Dec. 11, the Chicago Sun-Times reported. She was 91.

Holle—born in Jacksonville, Ill.—became a member of the original South Bend Blue Sox of the All American Girls Professional Baseball League (AAGPBL) in 1943. She also played with the Kenosha Comets for a brief period.

On Nov. 5, 1988, Holle was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame at Cooperstown, N.Y., as a member of the All American Girls League. She was also inducted into the sports of fame of her alma mater, MacMurray College, in 1993.

Holle is survived by her longtime partner,

Linda Hoffman; sisters Patricia Patrick of Lake Forest and Charlene Hobbie of Waverly, Ill.; nieces Dixie Hanks Richter (John) of Albuquerque, N.M., Betty Holder of Houston, Wendy Friedland (Warren) of Rockville, Md., and Carrie Carr (Bill) of Barrington, Ill.; nephew Larry Patrick (Amy) of Gurnee, Ill.; her two schnauzers, Maggie and Ellie; her many great and great-great, nieces and nephews; and friends and former teammates.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Kathryn (Ollie) and Frederick Holle; sister Emma, and brother Frederick. In lieu of flowers, people can send donations to the All American Girls Professional Baseball League (<http://www.aagpbl.org/index.cfm/pages/uncategorized/34/donations>) or the Midwest Palliative & Hospice Care Center (<http://www.carecenter.org/make-a-gift/honor-a-loved-one>).

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