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WINDY CITY TIMES

THE VOICE OF CHICAGO'S GAY, LESBIAN,
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MAR. 5, 2014
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GAY OAK PARK
TRUSTEE RAY
JOHNSON BIDS
FAREWELL TO
AREA

PAGE 6



MARRIAGE
PLAINTIFF
CHALLIS GIBBS
DIES

PAGE 5

NATURAL ELECTION



It's *that* time, as primary elections throughout the state take place March 18. (Early voting runs through March 15.) Among those in the running are LGBT candidates (from left) Jorge Zavala Jr. (vying for a Congressional seat) as well as judicial contenders Judy Rice and James Crawley. Read about these candidates and see Windy City Times' charts on elections across Illinois starting on page 7. Photos above courtesy of the candidates



COLUMBIA
COLLEGE'S BLACK
FILM SOCIETY
MAKES STAND
WITH MOVIE
SHOWING

PAGE 22

MOVIE KIND OF LOVE



Movies figure prominently in this issue of Windy City Times, as there is an interview with grande dame Elaine Stritch (far left, photo courtesy of Sundance Selects) about her new documentary. There is also a review of the movie (as well as one of the Elijah Wood movie *Grand Piano*), and a wrap-up of the Oscars, which featured winner Jared Leto (near left). Some LGBT activists were upset that Leto did not mention the transgender community specifically in his speech, since he won for playing a transgender character.



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Images on cover (left, from top): Photo of Steve Grand from Chris Ricchetti; photo of Ray Johnson by Tracy Baim; photo of Challis Gibbs by Steve Becker; photo of Black Film Society member by Gretchen Rachel Blickensderfer

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AWARD-WINNING

Center on Halsted held its annual Oscars event at the Park West (left).
Photo by Jerry Nunn



DIFFA held its annual grants presentation ceremony at Northwestern Memorial Hospital.
Photo of Ann Hilton Fisher by Ed Negrón



Gay Midwestern singer Matt Gold talks cover songs, authenticity.
Publicity photo

GHOST IN THE MACHINE

In his latest Fairy Gardener column, Jim Edminster talks about "evolutionary ghosts."

HOW SWEET IT IS

The French Pastry School hosted "For the Love of Chocolate" at Union League Club.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

Find out the latest about Dancing with the Stars, Beyonce and Jamie Lee Curtis.

plus DAILY BREAKING NEWS

TEASE, PLEASE



Chicago House held "The Tease," its first-ever burlesque event.
Photo by Ed Negrón

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Judge overturns Texas marriage ban

BY LISA KEEN
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

A federal judge in San Antonio, Texas, ruled Feb. 26 that Texas' ban on same-sex marriage violates the U.S. Constitution and demeans the dignity of gay couples "for no legitimate reason." Judge Orlando Garcia then granted two plaintiff couples' request for an injunction barring the state from enforcing the ban. But, like federal district court judges in Virginia and Utah, Garcia stayed his ruling pending appeal of the case to the federal appeals level.

The Garcia ruling was in *DeLeon v. Texas*, in which two same-sex couples challenged the state's statutory ban and its state constitutional ban on marriages for same-sex couples. One couple had married in Massachusetts and sought recognition in Texas; the second couple sought to marry in Texas.

Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott announced immediately that his office would appeal the decision to the Fifth Circuit U.S. Court



Texas Gov. Rick Perry said he will appeal the ruling.

of Appeals. He expressed optimism that the bans would prevail on appeal.

"The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled over and over again that States have the authority to define and regulate marriage," said Abbott. "The Texas Constitution defines marriage as between one man and one woman. If the Fifth Circuit honors those precedents, then today's decision should be overturned and the Texas Constitution will be upheld."

Texas Republican Gov. Rick Perry was more defiant, saying, "it is not the role of the federal government to overturn the will of our citizens."

"The 10th Amendment guarantees Texas voters the freedom to make these decisions," said Perry, "and this is yet another attempt to achieve via the courts what couldn't be achieved at the ballot box. We will continue to fight for the rights of Texans to self-determine the laws of our state."

Supporters of marriage equality were, naturally, happy.

"This ruling is one more step toward the inevitable end of official discrimination by the state of Texas," said Rebecca Robertson, legal director for ACLU-Texas. "Gay and lesbian couples want the same thing as other loving couples—to stand before family and friends and declare their lifetime commitment to each other, and to enjoy the same recognition and protection for their families that only marriage can bring. We applaud the judge's preliminary ruling, but we also recognize that there is a great deal of hard work to do to bring full equality to every Texan."

Garcia and at least five other federal judges to rule on state bans of marriage for same-sex couples in the past eight months have all

cited the *U.S. v. Windsor* decision by the U.S. Supreme Court. In that decision, the nation's highest court said the federal government cannot refuse to recognize a valid marriage license from a state. Garcia noted that lower courts must apply that ruling "and decide whether a state can do what the federal government cannot—discriminate against same-sex couples."

As if anticipating Perry's reaction, Garcia said, in the conclusion of his decision, that "[t]oday's Court decision is not made in defiance of the great people of Texas or the Texas Legislature, but in compliance with the United States Constitution and Supreme Court precedent."

"Without a rational relation to a legitimate governmental purpose, state-imposed inequality can find no refuge in our United States Constitution. Furthermore, Supreme Court precedent prohibits states from passing legislation born out of animosity against homosexuals (*Romer*), has extended constitutional protection to the moral and sexual choices of homosexuals (*Lawrence*), and prohibits the federal government from treating state-sanctioned opposite-sex marriages and same-sex marriages differently (*Windsor*)."

Garcia ruled that the Texas bans violate the guarantees of due process and equal protection of the U.S. Constitution.

A federal judge in Michigan began hearing testimony Feb. 25 in a lawsuit challenging Michigan's ban on allowing same-sex couples to marry.

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Number of extremist groups declines

The number of far-right extremist groups fell significantly in 2013 for the first time in a decade, according to a report from the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). However, with a total of more than 2,000 groups, the radical right remains at historically high levels.

In its annual count, the SPLC found that the number of hate groups (a subcategory with extremist groups) dropped by 7 percent—from 1,007 in 2012 to 939 in 2013. The more significant decline came within the antigovernment "Patriot" movement: These groups fell 19 percent—from 1,360 groups in 2012 (an all-time high) to 1,096 in 2013.

The report says there are 23 far-right extremist groups in Illinois, including Americans for Truth About Homosexuality, Loyal White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Heterosexuals Organized for a Moral Environment (H.O.M.E.), the Ecclesiastical Council for the Restoration of Covenant Israel (ECRCI), Nation of Islam, Northern Hammerskins, The Creativity Movement, and the World Congress of Families/Howard Center for Family, Religion, and Society.

See www.SPLCenter.org.

Opponents fail to force vote on pro-trans law

Foes of the School Success and Opportunity Act—a new California measure that provides transgender students certain rights in public schools—have failed to gather enough voter signatures to place a referendum to repeal the law on the November ballot, according to the Associated Press.

At least 504,760 signatures were required. The law's opponents submitted 619,387, but county election officers determined that just 487,484 of them were valid.

Open To Thinking

BY NICK PATRICCA



Religion: What Is It?

Religion, for better and for worse, is a fundamental force in all human cultures, including our contemporary 'secular' civilizations, allegedly built upon non-religious principles.

There are several productive ways of studying religion, ways that are as free from ideology and preconceptions as is humanly possible. William James developed a pragmatic approach that focused on the effects of religious experience rather than its causes.

Consider Paul's conversion experience, his 'being knocked off his horse' as he journeyed from Jerusalem to Damascus to persecute Jewish followers of Jesus. Did Paul actually meet Jesus in this experience? Did Jesus actually make Paul an apostle through this experience? We don't know the answers to these questions. We don't really know whether Paul was actually knocked off his horse. But, from a pragmatic point of view, none of those things matter to the 'truth' of Paul's religious experience. What we can know and what we do know is how Paul responded to this experience: what Paul

life, with God the Father, the God in the Heavens (the High God or the Sky God) as the acknowledged and respected, but largely distant, Supreme God.

The primacy of devotion to the Madonna holds true for Italian Catholic communities in general, with Jesus the Christ and/or various saints taking second place depending upon the specific sub-groups.

My mother developed a special devotion to St. Joseph because she felt the need to give my brother and myself a 'real father' to guide us into manhood and through the perils thereof. In my 'hood' this task was no easy job even for a saint. She frequently informed St. Joseph that he wasn't holding up his end of the bargain. In Tennessee Williams' 'Rose Tattoo,' Serafina della Rose, the Sicilian widow, would turn the statue of St. Joseph toward the wall when he failed to deliver as he should. In these instances, the story and the image of St. Joseph are the objects of religious experience and expression.

If we compare the iconography in the

churches of the Catholic version of Christianity with that of the Calvinist version, we see at once and dramatically the profoundly different focuses of these two religious traditions. In the Calvinist churches, the pulpit usually dominates the sanctuary space, with the altar and the crucifix sometimes equally present, sometimes wholly sub-

"The primacy of devotion to the Madonna holds true for Italian Catholic communities in general, with Jesus the Christ and/or various saints taking second place depending upon the specific sub-groups."

taught in his writings and what actions Paul took in creating Christianity as a religion independent of Judaism. These things are true whether from God or from epilepsy or from a horse throwing Paul off his back just for-the-hell-of-it.

James' pragmatic approach enjoys an intellectual kinship with a variety of methods generally called phenomenological which investigate the question 'What is Religion?' through the study of the structures, symbols, and objects of 'religious' experiences without defining in advance what is or is not a religious experience.

One type of phenomenology examines the 'objects' in a given religious experience.

For example, in the East Liberty ghetto where I grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the Italian community focused its prayer life primarily on the Madonna, with St. Anthony running a distant second. Even the German nuns, who taught me to read and write, affirmed this primacy of Mary by the dictum: 'How could God (that is, Jesus the Christ) deny his mother's request?' St. Anthony was invoked for anything lost: lost things, lost causes, lost persons.

Descriptively, therefore, my East Liberty, Italian community had the Madonna as the center of its actual religious

ordinate, and sometimes not present at all. Hearing and responding to the Word of God has primacy of place in the liturgy; the Bible is the principle symbol of the living presence of God in the community.

In the Catholic tradition, there is a veritable pantheon of icons surrounding the primary symbols of the altar, the crucifix, the Madonna, and the favorite saint, with the consequence that there are many operative centers of this community at worship.

This comparison of iconographies leads us to another way of studying religion through an analysis of its primary symbols.

Let us consider this trinity of symbols in the worship of the Italian community in which I grew up: the baby Jesus, the Madonna, and the crucified Christ. What kind of god reveals itself in these inter-related icons? What kind of divine power expresses itself as a baby with its arms stretched out asking to be picked up and cared for, or as a grief consumed mother holding the broken body of her son, or as a person who suffers and dies just like you and me.

The above reflections concern the content of religious experience. In another column I shall discuss the social functions of religion.

Nick Patricca is professor emeritus at Loyola University Chicago, president of Chicago Network and playwright emeritus at Victory Gardens Theater.

Challis Gibbs, marriage plaintiff, dies

BY TRACY BAIM

Challis Gibbs, 61, one of the plaintiffs in the case that won emergency marriage licenses in Illinois, died Feb. 24.

Gibbs and her partner of 21 years, Elvie Jordan, were among the first few couples married after a judge ruled Dec. 9, 2013, that there was an immediate need to allow the marriages to



Challis Gibbs. Photo by Steve Becker

move forward. Gibbs was diagnosed with an aggressive form of stage 4 neuroendocrine cancer in November.

Gibbs and Jordan were married in their home Dec. 12, surrounded by family and friends in a loving ceremony.

One of the other plaintiffs, Ron Dorfman, who married his partner Ken Ilio, passed away Feb. 10; the couple had married Dec. 13.

Judge Sharon Coleman from the U.S. District Court of the Northern District of Illinois signed the order Dec. 16 that said same-sex couples wherein a partner faces a serious medical complication can marry ahead of the scheduled June 1 start date when marriage equality takes effect in Illinois. Couples seeking an early marriage for medical reasons were able to access a form from their county clerk's office.

The case was argued by lawyers from Lambda Legal and ACLU Illinois, as well as the law firms of Kirkland & Ellis and Miller Shakman & Beem.

Coleman was the same judge who also

opened the gates to all same-sex marriages in Cook County Feb. 21.

The first state-recognized same-sex wedding performed in Illinois took place Nov. 27 when activist and former Cook County State's Attorney Victims Advocate Vernita Gray, who is terminally ill, and her partner, Pat Ewert, were wed at their home.

Gibbs said in the petition: "When I die, I want Elvie to be able to say, 'I lost my wife.' I do not want her to have to say that she lost her civil union partner."

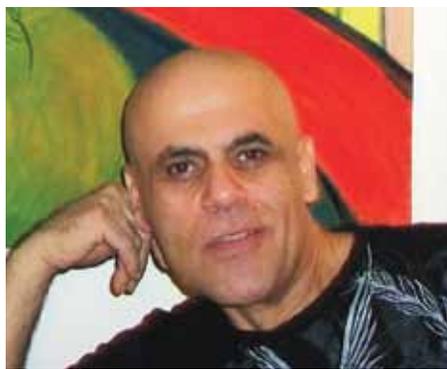
During their wedding ceremony, Jordan told Gibbs, "I love you now, and I will love you forever. Your heart is where I live." Gibbs said, simply, "Always."

Coverage including video of one wedding at www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Two-more-Illinois-couples-get-early-marriage-go-ahead/45537.html.

PINK Magazine founder David Cohen dies at 59

David A. Cohen—who was the founder and publisher of the LGBT publications the PINK Pages, Pride Magazine and, subsequently, PINK magazine—died on Jan. 29. He was 59.

Cohen immigrated to the United States from Israel in the 1980s. He lived in New York City before settling in Chicago. Cohen's PINK Pages was the first "yellow pages" to serve the LGBT community in New York City in 1990. He expanded the PINK Pages nationwide to other U.S. cities including Chicago, Denver, Seattle, San Francisco and Los Angeles.



David Cohen.

In 1995, Cohen launched Pride Magazine, an entertainment/lifestyle-oriented LGBT magazine. In 2011, the PINK Pages and Pride Magazine merged into one publication called PINK Magazine. This award-winning magazine was offered in print and on the web (www.pinkmag.com) and featured LGBT community events, entertainment, fashion, as well as a directory of gay and gay-friendly businesses.

In addition to being a publisher and print/web designer, Cohen was a fine artist. Working in acrylics, watercolor and pen and ink, Cohen's fluid and abstract style was reminiscent of Picasso and Matisse, according to his friends. He often shared his art with those friends, and recently had developed a line of greeting cards featuring his colorful work.

Cohen sponsored many philanthropic efforts and fundraisers for the LGBT community. Benefactors included Howard Brown Health Center, Center on Halsted, the Lesbian Community Care Project (LCCP), GLBT Historical Society (San Francisco), Dining Out for Life, Reeling Film Festival, Chicago House, and more.

He died peacefully in Chicago with family surrounding him. He is survived by his brother Doron Cohen (Manny), sister Karen (Jamie) Wiener and two nephews (Ely and Ziv) all of New York, N.Y., and sister Edna (Uzi) Uzziel of Israel. Per his wishes, Cohen was buried near his family at Beth Moses Cemetery, Long Island, N.Y. A private celebration will be held in Cohen's honor in Chicago.

Renowned plastic surgeon dies unexpectedly

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Dr. Rodger Wade Piolet, 52, renowned and respected plastic surgeon, died Jan. 18 due to the effects of a stroke.

Piolet was born on Feb. 13, 1961 and raised in Aurora, Ill. He earned his undergraduate degree at Tulane University in New Orleans, La. and completed his medical degree at Tulane University Medical School. His career began as an academic at the University of Chicago where he served as an assistant professor of surgery for four years. Following his academic career, Piolet was a clinical associate at the University of Chicago for 10 years while also running his private practice both in Chicago and Miami, Fla., for the past 17 years.

Piolet is survived by his longtime partner, Christopher Roy; mother Barbara Piolet of Aurora, Ill. (father Jack Piolet, deceased); sister Dana Piolet (Dan Kohn); brothers John Piolet

of Aurora, Ill., and Douglas Piolet (Mariette) of El Paso, Texas; five nieces; business manager and friend Caryle Johnson of Chicago; and his beloved dogs, Bennie and Ollie.

Known for his generous and kind spirit, Piolet volunteered his time and services on medical missions with Northwest Medical Teams traveling to remote Mexican villages where he performed pediatric and adult reconstructive surgery on those with congenital deformities. Numerous media outlets recognized Piolet for his techniques and innovations in cosmetic and aesthetic surgery. He appeared on WGN-TV, NBC-5, Oprah After the Show, Fox News, Access Hollywood and the Discovery Health Channel and was featured in the Chicago Tribune, the Chicago Sun-Times, the Daily Herald, the Miami Herald, Wire Magazine and Star Magazine.

"Rodger maximized his life. He lived it with such intensity, vigor and energy," Roy told Windy City Times. "Whether it was driving his boat or Aston Martin, flying a helicopter, darting between medical clinics, or performing his exceptional surgical skill in the operating room, he never seemed to tire.

"What, to me, seemed like an exhausting



Dr. Piolet (left) and Chris Roy. Pic from Roy

pace, he simply found exhilarating. He would always say, 'Speed is knowing when to slow down'. With regards to Rodger, truer words were never spoken. After surviving cancer, Rodger realized life was too short for petty arguments about small inconveniences. He lived his life by this simple rule. Speaking about people in general Rodger said 'I can't stand bad behavior.' "

Private services have already taken place. In memory of Piolet, donations can be made to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and Imerman Angels.

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Lesbian Oak Park trustee Colette Lueck with retiring trustee Ray Johnson. Photo by Tracy Baim

Gay Oak Park trustee says farewell to labor of love

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL BLICKENSERFER

At the end of the March 3 Oak Park Village Board of Trustees meeting, Ray Johnson's resignation from that governing body will take effect. "I can be roasted or toasted at that time," Johnson told his fellow members during his announcement earlier this month.

Johnson was a trustee for 11 years. He also served as a five-year commissioner on the Community Development Citizen Advisory and Planning commissions. "Village government has been the highlight of my life," Johnson said. "In some analogous ways, it's been the love of my life. How fortunate for me to have both a day job and a nights and weekend job that I truly love."

It is Johnson's day job that will be taking him

to New York City. On Jan. 20, he was promoted to the vice president of community investment at HSBC Bank—a company he has been with for the past 31 years. "It's an incredible job opportunity," he told Windy City Times. "I'll be managing our global programs and employee volunteerism in the United States." Johnson intends to live in Brooklyn.

Johnson—who is also the network liaison for HSBC's Pride LGBTQ employee resource group—said he is proud to be part of a company that wants its employees to bring their whole selves to work. "It's encouraged from our president and CEO all the way through the organization," he said. "That if you are, as I am, an openly gay man and if I'm not able to talk about simple things, like what I did over the weekend with my partner, then I am creating bar-

riers and silos for engagement with other colleagues. We're encouraged to talk freely about issues that often divide us, to be advocates for others and to lead by example."

Johnson was born in Michigan and, at the age of 25 and still in the closet, he relocated from Detroit to Oak Park. He believes his success at HSBC has been directly tied to his involvement in the village and that his impending move is actually a testament to the LGBTQ community there. "There's a strong LGBTQ network in Oak Park," he explained. "The Oak Park Area Gay and Lesbian Association (OPALGA) offers all kinds of working opportunities for people. I have a support structure; a real family of LGBTQ people here that allowed me to be a better person than I might otherwise have been."

When he arrived in Oak Park, Johnson was solely focused on his career. He maintains that both the atmosphere and the community encouraged him to see life differently. "I had an obligation to look out for others who might be less fortunate, who might need support to accomplish a goal, to get involved."

Johnson said that it wasn't until 1998 that he "fully" came out: "I was already out to friends and had a partner, but it was then that I brought my whole self to work and became an ambassador and advocated for things like the domestic partnership registry, gay marriage and equal benefits. That's what you do in Oak Park. You advocate for better houses, for LGBTQ equality, you focus on schools and faith based organizations that are supportive."

In 1968, Oak Park was one of the first communities in the United States to pass a fair housing ordinance for people of color. "That mindset was a part of the Oak Park DNA," Johnson said. "You saw the community transition from a very conservative/Republican to a progressive community that is clearly focused on electing progressive candidates."

In 1989, Oak Park was the third community in the state to pass civil-rights protections to LGBTQ residents. At the height of the AIDS crisis, a grass roots effort in Oak Park secured

housing for people infected with HIV. "At the time, I was volunteering at Illinois Masonic's Unit 371, which was one of the first AIDS wards at a major city hospital," Johnson remembered. "It was where I first witnessed the isolation of people impacted by HIV/AIDS. Their families would abandon them and it was up to volunteers to create a link to the outside world."

Johnson said that it was his 1997 advocacy for the same-sex domestic partnership registry that broke him into what he termed as the "Oak Park Mindset." He had seen a meeting about the issue advertised in the paper and decided to attend. "Everyone [there] was struggling about what to do," he said. "We needed to organize and have a campaign structure and it built from there. We had already advocated for the registry and it had passed, but then some opponents got together to put a referendum on the ballot opposing it. So we had to fight for it twice. Once to get it passed and then to keep it."

In some of the harshest weather Johnson can remember, people went out into the community to knock on doors. "When we won, it was an incredible night—a seminal moment," he said. "You had the gay, lesbian and straight communities and people who were fighting HIV/AIDS and even some faith-based organizations. Everyone came together to win."

Looking back, Johnson said he believes that his biggest contribution to the people of Oak Park was to listen, and described the reaction to his resignation as one of shock. "But I have received over a hundred personal notes from people I've helped," he said. "We may have never met, but there are just some wonderful people who have told me that I made a difference."

Johnson said that Oak Park will see him again one day, explaining, "Boy, Oak Park would be a great place to come back to and retire. I'm telling everyone that I'm in a New York state-of-mind but my heart's in Oak Park."

See more photos and video with online version of this story.

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Guide to the gays

The next primary elections, to be held March 18, feature a number of openly gay and lesbian candidates. The following individuals have publically stated that they were a member of the LGBT community and were on the ballot as of March 3.

—Kelly Cassidy

Race: Illinois state Representative (14th District)

Website: CitizensForKellyCassidy.com

The skinny: Cassidy, who defeated another lesbian candidate, Paula Basta, in March 2014, is this time running unopposed in the Democratic primary. Republican candidate Denis Detzel, a consultant, is also running unopposed in that district. Before taking office, Cassidy was an activist and a staffer for state Sen. John Cullerton.



Sam Yingling. Photo courtesy of Yingling

ELECTIONS 2014

—Sam Yingling

Race: Illinois state Representative (62nd District)

Website: SamYingling.com

The skinny: Yingling, running unopposed in the primary for his second term, is a native of central Lake County and lives in Round Lake Beach. He is the first openly gay House member from outside metropolitan Chicago. The night after SB10 passed, Yingling proposed to his longtime partner, Lowell Jaffe, at a party in the executive mansion. Republican Rod Drobinski of Wauconda is also running unopposed in the race.

—Greg Harris

Race: Illinois state Representative (13th District)

Website: GregHarris.org

The skinny: Harris, who was chief co-sponsor of SB10, the legislation that will bring about marriage equality in Illinois beginning in June, 2014, has a district that includes Uptown, Ravenswood, Lincoln Square, North Center and Bowmanville. He was first elected in 2006 and is currently running unopposed in the Democratic primary. Republican Jon Joseph Hartmann is running unopposed as well.

—James Crawley

Race: Cook County Circuit Court Judge (Pamela E. Hill Veal vacancy)

Website: crawleyforjudge.org

The skinny: Crawley, a native of Joliet, attended Loyola University Chicago and received his law degree from St. Louis University, where he started doing legal work on HIV/AIDS issues. He has had his own practice for more than 12 years, and has developed a specialty in food poisoning personal injury cases. Also running for the vacancy are Andrea Michele Buford and Kelly Maloney Kachmarik.

—Judy Rice

Race: Cook County Circuit Court Judge (7th Subcircuit, W. Taylor vacancy)

Website: www.judyriceforjudge.com

The skinny: Rice is senior vice president and head of community affairs & economic development for Harris Bank. After receiving her law degree in 1988, Rice began her legal career as an assistant Cook County state's attorney. She then began her 17-year-long career with the City of Chicago, initially as assistant corporation counsel.

—Jorge Zavala

Race: U.S. Representative (4th District)

Website: ZavalaForAmerica.com

The skinny: At 26, Zavala is the youngest candidate in Illinois to run for Congress—and he is in a very competitive primary against incumbent U.S. Rep. Luis Gutierrez. Zavala was raised in the Logan Square neighborhood and attended Resurrection Catholic Academy.

Note: In February, out lesbian Mel Ferrand lost an appeal to have her name reinstated to the ballot. She has been campaigning to fill the 40th district state representative's seat now filled by Jaime Andrade, who replaced Deb Mell. One of Ferrand's opponents successfully challenged her candidacy on the basis of a filing error. Ferrand said March 3 that she is currently evaluating her options.

Early voting info

Early voting for the March 18 primary election will be offered through Saturday, March 15.

Voters registered in the City of Chicago may use any early voting site in the city, regardless of where the voters live.

Voters don't need a reason or excuse to use early voting; however, voters do need to present government-issued photo identification.

Ballots cast in early voting are final. After casting ballots in early voting, voters may not return to amend, change or undo a ballot for any reason. It is a felony to vote more than once—or to attempt to vote more than once—in the same election.

All 51 locations will be open Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. To get a list of sites, visit <http://www.chicagoelections.com/page.php?id=9>.

Cassidy introduces gun-registration measure

State Rep. Kelly Cassidy (D-Chicago) has introduced a bill requiring the registration of firearms in the State of Illinois.

"We've dealt for too long with gun violence in our neighborhoods, most often perpetrated by individuals who acquired the firearm through illicit means," Cassidy said in a press release. "According to a University of Chicago Crime Lab Report, 45 percent of firearms used in crimes in our state were purchased legally in Illinois and then illegally transferred. Registration creates a safeguard against these transfers and significantly hinders the ability for criminals to acquire firearms."

HB 4715, the Firearms Registration Act, would require registration of firearms upon purchase, and for firearms owned at the time of passage. The registration process would include a background check, and transfer to an individual without complying with registration would be a Class 2 felony.

QUALIFIED • INDEPENDENT • IMPARTIAL

- The only **LGBT candidate running countywide.**
- Found "**Recommended**" by the **Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago (LAGBAC).**
- Received the **highest judicial rating possible** from the women's bar groups.
- James Crawley is, "hardworking ... has extensive practice experience ... and is **well regarded for his dedication to the law and his integrity.**" [Source: Chicago Bar Association]
- Endorsed by **Mike Quigley, Greg Harris, Sara Feigenholtz, Democratic ward and township organizations, Personal PAC** and labor unions, including the **Chicago Fraternal Order of Police and Chicago Firefighters.**
- Has a demonstrated **30-year record supporting LGBT causes** and people with HIV/AIDS.

COOK COUNTY EARLY VOTING BEGINS 3/3/2014

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www.CrawleyForJudge.org

ELECTIONS 2014: JUDGES

LGBT candidates Rice and Crawley eye the bench

BY KATE SOSIN

It's been 20 years since Tom Chiola's historic win made him the first openly gay elected official in Illinois, and Cook County has seen a number of out judges take the bench since.

This year could bring two more, as Judy Rice and James Patrick Crawley are battling for seats in Cook County.

Each election cycle typically sees a handful of LGBT judicial candidates. Rice, a Chicago native with a long history in city government, is running in the Cook County Circuit Court 7th Subcircuit. James Crawley, a personal injury attorney with more than 25 years in law, is running to fill the Cook County Circuit Court Hill-Neal Vacancy. Linda Pael, an out candidate in the 10th Subcircuit withdrew from her race in December.

"They seem to be running really good races," said John Litchfield, president of the Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago (LAGBAC), of Rice and Crawley.

LAGBAC does not comment on specific races, Litchfield said. That is because LAGBAC rates candidates.

LAGBAC found both Rice and Crawley "recommended."

Judy Rice

Rice previously served as the Chicago treasurer under Mayor Richard Daley, and was the first female commissioner of the Chicago Department of Transportation and the Chicago Department of Water as well as the director of the Department of Revenue.

She has been active in Chicago's LGBT community for years, but it wasn't until last fall, when she launched her campaign, that she came out as a lesbian.

"There are many factors about me: the fact that I'm African-American, that I'm female, that I'm a lesbian, that I'm an attorney, that I've been in business school," Rice told Windy City Times last September. "It's not something that is the primary focus of my role, but it's a

factor about me, and at this point in my life, it's one that I'm open about."

Rice co-chaired the 2006 Gay Games Champions program in Chicago, among things, and she attended the Chicago Pride Parade annually. Most recently, she has served as the senior vice president and head of community affairs & economic development for BMO Harris Bank.

Rice is up against two other Democrats—Owens J. Shelby, an assistant state's attorney in Cook County, and Marianne Jackson, an associate judge.

Shelby did not submit his name to the Alliance of Bar Associations and was therefore LAGBAC did not recommend him. Jackson's ratings have yet to be released.

In her candidate interview with WCT, Rice said she believes the diversity of her experiences makes her a great candidate for judge.

"I think people get someone who knows the community, who knows the issues that we are going through in the community, who is fair, who will listen, who will try to make well-reasoned decisions on behalf of people who are a part of them, who will be open," Rice said. "Those are all the qualities that you want in a judge."

More on Rice is available on her campaign website at www.judyriceforjudge.com.

James Crawley

Crawley has made a name for himself as a personal injury attorney, taking on a number of food poisoning cases in his private practice for the last 12 years. In total, he has been practicing law for nearly 25 years.

Originally from Joliet, Crawley graduated from Loyola University Chicago and attended law school at St. Louis University. He has done extensive volunteer work for AIDS Care Inc, The Jane Addams Hull House Uptown Center and the American Civil Liberties Union, among other organizations.

He has been married to his partner Dan Ingram since 2008, and they have been together for more than 13 years.



Judy Rice and James Crawley. Photos courtesy of the candidates

Crawley faces a tough race against two Democratic contenders—Andrea Michele Buford and Kelly Maloney Kachmarik.

Buford is already a Circuit Court judge, after she was appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court in 2011. She is a former president of the Cook County Bar Association. She was also found "recommended" by LAGBAC.

Kachmarik is an attorney based in the Southwest suburbs focusing on municipal law, civil rights, defense of police officers, personal injury and contract law, according to her website. She declined to appear before the Alliance of Bar Associations for evaluation, so she was found "not-recommended" by LAGBAC.

Crawley told Windy City Times in his October candidate interview that he has the right temperament and sense of justice for the job.

"One of the things that I think differentiates me from a lot of candidates is probably this innate sense of fairness that I feel that I have, a strong sense of integrity that I would bring to the bench," Crawley said. "I want people leaving the courtroom, regardless of whether they're the winner or loser, to walk out knowing they were treated fairly. That's something I think I would be very good at."

More on his campaign is available at: <http://www.crawleyforjudge.org>.

The election

Even more challenging than opponents this election, however, might be voter turnout. Susana Darwin, who co-chairs the judicial evaluation committee for LAGBAC, notes that in addition to low enthusiasm for judicial candidates, this year's contenders will be facing off during a relatively minor election season. Without a presidential race to encourage voter turnout, judicial candidates will have to work that much harder to get supporters to the polls.

But Darwin says that getting informed about judicial candidates is worth the effort. Voters should put in the time, she said, to check out the bar association reviews, compiled at vote-forjudges.org.

"It's the candidates that choose not to be evaluated that I find incredibly offensive," Darwin said, noting that declining evaluation often leaves voters in the dark about how candidates might measure up in the courtroom.

Litchfield also drove home the importance of studying up for judicial races.

"At some point in your life, everyone has a brush with the law, and you want to make sure a qualified judge is hearing your case," he said.

That, he said, is especially important for LGBT people as the Cook County State's Attorney's office pursues hate crime convictions.

"It's really important to have a judge that's thoughtful on those issues," Litchfield said.

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Gay Congressional candidate promises direct involvement

BY MATT SIMONETTE

At 26, Jorge Zavala Jr., is currently the youngest Illinoisan currently running for U.S. Congress. A native of the Logan Square neighborhood, he's currently seeking the 4th District seat currently held by Luis Gutierrez. Zavala is openly gay.

He said that his inspiration to run for office stems from his doing development work in Southeast Asia, shortly after graduating from DePaul University. "The experiences that were closest to my heart were women's issues, human rights issues and immigration issues," he said. "My role was to seek funding and resources to provide basic health care to women and children, and at the same time help promote education."

He added that, back home in Chicago, his family had been very active in community organizing a well, "whether it was to keep a local school from closing down, or grant writing to fund technology programs that benefit underserved communities." Zavala's father, Jorge Zavala Sr., has also run against Gutierrez.

Expanding job opportunities within the district is a key concern for Zavala: "It's a challenge to find jobs, especially in this weak job market that we have, [and] particularly for our elders and our recently graduated youth. Many are working jobs that they could have gotten had they not gone to college. It's still a blessing to have the opportunity to work but, at the same time, to we have to secure jobs in our district that promote a stable community."

Residents of Zavala's district are primed to work, and elected officials have to work to bring businesses there, he said. "I would like to seek out more investment from prospective companies in our communities," Zavala noted. "I know that, in speaking with leaders in places like Humboldt Park, Cicero and Berwyn, there has been a deep interest in really securing more jobs in the community through active engagement and more investing. It's about getting other people to take notice."

He added that one consequence of the poor economy has been the closing of clinics offering mental health services: "[That] affected the community and forced the patients to seek healthcare places far away, and many of those patients don't have transportation on their own.

Zavala also would like to see an expansion of funding for services to LGBT constituents, especially LGBT youth, including testing ser-



Jorge Zavala Jr.

vices, mentoring programs and easier access to shelters.

"We really have to promote safety in our community," he added. "I'm working to hear the trans perspective on these issues as well. I have friends who identify as pre-op and post-op, and their health needs are completely different from that of a [cisgender] gay man or lesbian, for example."

Zavala spent some time working at the Consulate General of Mexico in Chicago, where he helped community members address concerns and secure needs regarding documentation. "My whole purpose was to create an environment that was less hostile and more welcoming."

Gutierrez has done a great deal of work on immigration reform. Zavala said, however, that much of his opponent's work has yet to trickle down to the district.

"[Gutierrez] is leading us in the right direction, but there hasn't been a local focus," he added. "When he speaks of issues like the DREAMers, those are wonderful, beautiful concepts, but that's what they are—concepts. ... Residents cannot get useful information because agencies cannot provide it to them. I believe the Congressman is going in the right direction, but there is just not enough action at the local level."

Zavala said that he'd stand apart by engaging his district at the community level. "We're at a point where there are a lot of cultural wars going on, and we have to have our leaders be adults about these things," he said. "We need to be able to ask our leaders what they're doing. I'm transparent about what I plan to do."

ELECTIONS 2014

Equality Illinois PAC gathers to support pro-marriage lawmakers

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Officials of Equality Illinois PAC (political action committee), as well as many of its supporters, gathered at Hubbard Inn on Feb. 27 to raise financial support for eight legislators who voted "yes" on SB10 in 2013.

Among those in attendance were state Rep. Sam Yingling, Ald. Deb Mell, Cook County Clerk David Orr and ESPN.com contributor Christina Kahrl.

"All of the candidates are looking good in the primary, but we have to leave no stone unturned," said Bernard Cherkasov, CEO of Equality Illinois. "We have to stand by our friends."

The candidates Equality Illinois PAC is supporting include state Sen. Don Harmon and state Reps. Jaime Andrade, Toni Berrios, Thaddeus Jones, Christian Mitchell, Ron Sandack, Ed Sullivan and Kathleen Willis.

Cherkasov said that Equality Illinois PAC is running 18 phone banks several days a week until the primary election; the organization expects to make about 60,000 phone calls before then. "Every space in the office is full—we have people sitting on the floor," he added.

Attorney Nicole Bashor said that, while other states' LGBT residents have had to fend off harmful legislation, such as in Indiana or Arizona, Illinoisans have to demonstrate that there will be no retribution from voters brought upon legislators who voted in favor of marriage equality. "Other states are watching Illinois to see what we do," added Bashor.

Yingling said that his constituents were largely supportive of his vote for gay marriage. "I received an outpouring of congratulations. The district realized that this was a no-brainer," said Yingling, who is not facing a challenger in his primary race.

Many spoke of other directions Equality Illinois and similar organizations might take once marriage becomes convenient and obtainable for all residents of the state. Cherkasov said the organization would turn to issues such as transgender rights and school bullying.

"Every victory we've achieved has been a coalition effort," said Cherkasov. "We're going to have to bring weight to bear upon these issues. Marriage is one good example of what happens when everyone works together."

"It's going to be harder going forward," admitted Equality Illinois co-founder Art Johnston. "Everybody 'gets' the idea of marriage—but these other things are extremely important."

Orr said that, as of Feb. 26, 87 same-sex couples had obtained licenses to be married at the County Clerk's Office.

"By today [Feb. 27], I expect there should have been about 100," he said, adding that applicants ages have ranged from 18- to 80-years-old. "We haven't had a stampede, which is actually a good thing—we want to make sure people know the licenses are only good for 60 days, and I know a lot of people will want June weddings."

One couple that won't be going in right away for their license is Yingling and his partner Lowell Jaffe, who got engaged at the governor's mansion the day the House passed SB10.

"It won't be until 2015—I have to get through the election," said Yingling. "I'm afraid I'm going to turn into a groomzilla."

Photos available with online version of this story.

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Election 2014

US SENATE

WCT = LGBT scores are the first ones listed in each case (WCT1). Non-LGBT inquiries (WCT2) ask candidates about issues ranging from raising the minimum wage to the environmental topic of fracking.
 HRC = Human Rights Campaign 112th Congress, ratings are a percentage of total 100% based on HRC tracking of how candidates voted in the 112th Congress
 PP = Planned Parenthood
 CAI = Citizen Action/Illinois Policy Council

	WCT1	WCT2	HRC	PP	CAI
UNITED STATES SENATOR					
James D. "Jim" Oberweis (R)					
Douglas Lee Truax (R)					
Richard J. Durbin (D)	21/21	5/6	100	Y	Y

US CONGRESS RACES

WCT = LGBT scores are the first ones listed in each case (WCT1). Non-LGBT inquiries (WCT2) ask candidates about issues ranging from raising the minimum wage to the environmental topic of fracking.
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 IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization
 PP = Planned Parenthood
 CAI = Citizen Action/Illinois Policy Council

	WCT1	WCT2	HRC	IVI	PP	CAI
1ST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT						
Jimmy Lee Tillman (R)						
Bobby L. Rush (D)			94		Y	
2ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT						
Eric M. Wallace (R)						
Robin Kelly (D)					Y	Y
3RD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT						
Sharon M. Brannigan (R)						
Diane M. Harris (R)						
Daniel William Lipinski (D)			30			
4TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT						
Hector Concepcion (R)						
Luis V. Gutierrez (D)			100		Y	
Jorge Gerardo Zavala (D)						
Alexandra Eidenberg (D)						
5TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT						
Nancy Wade (R)	19/21	5/6				
Mike Quigley (D)			100		Y	
6TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT						
Peter J. Roskam (R)			0			
Michael Mason (D)	11/21	5/6			Y	
7TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT						
Robert L. Bumpers (R)						
Danny K. Davis (D)			88	Y	Y	Y
8TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT						
Manju Goel (R)						
Larry Kaifesh (R)						
Tammy Duckworth (D)					Y	
9TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT						
David Earl Williams III (R)						
Susanne Atanus (R)	6/21	2/6				
Janice D. Schakowsky (D)			100		Y	Y
10TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT						
Robert Dold (R)			35			
Brad Schneider (D)					Y	
11TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT						
Chris Balkema (R)						
Bert Miller (R)						
Darlene Senger (R)						
Ian Bayne (R)						
Bill Foster (D)	21/21	4/6			Y	
12TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT						
Mike Bost (R)						
William L. "Bill" Enyart (D)					Y	
Paula Bradshaw (G)						
13TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT						
Rodney Davis (R)						
Michael Firsching (R)						
Erica Harold (R)						
Ann E. Callis (D)						Y
George Gollin (D)	21/21	5/6		Y		
David L. Green (D)						

14TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

	WCT1	WCT2	HRC	IVI	PP	CAI
Randy M. Hultgren (R)			0			
Dennis Anderson (D)				Y		Y
John J. Hosta (D)						

15TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

	WCT1	WCT2	HRC	IVI	PP	CAI
John M. Shimkus (R)			0			
Eric Thorstland (D)	20/21	3/6				

16TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

	WCT1	WCT2	HRC	IVI	PP	CAI
David J. Hale, Jr. (R)			0			
Adam Kinzinger (R)						
Randall Wayne Olsen (D)						

17TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

	WCT1	WCT2	HRC	IVI	PP	CAI
Bobby Schilling (R)			0			
Cheri Bustos (D)					Y	

COOK COUNTY RACES

WCT = LGBT scores are the first ones listed in each case (WCT1). Non-LGBT inquiries (WCT2) ask candidates about issues ranging from raising the minimum wage to the environmental topic of fracking.
 IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization
 PPAC = Personal PAC
 PP = Planned Parenthood
 CAI = Citizen Action/Illinois Policy Council

	WCT1	WCT2	IVI	PPAC	PP	CAI
BOARD PRESIDENT						
Toni Preckwinkle (D)				Y	Y	
ASSESSOR						
Joseph Berrios (D)				Y		
COOK COUNTY CLERK						
David D. Orr (D)	9/9	5/6		Y	Y	
SHERIFF						
Thomas J. Dart (D)	9/9	6/6	Y	Y		
Tadeusz "Tad" Palka (D)						
Sylvester E. Baker, Jr. (D)						
William "Bill" Evans (D)						
TREASURER						
Maria Pappas (D)				Y		
COMMISSIONER, COOK CO. BOARD - 1ST DIST.						
Brenda Smith (D)						
Blake Sercye (D)	9/9	5/6		Y		
Isaac "Ike" Carothers (D)						
Richard R. Boykin (D)						
Ronald Lawless (D)	9/9	5/6				
COMMISSIONER, COOK CO. BOARD - 2ND DIST.						
Robert B. Steele (D)				Y		
COMMISSIONER, COOK CO. BOARD - 3RD DIST.						
Jerry "Iceman" Butler (D)				Y	Y	
Rosemary Reeves (D)						
COMMISSIONER, COOK CO. BOARD - 4TH DIST.						
Stanley S. Moore (D)				Y	Y	
Nicholas "Nick" Smith (D)						
Robert R. McKay (D)						
COMMISSIONER, COOK CO. BOARD - 5TH DIST.						
Deborah Sims (D)				Y	Y	
Timothy "Tim" Parker (D)						
COMMISSIONER, COOK CO. BOARD - 6TH DIST.						
Joan Patricia Murphy (D)				Y		
COMMISSIONER, COOK CO. BOARD - 7TH DIST.						
Jesus G. Garcia (D)				Y		
COMMISSIONER, COOK CO. BOARD - 8TH DIST.						
Luis Arroyo, Jr. (D)						
Edwin "Eddie" Reyes (D)				Y	Y	
COMMISSIONER, COOK CO. BOARD - 9TH DIST.						
Frank L. McPartlin (D)						
Peter N. Silvestri (R)				Y	Y	
COMMISSIONER, COOK CO. BOARD - 10TH DIST.						
Bridget Gainer (D)				Y		
COMMISSIONER, COOK CO. BOARD - 11TH DIST.						
John P. Daley (D)				Y	Y	
COMMISSIONER, COOK CO. BOARD - 12TH DIST.						
John Fritchey (D)				Y		
COMMISSIONER, COOK CO. BOARD - 13TH DIST.						
Larry Suffredin (D)				Y	Y	

COMMISSIONER, COOK CO. BOARD - 16TH DIST.

	WCT1	WCT2	IVI	PPAC	PP	CAI
Jeffrey R. Tobolski (D)				Y		Y

COMMISSIONER, COOK CO. BOARD OF REVIEW, 3RD

	WCT1	WCT2	IVI	PPAC	PP	CAI
Larry Rogers, Jr. (D)				Y		Y

METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT

	WCT1	WCT2	IVI	PPAC	PP	CAI
Cynthia M. Santos (D)						
Frank Avila (D)				Y		
Timothy "Tim" Bradford (D)				Y		Y
Josina Morita (D)	3/3	4/4	Y	Y		Y
Tom Courtney (D)						
Adam Miguist (D)						
John S. Xydakis (D)						
Frank Edward Gardner (D)						
Kathleen Mary O'Reilly (D)						
Brendan Francis Houlihan (D)						

IL STATE RACES

WCT = Windy City Times questions, number listed is of the total questions correct for that race. WCT1 refers to a greater number of general questions; WCT2 refers to LGBTQ-specific questions
 IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization
 PPAC = Personal PAC
 EQIL = Equality Illinois PAC
 PP = Planned Parenthood
 CAI = Citizen Action/Illinois Policy Council

	WCT1	WCT2	IVI	PPAC	EQIL	PP	CAI
GOVERNOR/ LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR							
Bill Brady (R)							
Maria Rodriguez (R)							
Dan Rutherford (R)							
Steve Kim (R)							
Kirk W. Dillard (R)							
Jil Tracy (R)							
Bruce Rauner (R)							
Evelyn Sanguinetti (R)							
Tio Hardiman (D)							
Brunell Donald (D)							
Pat Quinn (D)			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Paul Vallas (D)						Y	
ATTORNEY GENERAL							
Paul M. Schimpf (R)							
Lisa Madigan (D)					Y		Y
SECRETARY OF STATE							
Michael Webster (R)				Y	Y	Y	Y
Jesse White (D)							
COMPROLLER							
Judy Baar Topinka (R)					Y		
Sheila Simon (D)	17/17	5/6		Y	Y	Y	
TREASURER							
Tom Cross (R)				Y	Y	Y	
Bob Grogan (R)							
Michael W. Frerichs (D)				Y	Y	Y	Y

STATE SENATE RACES

IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization
 PPAC = Personal PAC
 EQIL = Equality Illinois PAC
 PP = Planned Parenthood

	IVI	PPAC	EQIL	PP	CAI
3RD LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT					
Mattie Hunter (D)		Y	Y	Y	Y
6TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT					
Stephanie Linares (R)					
John J. Cullerton (D)		Y	Y	Y	
9TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT					
Daniel Biss (D)		Y	Y	Y	
12TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT					
Steven Landek (D)			Y		
15TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT					
Napoleon Harris (D)		Y			
18TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT					
Bill Cunningham (D)			Y		
24TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT					
Chris Nybo (R)					
Dennis M. Reboletti (R)					
Suzanne Glowiak (D)		Y		Y	

	IVI	PPAC	EQIL	PP	CAI		WCT1	WCT2	IVI	PPAC	EQIL	PP	CAI		WCT1	WCT2	IVI	PPAC	EQIL	PP	CAI	
30TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT Don Wilson (R) Terry Link (D)		Y	Y	Y		15TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT John C. D'Amico (D)			Y	Y				44TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Ramiro Juarez (R) Fred Crespo (D)					Y	Y	Y	
33RD LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT Karen McConnaughay (R)						16TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Lou Lang (D)			Y	Y	Y			45TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Daniel Brinkman (R) Seth Lewis (R) Christine Jennifer Winger (R) TJ Lewis (R) Jenny M. Burke (D)					Y			
36TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT Neil Anderson (R) Mike Jacobs (D)		Y	Y	Y		17TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Kathleen Myalls (R) Laura Fine (D)			Y	Y	Y			46TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Heidi Holan (R) Deb Conroy (D)					Y	Y	Y	
39TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT Bob Galhotra (D) Don Harmon (D)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	18TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Robyn Gabel (D)			Y	Y	Y			50TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Julie Cosimo (R) Beth C. Goncher (R) Keith R. Wheeler (R) William F. Keck (R) Valerie L. Burd (D)					Y		Y	
42ND LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT Linda Holmes (D)		Y	Y	Y		19TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Robert Martwick (D)			Y	Y	Y			51ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Ed Sullivan, Jr. (R) Bob Bednar (R)							Y	
45TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT Tim Bivins (R)						20TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Michael P. McAuliffe (R) Michael T. Yorty (R) Mo Khan (D) Jerry J. Acciari (D)	17/17	5/6	Y	Y	Y	Y		52ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT David McSweeney (R) Bill Downs (D)					Y			
48TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT Linda Little (R) Andy Manar (D)			Y			21ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Silvana Tabares (D)			Y	Y	Y			53RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Mel Thillens (R) Martin J. Moylan (D)						Y	Y	Y
51ST LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT Chapin Rose (R)						22ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Michael J. Madigan (D)					Y			54TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Jim Moynihan (R) Michelle Mussman (D)					Y	Y	Y	
54TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT Kyle McCarter (R)						23RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Michael J. Zalewski (D)			Y	Y	Y			55TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Ed Sullivan, Jr. (R) Bob Bednar (R)								
57TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT James F. Clayborne, Jr. (D)		Y		Y		24TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Elizabeth "Lisa" Hernandez (D)			Y	Y	Y			56TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT David McSweeney (R) Bill Downs (D)					Y			

ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY RACES

WCT = Windy City Times questions, number listed is of the total questions correct for that race. WCT1 refers to a greater number of general questions; WCT2 refers to LGBTQ-specific questions
 IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization
 PPAC = Personal PAC
 EQIL = Equality Illinois PAC
 PP = Planned Parenthood
 CAI = Citizen Action/Illinois Policy Council

	WCT1	WCT2	IVI	PPAC	EQIL	PP	CAI		WCT1	WCT2	IVI	PPAC	EQIL	PP	CAI		WCT1	WCT2	IVI	PPAC	EQIL	PP	CAI
1ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Daniel J. Burke (D)				Y	Y	Y		29TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Thaddeus Jones (D) Kenneth "Kenny" Williams (D)			Y	Y	Y			57TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Bill Grossi (R) Elaine Nekritz (D)				Y	Y	Y	
2ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Edward J. Acevedo (D)				Y	Y	Y		30TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT William "Will" Davis (D) Deyon L. Dean (D)			Y	Y	Y	Y		58TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Mark Neerhof (R) Scott Drury (D)				Y	Y	Y	
3RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Luis Arroyo (D)				Y	Y	Y		32ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT André Thapedi (D)					Y			59TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Leslie Munger (R) Carol Sente (D)							
4TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Cynthia Soto (D)				Y	Y	Y		33RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Lynn Renee Franco (R) Marcus C. Evans, Jr. (D)			Y	Y	Y			62ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Rod Drobinski (R) Sam Yingling (D)				Y	Y	Y	
5TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Collin Johnson (R) Kenneth "Ken" Dunkin (D)				Y	Y	Y		34TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Mark Ekhoft (R) Fatimah "Timah" Macklin (R) Elgie R. Sims, Jr. (D)			Y	Y	Y			63RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Steven Reick (R) Jack D. Franks (D)					Y	Y	
6TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Esther Golar (D)				Y	Y			35TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Victor C. Horne (R) Frances Ann Hurley (D)			Y	Y	Y			65TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Steven A. Anderson (R) Debbie Miller (R) Daniel J. Ugaste (R)							
7TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Emanuel "Chris" Welch (D) Antoinette "Toni" Gray (D)				Y	Y	Y		36TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Kelly M. Burke (D)			Y	Y	Y			67TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Charles E. "Chuck" Jefferson (D)				Y		Y	
8TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT La Shawn K. Ford (D)					Y			37TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Margo McDermed (R) Gayla Smith (R) Arthur Lukowski (R) August (O'Neill) Deuser (D) Nichole Serbin (D)			Y	Y	Y	Y		71ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Jeff McKinley (R) Jim Wozniak (R) Mike Smiddy (D)				Y	Y	Y	Y
9TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Carlos Alvarez (R) Myles Lloyd Tobin (R) Arthur Turner (D) Tonya N. Hunter (D)				Y	Y	Y		38TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Al Riley (D) McStephen O. A. "Max" Solomon (D)			Y	Y	Y	Y		72ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Patrick Verschoore (D)					Y	Y	
10TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Mark Calonder (R) Pamela Reaves-Harris (D) Derrick Smith (D) Eddie Winters (D) Antwan D. Hampton (D)		17/17	5/6					39TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Maria Antonia "Toni" Berrios (D) Will Guzzardi (D)			Y	Y	Y			77TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Kathleen Willis (D) Antonio "Tony" Favela (D)				Y	Y	Y	
11TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Ann M. Williams (D)				Y	Y	Y		40TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Nancy Schiavone (D) Jaime M. Andrade, Jr. (D) Aaron Goldstein (D) Bart Goldberg (D) Wendy Jo Harmston (D) Mark Pasiaka (D) Mel Ferrand (D)			17/17	5/6				78TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Camille Lilly (D)				Y	Y	Y	
12TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Sara Feigenholtz (D)				Y	Y	Y		43RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Ariana Flores (R) Keith Farnham (D)			17/17	6/6	Y			79TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Glenn Nixon (R) Katherine "Kate" Cloonen (D) John W. Howard (D)				15/17	4/6		Y
13TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Gregory Harris (D)		17/17	6/6	Y	Y	Y					Y	Y	Y			80TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Anthony DeLuca (D)				Y	Y	Y	
14TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Denis Detzel (R) Kelly M. Cassidy (D)		17/17	6/6	Y	Y	Y	Y				Y	Y	Y			81ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Keith R. Matune (R) Ron Sandack (R)					Y		

Election 2014 (from page 11)

	WCT1	WCT2	IVI	PPAC	EQIL	PP	CAI		WCT1	WCT2	IVI	PPAC	EQIL	PP	CAI		WCT1	WCT2	IVI	PPAC	EQIL	PP	CAI
86TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Lawrence "Larry" Walsh, Jr. (D)					Y	Y		98TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Yvonne Bolton (R) Natalie A. Manley (D)				Y	Y	Y		113TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Melinda Hult (R) Jay Hoffman (D)					Y	Y	
92ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Jehan Gordon (D)				Y	Y	Y		103RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Kristin Williamson (R) Carol Ammons (D) Samuel A. Rosenberg (D)			Y	Y	Y		Y	114TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Eddie Lee Jackson (D)			Y			Y	
97TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Mark Batinick (R) Richard E. Chapman (R) Amanda Mancke (R) Dennis Grosskopf (D)				Y		Y										115TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Terri Bryant (R) Robert "Bob" White (R)		Y					

Particular races for which there were no data have been deleted for space. See our downloadable charts at WindyCityTimes.com.

JUDICIAL EVALUATIONS

Windy City Times does not endorse candidates. Rather, we list their answers to our questionnaire as well as the ratings of legal organizations so that readers can make informed choices when they vote.

Key to Organizations:

- WCT = Windy City Times questions, number listed is of the total questions correct for that race
- PPAC = Personal PAC
- IVI - Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization
- CAI = Citizen Action/Illinois Policy Council
- CCL = Chicago Council of Lawyers
- CCBA = Cook County Bar Association
- DSL = Decalogue Society of Lawyers
- ISBA = Illinois State Bar Association
- LAGBAC = Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago
- WBAI = Women's Bar Association of Illinois

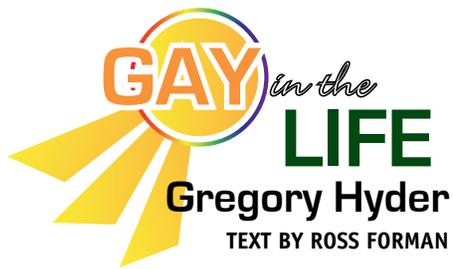
Key to Ratings:

- Q = Qualified
- NQ = Not Qualified
- WQ = Well Qualified
- HQ = Highly Qualified
- HR = Highly Recommended
- R = Recommended
- NR = Not Recommended
- NE = Not Evaluated
- (D) = Democrat
- (R) = Republican

	WCT	PPAC	IVI	CAI	CCL	CCBA	DSL	ISBA	LAGBAC	WBAI
App. Ct-1st Dist. (Gordon vacancy) Shelly A. Harris (D) Susan Kennedy Sullivan (D) Freddrenna M. Lyle (D) Nichole C. Patton (D)	8/9		Y	Y	Q	R	R	Q	R	R
App. Ct-1st Dist. (Murphy vacancy) David Ellis (D)		Y	Y	Y	NQ	HR	R	NQ	R	R
App. Ct-1st Dist. (Steele vacancy) Sharon Oden Johnson (D) John B. Simon (D)	7/9	Y	Y	Y	NQ	R	R	NQ	NR	HR
App. Ct-2nd Dist. (Bowman vacancy) Michael J. Burke (R)					Q	R	R	Q	R	R
Cook Circuit Court (Arnold vacancy) Bridget Anne Mitchell (D) Alfred M. Swanson, Jr. (D)	8/9 8/9	Y Y	Y	Y	Q	R	R	Q	R	R
Cook Circuit Court (Burke vacancy) Maritza Martinez (D)					Q	R	R	Q	R	R
Cook Circuit Court (Connors vacancy) Brendan O'Brien (D) Kristal Rivers (D) Peter J. Wilkalis (D)		Y	Y	Y	NQ	R	NR	Q	R	R
Cook Circuit Court (Egan vacancy) Daniel J. Kubasiak					Q	R	HR	HQ	R	R
Cook Circuit Court (Phelps Felton vacancy) Patricia O'Brien Sheahan (D)					Q	R	R	NQ	R	R
Cook Circuit Court (Howse vacancy) Caroline Kate Moreland (D)					Q	R	HR	Q	R	R
Cook Circuit Court (Lowrance vacancy) Thomas J. Carroll (D)					Q	R	R	Q	R	R
Cook Circuit Court (McDonald vacancy) Cynthia Y. Cobbs (D) Linda L. Mastandrea (D)	9/9	Y	Y	Y	Q	HR	R	Q	R	R
Cook Circuit Court (Neville vacancy) Carolyn Joan Gallagher (D) William B. Raines (D) Patricia S. Spratt (D) Mary Alice Melchor (D)	8/9 9/9 8/9	Y			Q	R	R	Q	R	R
Cook Circuit Court (Reyes vacancy) Stephen J. Feldman (D) Diana Rosario (D) Gregory R. LaPapa (D)		Y	Y		NQ	R	NR	Q	NR	R
Cook Circuit Court (Hill Veal vacancy) Andrea Michelle Buford (D) James Patrick Crawley (D) Kelly Maloney Kachmarik (D)	8/9 9/9	Y	Y	Y	Q	HR	HR	Q	R	R

Cook Circuit Court-2nd Sub (O'Neal vacancy)

	WCT	PPAC	IVI	CAI	CCL	CCBA	DSL	ISBA	LAGBAC	WBAI
Nyshana K. Sumner (D) Steven G. Watkins (D)					NR	NR	NR	NQ	NR	NR
Cook Circuit Court-3rd Sub (Donnelly vacancy) Lauren Brougham Glennon (D) Terrence J. McGuire (D)					NR	NR	NR	NQ	NR	NR
Cook Circuit Court-4th Sub (Billik vacancy) Brian Joseph Stephenson (D) John J. Mahoney (D) James J. Ryan (D) Daniel Lawrence Peters (D) Maureen Masterson Pulia (D)	6/9		Y		Q	R	R	Q	R	R
Cook Circuit Court-4th Sub (Mulhern vacancy) Martin D. Reggi (D) John Michael Allegretti (D)					WQ	NR	HR	HQ	NR	R
Cook Circuit Court-7th Sub (Hardy-Campbell vacancy) Robert D. Kuzas (D) Mable Taylor (D)					NR	NR	NR	NQ	NR	NR
Cook Circuit Court-7th Sub (Taylor vacancy) Judy Rice (D) Owens J. Shelby (D) Marianne Jackson (D)	8/9	Y	Y		Q	R	R	Q	R	R
Cook Circuit Court-9th Sub (Goldberg vacancy) Jerry A. Esrig (D) Megan Elizabeth Goldish (D) Nathan Benjamin Myers (D)	9/9	Y			NR	NR	NR	NQ	NR	NR
Cook Circuit Court-9th Sub (Meyer vacancy) Anjana Hansen (D) Thomas Peter Kougiyas (D) Monica A. Forte (D)	7/9 8/9	Y			WQ	R	R	Q	R	R
Cook Circuit Court-9th Sub (Preston vacancy) Michael Francis Otto (D) Abbey Fishman Romanek (D) Michael Alan Strom (D) Brian Alexander (D) Thomas M. Cushing (D)	8/9 9/9	Y	Y		NR	R	HR	HQ	HR	R
Cook Circuit Court-10th Sub ('A' vacancy) Anthony C. "Tony" Kyriakopoulos (D) Katherine A. O'Dell (D)					Q	R	R	Q	R	R
Cook Circuit Court-11th Sub ('A' vacancy) Gina A. Crumble (D) Joanne F. Rosado (D) Scott Michael Kozicki (D) Pamela McLean Meyerson (D)	9/9 7/9		Y		Q	R	NR	Q	R	R
Cook Circuit Court-12th Sub (Jordan vacancy) James Paul Pieczonka (R) James I. Marcus (R) Samuel Bae (D) Ralph Eugene Meczyk (D) James Edward Hanlon, Jr. (D) James L. Kaplan (D) Allan W. Masters (D)	9/9	Y		Y	Q	R	R	Q	R	R
Cook Circuit Court-13th Sub (Iosco vacancy) John Curry (R) Gary W. Seyring (R) Caroline M. Kennedy-Elkins (D)					Q	R	HR	Q	R	R
Cook Circuit Court-15th Sub (Doody vacancy) Patrick Kevin Coughlin (D) John S. Fotopoulos (D) Diana Embil (D)	8/9	Y	Y		Q	R	R	Q	R	R
Cook Circuit Court-15th Sub (Sterba vacancy) Michael B. Barrett (D) Sondra Denmark (D) Chris Lawler (D) Mary Beth Duffy (D) Robbin Perkins (D)					NR	NR	NR	NQ	NR	NR
Wabash Co.-2nd Judicial Court (Sawyer vacancy) William C. Hudson (R) Cassandra A. Goldman (D)		Y			Q	R	R	Q	R	R



Gregory Hyder was contacted 13 years ago when The Peninsula Chicago Hotel in downtown Chicago was under construction.

"I really had not planned on being in the hotel business; I had returned from teaching in Africa and needed a job while I was working on a second degree and started checking people in at the front desk ... the rest is history," he said. "To be a part of the design and building aspect of the project has really made this a more personal work experience."

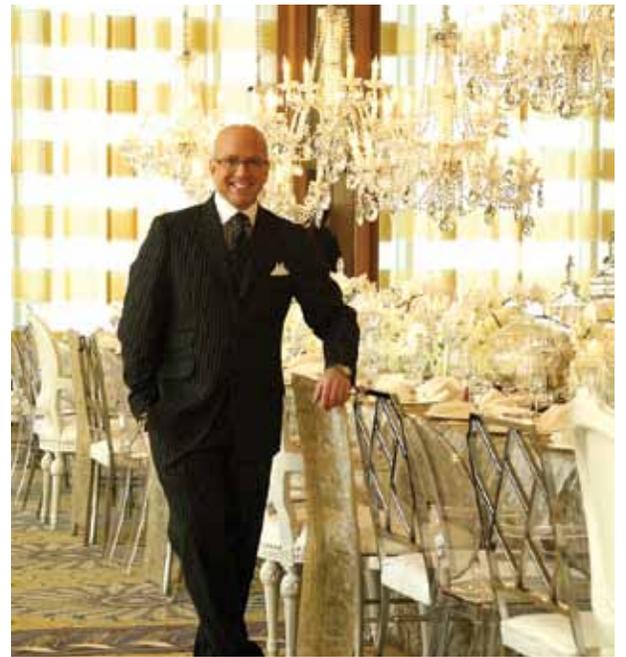
Hyder said he is "very fortunate" to have such an "interesting and fun job." His team handles all events at the hotel—weddings, fundraisers, corporate events, and more.

"There are so many amazing events and organizations I have been able to be a part of and work with, I can't even begin to name a favorite," Hyder said. "I will say it is most gratifying to watch events go from inception to fruition; there is a great sense of pride in that process."

The Peninsula Chicago has, for years, been involved in the annual World of Chocolate, benefitting the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC).

"Having always had the fortune to have such a stellar pastry team, the gang has always been on board to create something special for AFC [and the World of Chocolate every December]," Hyder said. "I think many of the attendees look forward every year to see what we are going to come up with to top the previous year."

"World of Chocolate is one of my favorite events of the season. I really think it is a unique event in the sense I feel it is able to reach a younger demographic in the gay community and, let's face it, they are the future of fundraising."



Age 51	weddings now that things are legal in the great state of Illinois."
Neighborhood Uptown	Dream vacation destination "I've [already] done both: elephant-riding in Thailand and [a] safari in South Africa."
Job title Director of style and community relations, director of catering and conference services	Favorite TV shows Downton Abbey and Saturday Night Live
Hobbies Gardening, cooking and music	Favorite color Red
Best part of your job "The diversity of projects every day."	Favorite pizza topping Pepperoni
Worst part of your job "The diversity of projects every day."	Little-known fact "I worked in South Africa, developing music programs for children during apartheid in the late 1980s."
Gay weddings "We here at The Peninsula are certainly looking forward to having many more gay	



WINDY CITY TIMES

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March 5 & 12



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VIEWPOINT

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TIMES

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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.



**ANDY
SHAW**

Ron Dorfman's impact on journalism

Many of you know Andy Shaw from his long TV reporting career and now his watchdog work at the Better Government Association. But you probably don't know that someone who was near and dear to us at the *Windy City Times*, Ron Dorfman, gave Andy a big break when he was just starting out in journalism. Here's a column Andy wrote for us in Ron's memory:

Successful careers are often facilitated by strokes of luck—connected friends or family members who open doors, or fortuitous moments when you're simply in the right place at the right time to catch a break.

It's true you have to bring more to the table than a letter of recommendation, but a lot of people have ability, so a bit of luck is often the difference between those who get a chance to take their game to the next level, and those who don't.

My luckiest break came in 1974, when I was a young reporter at City News, the iconic Chicago wire service that, in the days before college j-school programs, gave generations of aspiring journalists on-the-job training while they were covering the gritty local news.

Distinguished alums include Ben Hecht, Charles MacArthur, Carl Sandburg, Kurt Vonnegut and Mike Royko.

The challenge back then was to "graduate" from City News to one of the daily newspapers—there were four in those days—so you had to get the attention of their editors.

That was hard because City News didn't print anything or put reporter by-lines on stories—it simply fed information to the papers.

As a result, we toiled in relative anonymity. So I started writing freelance pieces for community newspapers and small magazines to get a little visibility, but I needed a "game-changer."

It came when I was assigned to cover the



Andy Shaw (center) with Ron Dorfman (right) and Ron's husband Ken Ilio at their wedding reception Jan. 10. Photo by Hal Baim

Criminal Courts building at 26th & California, where the regular beat reporters for the newspapers were colorful competitors in the swashbuckling "Front Page" tradition, the cops who hung out with us in the pressroom cynical jokesters, and the cases in the courtrooms grisly urban dramas.

The beat was a story begging to be told, so I took copious notes, banged out a draft, and submitted it to the Chicago Journalism Review (CJR), our answer to New York's prestigious Columbia Journalism Review.

From its inception in the wake of the controversial media coverage that surrounded the violence outside Chicago's 1968 Democratic Convention, until it folded a decade later, CJR critiqued local media content.

So my article—a tongue-in-cheek send-up of life at 26th and Cal—was a good fit.

The "kiss and tell" aspect bothered some folks, including the cops and beat reporters I lampooned, but it caught the attention of newspaper editors, including those at the Sun-Times, and a few months later they hired me.

From there, thanks to smaller bits of luck, I went on to NBC 5, then ABC 7, and now the Better Government Association, the anti-corruption watchdog organization that shines a light on government and holds public officials accountable.

So why am I taking this trip down Memory Lane?

Because the CJR editor who encouraged me to write the story, and helped me massage it into printable shape, was renowned editor/activist Ron Dorfman, who died recently after a long battle with AIDS.

Ron was an intense, diminutive bundle of energy who co-founded the CJR, and his ed-

iting skill turned a kid reporter's very rough draft into a smooth enough piece of journalism to impress the right people.

Over the years Ron held many journalism jobs and supported numerous progressive causes, including gay rights. In December he married his longtime partner Ken Ilio, a talented photographer, academic and techie.

We were all part of a crowd of aging journalists, artists and activists who gathered most Friday evenings at Phil Stefani's 437, which replaced the old Ricardo's at the same Rush and Hubbard location.

The conversation, as you might imagine, is voluble, with enough old war stories to encourage an occasional retelling of my history with Ron.

The last time I saw him was a Friday night in January, when his medical prognosis had worsened, and many of us realized we were seeing him for one of the last times.

Sadly, we were.

Ron died quietly at home on Feb. 10.

He was lucky to live many more years than his early diagnosis predicted, thanks to experimental AIDS "cocktails" and a fierce determination that enabled him to ward off the ravages of HIV for two decades

But really, I was the lucky one—in the right place at the right time, when Ron was editing a publication that wanted a story I needed to write to advance my career.

You can't hear me Ron, but let me say thank you one more time.

I will always be grateful, and I'll continue to recount this episode to remind people about the value of lucky breaks, the importance of remembering the people who opened those doors, and the obligation to do the same for others.

Because, as poet Robert Frost said in "The Road Not Taken," it makes all the difference.

Andy Shaw was a political correspondent at ABC-7 for 26 years before becoming President & CEO of the Better Government Association in 2009. Email: ashaw@bettergov.org. Twitter: @andyslawbga.

LETTERS

Rise to the hate

Open Letter to LGBT Roman Catholics in the Chicago Archdiocese

Cardinal Francis George has stated that married gay couples cannot receive communion going forward. The Archdiocesan Gay and Lesbian Outreach (AGLO) ministry supports this action. Hate being promoted in the name of religious freedom is wrong.

According to the Washington Post, a Catholic chaplain at MedStar Washington Hospital Center stopped delivering a 63-year-old heart attack patient communion prayers and last rites after the man said he was gay.

Across the Roman Catholic landscape, individuals are being fired from their teaching positions simply because they got married to someone of the same sex.

On the international level, the Nigerian Conference of Catholic Bishops endorsed anti-gay legislation—and not a whimper is heard

from Pope Francis. Men and women are being dragged from their homes and beaten because of who they are, and still the Catholic silence is deafening.

Where is the Catholic voice in these matters? Is going along to get along a prudent course of action for Catholics who want to bring about change in the Church? How do you think change will happen if you don't work for it? Do we really think God is present in such a community?

Homophobia is a sin against God, and still there is silence in our Catholic Community.

Our gay clergy are incapable of summoning up the courage to speak out because LGBT Catholics could care less. Yet some of these Catholics will join LGBT political organizations in Chicago going so far as to sit on their organization's board of directors and scream about horrors of homophobia only to go back to their parishes and remain silent. How have we become so immune to this form of hypocrisy?

Even here in the archdiocese, a group that

claims to minister to the LGBT community buries its head in a Sunday evening Mass at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel pretending that all is right with the world because they are allowed to have a Mass. The group supports the cardinal's position to deny Communion to LGBT married couples—to do other would get them kicked out of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. How have we come to this? What a sad commentary on hypocrisy.

Forgive me if I have offended any Catholics, but if I have than you know how I feel. Why are we like passive zombies when we leave the Pride Parade and return to our home parishes and sheepishly turn our backs on homophobia?

Where is our faith? Have we lost the belief that we are all children of God? Are we so immune to taking action because to do so would make us feel uncomfortable?

There is absolutely no Catholic organization in the archdiocese that ministers to us; to think otherwise is to be delusional.

Joe Murray

GOINGS-ON



WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION

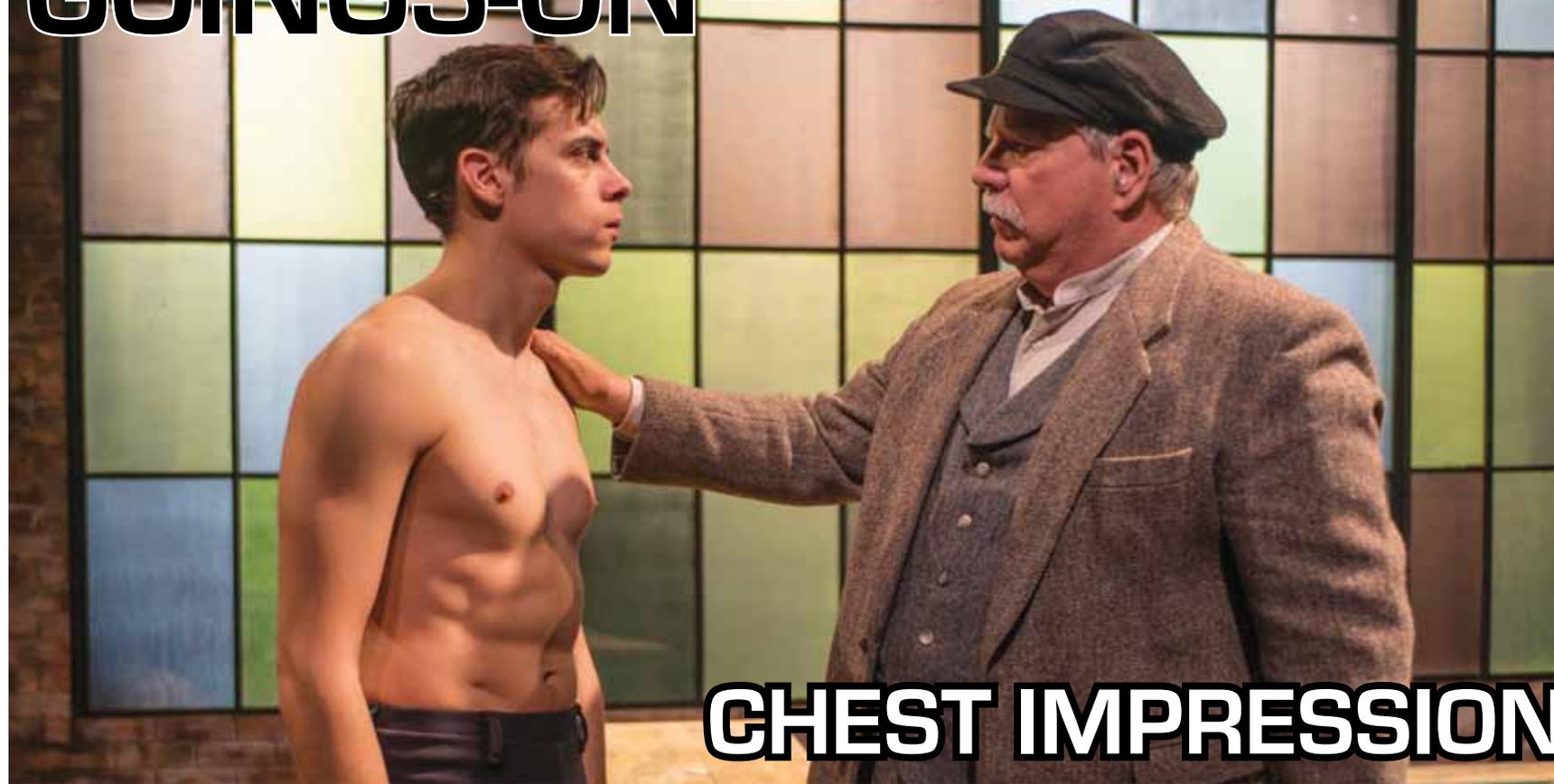


Photo by Michael Brosilow

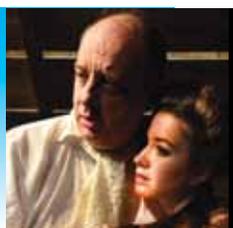
CHEST IMPRESSION

Nate Santana and Norm Woodel star in the theatrical production Golden Boy. See the review on page 21.

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SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Lesbian playwright tackles 'Mammoths' task

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

When New York-based lesbian playwright Madeleine George found out that the old Pratt Museum of Natural History was going to be closed down in her hometown of Amherst, Mass., she wanted to go back so she could chain herself to the door to stop it from happening. And that was despite her opinion that "it was a terrible museum and it was really outdated."

"It was a museum that I had loved a lot as a child," said George, citing the Pratt closure as one of the inspirations for her 2011 comedy *Seven Homeless Mammoths Wander New England*, which is having its Midwest debut in Chicago at Theater Wit. "[The museum] felt ancient itself and it was always very under-visited. You could go in there and get lost and feel like you were stepping out of time."

But a musty museum isn't the only focus of George's play, even though its closure does create some conflict for the characters and some whimsical comic asides as two prehistoric diorama Neanderthals share conversations that mirror those of bored college students encountering decades-old exhibits.

George says the heart of *Seven Homeless Mammoths...* is an examination of jealousy involving a lesbian love triangle among college academics in a small New England town. Dean Wreen (Meighan Garachis) has invited her ex-lover, Greer (Laura T. Fisher), back into their former home together since she has been diagnosed with a terminal cancer. But also living there is Wreen's much-younger lover, Andromeda (Kristen Magee).

"How do you deal with being the new person coming in to a relationship where there's an ex-partner who has been around for a really long

time?" said George. "Not to generalize, but I feel that lesbian configurations of that problem are different from other kinds. There's a particular way that women stay in each other's lives. Not everybody, obviously, but it's pretty common to find that people have created really interesting 'alternative kinship structures' as one of the characters says in the play."

Although George is more than happy to see all the advances being made in the United States regarding same-sex marriage rights and is very willing to endorse them, she questions if something might be lost with all the emphasis on traditional two-person partnerships taking precedence over more creative and expansive family relationships created within the LGBT community.

"The more innovative structures that we have been able to make in the past, not having access to the traditional or mainstream forms, do those things fall by the wayside?" George asked. "That's a kind of question that runs throughout the play."

But despite the dramatic issues of mortality and jealousy, George insists that she also wrote *Seven Homeless Mammoths* to explore the similarities and differences of comedies as written by Shakespeare and those of modern-day sitcoms. In fact, George found a way to weave in her obsession with the hit NBC sitcom *Friends* throughout the play.

"I don't know exactly what I love so much about that show, but I think it's a little because it verges on the perfect sitcom," George said. "I have watched all the episodes many, many times and I own them all."

All these disparate comic elements of a natural history museum, jealous academic lesbians and *Friends* sitcom references really spoke out



Playwright Madeleine George. Photo courtesy of Theater Wit

to Theater Wit artistic director Jeremy Wechsler, who feels that *Seven Homeless Mammoths...* is a perfect compliment to his company's hit production of *Completeness* from last year.

"I'm a whore for a comedy," joked Wechsler, adding that he sought out to direct and produce *Seven Homeless Mammoths...* initially just because its wacky title jumped out at him. "Ultimately I picked the play because its characterization is spot on, and it is freaking funny."

Another thing that impressed Wechsler, who joked that he was the "straight man out" when he previously worked for the very gay-focused Bailiwick Repertory Theatre, was that *Seven Homeless Mammoths...* featured lesbian characters who weren't dealing with societal disapproval or discrimination, but who were just leading their everyday lives.

"The assumptions in the play are all about the inclusiveness of gay culture into American culture," Wechsler said. "It's also about loss and how you let go of things in the past, and it's quite touching."

Though *Seven Homeless Mammoths...* is largely about a lesbian, George was happy to report that her comedy largely won over an overwhelmingly suburban heterosexual audience at its 2011 premiere at New Jersey's Two River Theater Company.

"This is a beautiful thing for comedy, which is to bridge the gap," George said. "To have some people in the audience to say, 'This is my story and I don't get to see it enough,' and to have other people in the audience to go like, 'There's no reason why I can't participate in this story, too.'"

Seven Homeless Mammoths Wander New England runs Thursday, March 6, through Sunday, April 27, at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave. Previews go through Sunday, March 16, with an official press opening at 7 p.m. Monday, March 17. The regular run is 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays with 3 p.m. matinees Sundays. Preview tickets are \$12-\$28. Regular run tickets are \$20-\$36; call 773-975-8150 or visit www.theaterwit.org.



From left: Dana Black, Pamela Mae Davis, Justine C. Turner and Matt Holzfeind in *Miss Marx*. Photo by Chris Ocken

THEATER REVIEW

Miss Marx

Playwright: Philip Dawkins
At: Strawdog Theatre Company,
3829 N. Broadway
Tickets: 1-866-811-4111;
www.strawdog.org; \$28
Runs through: March 29

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

I'm always eager for a new Philip Dawkins play, whether or not it completely fulfills its potential. His intelligent plays are highly theatrical, and rich with witty verbal dexterity. His works entertain in the true meaning of that word, "to hold attention." They entertain in part because they are amusing even as they engage serious ideas. I also admire Dawkins because the style and form of his plays never repeat themselves. To the best of my knowledge, *Miss Marx* is his first play to portray an important historical figure: Eleanor Marx (1855-1898), the English-born daughter of Karl Marx who translated *Das Kapital* into English and was a leader of international revolutionary socialism.

Jenny Julia Eleanor Marx was a formidable thinker and propagandist who espoused full empowerment for women in politics, the professions, voting and intimate relationships. Like her somewhat-counterpart, "Red" Emma Goldman, Marx believed women and men should be equally free to love who-and-as they wish, and without the constricting bonds of marriage. She entered forcefully into a relationship with prominent socialist and activist Edward Aveling, already married, with whom she lived for a number of years. In the end, however, her very woman-ness—or lack of fulfillment as a woman—destroyed her: when Aveling dumped her she committed suicide.

Dawkins sketches all of this and more besides—her close friendship with a gay man, her fondness for children, her oratorical skills, her promotion of Henrik Ibsen's plays, her abiding friendship with Friedrich Engels—by creating a memorable stage figure of ferocious passions and high standards. The language and flash of her flirtations with Aveling are worthy of Beatrice and Benedick, while their sexual encounters are like cats in heat. As Eleanor, Dana Black provides a majestic physical presence and brilliantly plays the complex subtext of the role, alerting us to seething emotions within while Eleanor maintains a cool exterior persona. John Ferrick, although physically smaller than Black, is sturdy and equally convincing as aggressive, self-centered Aveling. Dinner with this couple would be fascinating if they didn't smash all the china. *Miss Marx*

is so high-spirited you hardly notice it turning darker and solemn.

Director Megan Shuchman gives her fine ensemble great emotional range and freedom without ever losing control of the shape and pace of the work. It goes over the top precisely where it should but nowhere else. She and Dawkins introduce some amusing meta-theatrical devices (double casting and cross-gender casting) and skillfully integrate composer Mike Przygoda's sweet original music for piano, drum and violin. Mike Mroch's scenic design provides a realistic box set within the L-shaped Strawdog audience configuration, creating an effective 1890-ish physical look along with lighting by Jordan Kardasz and period costumes courtesy of Izumi Inaba.

CRITICS' PICKS

Cock, Profiles Theatre, through April 6. No chickens are harmed in this fast-paced, intensely physical and veddy British three-way (gay, gay and het) that adds a whole new dimension to the expression "thinking with your dick." MSB

Buzzer, Goodman Theatre, through March 9. Gentrifiers come in all colors. Ostensibly about race, this brilliantly acted three-character play concerns an upwardly mobile Black attorney who returns to the now-changing old 'hood and finds he's still not so far from the mean streets. JA

The How and the Why, Timeline Theatre at Baird Hall, through April 6. The topic is gynecological evolution, but Janet Ulrich Brooks and Elizabeth Ledo swap facts about "lady parts" with a rapier precision to win over the most squeamish playgoer. MSB

Rusalka, Lyric Opera of Chicago, through March 16. Dvorak's dark fairy tale inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid* is musically and dramatically ravishing from start to finish in this smart and beautifully designed new production led by out director Sir David McVicar. SCM

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

THEATER REVIEW

A Tale of Two Cities

Playwright: adapted by Christopher M. Walsh from the novel by Charles Dickens
At: Lifeline Theatre, 6912 N. Glenwood Ave.
Tickets: 773-761-4477;
www.lifelinetheatre.com; \$40
Runs through: April 6

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

A man who doesn't think that he deserves love can never be loved by others—and therein lies the paradox of tragic romantic heroes in literature from *Cyrano de Bergerac* to the present day. What distinguishes the two suitors to Miss Lucie Manette in the love triangle that anchors Charles Dickens' novel is that Charles Darnay declares his affection and then asks the lady to marry him, while Sydney Carton, after confessing same, expresses relief that his devotion is certain to be unreturned. What's a girl to say to *that*?

This is not Jane Austen's England, however, where such domestic tangles are quickly resolved, but a nation menaced by global unrest preceding cataclysmic social upheaval, both across the channel in allied France and across the Atlantic in its U.S. colonies, during an era still fresh in the memories of Dickens' readers. French expatriates like Darnay and Lucie's own father cannot escape their connections with a country embroiled in near-anarchy, leaving

their salvation in the hands of heroic British sympathizers, bred of upright societies where masters and servants share a united moral accord.

Christopher M. Walsh's adaptation facilitates the multiple dimensions of his epic narrative through the introduction of a protean Everyman, dubbed "The Resurrection Man" (euphemism for a "corpse-snatcher"), to play all of the commoners, and to act as our guide to the volatile world of *coups d'état*. His commentary allows Walsh to focus on the intrigue associated with a Parisian merchant family's revenge upon the estranged Darnay's aristocratic ancestors—a vendetta that will endanger him and those he loves, while exacting terrible risks in unexpected quarters.

Fitting big stories into small spaces is Lifeline Theatre's specialty, its stage's restrictive floor dimensions and high ceilings easily accommodating 10 actors portraying citizens on two continents (with the assistance of Elise Kaulzlaric's dialect instruction and Andrew Hansen's audio score that replicates the descent of the guillotine blade with chilling accuracy). John Henry Roberts deftly keeps us apprised of his diverse personae with never a trace of disruptive jocularly, his unswerving focus matched by an ensemble capable of riveting our attention for the swift-paced two-and-a-half hours necessary before the villains are dispatched, the innocent rescued and the noble rewarded for their sacrifice.



Three Soldiers (for Sisters). Photo by Austin D. Oie

THEATER REVIEW

Three Soldiers (for Sisters)

Playwright: Aaron Sawyer
At: Red Theater at the Den,
1333 N. Milwaukee Ave.
Tickets: 773-733-0540;
www.redtheater.org; \$10-\$20
Runs through: March 23

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Aaron Sawyer may not be the only writer to transpose Chekhov's pre-revolution Russia to a universe more accessible to modern American audiences—the 1950s, say, or Enid, Okla.—but uprooting the Prozarov sisters from their beloved Nebraska to isolate them in a war-torn Afghanistan entails more than a shift in geographical references or dress hems. Still, as one of Sawyer's GIs remarks, "If you're going to fire the first shot, you might as well blow it *all* up."

Our story still focuses on the children of a U.S. "advisor" posted to a foreign land far from the family's beloved Omaha. Eldest sister Olga teaches at the local school, as does middle sister Maria's would-be playwright husband Freddy, while little sister Irna chafes under the restrictions mandated by local custom. Laptop-hugging brother Andrew fancies himself an entrepreneur, but first needs ground-gripping Natasha to break him of his gambling habit—a duty the unreconstructed colonialista embraces eagerly,

along with taking charge of her husband's affairs and bossing her in-laws.

In a country where the house servants may be plotting against their employers and an unescorted woman risks assault by wearing red stiletto-heels on the street, hostilities requiring military presence are not limited to a few troops marching to distant drums. The erosive malaise infecting these homesick expats may be manifested psychologically on the domestic front, but its effect on the uniformed personnel—Petro, Sully, Cookie and commander Alex Chebutykin—is patently physical.

Before we are done, three of them will undergo bodily changes, a rape victim will not be whom we expect, somebody will die who didn't in the 1901 version, and someone else will meet an untimely end in a manner grimly commonplace, given that person's locale.

Red Theater calls its version an "aggressive retelling" of Chekhov—braggadocio often connoting a license to self-conscious excess—but except for the introduction of a Brechtian device in the form of a protean everyperson dubbed "Misfit" (whose purpose remains unclear to us for too long), Sawyer's analogies parallel his source material with remarkable accuracy. The actors likewise engage our sympathies, easing us into our milieu—in particular, Jim Poole's avuncular senior officer Alex, Johnard Washington's cheerful Petro, and Victoria Alvarez-Chacon's Cookie, whose willingness to sacrifice even her gender identity for love and country makes her loss the most tragic of all.



Golden Boy. Photo by Michael Brosilow

THEATER REVIEW

Golden Boy

Playwright: Clifford Odets
At: Griffin Theatre Company at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave.
Tickets: 773-975-8150 or www.griffintheatre.com; \$28-\$33
Runs through: April 6

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Clifford Odets' classic 1937 drama Golden Boy is about a gifted violinist who gives up music so he can get rich quick as a prizefighter. That leap from artist to bruiser might seem to strain dramatic credibility.

However, looking at that transition symbolically, or what was happening in Odets' own life at the time (the struggling playwright of left-wing political works like Waiting for Lefty and Awake and Sing! was suddenly flush with loads of Hollywood cash), Golden Boy can be seen more as a meditation on the pressures of success and heightened expectations. Golden Boy also explores all the people who start to feed off of a celebrity like a precious meal ticket.

This makes Golden Boy, now receiving a good production by Griffin Theater, feel relevant in our age of instant reality TV celebrities who believe that fame and money will bestow respect and esteem. And that's despite the hard-boiled, easily spoofed New Yorker accents the majority of the cast sport for their characters.

Despite the decision to keep two intermissions for this three-act play, Golden Boy still moves fleetly along under Jonathan Berry's direction (and the running time of two hours and 45 minutes breezes by). Set designer Dan Stratton aids with the transitions with translucent sliding panels (which allow for some good silhouette effects) and door frames that evoke gym windows or tenement rooftops, while Mieka van der Ploeg helps keep things rooted to the play's era with effective period costumes.

The large cast is fine and frequently cast with distinctive actors who fit the look of their characters just right. (The great interplay between David Cady Jr. as the trainer Mickey and Connor McNamara as the cocky fighter Pepper is a prime example.) Yet I got the sense on opening night that all these hard-working actors hadn't quite clicked as an organic acting ensemble just yet. Perhaps it was nerves (and the weight of maintaining their tough-guy accents), or maybe they needed a few more performances to get under their belts.

Still, there were many notable performances. Top of the list is Nate Santara as the title golden boy fighter, Joe Bonaparte. Santana's seething and scrappy take on the role clearly showed off his character's boiling drive for success and respect at all costs. Also heart-wrenching as Joe's Italian immigrant father was Norm Wood-el, who honestly shows all the disappointment and bewilderment at seeing his artistic son turn so angry and violent. So even if the symbolic plot and Depression-

era accents could be seen as laughable on the surface, Golden Boy still delivers a relevant dramatic punch for today. And Griffin Theatre gamely shows that it's willing to go down to the mat with it.

SPOTLIGHT



The producers of the international hit dance sensation Riverdance are back again with a new revue titled **Heartbeat of Home**, which is making its U.S. debut in Chicago strategically timed right before St. Patrick's Day. Along with the expected percussive Celtic step-dancing, the new show aims to look at the cultural Irish Diaspora and how it has melded with other dance styles like Latin and Afro-Cuban. Heartbeat of Home continues through March 16 at the Oriental Theatre, 24 W. Randolph St. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays (also Sunday, March 9), 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays (also Wed., March 12). Tickets are \$40-\$82; call 800-775-2000 or visit www.broadwayinchicago.com for more information. Photo by Jim Byrne.



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Columbia students demand diversity in film

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL BLICKENSDEFER

There was barely a single open seat remaining in the screening room of Columbia College Chicago's downtown campus. On Feb. 26, college president Kwang-Wu Kim and film/video department chair Dr. Bruce Sheridan were part of an audience for one of two screenings of *Black Sheep*—a documentary the school's Black Film Society made that aimed to send a clear message to Sheridan, Kim and Columbia's administration: When it comes to the Black and minority students who dream of becoming the next generation of filmmakers, the school's film department needs to do better.

The 30-minute documentary seemed to stun the audience with its powerful mix of a roundtable discussion and interviews with current and former Black students and faculty members—including Vaun Monroe, one of the only two Black teachers in the film program. It challenged the department's diversity in both its curriculum and faculty.

"Students of color are saying that they are not seeing their experiences and themselves represented on the screen," said Columbia College Cinema Arts and Science Professor Jennifer Peepas in the documentary. "And I think that's absolutely true, when you look at the films that we screen."

"There are certain filmmakers they [the film department] just don't want to talk about," Columbia Alum Jessica Estelle Huggins asserted.

"If a Black filmmaker comes up, it's like Tyler Perry or Spike Lee."

The other students featured in the documentary all agreed. When it came to Columbia's film department's demonstration of the heights a Black filmmaker could reach, it was Spike Lee or nothing.

"They didn't expose us to anything except Spike Lee," one current sophomore shrugged. "And I missed the day that they screened that."

"Columbia College, there are more Black directors than Spike Lee!" echoed another.

Even more disturbing, the students asserted that they weren't allowed to present their own ideas during classroom projects. "I had pitched a documentary about gang violence in Chicago," senior Jade Ivy said. "I was told that my idea had not gotten picked. I got partnered with a guy that was doing a documentary about ferrets."

Linda Garcia Merchant was a first-year MFA student in film and video at Columbia. She holds a B.S. with honors from Western Illinois University and has served as a member of numerous groups in Chicago, including the Lesbian Leadership Council of the Chicago Foundation for Women. In 2006, she formed her own company that, by 2011, had produced five documentaries.

Merchant—who was given a fellowship to attend Columbia—was inexplicably asked to leave the program. "It made no sense to me," she remembered. "My only response was, 'but I



Members of the Black Film Society at the screening. Photo by Gretchen Rachel Blickensdefer

want to teach! I really don't want to believe, but I always wonder, that if I had come in here in a different skin, in a different gender, I think that talent would have been cultivated and would have been supported."

In summing up *Black Sheep*, Black Film Society President Raina McKinley said, "I wanted to be sure that the voices of Black film students are given a chance to be heard. All too often, the voices of Black film students at Columbia are overlooked and they get lost in the crowd." "Columbia's reputation as a diverse school is at stake here. It does not practice what it preaches," Black Film Society Vice President Don Whisler stated.

During a talk-back session after the film's screening, Kim said he appreciated the educational imperative presented in the film: "This is not just about students or brown students or yellow students or purple students. It's about asking the question 'why in a school like Columbia College Chicago is this more than the standard quota conversation that exists in higher education all across the country?' We're talking about a merging culture in a world that is changing."

Kim pledged that he would activate a more diverse model of education that would begin with the hiring of new Provost Dr. Stanley T. Wearden, Ph.D.

Kim announced the decision on the same day as the screening of the film. Wearden is currently a dean at Kent State University, "a school that is predominantly white," Kim acknowledged. "[He's] working very hard to bring in faculty of color, to expand definitions of diversity. I think there's a lot of opportunity for him here."

Kim told *Windy City Times* that he was not surprised by the film, saying, "It's always different though to see something that's really thought through and well put together as this was." He added that he wants to respond to the Black Film Society in a constructive way: "I want them to meet with our incoming Provost so that he understands how we're thinking about the issues of diversity here."

Meanwhile, Sheridan claimed that while he was pleased to see *Black Sheep*, he didn't believe it to be a film about the department or the college: "It was 25 minutes of people speaking. It's a film about what people think. These are things that any student would be concerned about."

He asserted that the department always had an open curriculum, saying, "There's never been a rule in this college that students couldn't ask for a curriculum. They just didn't ask. So now they will. So that's good."

Responding to the film's assertions of a lack of diversity in a curriculum, Sheridan said that he always tried to run classes that students wanted, but ultimately blamed enrollment figures: "More often than not, the classes don't

run because students don't enroll."

He insisted that the department showcased a lot more films than those of Spike Lee. "I did a Q&A with Richard Roundtree," he said. "In the classroom, we're showing *Van Peebles*, *Gordon Parks*—but my point is that it's easy to fall back on Spike Lee. All we do is look at the learning outcomes. Will they learn from it?"

Sheridan also insisted that Columbia always sponsors the Black Perspectives program of the Chicago International Film Festival: "We asked for the Africa emphasis and we give out tickets to our students to get engaged in this festival and a lot of students just don't go."

"That's just not true," said Marcus Martin, the co-founder of the Black Film Society and a recent graduate of Columbia. "We've all attended the Black Perspectives annually without any notification from Bruce Sheridan. He invited us once, last year, after we had told him we wanted more diversity in the faculty."

As an example, Martin cited a time when Black students in the department wanted to attend the American Black Film Festival. "We sent [Sheridan] a proposal and didn't hear anything," Martin said. "It wasn't until I had a conversation with the former President Carter that I get an email the next day from Sheridan."

He said that Sheridan gave the money to send three students to attend the festival: "I'm thinking the school is supporting us now, but when we came back, the rules had been changed. They said that students could no longer attend festivals because they have social content and not just educational perspectives."

Martin said he believes that Columbia's administration is just playing a waiting game: "They're hoping that once Black History Month passes, they're not going to have hear any more about this."

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Powell's fashion show March 14 at Block 37

Fashion designer Borris Powell will unveil his new accessories collection at his "Freedom" show on Friday, March 14, at 8:30 p.m. at Block 37, 108 N. State St.

In 2011, Powell won the Oscars Designer Challenge with his "Black Swan" dress. He has since expanded to ready-to-wear, men's custom suits and handbags.

Powell's fall/winter 2014 collection is "American"-inspired, with dark, rich fabrics and simple cuts with a focus on details, according to a press release.

Tickets are \$40-\$100; see www.ticketpeak.com/freedomBjP. For more info on Powell, visit www.BorrisPowell.com.

Elaine Stritch: Still dancing

The 89-year-old stage and screen legend reveals all in the new film

Elaine Stritch: Shoot Me
BY LAWRENCE FERBER

"If somebody doesn't understand me, they can just go fly a kite," drawled Elaine Stritch, star of stage and screen. "Their loss, my gain, because I get rid of them!"

While well-known and beloved for her prickly, brassy demeanor; characters like Alec Baldwin's mother, Colleen, on *30 Rock*; and raucous one-woman shows, the Detroit-born Stritch reveals a new, vulnerable side in the new documentary *Elaine Stritch: Shoot Me*. She threw herself fully into the documentary experience, she noted, and is pleased with the results and humanity depicted.

"When I started doing club work, what interested me was I was still playing a part," she recalls. "I was doing a woman who was doing a club act and its very lonely to do. Believe me. You get up and you're 70 and singing, 'someday he'll come along, the man I love.' It cracked me up!"

Covering her beginnings, diverse career and collaborations, and recent struggles with diabetes-related health problems, it paints an affecting, entertaining, and emotionally affecting portrait of a stage and screen legend while tackling universal issues like aging, mortality, friendship, and legacy.

Two days following her 89th birthday, Stritch is in her trademark feisty spirit (although on the mend following an unfortunate series of falls), and game for questions about anything and everything. On co-star/friend Rock Hudson's closet-ness: "I don't know what problems were going on inside of him, but I was on his side, he was a darling man." Regarding President Obama, she said, "What I think his biggest fault is, he's trying to please everyone—it took me 89 years to prove to everyone around me that that's impossible."

And there's the Woody Allen controversy. "I love Woody Allen," she admitted of the latter, polarizing topic of late. Stritch starred in Allen's 1987 drama *September*, and later popped up in his 2000 comedy *Small Time Crooks*. "I love a lot of people, whom I don't find out these things about until [later], and it's none of my business. It's gossip! I'm not going to get mixed up with it. I just love the fact he writes the material he writes. I worked with him on an artistic level and love him. What Woody does, says, thinks, whatever he wants to live his life, I only know this—he's a great artist. The conversation is over."

Directed by Chiemi Karasawa, *Shoot Me* follows Stritch (who just started tweeting under @ElaineStritch) as she works on a number of productions, including the cabaret show, "Singing' Sondheim... One Song At A Time," at the Carlyle. In the process, we look back on her extensive life and career, including the one-woman Broadway production *Elaine Stritch at Liberty*. A bevy of contemporaries and colleagues share anecdotes, like the late James Gandolfini, Alec Baldwin (whom also served as an executive producer), Nathan Lane, composer Stephen Sondheim, and Cherry Jones, while we savor archival and behind the scenes footage from her films and TV appearances, including *30 Rock*, for which she won her second Emmy award.

One entry in her filmography we don't delve into at length, however; in 1965's *Who Killed Teddy Bear*, in which Stritch played a "dyke" against queer icon Sal Mineo. "Someone called me one day from an agent's office and said, 'Would you like to play a lesbian who runs a disco and is strangled on Second Avenue by

Sal Mineo using a silk stocking?'" she recalled, amused. "I said, 'Are you kidding? Who wouldn't want to play that? I'll kill to do that part!' The director loved me because I rewrote a scene with co-star Juliet Prowse and myself so I would play this lesbian as a woman who tries to come off like straight. Go see it—you'll love it."

One major personal revelation in *Shoot Me* is the extent to which diabetes and alcohol have complicated her health and aging: At one point, preparing for a gig, she loses the ability to articulate due to low blood sugar and is rushed to the hospital. She's also frank and accepting about her age, and feels that revealing this side of her life was part and parcel of agreeing to take part in the documentary that she lauded, incidentally, as "excellent."

"I had no fear of revealing myself to people around me," she insisted. "No fear at all. If I had to go to the hospital, nothing was too personal, nothing was too 'inner' me. It didn't



Elaine Stritch. Photo courtesy of Sundance Selects

frighten me at all and I like that quality about myself."

The documentary ends—spoiler alert!—as Stritch debates retirement and finds an abode in Birmingham, Mich., which she describes as a Midwest version of the Hamptons. Evincing that wonderful, who-the-f*ck-cares bravado

again before the interview concluded, she insisted we have a drink if I get out that way.

"We'll go to the corner saloon and lift a few," she said. "Just a few, though [because it gets expensive]. I'm afraid I'm gonna live forever, and it will cost me money to stay alive. I'd hate for that to happen."


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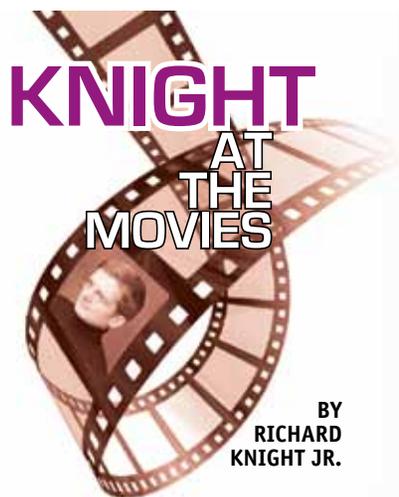
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Elaine Stritch: Shoot Me; Grand Piano; film note

It's rather appropriate that Chiemi Karasawa's glorious documentary **Elaine Stritch: Shoot Me** begins with the legendary "Stritchie" performing a portion of Sondheim's "I'm Still Here" on the soundtrack. The legendary song—with its acerbic, world-weary tone (written for *Follies* in 1971) and inspired by the long career of Joan Crawford—is the perfect match for Stritch's inestimable talents. Famously contrarian, profane, foghorn-loud and gloriously funny in her brutally frank assessments that take no prisoners (including herself), the diva, now 89, is nothing less than the walking, talking embodiment of Sondheim's theatrical classic.

Good times and bum times—she, indeed, has seen 'em all. Throughout Karasawa's movie we look back with her (via archival photos and vintage footage) as she contemplates a life-long performer's version of retirement (fewer gigs and a move out of town), rehearses for those shows with her patient (really patient) musical director Rob Bowman, tapes an episode of *30 Rock*, and examines, without a trace of sentimentality, her own mortality. "Gettin' old ain't for sissies," she quotes Bette Davis as she deals with diabetes, memory issues and various other senior-related infirmities that increasingly work against her body and test her resolve.

However, nothing keeps Stritch down for long or from keeping her professional commitments. (Only Mother Nature—in the form of a hurricane—seems to have the power to do that.) The candid observations from this sometime holy terror about her lifelong battle with the bottle, stage nerves (though she is

never less than commanding once the lights come up) and the occasional vulnerability are augmented by tributes from a host of familiar faces, including Tina Fey, Alec Baldwin, James Gallofini, Paul Iacono and Nathan Lane.

As this feisty old broad of Broadway with the showgirl legs that won't quit goes about the business of opening a cabaret revue of all Sondheim songs with the challenge inherent in his brain-teaser lyrics (which she often forgets) at the Cafe Carlyle to a roomful of adoring acolytes; takes a peek at a rehearsal space being dedicated in her honor (hence the review of all the old photos and clippings, gathered together by her assistant); and strolls around Manhattan, accepting (as her due) the nonstop greetings from fans, Stritch is in her element. She also knows that for her—after decades of career triumphs mixed with plenty of setbacks—the party's over and the time has come to "go home" to Michigan more than 50 years after arriving in her adopted New York City. You can bet she doesn't go quietly.

Through richly revealing anecdotes and many of the artfully constructed songs she made her own ("The Ladies Who Lunch" from *Company* the most famous), Stritch provided a telling overview of her remarkable career and sometimes tempestuous offstage life in her fantastic 2001 Tony-winning one-woman show *Elaine Stritch: At Liberty*. Karasawa's sensationally entertaining movie—which, at times, seems a kindred spirit to Ricki Stern and Anne Sundberg's warts-and-all Joan Rivers documentary—updates Stritch's story, and the ensuing years can't help but add a layer of poignancy. The film, which debuted here last fall at the Chicago International Film Festival (at a memorable screening that Stritch attended), is in theaters this Friday and available now On Demand. <http://elainestritchshootme.com/>

Also On Demand—for a few more days at any rate—is a nifty little thriller in the Hitchcock or DePalma mode from Spanish director Eugenio Mira called **Grand Piano**. Elijah Wood stars as Tom Selznick, a classical superstar whose concert pianist career was cut short by a bad case of stage fright. Now, thanks to the support of his movie star wife Emma (played by Kerry Bishe), he's attempting a comeback via a performance in Chicago (one presumes at Symphony Center—though the façade of the Civic Opera House takes its place).

Tom is set to play the specially made grand piano (a Boesendorfer) of his former mentor, a musical genius who has just died in what are hinted at were mysterious circumstances. As Tom takes to the stage and begins to play, flipping open a page in his piano score, he discovers a note that tells him if he hits one wrong note he will be assassinated—and so will his wife, who is sitting prominently in a box seat just above the stage.

As the orchestra thunders away, Tom's fingers effortlessly skitter up and down the keyboard, while he just as frantically tries to figure out if this is a joke and how to make it stop. During a break in the music, he follows instructions and races offstage, finds an earpiece and gets back to the keyboard just in time to continue. (The audience, naturally, think he's wrestling with a return of the stage fright.)

Now he has the malevolent voice of his would-be assassin Clem (John Cusack, in high dungeon archvillain mode) issuing ever-more terse "or else" instructions to accompany his tempo crazed playing. As the concert draws to a close, Mira, working from a script by Damien Chazelle, ratchets up the tension as Tom becomes increasingly desperate, trying to figure out the assassin's real agenda—which involves the one-of-a-kind piano that is outfitted with extra keys.

The plot of *Grand Piano* is admittedly over-the-top, but Mira's swooping camera, endless dolly shots and other visual tricks keep it aloft (at times we even see the inner workings of the piano). There's also the committed performance of Wood, whose edginess never lets up. (His hysteria is nearly palpable and there are moments he convinces you he's playing



Elijah Wood (left) and John Cusack in *Grand Piano*. Photo courtesy of Magnet Releasing

the tricky classical pieces.) Naturally, Victor Reyes' piano-based score—which has equal parts menace and florid flourishes—needs to be singled out as well (as it reminds one, in a good way, of Bernard Herrmann's "Concerto Macabre" from *Hangover Square*).

Grand Piano is grand fun—stylish, highly entertaining hokum in the old-fashioned way of other "sophisticated" concert pianist thrillers like the high-faultin' 1946 Bette Davis-Claude Rains-Paul Henreid programmer *Deception*, the aforementioned masterful Victorian set classic *Hangover Square* (with gay actor Laird Cregar's final performance in the lead as the mad pianist) and a little-known but terrifying episode of Boris Karloff's 1961 TV program *Thriller* called "Terror in Teakwood." <http://www.magnetreleasing.com/grandpiano/>

Film note:

—Cinema Q IV, the fourth annual LGBT-themed movie series, kicks off tonight with Rodney Evans' 2004 film **Brother to Brother**,

which gave Anthony Mackie his breakthrough performance. The series continues each Wednesday in March at 6:30 p.m. at the Chicago Cultural Center in the Claudia Cassidy Theater, 78 E. Washington St.

Emily Blunt's debut starring role in the lesbian romance **My Summer of Love** plays March 12; the sexy, sports-themed German teen coming-of-age dramedy **Summer Storm** (sponsored by the Goethe-Institut) shows March 19; and Kevin Kline and Ashley Judd star in the musical biopic **De-Lovely**, about gay composer Cole Porter, on March 26.

The Queer Film Society (of which I'm president), the Legacy Project, Reeling Film Festival and Affinity Community Services are presenting the series in partnership with the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events. Windy City Times, ChicagoPride and the Reader are media sponsors. The four movies in this year's Cinema QIV line-up are celebrating their 10th anniversary. The screenings are free. www.queerfilmsociety.org

Very gay Oscars has 'Dallas' wins, Ellen as host

The 86th Academy Awards, which aired March 2 on ABC, could have been the most LGBT-oriented Oscars ever.

—Start with the show's producers, Craig Zadan and Neil Maron—who are both openly gay. (They also produced last year's Oscars.) They have also been behind productions such as TV's *Smash* and the movie *Hairspray*, among many others.

—The host was Ellen DeGeneres, who had previously done the same thing in 2007. Critics generally liked what she did this year as well, although one of *The Wrap's* headlines read "Ellen DeGeneres' Oscars Monologue Humiliates Jennifer Lawrence, Liza Minnelli" after DeGeneres brought forth Lawrence's 2013 stumble and called Minnelli "sir."

—Lorna Luft and Liza Minnelli—the daughters of Judy Garland—were acknowledged during a tribute to the 75th anniversary of *The Wizard of Oz* that had Pink singing "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." Also, gay icon Bette Midler sang her classic "Wind Beneath My Wings" during the "In Memoriam" segment. Another gay favorite, Idina Menzel, sang the Oscar-winning "Let It Go," the theme song from the animated feature *Frozen*—although actor John Travolta mangled her name while introducing her.

—Scott Rudin, who's openly gay, produced *Captain Phillips*, which was up for Best Film. (It lost to *12 Years a Slave*.) He also produced the folk-music movie *Inside Llewyn*

Davis; it was highly acclaimed, and it was nominated for Best Cinematography and Best Sound Mixing. (It lost to *Gravity* in both categories.)

—Local gay director Edgar Barends was the favorite to win an Oscar for his documentary *Prison Terminal: The Last Days of Private Jack Hall*. However, *The Lady in Number 6: Music Saved My Life* won that category, according to the official Oscars website.

—Then there were the winners. Matthew McConaughey won Best Actor for his role as real-life AIDS patient Ron Woodroof, who smuggled unapproved pharmaceutical drugs into Texas. Jared Leto won Best Supporting Actor for playing HIV-positive transgender woman Rayon. Only Leto acknowledged HIV/AIDS while accepting his award ("this is for the 36 million people who have lost the battle to AIDS"), and he also mentioned those who struggle for who they love (not specifically saying LGBT). The film's Robin Mathews, who won for makeup and hairstyling with *Adrutha Lee*, also mentioned AIDS. (Mathews said she was given a budget of just \$250, according to *NOLA.com*. During her speech, she said, "For all the victims of AIDS, we are honored and blessed to bring your story to the forefront of the younger generation that doesn't understand AIDS.")

Overall, it was a huge night for *Gravity* as it won seven trophies, including one for Best Director (Alfonso Cuarón). As mentioned, *12 Years a Slave* won for Best Picture; however, it also won for Best Supporting Actress (Lupita Nyong'o) and Best Adapted Screenplay (John Ridley). Cate Blanchett, as expected, won Best Actress for her role in the Woody Allen-directed *Blue Jasmine*. *American Hustle* had 10 nominations but received no awards.

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Steve Grand:

New music and a very successful campaign

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Openly gay singer Steve Grand made national headlines last year when his video for the song "All American Boy"—which featured him falling for a guy who turned out to be straight (but understanding)—went viral.

Now, he's in the media spotlight again, as he launched a Kickstarter campaign to fund his debut album, augmenting the announcement with appearances on programs such as Larry King Now. However, Grand did something very few people do on Kickstarter, as he reached his goal of \$81,000 in only 17 hours. (In fact, in less than two days, Grand's campaign has become one of only 32 out of 27,000-plus music projects in Kickstarter's history to successfully realize \$100,000 or more in funding. He plans to use the extra money to market the CD.)

Grand recently talked with Windy City Times about the campaign and his upcoming album.

Windy City Times: Hey—how are you?

Steve Grand: I'm doing really great. A lot has happened in the past couple of days. A lot of hard work has gone into this, and I'm glad to see things come to fruition. It's really nice.

WCT: Yes; it's not everyone who gets to appear with Larry King.

SG: I've been very lucky. I'm so grateful, and I realize that I'm very lucky.

WCT: Congratulations on the Kickstarter campaign. I was wondering why you decided to go this route and not with a label.

SG: I thought this was a great opportunity to show my fans how much I believed in them and that I could stay pure with my message. A lot of times a label, because it's footing the bill,

expects certain creative control. When I put "All American Boy" out July 2, I said I wanted to tell honest stories and make honest music that reflects my own life experiences and resonates with fans. I thought having them invest in me would solidify that relationship.

I really do feel that it's brought us all closer. I so genuinely appreciate my fans. Not a second goes by without me feeling so grateful. The relationship I have with them is more sacred than anything.

WCT: You're going your own way.

SG: I'm stubborn in the sense that I don't like being told what to do. It goes back to being a kid; I didn't like doing group projects because I wanted to do everything or I wanted to do nothing. When something has my name on it and has to do with matters of the heart—the music is the business of emotion...

When I put something out there I need to feel right with it on all sorts of levels. There's a lot of pressure. Not only does it need to resonate with [fans], but it needs to sit with me. I want to put my head down every night and feel like what I did was honest and true, and be a genuine reflection of part of who I am.

WCT: I saw a video of your newest song, "Back to California." I'm wondering: Is it about two friends who meet up after a while, is there some other dynamic to the relationship, or is it up to the viewer to decide?

SG: When I wrote the song and made the video, I set out to tell a story about friends. It's from my own experience, and it's about the dissolution of youth as well—how we have these thoughts, hopes and dreams that we



Steve Grand. Photo by Joem C. Bayawa

share with our best friends, and how we see (as early as post-college life) that life isn't all that we thought it was going to be. It's about coming to terms with that with someone with whom you were dreaming.

If you notice [in the video], the scenes with the kids are warm, vibrant and rich, and the ones of me in my current day are stark and the colors are cooler. Those colors reflect the realities of adulthood.

Lastly, it's another aspect of life that gay people experience. As gay people, we have our opposite-sex friends growing up and as we go through these things—and it's very special. I can speak as someone who was a young gay boy struggling to accept himself; I had a friend who was a girl, and we had a deep bond that

was a pure thing. I was also trying to communicate that as well. This is our story, too.

WCT: I want to talk a little about the new album. It's coming out in May?

SG: The album is coming out in May, and it will be called All American Boy. [I chose the title] because that's where the whole journey started, so I wanted to keep that theme and message. Other songs have to do with what it means to be all-American, and including gay people in that.

When I was young, my dad would brag to our neighbors or other members of the church congregation that my brother and I were "your all-American boys." We played baseball and

Turn to page 28

OUTCHICAGO




with Scott Duff

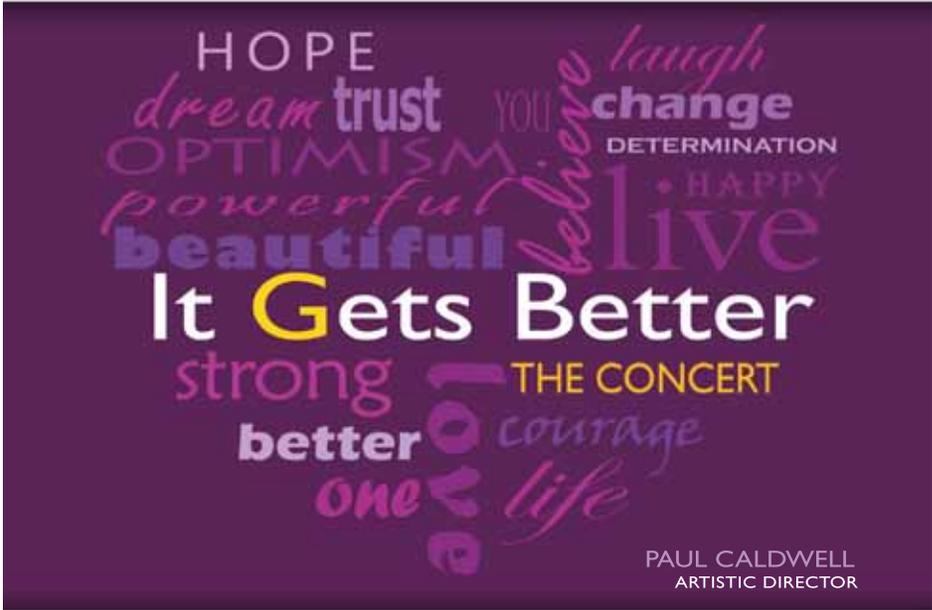
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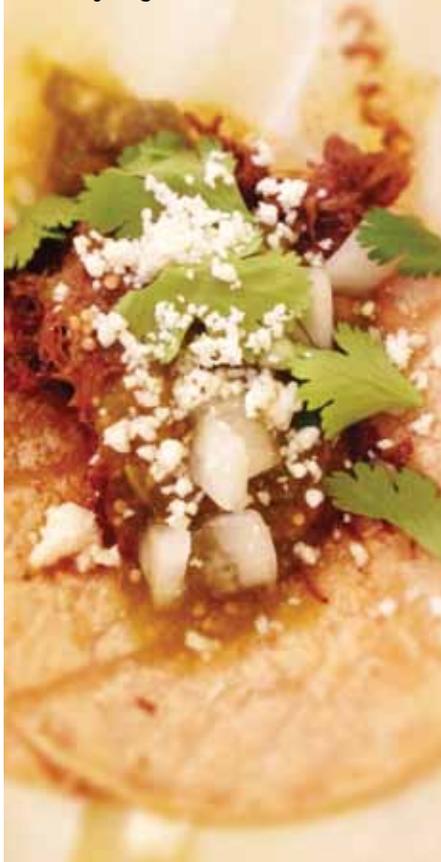
Big & Little's

BY MEGHAN STREIT

Big & Little's, a River North burger and po' boy joint, was put on the map after being featured on the Food Network's "Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives." I've been wanting to check out the now-famous fried seafood and duck fat fries for some time now. So, when a second location opened a few weeks ago in Lakeview, I got in line.

On most counts, Big & Little's lives up to its reputation. Most of the burgers are about \$6 a pop and you can get fantastic meat and fish tacos for \$3 or \$4 each, making it an affordable indulgence. And, you won't have to (completely) blow your diet either. The portions are shockingly small when compared to the super-sized helpings you receive at most fast food places. Some people looking to splurge might be disappointed by the small baskets of fries and burgers you can actually hold in one hand, but I found it refreshing to be served portions that are closer in size to what we should be eating.

Mexican beef short rib taco at Big & Little's. Photo by Meghan Streit



Big & Little's looks like your typical fast food place -- primary colors, bright lighting and no frills. But, don't be fooled by its humble appearance. The food is far superior to what you'd get a big chain. Plus, it's BYOB, so you can throw back a cold beer with your burger.

I went to Big & Little's for the burgers and po' boys, and they were impressive, but it's the tacos that will keep me coming back for more. You can choose from among all kinds of tempting taco fillings like fried oyster, mango chutney pork and ahi tuna sashimi. My favorite taco is the Mexican beef short rib. Tender and ever-so-slightly spicy marinated beef is served atop two palm-sized soft corn tortillas. The taco is drizzled with tangy green salsa and plenty of fresh cilantro. You won't find those kind of high-quality ingredients at most places selling tacos for \$3. One of the special tacos when I visited was made with steamed blue crab. An ample scoop of fresh shredded crab is served simply in a warm flour tortilla. This upscale taco doesn't need a lot of bells and whistles in the form of extra toppings, and it is definitely worth a try.

It only takes one bite to understand why Big & Little's burgers caught Guy Fieri's attention -- and subsequently that of so many Chicagoans and tourists. The beef patties are juicier than most and have just the right amount of grease to make them worth your while. The BBQ bacon burger will make fast fans out of most carnivores. It is coated generously coated

in smoky barbecue sauce, but not so drenched in it that the soft white bun gets soggy. It's also topped with some serious slices of bacon that must be at least a quarter-inch thick. The salty bacon is balanced by a few crunchy sweet pickles.

Don't miss out on the fries. They taste greasy and crisp like they've spent some time in the bottom of the fryer (in a good way), and they have a rich flavor, thanks to the duck fat they're cooked in. Order them with truffle salt for a decadent treat.

The po' boys left less of an impression on me. The fillings certainly are a cut above -- oysters, pork belly and soft shell crab, to name a few. The problem is the bread-to-protein ratio. I tried the fried shrimp po' boy, and while the shrimp were fresh, plump and beautifully fried, they were swallowed up by the large and unremarkable roll on which they were served. I struggled to get a bite that wasn't more bread than shrimp. But, one slightly disappointing po' boy won't keep me away from Big & Little's. The superb tacos and burgers will make a regular customer out of me.

Big & Little's is located at 1034 W. Belmont Ave.; call 773-857-6677 or visit www.bigandlittleschicago.com.

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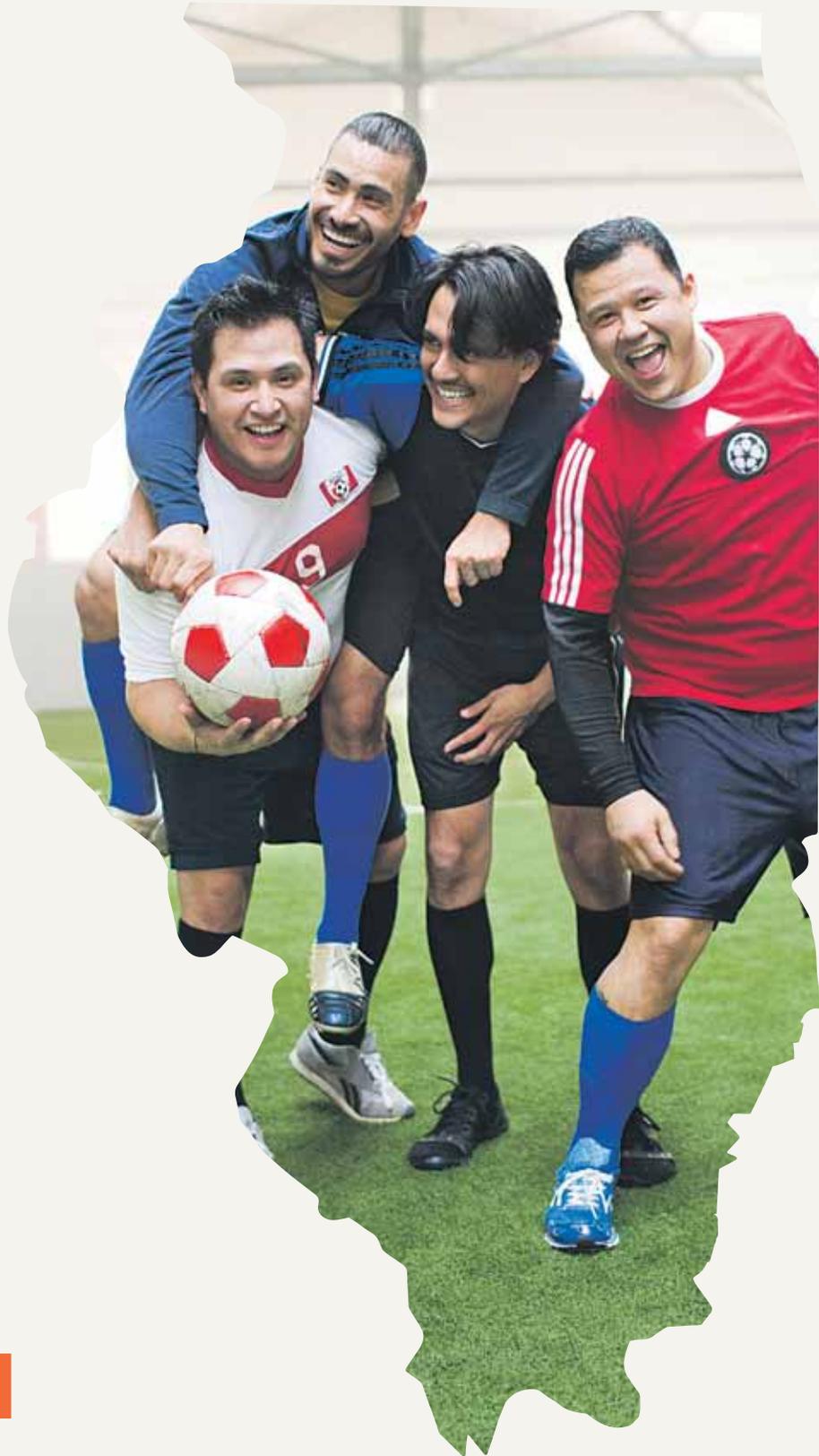
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GenderQueer Chicago GenderQueer Chicago is a grassroots, peer-led group that works to create safe spaces for all of us to talk about, think about, explore, and express gender. They are open to those who wish to talk and think about gender. GenderQueer Chicago meets every Wednesday evening from 7:00 to 9:00PM. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted St., <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

BQAC/Bisexual Queer Alliance of Chicago March monthly meeting A new BQAC board has been elected and there is so much to do for those of us of fluid sexuality! Like provide safe space; end biphobia and biphobia through education, outreach and activism; and plan a social event or two. 7:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted http://www.meetup.com/chicago-bisexual-queer-meetup/events/168409922/?a=ea1_grp&rv=ea1

Avital Norman Nathman, Deborah Seigel and Gina Corosely-Corcoran Contributors to The Good Mother Myth: Redefining Motherhood to Fit Reality 7:30pm Women & Children First Bookstore, 5233 N. Clark St.

Thursday, March 6

Chris Hughes The openly gay co-founder of Facebook will appear as part of the school's Roland Quest Lecture Series. 7:00pm Frick Center, Elmhurst College, Elmhurst http://public.elmhurst.edu/cultural_events

Imerman Angels Second Annual Blue and White Party One-on-one cancer support organization annual Spring event continues to grow the world's largest database of "Mentor Angels" -- volunteer cancer survivors and caregivers trained to provide personalized 1-on-1 support to anyone touched by cancer. 7:00pm - 10:00pm John Barleycorn River North, 149 W Kinzie St., <http://mermanAngels.org>

Seven Homeless Mammoths Wander New England previews Dean's ex has returned to live with her, complicating her relationship with her new (and much younger) girlfriend. Rated M for mature content and

language. Features simulated sex between prehistoric college students and contemporary lesbians. Preview tickets \$12-\$18 8:00pm Theater Wit 1229 W Belmont Ave. 773-97-8150 <http://www.Theater-Wit.org>

Friday, March 7

Affinity Meet Up at eta Creative Arts Foundation Let's Talk Out Loud. Marriage Equality and Beyond. 1:00pm eta Creative Arts Foundation 7558 S. South Chicago Chicago, IL 60619 <http://www.affinity95.org>

First Friday Fun, cocktails, musicals, and door prize drawings. For a \$10 donation at the door to the Equality Illinois PAC, you receive two drink tickets and a ticket for a door prize drawings. 6:00pm - 8:00pm Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St. <http://www.equalityillinois.us/events/first-friday-5>

Gay Bowling Tournament 2014 Second City Open Chicago (SCOTCH) Bowling Tournament. Doubles and team events. Entry fee \$99, plus nominal processing fee. Also, senior handicap division, entry fee \$10. Backed Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA). Also see: Opening-night party March 7 and banquet/awards presentation March 9. email bod3@chicagoamsa.org. 9:00pm - 11:00pm Waveland Bowl 3700 N Western <http://scotch.chicagoamsa.org>

Saturday, March 8

Frontrunners/ Frontwalkers Chicago Fun Run/Walk A club for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transexuals and friends who are interested in running and walking together along Chicago's great open lakefront, meeting twice weekly, on Saturdays at 9am and Tuesdays at 6:30pm 9:00am Totem Pole in Lincoln Park <https://www.facebook.com/groups/52950773133/>

Let's Do It! winter cabaret and fundraiser for Chicago Gay Men's Chorus Let's Do It! winter cabaret and fundraiser for Chicago Gay Men's Chorus Support the great work of CGMC and celebrate the works of Cole Porter, Stephen Schwartz, and Elton John. \$35 - \$50. Order online or by phone. 12:00pm Mayslake Peabody Estate, 1717 West 31st St., Oak Brook 800-838-3006 http://lets-do-it.brownpapertickets.com/?utm_source=2014.02.20.LetsDoItFinalPush&utm_campaign=2014.02.20+LDI&utm_medium=email

Immigrant Youth Justice Leagues annual "Coming Out of the Shadows" Show the

presence of a large LGBTQ community that is also a member of the immigrant community, or be there in solidarity with undocumented folks organizing against deportations. 12:00pm Federal Plaza 50 W. Adams St. <https://www.facebook.com/events/652545481470103/>

A Champagne Toast to Jazz Royalty Annual benefit shhh...OUT! Lakeside Pride Jazz Ensemble. Special feature on the music of the great Billy Strayhorn, one of the first and few openly gay composers of his time. 6:30 p.m. reception. \$25 advance. \$35 door. 7:30pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted <http://lakesidepride.cloudaccess.net/index.php/champagne.html> Tickets: <https://www.vendini.com/ticket-software.html?t=tix&e=d9d478622a8cc6c432dabee2334bb95e>

Matthew Morrison Broadway and television star to take the stage at Dominican University's 34th Annual Trustee Benefit Concert and Gala. DConcert tickets start at \$27. Tickets to the gala, including the concert, cocktail reception and dinner, are \$350. 8:00pm Lund Auditorium Dominican University 7900 W Division St., River Forest, 708-488-5000, <http://www.dom.edu/advancement/giving/benefit/index.html>

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater: Chroma / Four Corners / Revelations In their Chicago home at the Auditorium Theatre. Contemporary favorites to beloved classics. \$32 - \$92 8:00pm Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University 50 E Congress Pkwy., 800.982.ARTS (2787). http://www.auditoriumtheatre.org/pages/home/performances-events/performances.php?event_id=455

Sunday, March 9

Ethical Humanist Society of Chicago Meeting every Sunday from 10:30 to noon, featuring a speaker on a variety of topics—personal ethics, education, psychology, politics, philosophy, medical care, equal rights, the environment, etc., followed by a coffee hour. Free and open to the public. Also Sunday School, weddings, service projects, book group, film group. 10:30am - 12:00pm Ethical Humanist Society of Chicago 7574 N. Lincoln Ave. Skokie, IL 60077 <http://www.ethicalhuman.org>

Scott Duff hosts LGBT radio talk show LGBT-specific talk show "Out Chicago" on politics, entertainment, celebrity gossip 11:00am - 1:00pm WCPT 820 AM

Finally Forever: A Wedding Expo Only members of the Chicago Area Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce will participate as vendor exhibitors. \$100 for a vendor spot at the expo. 11:00am - 4:00pm Chicago Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce 3179 N Clark <http://www.glchamber.org>

Rock of Ages Brunch Rockin' music, martinis, big hair, leather pants and eyeliner. Diva Madam X will perform as Joan Jett, Pat Benatar and other '80s rock stars,



POZ AND EFFECT

Wed., March 12

POZ magazine founder Sean Strub will be at Center on Halsted and Test Positive Aware Network.

Photo from 2012 event by Kat Fitzgerald

while Rock of Ages the movie plays on Kit Kat's seven jumbo projection screens. Five lucky brunch guests will receive a pair of tickets to see the Broadway in Chicago performance of Rock of Ages. Table reservations by phone 11:00am - 4:00pm Kit Kat Lounge & Supper Club 3700 N Halsted 773-525-1111 <http://www.Kit-KatChicago.co>

This Is Not a Cure for Cancer As part of the "incite change" mission, Collaboraction has Community Partners who are supporting the company's upcoming world premiere live theater event attacking cancer, its treatment and the way we live. Representatives from Gilda's Club Chicago will be on hand every Sunday 3:00pm Collaboraction - Flat Iron Arts Building 1579 N. Milwaukee Ave. 3rd Floor 312-226-9633 <http://collaboraction.org>

Monday, March 10

Joliet Marriage Forum Co-hosted by Equality Illinois and the Safe Zone Allies, aimed at educating about SB10, dispelling myths, and empowering same-sex couples and their families to understand and use all their state and federal marriage rights. Registration is recommended, online. 6:00pm - 7:00pm Joliet Junior College, Center Bridge H1012 1215 Houbolt Rd., Joliet Tickets: http://equalityfederation.salsalabs.com/o/35010/p/salsa/event/common/public/?event_KEY=2859

CCP and Team Fred 2014 Ride for AIDS cabaret fundraiser Our mission is to raise funds for our upcoming shows and projects while also helping to raise money for Team Fred for the 2014 Chicago Ride for AIDS. 7:00pm - 10:00pm, www.facebook.com/events/820037854678950/

That's Weird Grandma: Behind the (non-key) music All musical revue. Written and performed by Chicago public school students 8:00pm The Neo-Futurarium 5153 N Ashland <http://neofuturists.org/>

Tuesday, March 11

Applied Words: "It Gets Better" Guild Literary Complex in collaboration with About Face Theatre and in conjunction with their production of Brahman/i, a night of comedic stories about history, mythology, gender roles and high school. Hosted by comedienne Tamale and featuring Lily Be, Greg Ledger and others, part one of a two-part series on comedy. More information, exact start time to come. 21+ event 12:00pm Schubas Tavern, 3159 N Southport Ave., <http://www.guildcomplex.org>

How to Survive a Plague The story of two coalitions—ACT UP and TAG (Treatment Action Group)—whose activism and innovation turned AIDS from a death sentence into a manageable condition. Never-before-seen archival footage from the 1980s and '90s. No cost for admission. Food and beverages available for purchase. 6:30pm - 9:30pm Theory, 9 W Hubbard St., Chicago <http://surviveaplague.com>

Wed., March 12

Sean Strub: HIV Today: A Discussion, Reading/Signing Veteran AIDS activist Sean Strub, the nationally recognized founder of POZ magazine, member of ACT UP/New York, theatre producer, pioneering LGBT community marketer and author of the new memoir, Body Counts, chronicling his 35 years on the frontlines of the LGBT and AIDS movements, just published by Scribner. Sean Strub will hold two readings and signings for Body Counts in Chicago. Admission is free. 2:00pm - 3:30pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

Body Counts: An Evening with Sean Strub, Reading/Q&A Veteran AIDS activist Sean Strub, the nationally recognized founder of POZ magazine, member of ACT UP/New York, theatre producer, pioneering LGBT community marketer and author of the new memoir, Body Counts, chronicling his 35 years on the frontlines of the LGBT and AIDS movements, just published his memoir Body Counts: a Memoir of Politics, Sex, AIDS, and Survival. 6:30pm - 8:30pm Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN) 5050 N Broadway, Suite #300, <http://www.tpan.com>

Merrily We Go To Hell 11th Annual Dyke Delicious presents one of the earliest films to question traditional hetero-normative marital structures. To escape an arranged marriage, heiress Joan Prentice (Sylvia Sidney) elopes with reporter Jerry Corbett (Fredric March). 6:30pm - 8:30pm Columbia College Chicago Ferguson Theatre, 600 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago <http://chicagofilmakers.org/cf/genre/17>

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soccer, built treehouses, were good students and became Eagle Scouts. When I realized I was gay, I felt that I no longer fit what it meant to be all-American—which is another reason I chose that to be my first song. Gay values are American values, and they're family values.

WCT: There will be 12 songs on the album?

SG: As of right now, yes. I'm going to be breaking my butt to get 12 songs on there.

WCT: Is it whittling what you have down to 12 that's the trouble?

SG: Eleven of the songs are definite at this point. This is my first time working with a producer who's had some success, and I know what I want—or if I don't know what I want, I know when I'm not happy so I keep searching. Everything has to feel right with me.

I have a big catalog of songs; some were written when I was 18, and some were written just a couple months ago. There are at least 20 other songs.

WCT: It sounds like you could have a double album.

SG: I could, and I'm so eager to put music out there. In the future, I will release more

bodies of work more often, but they'll be smaller. I was going to release an EP but I've been in touch with my fans; social media is a beautiful thing but I don't get a day off. [Laughs] I love talking with them and connecting with them. I'm already thinking about my next release; the day after this album drops, I'll be planning the next few songs and videos. I need to make the most of these years and pent-up energy while I have them.

"All-American Boy" came out almost 10 years to the day when I realized I was attracted to another guy. It's been a tumultuous journey, so there's a lot I have to say.

WCT: It seems like the best part of this, for you, is making music that satisfies you and the fans. Is there any downside to all of it?

SG: I'm my own harshest critic so nothing someone could say I haven't already said about myself. Everything I've done so far is so overwhelmingly positive. I put a lot of pressure on myself and I don't want to let my fans down.

People can say what they want about me. Especially as a gay person, we are coming to terms with the idea that we're all individuals and that we all don't subscribe to the same value systems. We all think and feel differently. I'm excited for my generation because we won't

Dustin Lance Black at Elmhurst on May 8

Openly gay and Oscar-winning screenwriter Dustin Lance Black (Milk) will be at Elmhurst College's Frick Center Thursday, May 8, at 7 p.m.

In addition to Milk, Black's credits also include the movie J. Edgar and the play 8, which portrays the closing arguments in the federal trial that led to the overturning of California's Proposition 8 and the establishment of marriage equality in the nation's largest state..

Visit http://public.elmhurst.edu/cultural_events.

Facebook co-founder at Elmhurst on March 6

Chris Hughes, the openly gay co-founder of Facebook, will be at Elmhurst College's Frick Center Thursday, March 6, at 7 p.m.

According to the college's website, "by the age of 25, Hughes had helped to create two of history's most successful startups: Facebook and the social media machine that made Barack Obama president." Hughes married Sean Eldridge in 2012.

The appearance is part of the school's Roland Quest Lecture Series. Visit http://public.elmhurst.edu/cultural_events.

feel that something a gay person does is representative of the whole community. That's a sign of progress because it shows we're just like everyone else. Being gay is an important piece of you, but it doesn't stop you from doing what you want to do or believing what you

want to believe.

See www.SteveGrand.com and <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/stevegrand/all-american-boy-the-album?ref=live> for more information.

BILLY MASTERS

"And I have to say, one of the most amazing Liza Minnelli impersonators I've ever seen in my entire life. Just really, seriously, good job sir!"—Ellen DeGeneres acknowledges the real Liza Minnelli, wearing a daring off-the-shoulder dress at the Academy Awards.

After watching this year's Academy Awards, it was clear to me that these Oscars featured the most mispronounced names in history. Sure, anyone could say Christopher Waltz instead of Christoph Waltz, so I gave Ellen a pass. Zac Efron got a bit tongue-tied when he



Liza Minnelli (above) was the target of an Ellen DeGeneres zinger at the Oscars, writes Billy. Photo by Richard Termine

tried to refer to someone as an "inspiration," but he called her an "aspiration." Fine. But clearly the most jarring moment of the night was when John Travolta introduced "Let It Go," sung by "the wickedly talented, one and only, Adele Dazeem." Huh? Maybe all those rumors are wrong—no gay man would have screwed up Idina Menzel's name so badly. Thank God someone told DeGeneres to immediately come out and say "Idina Menzel"—twice.

Please, don't take these observations as criticism, since I truly enjoyed the Oscars immensely. And I think Ellen is a terrific host—one of the best. But it did occur to me after the fact that between Best Supporting Actor and Best Supporting Actress there was roughly one hour and 42 minutes of what I lovingly call a bunch of nothing. Sure, I enjoyed some of that nothing, but did I need it?

Liza Minnelli was poised to make history by joining with her siblings, Lorna and Joey Luft, in a tribute to the 75th anniversary of "The Wizard of Oz." However, all we got was Whoopi Goldberg pointing them out in the audience and asking them to rise and acknowledge the applause. What a wasted opportunity (not that I could think of anything the three of them could do together that didn't require at least a dozen utterances of the word "Mama"). And their choice seating led to another memorable moment. I don't know who was more shocked when Liza grabbed the Best Supporting Actress winner—me or Lupita Nyong'o.

Rick Murray, proprietor of Provincetown's Crown and Anchor, announced the formation of "Raising the Volume," a concert series that will also benefit the Trevor Project. I thought it was a big deal when he revealed that Linda Eder would be performing Aug. 18-19. As if P-town couldn't get any gayer, he then announced that the series would include a special performance on Aug. 4 by Alan Cumming and Liza Minnelli. What? Liza in P-town? Alert John Travolta ... just in case. Within hours of this news hitting the web, the show sold out! Days later, a second show was added. Just as the Oscars began, that show sold out. I suggest checking out their website, OnlyAtTheCrown.com. You never know what else they've got a-brewin'.

Last week, former NFL player Deion Sanders appeared on The Arsenio Hall Show and was asked specifically about Michael Sam coming out. "He's not the first gay guy in the NFL," Sanders said. "He's the first one to come out—let's get that straight. Every team I've played on, there was someone. ... We always knew. But he was cool. That was our boy. We had to look out for him. Every team I've played on—five different teams—there was someone gay in the locker room." Let the guessing game begin.

You know what else shows up in locker rooms? Cameras! Last week someone posted a photo of Tom Daley showering and ... well, it's pretty steamy, as you'll see on BillyMasters.com.

It was just announced that HBO has renewed Looking for a second season. Many of you have emailed me your opinions about the show. While it is undeniably slow and took a bit of time to get going, it's growing on me. This is, in no small measure, due to the nuanced performance of Jonathan Groff. Anyhoo, Looking leads to TWO "Ask Billy" questions. First, Karl in Albany writes: "Do you know anything about Murray Bartlett, the hot daddy on Looking? He looks amazing for an older guy."

I find it *très amusant* that Dom is being referred to as a "daddy"—especially since his character is 39. Is that what now constitutes a daddy? What does that make Scott Bakula? Grandpapa? In real life, Murray Bartlett is 42, he is openly gay and he's Australian! Yes, who knew? In addition to his TV work, here's something interesting—he appeared in the Australian tour of *The Boy from Oz*, playing Hugh Jackman's lover. Nice work if you can get it!

Our second *Looking* question comes from Will in Atlanta: "Who was the hot little muscle bottom who hooked up with Dom via Grindr? The one who was singing 'Defying Gravity' in the shower?"

That would be the adorable Andrew Keenan-Bolger, who is also openly gay. The 28-year-old hottie made his Broadway debut in *Seussical* back in 2000 (which, apparently, was a long time ago). Since then, he's done oodles of things, but this *Looking* episode certainly played to his strengths. Alas, he wasn't completely naked. As Murray Bartlett describes it, "I was acting like I was fucking a guy up against a mirror and we were in these, like, little socks. ... It's basically this pouch that you tie around your dick and your balls."

Still, it's less clothing than he usually wears when appearing with *The Skivvies*. Have I not mentioned *The Skivvies* before? They are Lauren Molina and Nick Cearley, two accomplished (and hot) Broadway babes who play eclectic, stripped-down arrangements of songs while stripped down to their underwear. Lauren is a marvelous cellist while Nick is quite adept at the ukulele. Keenan-Bolger has appeared with them, most notably singing "It's a Small World After All" while playing the glockenspiel. Interestingly enough, this performance helped him land the role on *Looking*. After his agent submitted him for the part, he was told the producers wanted a "topless photo." He said, "OK, I have one. But I'm playing a glockenspiel in it. Is that OK?" His manager checked with the brass and said, "Yeah, the glockenspiel's OK." And the rest is history. Of course, all of that sexy skin can be found on BillyMasters.com.

When I can work in the word "glockenspiel," it's time to check something else off my bucket list and end yet another column. What an exciting week. And the excitement continues over at www.BillyMasters.com—the site that never sleeps. If you have a question you'd like me to answer, send it along to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before Liza introduces Lupita to the Lufts! Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

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'It Gets Better' with Tamale at Guild Complex

Chicago: Guild Literary Complex (the Guild) continues its mission of bringing diverse voices to the fore in its upcoming event, "Applied Words: It Gets Better."

Taking place on Tuesday, March 11, It Gets Better is the first of four comedy-based Applied Words series, and will take place at Schubas Tavern, 3159 N. Southport Ave., at 7:30 p.m.

Addressing themes of history, mythology, gender and high school, It Gets Better is a collaboration with Applied Face Theatre and is being presented in connection to its spring production of Silk Road Rising's *Brahman/i: A One-Hijra Stand-Up Comedy Show*, by Aditi Brennan Kapil. Comedienne Tamale will host and curate the event, which features four prominent Chicago Live-Lit readers: Lily Be, Jill Howe, Greg Ledger and Precious.

The event is free, and open to the public ages 21 and up.

'Hannah Free' showing March 21

The Rainbow Alliance of the Unitarian Church of Evanston (UCE), 1330 Ridge Ave., will present Hannah Free on Friday, March 21, at 7 p.m.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for a dessert and coffee salon. Following the film will be a panel discussion. Admission is a \$10 donation.

Members of the panel are editor/producer Sharon Zurek, actors Taylor Miller and Maureen Gallagher, and producer Tracy Baim.

UCE is a "welcoming congregation" within the Unitarian Universalist Association. As a

welcoming congregation, UCE pledges to address the needs of LGBT people at every level of congregational life, and celebrate the lives and loves of all people in the spirit of the first principle of Unitarian Universalism. The Rainbow Alliance carries out the goals of UCE's welcoming congregation.

Tickets go on sale Feb. 25; visit ucevanston.org or call 847-864-1330.

Lorde at Aragon March 18

New Zealand singer Lorde—who has risen to fame thanks to her single "Royals"—will perform at the Aragon Ballroom, 1106 W. Lawrence Ave., on March 18.

"Royals" [Lava/Republic Records] remained at number one for nine weeks, topping the charts in an additional 45 countries and selling 7.5 million copies across the globe. Lorde—also known as Ella Maria Lani Yelich-O'Connor—is officially the youngest artist to top the chart since 1987. (She's 17.)

Her follow-up single is "Team."
See Lorde.co.nz.

CGMC concert March 8

Chicago Gay Men's Chorus (CGMC) will present its second winter cabaret show, "Let's Do It!" March 8 at Mayslake Peabody Estate, 1717 W. 31st St., Oak Brook.

Song selections include the show's title "Let's Do It," "Meadowlark," "Can You Feel the Love Tonight" and many other classic standards.

Tickets are sale for \$35 for general admission and \$55 for VIP seating, both with a two-drink minimum. For tickets and more information, visit cgmc.org.

Local team offers 'Sky'-high support for Michael Sam

BY ROSS FORMAN

Pokey Chatman smiled when she heard about Michael Sam coming out in early February and, thus, possibly becoming the first openly gay player in one of the big four (baseball, basketball, football and hockey) male team sports.

Chatman also admitted she was surprised that, in 2014, there have been no others.

"I smiled, just in terms of him getting out in front of his story. And for that, I have mad respect for him," Chatman, the head coach and general manager for the Chicago Sky of the WNBA, told the Windy City Times in an exclusive interview on Feb. 18. "Football certainly is a man's man's sport and his coming-out is just one part of him ... but it's a hot topic and it's going to continue to be."

Chatman was a standout player for the LSU Lady Tigers from 1987-91 who eventually became the school's head coach (2004-07), leading the Lady Tigers to three consecutive NCAA Final Fours in 2004, 2005 and 2006.

This is her third season coaching the Sky, and the 2013 run included Chicago's first-ever post-season appearance.

"I'm sure it wasn't all hunky-dory [for Sam], but to have the courage [to come out] speaks volumes about him, especially [coming out before the NFL Draft] since it might affect [his] draft status."

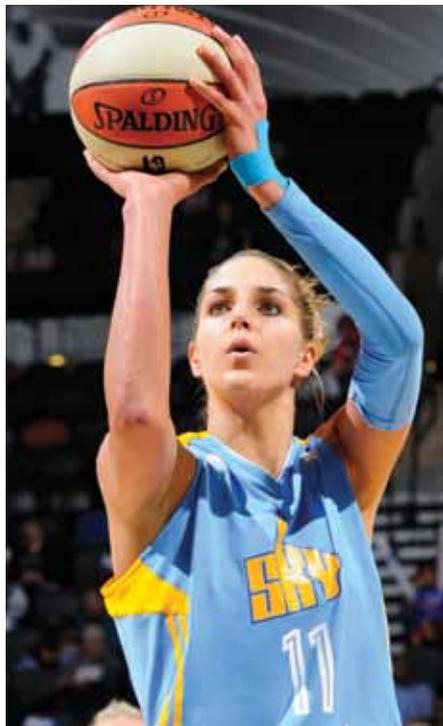
Elena Delle Donne, the 2013 WNBA Rookie of the Year and an All-Star for the Sky, tagged Sam as "a brave man" and one who certainly can and will help other closeted athletes.

"I hope, if someone else is fighting the same [coming-out] demons, [Sam] will be someone who they can look up to, and then be able to come out also instead of having to hide [their sexual orientation]," Delle Donne said.

"In our league, [a gay player or one coming-out is] normal, not a conversation to be had," she added. "You can be who you are in our league and we do have a very supportive following [from the gay community]. We love all of our fans and the girls who play in the league—gay, straight, Black, white, whatever. Hopefully our society will be that way, too, at some point."

"I'm sure it was a tough decision for Michael, and I obviously support him, as I'm sure our whole league would support him. We're proud of him."

Delle Donne played, and started, all 30 regular-season and both playoff games for the Sky in 2013. She averaged 18 points and five rebounds, highlighted by a 32-point game last August against Minnesota. She grabbed 12 re-



Chicago Sky player Elena Delle Donne. Photo courtesy of the Sky

bounds in a July game against Seattle.

Delle Donne led all players in votes for the 2013 WNBA All-Star Game, the first time a rookie has done so in league history. She missed the game, however, due to a concussion.

"I feel he'll be accepted [in the NFL] because, first of all, he's a phenomenal football player—and that's what he's going to bring to his team, great football," Delle Donne said. "And that's what it's all about in the long run."

"If anyone shuns him [because he's gay], I think they are going to be the ones who get the backlash, not him."

Chatman spent six seasons coaching in Russia, and this actually is her first winter not in Moscow.

Chatman said she never experienced any animosity in Russia to gay people and, yes, there were gay players on her teams, she said. "I don't know if it was because we were involved in sports, or the vastness that is Russia, or what," she said.

Chatman coached Seimone Augustus, an open lesbian, in Russia—and Augustus' partner was present, too.

"I never thought they felt afraid or tried to hide anything," Chatman said.

Chatman said it was "so disappointing,"

to hear about the anti-gay propaganda laws implemented in Russia last summer "because I had been there for so long – and there never were any issues."

Hearing about the anti-gay propaganda laws, Chatman said her first reaction was, "Really?!?!" I felt like I was going back [in time] 50 years."

Chatman said she has seen some of the horrific anti-gay videos posted online from Russia, and she's "speechless" to the violence. "We've made so much progress in so many areas, but, wow, we've been relegated to this. It's disheartening," to watch, she said.

The Sky season-opener is Friday, May 16, when Chicago plays host to Indiana at the Allstate Arena in suburban Rosemont. The WNBA

regular-season runs through mid-August.

The Sky announced on Feb. 18 that the team will host the first-ever WNBA preseason game in the state of Delaware. The Sky will battle the Washington Mystics on Tuesday, May 13, at the University of Delaware—Delle Donne's alma mater.

"We're thrilled to welcome back Elena and her new team, the Chicago Sky, to the BOB this coming May," University of Delaware Athletic Director Eric J. Ziady said in a statement. "We're so proud of Elena's accomplishments both on and off the court this past year at the professional level and know all of Delaware will welcome her back with open arms to the place where she and her teammates had so many memorable moments."

Chicagoland to host Big East women's basketball tournament

BY ROSS FORMAN

The DePaul University women's basketball team would like nothing than to win the Big East Conference tournament—because it is the Lady Blue Demons who play host to the annual event March 8-11 at the Allstate Arena in suburban Rosemont.

DePaul is 21-6 overall, among the "Others receiving votes" in both major polls of the top 25 women's basketball teams in the nation. The Lady Blue Demons were 12-3 in conference play (as of Feb. 22), within striking distance of St. John's (12-2 in conference, 19-6 overall, and ranked No. 22 in the latest AP Top 25).

"It's exciting that the tournament will be [held] in Chicago; this should be some really good basketball," said Marcia Hill, a member of the Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA) Hall of Fame.

Other top teams in the Big East this season include Creighton, Villanova and Marquette.

"It's great that this caliber of basketball is going to be played in Chicago, especially women's basketball," said Grete Hornstrom, commissioner of the CMSA women's basketball league.

DePaul boasts a high octane offense, tops in the conference, averaging 84.4 points per game, led by the dynamic duo of Jasmine Penny and Megan Rogowski, each of whom rank among the top 10 in the league for scoring. Rogowski also is the league leader for long-range shooting, with 86 3-point baskets (out of 189 attempted). Penny leads

the Big East in field goal percentage (.582).

The Blue Demons also boast Brittany Hrynko, who leads the league in assists average/game (5.6) and steals/game (2.6). DePaul's Chanise Jenkins is tied for second in assists with Seton Hall's Ka-Deidre Simmons (5.4).

"Fans will, no doubt, get to see some great players, some of whom will move on to the WNBA [after their college careers]," Hornstrom said. "This tournament is a great opportunity for young girls, young players—to see that there is potential to play top-level college basketball."

Notre Dame was the top Big East team last season, with its 16-0 regular-season record, but was eliminated from the Big East Tournament by the University of Connecticut, which went on to claim the title with its 93-60 win over Louisville.

This season's Big East boasts 10 teams, including Butler, Georgetown, Xavier and Providence.

First-round games in the tournament will feature the No. 7 seed facing the No. 10 seed, and the No. 8 and No. 9 seeded teams battling on March 8. These are the only games of the tournament that will be played at McGrath Phillips Arena in Chicago.

The No. 1-seeded team faces the 8-9 winner in its first game on March 9.

The champion will be crowned March 11.

Fox Sports 1 will televise the semifinals and finals.

For tickets see www.BIGEAST.com or call 1-777-325-SLAM.

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Ray is a legal authority on all of his practice areas, which include probate, trusts, guardianship, estate planning, and elder law, including the litigation of those areas. He is a longtime advocate for and member of the LGBT community, and is involved in several charitable groups, community associations, and professional organizations. Ray is a member of Clark Hill PLC, a full-service law firm consisting of a diverse team of attorneys and professionals committed to our clients and our communities.

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