



PRIDE FEST  
2014

PAGE 40

# WINDY CITY TIMES

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

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LGBTS TRAVEL TO  
DOMINICAN  
REPUBLIC  
PAGE 6



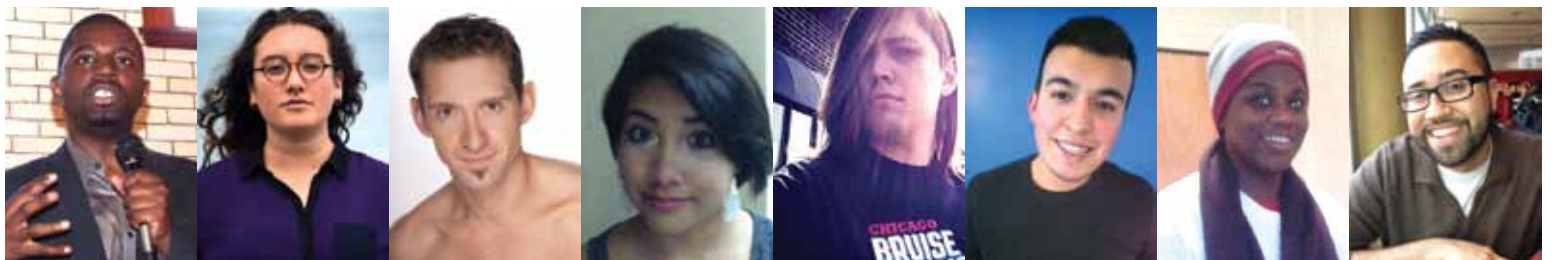
INSTAGRAM  
CELEBRITY  
WRITES BOOK ON  
LOVE, ABUSIVE  
CHILDHOOD  
PAGE 65



TRAVELING TO  
LAS VEGAS  
PAGE 64



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page 52

# HAPPY PRIDE

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## NEWS

Presbyterians' historic vote	4
Windsor, Lawrence anniversaries	7
Bristol honored; wedding; Culver's	8
Youth summit	14
Street named after Herrington	18
Gerber/Hart update	24
Gay in the Life: Searcy	28
VIEWS: Munar	30

## ENTERTAINMENT/EVENTS

Scottish Play Scott	31
WCPA's campaign	36
Knight: Jersey Boys	38
Pride Fest pics	40
Pride Weekend activities	42
30 Under 30 honorees	52
Dish: Laughing Bird	76
Billy Masters	83

## OUTLINES

Classifieds	80
Calendar	82
#ProudToPlay	86

Images on cover (left, from top): Photo from Pride Fest by Ed Negron; photo of fellows in the Dominican Republic courtesy of Taal Hasak; cover of Picture Perfect? courtesy of Kordale Lewis; photo of The Venetian by Andrew Davis

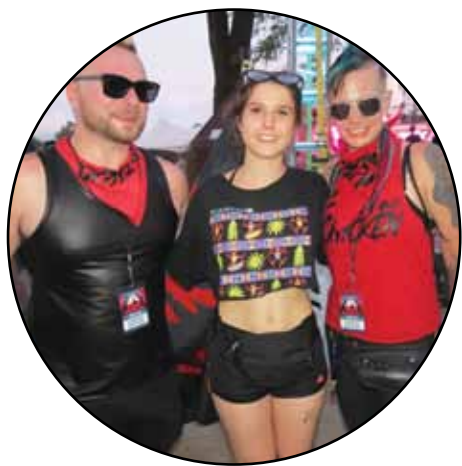


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## 'SPRING' IN THEIR STEP

Thousands of dancing souls hit the Spring Awakening festival at Soldier Field (left). Photo by Jerry Nunn



Rabbi Max Weiss writes about promoting LGBT rights here and abroad. Photo from Oak Park Temple



In Ask Lambda Legal, Hayley Gorenberg deals with college LGBT centers and ex-gay attacks. Photo from Lambda Legal

## 'TABLE' MANNERS

Chicago Community Trust CEO Terry Mazany recently presented "On the Table" initiatives.

## AGE OF SAGE

Windy City Times reviews Rachael Sage's concert at Uncommon Ground on Devon.

## THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

Find out the latest about Ricky Martin, Laverne Cox and Where the Bears Are.

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'06 Honda Odyssey EX	Sunroof, Automatic, Ocean Mist, P4627	\$10,995			
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# Presbyterians allowing marriage equality

BY CHUCK COLBERT

On the same day as marriage-equality detractors marched on the nation's capital to defend traditional marriage, the Presbyterian Church (USA) took a more inclusive stand.

Meeting in Detroit, Michigan, commissioners to the mainline Protestant denomination's General Assembly approved, on June 19, to change the Book of Order's definition of marriage from a "man and woman" to "two people."

The Book of Order is, in effect, the denomination's constitution or governing document.

However, the language-change approval—by a lopsided 71 percent to 29 percent margin—came after an amendment that added after the words two people, the phrase "traditionally a man and woman."

The additional phraseology was a nod to conservatives and to long-standing church tradition, a move Presbyterian pro-LGBT equality advocates supported.

And yet the change to the Book of Order will not become church law until a majority of presbyteries, or regional governing bodies, vote to ratify new language. Altogether, there are 172 presbyteries. Ratification is a yearlong process.

In separate but related action, Presbyterian commissioners in Detroit also approved a measure allowing Presbyterian ministers to officiate at same-sex weddings in states where marriage equality is legal. This takes effect immediately and does not require ratification.

The voting margin in the General Assembly to allow pastors to perform same-sex marriages was also lopsided (76 percent to 24 percent).

Both measures are a departure from church policy that in 1991 and 2008 banned ministers from officiating at same-sex weddings and held trials for pastors who violated the ban. The reversals this year, moreover, build on decisions made at General Assembly in 2010, and ratified in 2011, that removed barriers to ordaining openly gay candidates for ministry.

With an estimated 1.8 million members, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) is among the largest Christian denominations moving forward fully to embrace marriage equality.

Denomination advocates for LGBT equality could not have been happier with the outcomes at General Assembly.

Reached by phone in Detroit, Alex McNeill—a candidate for ordination and executive director of More Light Presbyterians who identifies

as a transgender man—said that the vote was "an answer to many prayers by many Presbyterians throughout the years to finally have same-gender relationships recognized as marriages and to have the ability for ministers to bless those commitments of marriage."

More Light Presbyterians advocates LGBT equality within the church.

Better yet, discussion about marriage equality, during the General Assembly's plenary session, McNeill added, "unfolded with such grace. It was clear the Holy Spirit was at work because even as folks disagreed, they were not disagreeing with each other about people, but about the issue, really keeping a respectful tone throughout the debate."

But some church members voiced displeasure. For instance, the Presbyterian Lay Committee, which opposes equal marriage for gays, urged congregations to launch a financial boycott out of protest.

"The Presbyterian Lay Committee mourns these actions and calls on all Presbyterians to resist and protest them," the group said in a statement. "You should refuse to fund the General Assembly, your synod, your presbytery and even your local church if those bodies have not explicitly and publicly repudiated these unbiblical actions."

"God will not be mocked," the statement continued, "those who substitute their own felt desires for God's unchangeable Truth will not be found guiltless before a holy God."

Meanwhile, a Chicago-based minister who is openly gay also welcomed the pro-LGBT progress that came from the Detroit gathering.

"We're very excited about it, and I am personally excited about it," said the Rev. Michael Kirby, pastor of Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, located a short distance from Midway Airport in Chicago's Garfield Ridge neighborhood.

Reached by phone in Detroit, Kirby said that his church, among others in the presbytery, co-sponsored the marriage overtures, including Fourth Presbyterian, Lake View Presbyterian, Friendship Presbyterian, Western Springs Presbyterian, First United of Oak Park, Lincoln Park Presbyterian, Southminster Presbyterian [in Evanston] and St. Luke's Presbyterian.

"While we recognize there are many people how will have a hard time with" the vote outcomes, we want to remain in dialogue with them," he said.



The Rev. Michael Kirby. Photo from Kirby

For Kirby, permission to marry same-sex couples is part and parcel "to the pastoral care that we believe we are called to provide," he said.

The marriage overtures, Kirby explained, "creates freedom for the clergy in Illinois without having to face judicial action in Presbyterian courts just for marrying people who come to us."

The call to pastoral care, he added, "in our system is how we view worship and marriage and pre-marital counseling—and all of that."

"That's pastoral care, Kirby said. "It lets us be the pastors we are called to be."

Nathan Sobers, a Presbyterian Church (USA) ruling elder, living in Seattle, Wash., voiced his happiness with General Assembly's pro-LGBT progressivity.

"For the folks in my congregation, the actions of the assembly have been greeted with great joy and relief," he said. "We have long been a congregation that believes in Martin Luther King's call to seek the beloved community and to work for social justice. As a result of what has happened here, our pastor will now be able to minister to all of the members of our church equally and fairly, without having to worry about losing his job."

"I have dreamed about the day when my husband and I could get married in the church that

has welcomed and supported us for so many years. Now that day has arrived and I can't wait to celebrate with our church family. I am proud to be a Presbyterian and so grateful to be part of a church that recognizes that love is love."

Co-moderator and spokesperson for More Light Presbyterians, Sobers and his husband have been together for 27 years. He is a member of a church, said Sobers that is an inner city, multi-racial, multi-ethnic congregation of about 80 members.

The Rev. Robin White, who is honorably retired, having served in Maryland and Delaware, is also co-moderator of the board of More Light Presbyterians, voiced her gratitude.

"As an out lesbian, ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church (USA) I am overjoyed that the church I have served for nearly 30 years, will finally recognize, celebrate and bless my marriage," said White.

Echoing Kirby and Sobers, she added, "As a pastor, I finally have the freedom to officiate same sex marriages without the possibility of church trial. I feel both honored and proud to be a member of a church that recognizes that love is love and that God blesses the marriage covenant all loving couples make."

For her part, said Sharon Groves, director of the Human Rights Campaign's Religion and Faith Program, "This is a giant step forward for the Presbyterian Church (USA) and for people of faith everywhere. Presbyterian LGBT couples are now one step closer to being able to get married in the church of their choice."

She added in a press release, "Perhaps even more significantly, young people and their families can go into a Presbyterian church and know that their denomination has not turned a blind eye to them but has instead taken a giant step toward becoming a more loving and more welcoming place for all people to worship."

The Human Rights Campaign is the largest LGBT civil-rights advocacy group and political lobbying organization in the United States.

The Presbyterian Church (USA) joins other mainline churches in sanctioning same-sex marriage.

In a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center in February, 62 percent of mainline Protestants said they favor of marriage equality.

And the Presbyterians, with their actions in Detroit, follow other religious groups that sanction same-sex marriages, including the United Church of Christ, Unitarian Universalists Association of Congregations, Reform and Conservative movements in Judaism, the Society of Friends (Quakers), and Evangelical Lutherans, which allow each congregations minister to determine whether or not to marry same-sex couples.

Nationwide, polling of all U.S. residents shows increasing support of equal-marriage rights for gays, with a recent Washington Post/ABC survey of voters marking a record 59 percent who favor the freedom to marry.

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# Chicagoans visit Dominican Republic as LGBT-rights advocates

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL BLICKENSERFER

Tourists who visit Santa Domingo in the Dominican Republic can spend their time wandering around the Fortaleza Ozamao—the oldest military castle in the Americas or the equally magnificent Catedral Santa María de la Encarnación. They can enjoy spectacular ocean views from the luxurious Malecon Center skyscrapers, find an adventure in the Les Tres Ojos caverns, or travel a couple of miles out of the capital city to kick back with a cocktail on the white sand beaches of Boca Chica.

However, there is a shadowy side to the Dominican Republic—images not to be found in brochures advertising the historic and natural wonders of its capital city. There are decaying buildings with rusted metal rooftops set so close to each other that one can barely discern the ground beneath them. Also, there are places where running water and electricity are virtually non-existent, where the hopeless and their half-dressed children scrounge for food in piles of garbage or wander crude streets, simply trying to stay alive. Because they are of Haitian descent, they are not welcome in the country, with no access to education, jobs or even an identity.

Although homosexuality is not considered illegal, Catholic and evangelical leaders in the Dominican Republic foster continual hatred and disdain for the LGBTQ population. When former Chicagoan James “Wally” Brewster Jr. moved there with his husband to take up the post of U.S. ambassador last November, there was vociferous language from religious groups who encouraged the populous to wear black in

protest of a perceived U.S. attempt to install same-sex marriage in the country. Meanwhile, LGBTQ people are marginalized, youth who come out are abused or live in fear of violence and the only work the trans\* population can find is via the sex trade. The Trans\* Murder Monitoring project has reported a dramatic increase in the murder of trans\* people living in the country since 2008.

It is this part of the Dominican Republic that a group of Chicagoans traveled to see May 18 of this year. They came from all walks of life and yet were united under a common goal: to support grassroots, human-rights organizations and NGO's (non-governmental organizations) working in the Dominican Republic to ensure that the marginalized people there have a voice and claim a chance at life that many people in the United States take for granted.

Debra Shore is the Chicago Commissioner of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District; Dr. Danny W. Cohen, Ph.D., is a professor at the School of Education and Social Policy at Northwestern University; Jonathan ‘Yoni’ Pizer is a real estate developer; Jackie Kaplan-Perkins is a celebrated philanthropic leader, consultant and political activist; and Elena Grossman is a project manager working to build resilience against climate change. Openly gay and each a Global Justice Fellow with the American Jewish World Service (AJWS), they—along with the executive director of the newly created Chicago office of the AJWS, Taal Hasak-Lowy—talked with Windy City Times about their visit to the Dominican Republic and the people they encountered whose suffering and resilience are mirrored both historically and in LGBTQ com-



Global Justice Fellows at the U.S. ambassador to the Dominican Republic's residence. Photo courtesy of Elena Grossman

munities in present day United States.

“After the holocaust, many people wondered how the world could be silent while these atrocities were happening,” Hasak-Lowy explained. “The AJWS is the Jewish voice to ensure that we will not remain silent when injustices happen to other people. We work to help protect people’s sexual health and rights, their civil and political rights and their access to natural resources.”

In that capacity, the AJWS is often the first funder to more than 500 organizations in 17 different countries around the world. The representatives from Chicago who went to the Dominican Republic received warm hugs of welcome and an education from those considered by the Dominican Republic government to be the least of its people; the sex workers, the communities living in the Batey slums—faces and names the AJWS travelers will remember for the rest of their lives.

“It was interesting to be in the D.R., both as a Jew and a lesbian,” Kaplan-Perkins said. “The statelessness experienced by Dominicans of Haitian descent was devastating. The people we met. The slums they lived in. Just to be there and makes you realize ‘I am a citizen of the world.’ You keep coming back to the [Hebrew] words ‘Tikkun Olam’—how do I repair the world?”

“One of the most powerful pieces of this trip was making the connection between the fights for LGBT and immigration rights happening there and those happening here,” Grossman added. “When something happens in a foreign land, it does affect us on some level.”

Cohen has made the study of the holocaust a quintessential part of his life’s work. He sees a direct line between Nazi persecution of homosexuals and the ongoing persecution of LG-

Turn to page 16



## Celebrating Marriage Equality in Illinois



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# Lawrence, Windsor mark anniversaries

BY LISA KEEN  
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

June 26 is the most historic date on the LGBT civil-rights movement's calendar. It is the day in 2003 when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that states could not enforce laws prohibiting same-sex adults from having intimate relations. It is the day in 2013 when a Supreme Court procedural ruling enabled same-sex couples to marry in California. And it is the day in 2013 when the Supreme Court ruled that the federal government could not deny married same-sex couples the same benefits it provides to married male-female couples.

While the decision that allowed couples in California to marry provided important momentum to the marriage equality movement, the decisions in the 2003 *Lawrence v. Texas* and 2013 *U.S. v. Windsor* cases are undeniably the most important Supreme Court decisions ever issued on LGBT-related matters. *Lawrence* brought a crashing end to the longstanding presumption by society and the law that gays were "deviate" and should be singled out for disfavor.

"When homosexual conduct is made criminal by the law of the State, that declaration in and of itself is an invitation to subject homosexual persons to discrimination both in the public and in the private spheres," wrote Justice Anthony Kennedy for the six-to-three majority in *Lawrence*.

"...The State cannot demean their existence or control their destiny by making their private sexual conduct a crime. Their right to liberty under the Due Process Clause gives them the full right to engage in their conduct without intervention of the government."

And it was Justice Kennedy who wrote the five-to-four majority decision in *Windsor* last year, striking the key provision of the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) that barred every federal entity from treating married same-sex couples the same as married heterosexual couples for the purpose of any federal benefit.

"The Constitution's guarantee of equality 'must at the very least mean that a bare congressional desire to harm a politically unpopular group cannot' justify disparate treatment of that group," wrote Kennedy in *Windsor*. "...DOMA's unusual deviation from the usual tradition of recognizing and accepting state definitions of marriage here operates to deprive same-sex couples of the benefits and responsibilities that come with the federal recognition of their marriages. This is strong evidence of a law having the purpose and effect of disapproval of that class. The avowed purpose and practical effect of the law here in question are to impose a disadvantage, a separate status, and so a stigma upon all who enter into same-sex marriages made lawful by the unquestioned authority of the States."

"....DOMA undermines both the public and private significance of state-sanctioned same-sex marriages; for it tells those couples, and all the world, that their otherwise valid marriages are unworthy of federal recognition," wrote Kennedy. "This places same-sex couples in an unstable position of being in a second-tier marriage. The differentiation demeans the couple, whose moral and sexual choices the Constitution protects.... And it humiliates tens of thousands of children now being raised by same-sex couples. The law in question makes it even more difficult for the children to understand the integrity and closeness of their own family and its concord with other families in their community and in their daily lives."

Kennedy's words in both *Lawrence* and *Windsor* have been repeated in numerous court decisions since. And the powerful influence of words and decisions has almost obscured the

fact that they were narrow victories.

In *Lawrence*, Kennedy wrote for just five of the six justices who considered sodomy laws to be unconstitutional; while Justice Sandra Day O'Connor provided a sixth vote in concurrence with the judgment, she did not join Kennedy's opinion to the extent that it overruled the 1986 decision in *Bowers v. Hardwick* (which had upheld state sodomy laws). O'Connor said she would simply strike Texas' law on equal protection grounds. ("Moral disapproval of this group, like a bare desire to harm the group, is an interest that is insufficient to satisfy rational basis review under the Equal Protection Clause.")

In *Windsor*, Kennedy wrote for just five justices. One of those five, Elena Kagan, had been on the bench for only two and a half years and apparently had to recuse herself from a similar DOMA challenge that had reached the high court sooner because she likely discussed it

while serving as solicitor general. If the court had taken that first case, *Gill v. Office of Personnel Management*, the court likely would have rendered a tie vote and DOMA would still be in effect in most states.

Often forgotten, too, is the enormous influence the sitting president had on the impact of each decision.

The administration of President George W. Bush took no action in 2003 to see that the *Lawrence* decision was quickly and thoroughly respected by various federal programs, such as the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law banning openly gay servicemembers. It continued enforcing the ban that had been approved by a Congress that pointed to sodomy laws to justify its hostile treatment of gays. Bush said nothing about the *Lawrence* decision and the White House press secretary brushed it off as a "state matter." Then, in 2004, Bush spoke in support of a Congressional bill that sought to ban marriage for same-sex couples.

In contrast, President Obama spoke out quickly in support of the Supreme Court's decision in *Windsor* and ordered his administration "to review all relevant federal statutes to ensure this decision, including its implications for Federal benefits and obligations, is imple-

mented swiftly and smoothly."

Legal activists responded differently following both decisions, too. LGBT legal activists were still wary of mounting lawsuits that would wind up in front of the Supreme Court. Even as late as 2009, they thought it was "too early" to put another issue to a vote at the Supreme Court.

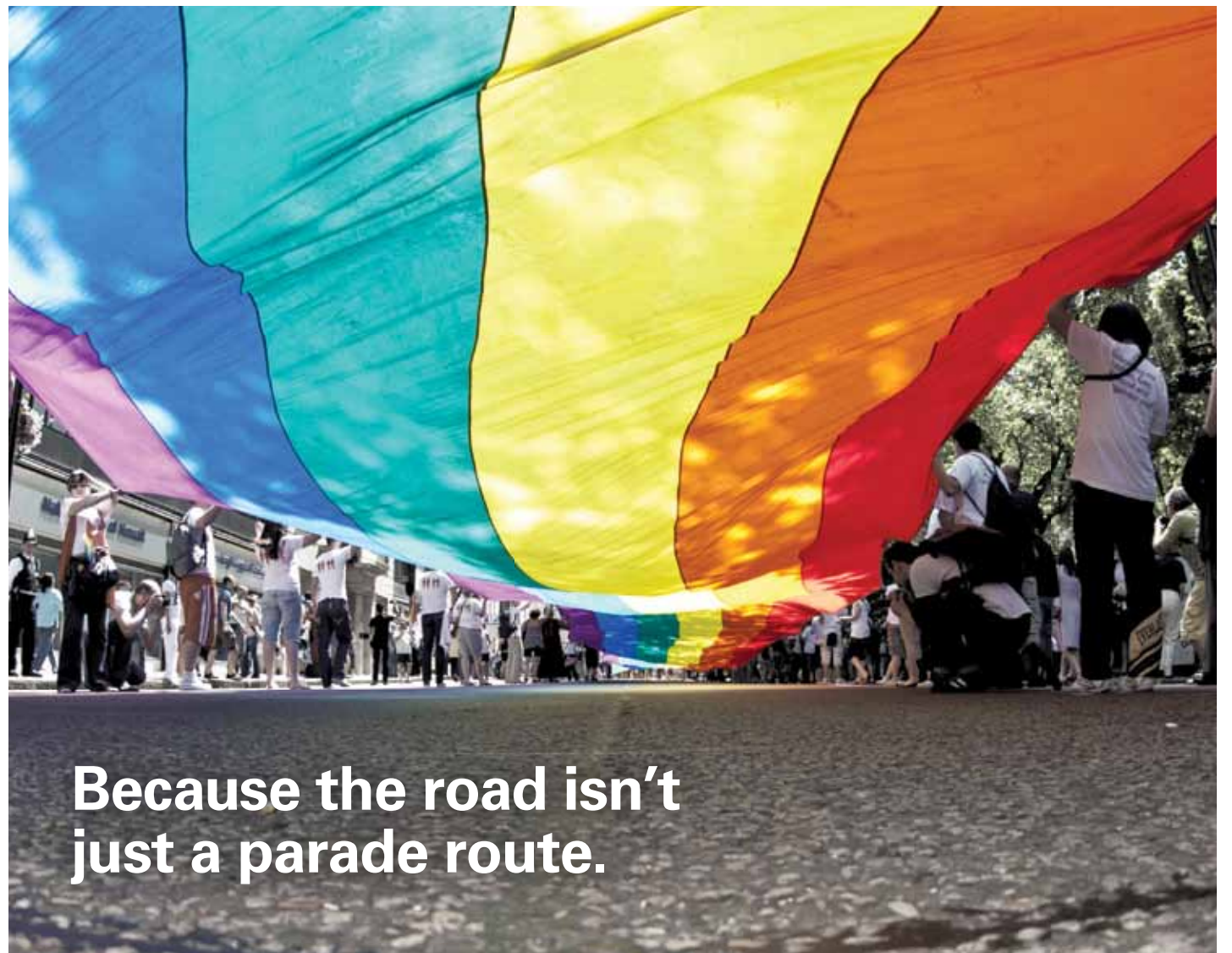
But following the *Windsor* decision last year, legal activists filed more than 70 lawsuits in short order, challenging state laws in 30 states that banned marriage for same-sex couples.

Prior to the *Windsor* decision, 12 states and the District of Columbia allowed same-sex couples to marry. One year later, 18 states and D.C. have marriage equality and another 14 states have had courts declare their bans on same-sex couples marrying unconstitutional.

Also, prior to the *Windsor* ruling, 18 percent of the U.S. population lived in states with marriage equality. Today, not counting Wisconsin or Pennsylvania (whose bans are still subject to appeal), 39 percent of the population lives in marriage equality states.

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From left: Joanne Bristol, Rev. Dr. Marti Scott (center) and Outreach Pastor Rev. Stephanie Escher. Photo by Tracy Baim

## Euclid United Methodist Church honors Bristol

Lesbian activist and healthcare worker Joanne Bristol received the Bruce Scott Award from Euclid Avenue United Methodist Church in Oak Park June 22. The award was given to Bristol and her partner, Mary Morse, who died in 2006.

The award is named for the late Bruce Scott, one of the gay men who fought against the Cold War witch hunts of gays and lesbians in the federal government. His battle is documented in the book *The Lavender Scare*.

Bristol, 59, suffers from a rare, devastating neurological disease called progressive supranuclear palsy. She accepted the award from Pastor Reverend Dr. Marti Scott and Outreach Pastor Rev. Stephanie Escher.

See previous article on Bristol and Morse linked here: <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/How-a-loving-lesbian-couple-made-Logan-Square-Honey/47411.html>.

## Culver's franchise owner has anti-gay past

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The co-owner of a new Culver's franchise—the first in the city, located just blocks from the Boystown neighborhood—published online criticisms of his minister and church officials for what he felt was a lenient stance on LGBT issues.

Justin Obriecht and a co-owner are planning on opening the new Culver's location at 3500 N. Clark St. early next year, according to The Chicago Tribune. Obriecht told the paper that he expects the late-night crowds and baseball games to draw big business to the restaurant. Obriecht also owns several Culver's franchises in the South Suburbs; his first, which he opened in 2001 when he was 25, was in Tinley Park. Within three years, according to a 2012 Tinley Park Patch report, Obriecht's restaurant was doing \$3 million a year in sales, the most at any Culver's location.

Obriecht discussed his conversion from atheism to Christianity with Tinley Park Patch, and said that his faith had brought him new intention in his life, and a raised awareness for the plight of the poor. He has also discussed his faith at length on his blog, "Truth Seeking" ([justinobriecht.com](http://justinobriecht.com)).

In late 2013, Obriecht began documenting difficulties he was having with Jon Klinepeter, pastor of Willow Chicago, the urban campus of Willow Creek Community Church, where Obriecht and his wife attended church, as well as other church officials. Obriecht wrote extensively about pressing Klinepeter for definitive opinions on issues such as gay marriage and same-sex adoption, and said that he was distressed by Klinepeter's apparent support for those issues.

"In March of 2013, my wife and I had a great relationship with Jon," Obriecht wrote. "I was pleased to see that my pastor had a public Facebook page and that he accepted my friend request. However my excitement soon turned to disappointment and disbelief as I scrolled through his page and found post after post condoning, normalizing and affirming homosexuality and same-sex marriage."

In a multi-part open letter that Obriecht published online beginning this past November,

Obriecht said that Willow Creek's stance on homosexuality was too informed by standards of political correctness, leaving Klinepeter "hung out to dry by his church's selective approach to Biblical truth."

Obriecht further added that "radical homosexual activists" were looking to "exploit the involuntary sexual confusion all LGBT individuals experience, in order to turn them into pawns for the cause that normalizes the very thing that's destroying their lives. While those same LGBT individuals are thirsty for truth, but the church, the only place they can get such truth, is too concerned about numbers and political correctness, to worry about their salvation."

Obriecht and his wife left Willow Creek in November, according to his website.

Responding to a Windy City Times email query, Obriecht wrote, "As far as my comments in my blog in relation to LGBT matters, that was in regards to my previous church and pastor. I currently live in East Lake View and am moving in July to a home even closer to the restaurant."

"I currently employ, serve and am friends and family with several LGBT individuals. I've spent most of my life in and around the gay community and am excited to not only serve that community but employ it and continue to be a part of it."

Obriecht's letter can be read at its entirety at: <http://justinobriecht.com/a-warning-for-willow-chicago/>.



From left: Lee and David Neubecker. Photo by Tracy Baim

## Neubeckers wed

Lee Michael Neubecker and David Wesley Greer Neubecker celebrated their Illinois marriage in a ceremony June 21 at Unity Temple in Oak Park. The minister was Rev. Emily Gage.

The couple's children, Braiden and Michael, were part of the ceremony, as were Lee's parents Mike and Janice. There was music and a gathering of stones, and the traditional vows and ring exchange. A post-ceremony reception was held at their River Forest home. Photo by Tracy Baim

## Missing trans performer has been located

Transgender artist-performer Kokumo Kinetic has been found after she was reported missing June 20.

Kinetic, who is based in Chicago, had last been seen in a Baltimore, Maryland, Motel 6 on June 19, when she reportedly seemed "confused," said commentator TransGriot on her Facebook page.

The Baltimore chapter of the organization Black Transmen, Inc. (BTMI) coordinated the search for Kinetic, and had asked that anyone who might have knowledge of her whereabouts contact it.

A native of Chicago's South Side, Kinetic was selected as one of Windy City Times' 30 Under 30 in 2011. She also was a speaker and performer at the March on Springfield for Marriage Equality, and a key force behind T.G.I.F. in Chicago.

## Holy Trinity holding mass marriage service

A marriage-equality service will be held Friday, June 27, at 7:30 p.m. at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 1218 W. Addison St.

A gay couple will be married and 16 couples, both same- and opposite-sex, will renew vows from earlier marriages, civil unions or commitment services.

The Rev. Wayne Miller of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (headquarters in Chicago) will preside.

Holy Trinity's two pastors are both gay and partnered, and will be among the 16 couples renewing vows.

In 2009 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America passed resolutions allowing partnered gay clergy to serve in ELCA congregations.

Holy Trinity has been a Reconciling in Christ congregation since 1990, publicly welcoming gays and lesbians into all avenues of participation and leadership in the church.

Visit <http://www.holytrinitychicago.org>.

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Arthur Lurigio, Joey Mogul, Mary Powers and Ed Mogul. Photo by Tracy Baim

## Criminology group honors Joey Mogul

Chicago attorney Joey Mogul, a long-time advocate of social justice, criminal justice and LGBT rights causes, received the prestigious Anne O'Brien Stevens Award from the Illinois Academy of Criminology at their Spring Institute June 18 at the Union League Club.

The award was presented by longtime social-justice pioneer Mary Powers. Mogul's uncle, Ed Mogul, also a longtime justice advocate, was master of ceremonies. The president of the Illinois Academy, Arthur Lurigio, also presented the honor.

The other honoree was Judge George Leighton, 101 years old and now living in Massachusetts. His daughter and son-in-law accepted his honor, the Norval Morris Justice Award. Leighton fought against racism and criminal injustice on many fronts, including as a defendant in a case of inciting violence for advising African American clients that they had the right to live in segregated areas of Cicero; as a lawyer and judge in critical criminal cases; and as an advocate against the death penalty.

Timothy Evans, Chief Judge of the Cook County Circuit Court, spoke about the pioneering work of Judge Leighton. Jeffrey Colman, a partner at Jenner & Block, gave background on the major impact that Leighton has had on the justice system overall.



Anita Alvarez with (left) Officer Jose Rios and activist Dalila Fridi. Photos by Tracy Baim

## State's attorney holds annual LGBT event

Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez hosted her fifth annual LGBT pride celebration and awards June 18 at Center on Halsted.

Honorees were Officer Jose Rios, activist Dalila Fridi and Chef Art Smith (who could not attend, so his husband Jesus Salgueiro accepted). Smith received the Vernita Gray Lifetime Achievement Award. Vernita Gray's widow, Pat Ewert, and her mother, Fran, presented the honor to Salgueiro. With Salgueiro were three of four children he and Smith adopted the previous week.

The emcee for the evening was Dean Richards. Ray Koenig, State's Attorney LGBT Advisory Council chair, welcomed the audience of more than 100 people.

Cecelia Horan, president of the Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago, presented a scholarship from her group to Gavin Quinn.

Walgreens, a sponsor of the event, was represented by Tom Sondergeld, an openly gay employee. He is senior director of health and well-being.

Photos and text by Tracy Baim

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USPS Chicago district spokesperson Mark Reynolds. Photo by Tracy Baim

## Harvey Milk stamp unveiled at legal forum

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Officials from the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) unveiled the Harvey Milk stamp at a legal forum at Center on Halsted on June 17.

The forum, "State of the LGBT Union," focused primarily on legal issues that have been central to the community for the past year, among them marriage, transgender rights and job discrimination.

Mark Reynolds, a USPS Chicago district spokesperson, first spoke about the legacy of Harvey Milk, and why he was chosen to appear on a stamp.

Milk, according to Reynolds, united many different communities in San Francisco because he thought that, "When people of different backgrounds start to know each other, they find that they have so much in common. ... More than anything else, Harvey Milk gave people hope—that's one of the reasons he ran for office in the first place."

Thanks to Milk's legacy, Reynolds added, "There are far fewer closet doors."

Reynolds unveiled the stamp's image along with John Umphlett, customer service operations manager for USPS.

The forum itself traced a number of pertinent developments regarding LGBT legal rights in the past year. Participants included ACLU Illinois Board President Jill Metz, AIDS Foundation of Chicago Interim President John Peller, Equality Illinois CEO Bernard Cherkasov and Center on Halsted's Community and Cultural Affairs coordinator, Em VanderLinden. Attorney John Litchfield moderated the panel.

Metz traced legal developments since the Supreme Court overturned the Defense of Marriage Act in 2013. "The world has never been the same," Metz noted. "...One year later we have 21 states and the District of Columbia, and now Illinois has same-sex marriage. ... It's really been an amazing year."

Metz also reminded the audience that the LGBT community had not yet lost any of their legal challenges to a gay marriage ban, but did say that, since lawsuits had been filed in all 50 states now, a loss was likely at some point.

Cherkasov added that, despite the many victories, "We have to remember that in every state where there is now marriage equality, there have been attacks on it, including here in Illinois." With elections coming up, he added, "We have to make sure that we are voting for people doing the right thing by us."

Peller, speaking on matters relating to HIV/AIDS, said that the implementation of the Affordable Care Act was one of the most sig-

nificant events of the previous year for men and women with the infection. "Remember, up until then, it was perfectly legal for insurance companies to discriminate against people with HIV [and] people with any pre-existing condition, and not sell them insurance. ... It is revolutionizing access to care for people with HIV."

VanderLinden focused on issues relating to the transgender community, and noted that their issues still need much work—there are fewer legal protections based on gender identity than there are for sexual orientation. "Ofentimes [for example], trans women of color are one of the most marginalized within the community in general; they're often facing a bunch of barriers to employment, benefits and housing."



Harvey Milk stamp. Photo by Tracy Baim

Most of the panelists urged audience members to vote, and be cognizant of issues pertinent to the community.

"It took 20 years to get lesbians and gays and transgender people covered in the Human Rights Ordinance. It took 10 years to get civil unions. It took two years to get marriage. It's because we were present and involved, and we have to stay present and involved, or else we are going to slide right back," said Metz.

# Ecumenical PRIDE service showcases solidarity

BY JASON CARSON WILSON

God loves everyone equally.

That was the message a Chicago Coalition of Welcoming Churches-sponsored ecumenical PRIDE service sent June 22, which showcased the coalition's theme, "Solidarity: Standing on the Side of Love." University Church, 5655 S. University Ave., hosted the service.

The church's senior pastor, the Rev. Julian DeShazier, said the reason for hosting the service was simple.

"It was an opportunity for us to make an investment beyond name alone," he said. "This is what we stand for. This is who we want to be. I don't think it's much more than that."

University Church is a United Church Christ/Disciples of Christ-affiliated house of worship on the University of Chicago campus in Hyde Park.

Music and communion punctuated the service, before speakers shared their words. The communion service was conducted in a special way. It allowed participants to serve each other the Bread of Life and Cup of Salvation.

Speakers John Adewoye, Kooper Knebel and Pastor Jamie Frazier each shared their unique perspectives. Frazier, the Lighthouse Church of Chicago founder, said the word "love" has nearly lost its potency, thanks to overuse.

"[It's] tossed around more than a tennis ball at a Wimbledon tennis championship," he said.

With that said, people seem to indulge in inordinate self-love, according to Frazier. Solidarity is an antidote.

"Solidarity moves one away from the savior complex," he said.

Adewoye, Chicago LGBT Asylum Support Program co-founder, currently houses five gay men from Ghana, Nigeria and Uganda, in his three-bedroom Riverdale home. But, he'd never consider himself a savior.

Other asylees need a place to escape. They can't come until there's more room in Adewoye's house. So, CLASP is investigating ways to expand, including looking for more housing options. Adewoye co-founded CLASP with Broadway United Methodist Church's pastor, the Rev. Lois Parr.

Adewoye, a former Catholic priest in Nigeria, came to America in Dec. 1999 to get reparative therapy. He had a lover, while serving the church in Nigeria. Even so, Adewoye came to the United States "to seek the therapy to make me straight." Everything didn't go as planned.

"Something gave me real strength," Adewoye, now an American citizen, said. "I found the freedom to be a great homosexual. I came out like a rocket."

CLASP offers refuge to those in danger in their country. Kooper Knebel, a transgender woman, gave people a glimpse at life, when your assigned body and gender isn't who you are inside.

"I knew for 25 years that my name would be Kooper," she said.

So, Kooper became experienced at fighting gender norms. She stressed exactly why she scares some people.

"I'm not hurting anyone," Knebel said. "But, I'm messing with people's sense of order and normalcy. People feel the need to make their opinions known."

Those opinions usually become weapons that can mentally bruise and injure transgender people.

"We, who start out with so much hope for the future, start to wear down," Knebel said.

Society, she said, generally chooses to blame the victim—"you brought this on yourselves." That animosity and adversity dashed Knebel's hope, eventually leaving her without a job, home, car or cat.

So, she decided to end with an overdose of alcohol and barbiturates. Knebel said a 2011

National Center for Transgender Equality/National Gay and Lesbian Task Force study revealed 41 percent of transgender people will attempt suicide.

"I didn't want to die," Knebel said. "I only started living."

Today, she said, transgender people must accept that being true to themselves requires a trade-off.

"We won't grow old," Knebel said. "Something or someone will kill us."

Knebel, who graduated from Chicago Theological Seminary with a Master of Divinity degree in May, issued a call to action. Knebel works with the Night Ministry, which serves homeless LGBT youth throughout the city.

"We cannot wait for society to come around to [transgender] acceptance," she said. "Our brothers and sisters are dying."



Speaker Kooper Knebel (left) and the Rev. Jamie Frazier. Photo from the University Church

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# LGBTQ Youth & Homelessness

Report released  
from Windy City  
Times Homeless  
LGBTQ Youth  
Summit 2014  
May 2-5



Photos by Hal Baim. Many more photos, plus videos, of the summit available online.

The following is based on input and findings from a 3-day summit hosted by Windy City Times May 2, 3 and 5, 2014 at three Chicago locations: Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital, the University of Illinois at Chicago Gender and Sexuality Center, and the Museum of Broadcast Communications. The 70-page report is available for free download at the links provided below.

A followup meeting will be held Tuesday, July 8, 6-8 p.m. at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, in the senior center.

Summit organizers:

- Tracy Baim, Windy City Times publisher, Summit Host
- Kim Hunt, executive director of Affinity Community Services, Summit Director
- Bonn Wade, director of Chicago Houses's TransLife Center, Adult Ally
- Youth organizers: Breezi Connor, Keyshia LayMorris and Trian Alexander

In addition, dozens of youth and adult allies volunteered their time to work on the summit, in advance, during and after. The facilitators for the summit included nonprofit professionals with years of experience working on these issues.

Youth were recruited directly at shelters and through service providers. Adults were reached via social media and traditional media, as well as phone calls and emails. The general public and volunteers were recruited through press releases, media coverage and social media.

The definition of youth was "25 and under." They were paid \$50 each and received CTA passes, in addition to food and snacks provided. Adults paid \$45 to attend.

The overall summit budget was about \$25,000, and that included all costs for staff, food, beverages, and general supplies.

The summit had several goals, including:

- Looking at the complex causes of homelessness
- Shining a light on existing work being done
- Reporting on the gaps and needs
- Listing short-term and long-term strategies
- Creating action steps

Some top-of-the-line themes from the summit:

- Youth need more than a bed
- Do long-term relationship building
- More transparency and accountability
- Assessment and evaluation of programs and services
- Build visibility for the issue of youth homelessness
- Repurpose existing community assets
- Youth must have a real voice
- Hold ourselves accountable for taking care of youth
- Everything intersects

The fact that there more than 300 people who participated, with hundreds of recommendations coming forth from youth and adults, showed us how much there is a need for more collaboration, transparency and coordination of these complex issues.

Summit evaluations showed 4.8 out of 5 for the average rating from attendees. Many said they would love to see another summit. But without followup and actual implemented solutions, another summit would not be recommended—it could set up youth for additional disappointment that their ideas are not treated seriously.

The foundations and groups assisting Windy City Times with the summit were: The Crossroads Fund, True Colors Fund, Polk Bros Foundation, Alphawood Foundation Chicago, Liz and Eric Lefkowsky, Pierce Family Foundation, Lehman-Stamm Family Fund, Woods Fund of Chicago, Heartland Human Care Services, Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, Affinity Community Services, Lambda Legal, AIDS Foundation of Chicago, Chicago House, Howard Brown Health Center, The Association of Latinos/as Motivating Action, LM Catering French Caterer, Orbitz, and ChicagoPride.com.

## Overview

The LGBTQ Youth Homeless Summit was inspired by a weeks-long Windy City Times series, Generation Halsted. In that series, reporters followed youth over the course of many weeks to explore their experience with the system, and what their needs were. While many of the issues impact all homeless youth, there are additional barriers faced by LGBTQ youth. These include being kicked out of their homes, lack of family support, and additional risks within the DCFS system because of unsupportive foster families.

Two statistics drove the focus of the summit: 40% of homeless youth are LGBTQ, according to numerous national surveys. Also, 78% of LGBTQ youth in the Department of Children & Family Services system are likely to experience homelessness at some point. And people who experience homelessness as youth are likely to do so when they become adults (in addition to the likelihood of serving time in the prison system for economic crimes). By interrupting this pipeline, taxpayers are saving money while helping people.

The summit was organized into three days. The first day was just for youth. About 70 youth attended, including several with children of their own. The second day was for both youth and adults, with more than 150 in attendance. The third day was a reporting-out day, with about 90 people attending. The complete schedule of the days is in the appendix, along with other relevant documents.

The first two days of the summit were broken down into general plenary sessions and facilitated workshops focused on these areas:

- Housing issues (shelters, DCFS, HUD)
- Public policy (city, county, state, federal)
- Legal issues (emancipation, public safety)
- Education and job training
- Healthcare access, mental health, substance use
- Youth in systems (especially DCFS)

Chicago 2014 Homeless Youth Summit report released: See download links at the end for small and large-view PDFs

<http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Chicago-2014-Homeless-Youth-Summit-report-released/47864.html>

The full small report at the link: [www.windycitymediagroup.com/pdf/YOUTHSUMMITREPORTSMALL.pdf](http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/pdf/YOUTHSUMMITREPORTSMALL.pdf) .

The full large report at the link: [www.windycitymediagroup.com/pdf/YOUTHSUMMITREPORTLARGE.pdf](http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/pdf/YOUTHSUMMITREPORTLARGE.pdf) .

The report is also on the Chicago 2014 Homeless Youth Summit website, [chicagosummit.lgbthomelessness.com/](http://chicagosummit.lgbthomelessness.com/) .



## Next Steps

The complete summit document will be shared with the public through a free website created for the summit, available at this address: <http://chicagosummit.lgbthomelessness.com/>, and then also directly sent to service providers and individuals who have asked to be further engaged on these topics.

But there are some critical next steps to make sure the summit's findings are not just filed away like dozens of past reports on these issues:

— There is no one agency in Chicago that seeks to fill the gaps on LGBTQ youth homeless issues. The Chicago Coalition of the Homeless and Chicago Youth Homelessness Task Force do meet regularly, and are made up of service providers, government officials and others. But no agency is the “buck stops here” for LGBTQ homeless youth. Therefore, it may be necessary to create a task force that is just focused on the followups for the summit. It can piggyback the work of the existing coalitions, but because some of the work may not involve those service providers, it may be necessary to have an oversight task force. This can be done in conjunction with other groups, and Chicago's Plan 2.0 on homelessness.

— There needs to be more data collection and sharing, and evaluation of existing programs to make sure they are fulfilling their missions and adapting to the changing needs of the population of LGBTQ and other homeless youth.

— A key finding was that there was no one mobile-device-friendly way for youth to get current information and resources for such things as shelters, food, legal help, and more. Key summit volunteer Alison Stanton participated in a hack-a-thon and recruited volunteers to launch a website, <http://resources.lgbthomelessness.com/>. The next steps will be to make sure current information is available at all times, and that service gaps are analyzed for potential solutions to fill more needs. There may be a lot of great information and services out there, but if youth don't know about it, or volunteers aren't aware how to help, the needs are not being met. This may require funding to remain current, available and promoted.

— There are many issues that youth experiencing homelessness face that are about basic needs—needs that any one individual agency may not serve. For example, they need to have a safe place to store their belongings; a place to shower and use the bathroom; and in all cases, gender-affirming places to go, so they are not forced into unsafe situations. The creation of public bathhouses and storage places, available 24/7 because of the schedules young adults have with work and school, would seem to be a way to deal with a public health and safety issue facing all homeless people, not just LGBTQ youth and young adults. A suggestion was made to use lockers from shuttered schools, and move them to welcoming churches.

— Activism is one key element that came up frequently, but likely falls outside the mission of many non-profit agencies, who have to worry about foundation and government grants, and therefore can't protest in the streets without risking alienating funders or violating nonprofit

guidelines. Therefore, it may be necessary to create an independent, ACT UP-style group to do street actions, mobilize people to do creative media events (“building” small homes on empty lots as a media day, for example.).

— Also in the ACT UP vein, a marketing group could work to create a variety of advertising and visibility campaigns, on CTA buses and trains and elsewhere, around such needs as 1) General education about homeless LGBTQ youth; 2) Specific transgender education; 3) Recruitment of LGBTQ sensitive foster parents; 4) Visibility to actual youth seeking foster parents or host homes; 5) Promotion of various campaigns noted in this summit report, such as recruiting of “village” families for support of youth experiencing homelessness.

— The youth felt empowered more in the sessions with just youth than in those with adults also giving input. It's clear that youth need to have spaces to give input not just to any one agency, but overall to all agencies that serve them.

— The adults who attended seemed very excited to be able to communicate with people at other agencies, and to be outside of their own grant/job silos. This opportunity to brainstorm with others passionate about these issues should happen more.

— There also seem to be many research reports related to these topics that are often



conducted in secrecy, or their results are not generally shared with the public. The group recommended more public dissemination of academic, government and foundation reports on these topics.

— Most agencies dealing with these topics are constantly scrambling for funding, and competing with each other for funds. There should be a way to network and help lift all boats in fundraising, bringing new individual donors and foundations to this issue.

— Lifting all boats financially should also include the youth. Getting access to supplies (basic hygiene needs plus clothing, school supplies, etc.) in addition to general spending money on gift cards, could create better lives for homeless LGBTQ youth. These debit cards for various corporations can be allocated through existing homeless agencies.

Finally, what is clear from the summit is that there needs to be a more comprehensive involvement to provide solutions to these desperate needs. It can't just be on any one agency or person. There must be engagement from all nonprofits, from youth, from government, from individual donors and foundations, and from corporations and small businesses, to create a plan to end the problems leading to youth LGBTQ homelessness, and provide solutions in the meantime for those experiencing homelessness.



## Housing

Housing sessions were overall the most-attended at the summit, and in those sessions issues related to housing came up that were also addressed in other sessions. But there were a few key take-aways and recommendations. The city is working on increasing capacity for homeless housing needs, and they are doing a specific needs evaluation, so it is difficult to put an exact number to the overall housing needs of LGBTQ youth, age 26 and under. We are starting with an estimate here of 1,800 additional beds needed of various levels of support (this number is an estimate based on summit discussions of recent surveys done).

Geographic diversity of housing solutions was a HUGE concern in the housing sessions—not all new beds should be on the North Side.

1) 200 emergency shelter beds are needed for 18-26 year-olds.

2) 200 apartments are needed, 2-3 bedrooms per unit, scattered across the city of Chicago. Some for units with children of the youth, and self-identified “families.” Goal to service 400-600 or so people. (And goal to add additional units each year.)

3) 400 new LGBT and LGBT-sensitive foster families need to be recruited for short- and long-term foster care of 10-18-year-old self-identified as LGBTQ.

4) 100 long-term (1-2 years) beds in group home situations perhaps staffed by cultural entrepreneurs who run the homes.

5) 400 more long-term shelter beds for those who are yet not able to live independently.

6) 100 beds in more fully serviced facilities, with complete wrap-around services for youth who are most in need of 24-hour services.

7) 100 more partial emancipation shelter beds (there is just one shelter now) for those under 18 years old.

8) Separate from the above, the youth are also seeking 24-hour drop-in locations for respite, recreation, and a break from the stress of unstable housing.

9) Finally, if the city colleges of Chicago were to have dorms for students, this would create a critical solution to the desperate situation faced by unstably housed youth who are just trying to get ahead, but can't if they have no place to put down roots while getting their education. Starting point: 200 dorm rooms to serve 400 youth. Push existing universities with housing to open up to city college students.

Another recommendation for the long term is to create “tiny home” communities in areas of Chicago with vacant land. They would be modeled after similar communities in other cities, with central community center areas surrounded beehive-like with small all-inclusive homes.

**We encourage you to read the entire 70-page summit report for a comprehensive review of what needs to happen in an ACT UP-style community-wide effort to find solutions. If interested, please attend the July 8 meeting, and email if you want more info: [editor@windycitymediagroup.com](mailto:editor@windycitymediagroup.com).**

# Youth summit attendee creates resource website

BY MATT SIMONETTE

While attending the Windy City Times Summit on LGBT Youth Homelessness in May, activist Alison Stanton was struck by a statement made by one of the youths in attendance: "We don't even know what's available to us."

So Stanton took matters into her own hands to help. She used her participation in the National Day of Civic Hacking, or "hackathon," as an opportunity to create a website that aggregates information about what resources can be accessed for LGBT youths in need of assistance.

"There were many stories we heard [at the summit], about youths being sent from one place to another," noted Stanton, who works as a data scientist. Many participants said that, even when their communities did offer resources to homeless youths, they still had to rely on word of mouth in order to find out when, where and how they could actually access those resources.

She said that she knew little about youth homelessness going into the summit, and she took part to better understand the issues involved. "It shocked me to learn that so many homeless youth are LGBT—the first thing our society should be doing is looking out for our youth."

Furthermore, what she thought to be even more frustrating is that, "Those are people that need to be helped that we are capable of helping."

Stanton thus put her own expertise to work. "I have long considered myself an LGBT activist. I have a technical background, and I often look for ways to help nonprofits."

The National Day of Civic Hacking, which this year took place May 31-June 1, is a weekend-long, nationwide event wherein participants from government, business and technology sectors, among many others, come together to devise and implement projects that utilize open data, with a goal of creating "innovative civic projects ... aimed at building a more transparent, accessible government, while seeding and growing communities of innovation across the nation," according to its website.

Before the event, Stanton tried to access as much information as she could about available resources for homeless LGBT youth. "It was easy to put together. I just used the Internet primarily, and compiled the data in a Google spreadsheet—I made sure to include anything I could find."

Once the hackathon began, Stanton assembled a team. They began assembling the website at around 11 a.m. on May 31, and, working through the night, had the website ready for launch by noon the following day. Among those working with Stanton were Kelsey Ando, Lauren Dorman, Stuart Lynn and Janna (whose last name was not given).

The website is at <http://resources.lgbthomelessness.com>. There is contact information on the site for service providers to send information about resources they want posted.

Readers can now go to the site, enter some general information and be directed to age-appropriate resources. They can also download a file that puts events and deadlines directly into their online calendar.

Stanton said service providers should also check out the site, and let her know of resources not yet listed—she and her team are going to try to keep the site as up to date as possible.

"Definitely, this is not the end," she said.

The full report from the homeless summit will be available this week at <http://chicago-summit.lgbthomelessness.com/>.

## Sidetrack holds anniversary party, names new GM

BY ROSS FORMAN

As Sidetrack celebrated and honored its past June 19, the popular Lake View bar also took a step into its future.

The annual anniversary party featured 1980s drink prices and four popular food trucks, including The Fat Shallot and The Slide Ride, offering free food.

More than 1,500 came into Sidetrack for the festivities.

The celebration also included the 20-year-plus tradition of supporting Vital Bridges/GroceryLand, as donations were accepted of new personal grooming or cleaning products.

"The anniversary party is our way to say thank-you to the Chicago community, to share so many successes and victories over the years," said Brad Balof, who was formally introduced as the new general manager, replacing Chuck Hyde. "This year's event was a great success."

And it was much larger and grander than past anniversary parties, which have been only two hours and invitation-only. This year, the Sidetrack party went all night and everyone was invited to celebrate.

One of the event highlights was a staff video to Cyndi Lauper's hit song "Girls Just Want To Have Fun."

Balof said Sidetrack's entire staff of 50-plus worked the party, including 23 bartenders.

Balof has worked at Sidetrack for 13 years, serving in the past as a barback, security staff, bartender and shift manager. He also has long been the resident in-house emcee. Balof, 35, is partnered to Jason Kennedy, who also attended the party.

"I am so excited, honored; this is a great

opportunity," Balof said during a small break on his first official day in his new job. "Chuck Hyde taught me everything I know and filling his shoes is going to be a big task."

"I am very excited to transition into this new role at a place that I care very deeply about. Sidetrack has been a lot of things to a lot of people—and it's definitely the best thing in my life."

## Locals among newest Point Scholars

Point Foundation (Point) announced that it is awarding scholarships to 23 students, according to PR Newswire. Two of the awardees—Bridgette Davis and A.J. Singletary—have local connections.

Davis, from Eldridge, Iowa, will attend the University of Chicago School of Social Administration, where she will get her master's in social work. Singletary, who is from Mountain Home, Arkansas, is a candidate for a J.D./M.B.A. at Northwestern University School of Law/Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

The new scholarship recipients bring Point's total to 80 full-time students who will receive financial assistance and programmatic support from Point during the 2014-15 academic year. Point is the nation's largest scholarship-granting organization for LGBTQ students, many of whom have faced obstacles such as bullying and financial hardship.

Point Scholars and Point Alumni will meet July 24-27 in Boston for Point's annual Scholar & Alumni Leadership Conference. Jason Collins, the first openly gay athlete in professional sports, will receive the Point Leadership Award at the July 25 Leadership Dinner.

## ASGK wins awards for marriage campaign

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Chicago-based ASGK Public Strategies has been recognized for by two public relations organizations for their work on the Illinois Unites for Marriage Campaign.

In the months leading up to the House vote on gay marriage in November, ASGK oversaw media relations and strategy, message development, campaign and logo branding, advertising and community outreach.

The Publicity Club of Chicago honored the firm with two awards: the Golden Trumpet for "Best Government Affairs Campaign" and the top Platinum Award for "Best Overall PR Campaign of the Year."

The Chicago chapter of the Public Relations Society of America also honored ASGK with its top Skyline Award for "Best Public Affairs Campaign."

"This recognition is truly a celebration on behalf of equality for all in Illinois. Thank you to all the coalition partners, advocates, friends and families who helped make the campaign for marriage equality a success," said Eric Sedler, ASGK managing partner.

ASGK team members who worked on the campaign include: Eric Herman, managing director; Sophie McCarthy, managing director; Jeff Philips, director; Max Bever, senior associate; Jon Paul Valadez, senior associate; and Lauren Ryan, associate.

## REPUBLIC from page 6

BTQ communities world-wide. "The way that homosexuals under Nazism were treated and perceived in the decades after the war effect how our community remembers itself, perceives itself and continues to struggle for basic rights in many parts of the world," he said. "There's a history of shame, hiding and silence."

"When we met with representatives of the LGBT rights organizations there, I told them I'm an elected official and openly gay," Shore said. "And—like Senator Tammy Baldwin and others have said— 'If we're not at the table, we're on the menu.' That resonated with them, and I think they will take that idea and be out and be in the political arena in some way."

"The trans\* sex workers we met have been completely marginalized by society there and abused by the police and ignored by the government," Pizer noted. "Despite all of this, they keep fighting and doing what they need

to do to get some respect. It was just so impressive to meet them and hear their stories."

"It seems as if trans\* communities in the United States and in the Dominican Republic seem to be organizing and working in many of the same ways," Cohen added. "If we want to engage members of our community in international issues, we need to point out those similarities, so that we can see that we are all a part of the same worldwide movement."

Each of the AJWS representatives recalled names and images so powerful that—weeks after their Memorial Day return to the United States—they are still trying to process their feelings from a journey that has forever changed their lives and their perspectives.

"One of the kids in the Batey was a little girl named Jessica," Kaplan-Perkins recalled. "She was a survivor. She had this incredible smile and she wanted to be hugged and loved. Despite it all, there was something about her that was so hopeful, as if she was saying 'one day, I will get out of this.'"

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From left: Bernie Hansen, Walter Kogelis and 44th Ward Ald. Tom Tunney. Photo by Matt Simonette

## Street named in honor of activist Herrington

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Community members and politicians were among those who gathered June 19 at the corner of Broadway and Aldine Avenue as the street was dedicated to the memory of merchant and activist Dewey Herrington, also known as the "Mayor of Broadway."

Herrington and his partner, Walter Kogelis, were proprietors of the store Pass the Salt and Pepper, a gift shop at 3337 N. Broadway, and were some of the first merchants to open on the street just as Lakeview was becoming a largely gay neighborhood. Herrington, who died in 2008, was also a founder of the North Broadway Merchants Association, which later

merged into the Lakeview East Chamber of Commerce.

Ald. Tom Tunney called Herrington "a trailblazer in terms of LGBT rights" and spoke of the "emotional connection" Herrington had with the neighborhood. He also noted that Herrington and Kogelis were at the forefront of local activism for gay marriage.

"What we recognize most is his charm, support and determination," Tunney said.

Former Ald. Bernie Hansen, who was accompanied by his wife, Annette, joked, "Not only was Dewey the mayor of Broadway—he was the deputy alderman for some time and he let me know it."

Danny Kopelson introduced a performance of "America the Beautiful" by the Chicago Gay Men's Chorus, of which Herrington was a co-founder. Kopelson said that particular piece was meant to evoke the group's performance at the 1984 World's Fair in New Orleans.

"We had no idea how we'd be received—it was a very different time," Kopelson said, adding that Herrington helped win the crowd over. "Dewey sang two amazing solos. He had this beautiful gospel voice and could just belt it out. ... For a lot of those people in that audience, was their first exposure ever to a gay chorus, let alone so many gay men in one place. It was one of the proudest moments in our history."

Maureen Martino, executive director of Lakeview East Chamber of Commerce, discussed Herrington's AIDS advocacy, which became a high priority for him shortly after his twin brother Melvin died of the disease.

"He made it a crusade of his to get people involved," she noted. "He knew that it is everybody's responsibility to move the community."

Martino added that she had considered bringing Herrington's scooter, which he used to zip around the route of the Pride Parade each year, but couldn't.

"He was the head parade monitor," added

Chicago Pride Parade organizer Richard Pfeiffer. "He was up and down the parade route, doing everything."

Tunney and Kogelis unveiled the sign together. When the cover became stuck, Tunney climbed on a ladder to remove it and designate the street The Honorary Dewey Herrington Way.

Kogelis said he was so moved by the presentation that he had trouble finding the right words to describe how he was feeling.

"I'm really proud. It was an honor to be his partner, and it's fitting that this street will be named after him," he said.

## Vernita Gray LGBTQ fundraiser on July 8

The inaugural event for The Vernita Gray LGBTQ Youth Fund will be held Tuesday, July 8, 6-8 p.m., on the fourth floor (Windjammer Room) at 6033 N. Sheridan Rd.

Contributions begin at \$50. All checks should be made payable to the Crossroads Fund. (Write "VG Youth Fund" in the memo line.)

Email [VGrayFund@gmail.com](mailto:VGrayFund@gmail.com). To register, visit [VGYouthFund.BrownPaperTickets.com](http://VGYouthFund.BrownPaperTickets.com).

## Hall of Fame accepting nominations

The Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame is accepting nominations for its 2014 class.

Interested persons can visit [GLHallOfFame.org](http://GLHallOfFame.org), click on the "Nominate" tab, download the application, have the nominee sign the form and mail as instructed. Another option is to visit [http://glhalloffame.org/forms/nominate\\_2014.pdf](http://glhalloffame.org/forms/nominate_2014.pdf).

The ceremony will take place Wed., Nov. 12, at the Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark St., 5:30-8:30 p.m.

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Jewelry enlarged to show detail.

# Gerber/Hart updates public on progress, gift

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Gerber/Hart Library and Archives President Carrie Barnett and other library officials met with the public June 18 for an update on the organization's progress since new leadership took over in late 2013.

Barnett said that she was interested in fostering an atmosphere of transparency and wants the new administration to be as forthcoming as possible about the organization's challenges and accomplishments.

The period since Dec. 5, 2013—the date of Gerber/Hart's last public meeting—"has felt like a 're-engagement' with the community and our funders," Barnett said.

She noted that volunteerism has been one of the Gerber/Hart's bright spots in the first half of 2014. Volunteers logged about 800 hours on the archives' behalf, with 72 people volunteering occasionally, and 16 people working regularly. About 213 persons visited the archive in that time period as well.

Many of those volunteers, Barnett added, "are people in their 20s—they are here and excited, engaged and learning."

Development remains a high priority, and Gerber/Hart in June received a \$2,500 grant from the Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board (ISHRAB), as well as a bequest of over \$19,000 from the estate of activist James Bussen, who died in July 2013. Bussen was a Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame member who was active with Gerber/Hart, Dignity Chicago, and a number of other organizations.

"Jim had chosen five organizations, who, in addition to his family members, he wanted to leave his money to, and we were one of those



Gerber/Hart's Carrie Barnett. Photo by Matt Simonette

five," Barnett said. "It's really exciting that people are thinking of us, and thinking of our future, and what we give to the generations that come after us."

Gerber/Hart also is trying to reach out to community members to donate materials they think might have historical importance, she noted. "We're interested in talking to anyone—

you don't necessarily have to be someone in the Hall of Fame."

Other projects for the organization include completing the rooms housing its special collections and archives, and reviewing organizational by-laws.

Former President Dave Howser—who was one of several members to voice dismay over Gerber/Hart's previous board and management in early 2012—said that, although some projects at Gerber/Hart can still move at a slow pace, he has been pleased with the strides the organization has taken this year.

"It is a different organization than it was

five years ago, thankfully," Howser said. "The influence from the previous administration has been contained."

The financial report that Barnett distributed was unaudited and goes until May 31, 2014, before the ISHRAB grant and Bossen gift were received. It shows that the organization had \$138,023 in assets, \$15,916 in income and \$60,242 in expenses—showing that they had been operating at a loss of about \$44,326.

"We're very serious about the transparency now, and I'm not afraid to show that we have a loss of [just under] \$45,000—the community needs to know that," Barnett said.

## Arrest in 2012 attack of teen and her girlfriend

Nearly two years after a teenager and her girlfriend were both shot in the head on a grassy hillside in South Texas, killing one of them and leaving the other with serious injuries, authorities have arrested a man in the attack, NBC News reported.

U.S. marshals and Texas Rangers in the San Antonio suburb of Helotes arrested David Malcolm Strickland, 27. He is facing charges of capital murder, aggravated assault with a weapon and aggravated sexual assault in the June 23, 2012, attack on Mollie Olgin, 19, who died in the shooting. Olgin's girlfriend, Kristene Chapa, then 18, survived.

The Corpus Christi Caller Times quoted Robert R. Almonte, United States Marshal for the Western District of Texas, as saying of Strickland, "He's a stone-cold killer who thought he got away with murder, but will finally pay for his crime. My sympathies and condolences go to the victims and their families who had to endure this wicked act of violence."

## African-American LGBT judges on federal bench

On June 17, the U.S. Senate made judicial history by confirming Darrin Gayles to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida and Staci Yandle to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Illinois, marking the first time that two openly gay judicial nominees have been confirmed to the federal bench on the same day.

Yandle was confirmed by a vote of 52 to 44, while Gayles was confirmed 98-0, according to The Washington Blade.

Pro-LGBT groups hailed the developments. "I am thrilled that the Senate has confirmed Attorney Yandle and Judge Gayles to the federal bench," said National Black Justice Coalition Executive Director and CEO Sharon Lettman-Hicks.

In addition, the White House noted the confirmation of Judge Salvador Mendoza to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Washington, making him the first Hispanic judge to serve on his court.

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# Humble Hearts provides limitless charity to Chicago

BY MELISSA WASSERMAN

Walking down into Carol Boyd Yee's basement on Chicago's West Side, one will find a wide assortment of things from fashion, to home furnishings, to medical accessories and more. However, it's not a case of hoarding for her and her family: Her basement is the where she and her wife, Mae, run the non-profit organization Humble Hearts.

"We're not a religious foundation, we're just a humanitarian foundation," said Yee. "We want to take care of our community, and our community needs it a lot. Humble Hearts wants to be recognized not just somebody out there feeding the homeless, or clothing the homeless, or working with LGBT kids. They want to leave an impression like, 'Wow! You really do care about us.'"

Collecting everything limitlessly, Humble Hearts doesn't say "no" to anything as it sets out to redistribute items to anyone less fortunate in Chicago and operates with the mission statement: "to help one person at a time so that each individual gets the respect, attention, & focus they need to walk away with love, and dignity!" Although recycling items to those in need has been a passion of hers for over 15 years, Yee founded the non-profit organization Humble Hearts in June 2013.

"A lot of people we work with don't have the resources that we do," said Yee. "So, we do all the legwork and furnish homes. We give beds and clothing [and] gather up boxes of food; we work with a lot of homeless teenagers who run away from home. We don't ask questions. Our only concern is they remain safe and clothe them while they're out, so they don't freeze and starve to death."

Yee was homeless by choice at 16, running away from home to escape an abusive mother and alcoholic father. For two and a half years she stayed out—until she got pregnant and she returned home. Going to school and graduating at the age of 20 and getting a job, she was soon able to buy her own home on the West Side, which is the current home she has resided in for the past 15 years with her wife and daughter. Her wife, too, Yee shared, was also homeless living in a car 25 years ago.

"I truly believe God sent me my child to give me that second chance to turn my life around," said Yee. "It was an epiphany in my life I didn't want to be a statistic. I grew up in the hood. I grew up poor. I'm blessed. I'm alive and not hooked on drugs. I'm 20 years clean. I'm helping drug addicts and clothing them and feeding them because even though they're out doing what they're doing, they still need some kind of love. Society judges and they don't want to help. Humble hearts isn't going to judge you. We're going to help you because we've been

there."

Upon moving into her neighborhood, she put up a swing-set for her child to play safely. People, she explained, were knocking on her door asking if it was a daycare center and were asking why she had a swing-set in her yard.

"I just saw these kids and I thought of helping these kids and I started taking from my own children, passing down their things, toys and clothes to the neighborhood and the neighborhood started telling people about me and then people started telling people about me and then I started asking my friends, 'Save your items for me,'" said Yee of Humble Hearts' beginning. "The cops came to my house because they thought we were selling drugs, but we weren't selling drugs. People were dropping off loads of clothes."

Her drive to help the community, she described, comes from the constant need out there and the gratification she gets at the end of the day. Yee does have a screening process where she conducts home walk-through and evaluations to verify if people do in fact need the help.

"We're not a religious foundation; we're just a humanitarian foundation," said Yee. "We do not give junk; we give nice things. We sort by size, we sort by female or male, we sort by children, we have toys, when it's somebody's birthday we'll give them a birthday present. That's why I'm doing something every single day or helping somebody because donations come in every single day and just as much as they come in, they go out."

A recent Humble Hearts project was a dress giveaway event held at Morton Career Academy May 3. The event set out to give away free dresses to the first 100 eighth-grade or high-school girls in need of a dress for prom, graduation or any other special event. A raffle with prizes of a \$200 gift to a high school senior and a \$100 gift certificate for an eighth-grade student to go out and buy their own dresses was also held. Professional makeup artists donated their time to hand out beauty tips for the big celebrations.

"It broke my heart to hear someone's not going to go to their high-school prom, no one's got anything nice to graduate—we're girls," said Yee. "We all want to feel beautiful. We all want to feel pretty. My mind goes 200mph and I could not stop thinking about it. From that day, dresses started coming into my house. I went from having one dress to having over 517."

Yee even put in the prom dress she bought for last year's gay prom, which she and her wife won, saying she is excited to see the girl who picks her dress.

On a regular basis, Humble Hearts volunteers load up the car with home-cooked and donated



Carol Boyd Yee (right) with wife Mae Yee at the gay prom. Photo from Boyd Yee

food, hygiene products and clothes and drives along a planned route to feed whoever they come across living under viaducts.

"Some homeless we've dealt with, they get fed, they're turning their food to pass onto other homeless people," said Yee. "What they need is toilet paper and Humble Hearts passes out toilet paper; shavers, we buy a package of shavers at the dollar store. They're homeless but they still want to freshen up and clean themselves."

Working with various organizations such as Center on Halsted and Jesus Closet, donations

from companies such as The Dump, Walgreen's and The Great American Bagel, and individuals, Humble Hearts operates mainly on social media and by word of mouth. To date, the organization has helped over 100 people, according to Yee. She describes the Humble Hearts as spontaneous in what they do in terms of collecting.

To learn more about Humble Hearts, to get involved, or donate, visit: [www.humblehearts-foundation.org/home.html](http://www.humblehearts-foundation.org/home.html) and [www.facebook.com/pages/Humble-Hearts-Organization/477172595731068?ref=photo](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Humble-Hearts-Organization/477172595731068?ref=photo).

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"Pretty much anything sports-related"

**Little-known fact**  
"I used to ride horses professionally with the American Quarter Horse Association. I competed in rodeo-type events all over the country. I also am a father and grandfather."

Mark Sakalares has had so many fond memories playing sports in the local gay leagues, including multiple sports over the past nine years within the Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA). During that stretch, Sakalares has:

- Been a part of three national championship basketball teams;
- Played in two Gay Softball World Series;
- Played on a team that went 19-1 in the regular-season of the CMSA Open Sunday Softball league; and
- Been the commissioner of basketball when the league merged into CMSA.

His sporting resume got a bit bigger in late March, when he was named the Greg Walsh Award-winner, presented annually since 2010 to honor

great trophies and memories from the [games], but [also] I have learned so much by being on the board with these truly amazing people."

Sakalares has played in the annual Coady Roundball Classic basketball tournament for years. He also plays softball, bowling, golf and billiards.

"CMSA is more than a



Greg Walsh, a part of the basketball league who passed away suddenly.

"Greg was a fierce competitor and a guy who helped with the league for many years. Greg would do anything for anyone and would never ask for anything in return," said Sakalares, who joins a prestigious list of past award-winners: Doug King, Michael McRaith, Frank Kisner and Marcus Han. "To be thought of in the same breath with the previous winners was extremely humbling. I knew Greg and of course all of the previous recipients. All of them are people I have a great deal of admiration and respect for. I am honored that others feel I belong in their company."

Sakalares knew Walsh since the Gay Games in Chicago in 2006.

"I had no idea about being selected for the award. My partner was aware and he kept the secret very well," said Sakalares, who has been on the CMSA executive board for five years.

"Being able to be part of such a great organization, working with so many great, brilliant people is something I can take so much from. I have

simple sports organization. We bring people together," Sakalares said. "I've heard countless times how we have been an avenue for people within our community that, if it wasn't for CMSA, they don't know where they'd be today. I have been privileged to be a part of that. To help build CMSA to what it has become today, I am very proud to say that CMSA is one of the largest, if not the largest, LGBTQ sports organizations in the U.S.

"CMSA has been, and continues to be, about inclusion. We feel that by including our straight brothers and sisters in what we do that [it] will only lead to more understanding of the trials our community faces, thus harbor more acceptance/inclusion that crosses all boundaries."

Sakalares added, "CMSA has brought me so much that I can never repay. Friendships new and old. It's brought me a sense of community, a sense of being a part of something greater that makes a difference and that means a great deal to so many."



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## VIEWPOINT

## WINDY CITY TIMES

VOL. 29, No. 39, June 25, 2014

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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.**

**DAVID MUNAR**

## HBHC marks 40 years of service

*On May 29, I had the honor to preside over Howard Brown Health Center's (HBHC) 2014 Annual Meeting devoted to a commemoration of HBHC's 40th anniversary. The following is a transcript of my remarks to the 250 assembled guests.*

40 PROUD. As someone in his mid-40s, the slogan is not just a personal affirmation.

Today we are thrilled to launch 40 PROUD: a year's worth of commemorative activities marking the auspicious occasion of Howard Brown Health Center's 40th anniversary serving the community.

We've come a long way in four decades!

I'm reminded that in some faith traditions, 40 is considered a mystical milestone. In biblical terms, 40 is a symbol of patience and perseverance.

Nothing could more true for Howard Brown Health Center.

We've endured our share of challenges and yet the organization is standing, and standing strong.

40 PROUD is not just about the past but about the future. Our commitment tonight—with all of you—is to continue to fight for a prouder and more powerful Howard Brown community: An institution that is built to last, professionally run, grounded in and by the community, and making a positive impact on the health and lives of our constituents.

Over 40 years, Howard Brown has grown and evolved, and so has the LGBT movement. The founding of our institution coincided with the American Psychiatric Association's historic decision to remove homosexuality from its list of mental health disorders. The pace of progress has only continued. The movement's progress is most apparent by our recent success on marriage equality.

With so many advances secured, we stand at a historic crossroads.

For the people of Howard Brown, the path to pursue is clear as day. The next battle in our quest for equality must be improvements in community health.

As an agency, we are at a point in our development to dream big—to imagine a world where being LGBT actually improves your health instead of increases your risks for suicide, violence, cancer, depression, substance abuse, infection disease, or premature death.

I want to live in a world where our diverse communities enjoy equality in all facets of life.

Marriage equality is a game-changer, no doubt. But we must also experience equality where it matters most—in our physical and mental health. In our longevity and vitality. In our ability to access high-quality and culturally competent care.

I want to live in a world where we have the certainty and security that—in our moments of greatest need—compassionate healthcare is available to us and our partners, spouses, and family members.

I want to live in a world where every segment of our beautiful community—regardless of gender or gender expression, income level, age, or race/ethnicity—enjoys health and security.

The future of Howard Brown will be paved by our unrelenting quest to marshal the best innovations in healthcare for every segment of our diverse community.

How are we going to make this vision a reality? We are going to do it with you.

We will rely on our community to guide and inform our work. We will strengthen each of our service lines. We will retain our best talent and bring on-board new energy and perspectives. We will manage our business prudently and strengthen our institutional base for future growth and long-term sustainability.

We will invest in every asset at our disposal.

This means expanding our historic investment in comprehensive and culturally competent health and wellness programs for disadvantaged youth;

This means strengthening our services for lesbian, bisexual, queer and straight women;

This means providing state-of-the-art primary and specialty care for gay, bi, queer and straight men;

This means expanding our abilities to care for our transgender brothers and sisters with dignity and respect;

This means supporting our elders, LGBT couples and families, and all the rich diversity that makes up the LGBTQ and ally rainbow.

To fulfill our mission, we are going to work hard to expand our patient base and will work even harder to secure a bigger and better permanent home for the Broadway Youth Center so more young people can benefit.

Beyond our client services, we will also invest in building our medical education programs, our research, our advocacy, and our institutional partnerships.

And, of course, we're going to fundraise to make these ambitious plans possible.

In fact, our plans to increase our patient base are already well underway. Beginning next week, we will begin construction to build four new examination rooms at our main facility on Sheridan Road. With generous support from the State of Illinois, and in particular State Rep. Sara Feigenholtz, the project will increase our clinic capacity at Sheridan Road by 50 percent! While we secured state support to afford the significant plumbing and construction costs, we still need to raise an additional \$20,000 to fully outfit the four examination rooms for patient care.

Consider for a moment what four additional examination rooms mean for LGBT healthcare. Once fully outfitted, we will be able to offer the community a whopping 8,000 additional patient visits a year. Over the 10-year useful life of the project, that equals nearly a 100,000 added patient visits! Please, if you see it in your heart, help us raise the funds needed to put these new examination rooms to use as soon as construction is completed in October.

I would be remiss if I did not invite your donations of gently used furniture, home goods, and clothing for our social enterprise, the Brown Elephant. I have no doubt your homes are cluttered with unused stuff. We want it. We'll even pick it up!

The proceeds of the Brown Elephant and fundraising help us expand charity care to more patients who cannot afford care otherwise.

Our ambitious plans are only possible because of our hard working staff. Staff members, thank you for your kindness, good humor, and enormous compassion. I am so lucky to work with such an amazingly talented group of professionals.

Board members and members of the Community Advisory Board, thank you for all you do for the cause. And new Board and CAB members, we are so thrilled to welcome you to our ranks.

Finally, I must thank the most important resource of all: our loyal patients who elect Howard Brown as their life-affirming health home.

We work hard at Howard Brown but no one is working harder to heal and uplift lives than our patients. I want to leave you with a few stories that inspire me. Some names and facts have been altered in order to preserve patient confidentiality.

Meet Jasmine: a 19-year-old transgender woman who came into our clinic on a routine Friday night. It was an evening she will never forget. Her family accompanied her to the visit to support her quest to be treated with gender-affirming hormone therapy. Just two weeks prior, she revealed her true identity to her family and they lovingly embraced her. At Howard Brown, she met with a hormone advocate from our behavioral health team and a medical provider. Hormones in hand, she literally skipped out the door at the end of her visit. She can finally begin her journey to live her life the way it was intended. She has affirmation. Howard Brown is her health home.

Meet Dhyana: a 65-year-old cis-gender woman from India who woke up one day not feeling well. She asked her daughter to take her to the pharmacy to check her blood pressure. It was indeed elevated and she didn't feel well. She has health insurance for the first time in her life but navigating it has been confusing as English is her second language. She decided to stop at Howard Brown to see her regular physician. Though she came in without an appointment, the front desk recognized her urgent needs and immediately fit her into the schedule. She was found to have an irregular heart rhythm that could be life threatening if left untreated. She was transferred to the nearby hospital, treated, and settled into a normal rhythm later that day. Our stellar medical team saved Dhyana's life. Howard Brown is her health home.

Meet Samantha and Casey: A same-sex couple who dreamed of having a child but did not have the traditional means to do so. They looked into options at other medical centers and found them to be expensive, sterile, not romantic, and focused on infertility, which was actually not their issue. They learned about alternative means of conception available at Howard Brown. The process was not scary at all and they told us they appreciated the supportive, comprehensive, and competent care they received. Thanks to Howard Brown, the whole family now has a health home.

Meet Junior: a 23-year-old Latino man who we diagnosed with HIV in our walk-in clinic. Upon learning his diagnosis, he felt frightened and unsure of where to turn or what to do next. He was crying. A continuity-of-care specialist met with him to help him grieve and offer reassurance. We counseled him, signed him up for case management, medical care, and offered other resources. He left the clinic—on this most traumatic of days—feeling safer and more reassured. Howard Brown is now his health home.

All these and many other stories tug at the heart. But I must admit that for me, the last one hits close to home.

You see, at age 24, I was just as afraid and alone when a Howard Brown staff member gave me my HIV-positive test result. Back then there were no effective HIV treatments. I never could have fathomed all that would be in store for me: That I would not only survive but thrive living with HIV. That I would return to Howard Brown, not as a patient or funder, but as its chief executive.

And that I would preside over this august institution during a time of historic, national reform in healthcare; it just boggles the mind.

Joining the team at Howard Brown has brought my life and career full circle. And I am grateful for all this organization has done for me and my community.

I know that I speak for everyone at Howard Brown when I say we dedicate our time and talents to ensure no one in our community must face health uncertainties, illness, pain, or suffering alone.

We look forward to seeing you at Garden of Eve on Nov. 7 and at our other 40 PROUD commemoration events in the year ahead.

**Munar is president and CEO of Howard Brown Health Center. Visit [www.howard-brown.org](http://www.howard-brown.org).**

## GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



Press photo

## THE WHEEL THING

The High Roller observation wheel (left) and the Brooklyn Bowl are among Vegas' newest attractions. See page 64.

## THEATER

**'Ball' room.**  
Page 32

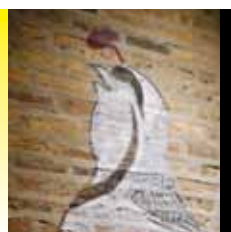
Photo from *The Golf Ball*  
by Marissa Druzanski



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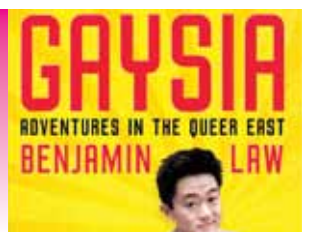
**Bird house.**  
Page 76

Press photo of logo at  
*Laughing Bird*



## BOOKS

**Laying down the Law.**  
Page 51



## SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

# 'Brigadoon' reappears

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

To put it bluntly, out playwright Brian Hill is tampering with a classic. The Goodman Theatre brought him aboard to revise the script for its new production of *Brigadoon*, the 1947 Broadway musical about a magical Scottish village that reappears for one day every 100 years.

Considering that *Brigadoon* creators Frederick Loewe and Alan Jay Lerner would go on to collaborate on other classics like *My Fair Lady* and *Camelot*, Hill knows that he has to tread carefully in his work. And that's even with the blessing of Lerner's daughter, Liza Lerner, who has granted the Goodman creative team permission to revisit and revise *Brigadoon* for the 21st century.

"I'll admit that it's daunting because I have such a love and respect of this piece," said Hill, adding that it was Jeff Award-winning director/choreographer Rachel Rockwell who specifically requested him to collaborate on her Goodman Theatre debut of *Brigadoon* after they worked so well on the 2011 musical *The Adventures of Pinocchio* for Chicago Shakespeare Theater.

"My history with this show goes back to when I was six years old. It was one of the first musicals I ever heard," said Hill, citing a 1957 *Brigadoon* studio recording featuring Shirley Jones and Jack Cassidy that his Scottish grandmother owned. "I used to listen to it religiously, so it's one of those shows that's in my DNA."

Where Hill is making most of the changes to the show is with the origin story of why *Brigadoon* disappears and reappears every 100 years. Though the first time disappearance of the town of *Brigadoon* happens in 1746, there was no mention in the musical of the historic Battle of Culloden from that same year when

British forces ruthlessly crushed the Scottish highlanders who were part of the Jacobite Rebellion. As a punishment, the British government banned Scottish family tartans and kilts and set in motion policies that would play a part in the devastating Highland Clearances when several thousands of Scots were forced from their lands.

"Something that really wasn't prevalent in the original was the presence of war," Hill said. "In 1947 when *Brigadoon* premiered, the Second World War was still very much an open wound for all of America and I think (Lerner and Loewe) wrote what they wanted to be an escapist musical."

Hence in the original script for *Brigadoon*, the town disappears as a way to ward off black magic and witchcraft—quite an ironic premise. And when *Brigadoon* was originally staged in London in 1949, historians were appeased by the show's exclusion of the Battle of Culloden by having the show's current and flashback dates shifted respectively to 1935 and 1735.

"Now I think ignoring the Battle of Culloden and the Second World War—two things that profoundly affect the characters in our play—both those historical events are very helpful for us now in terms of raising the stakes and giving our characters an absolutely strong reasons to do what they do," said Hill, adding that he has also made the show's hero, Tommy Albright, a WWII veteran. "And frankly to give the town a very, very strong reason for the town to disappear from the face of the earth for another 100 years."

Veteran Chicago-area actor Roger Mueller plays Mr. Lundie in the Goodman's *Brigadoon* and he's very pleased with the revisions that Hill and Rockwell have made. Though Mueller hasn't previously appeared in a production of



Playwright Brian Hill.  
Photo by Liz Lauren/  
Goodman Theatre

the show, he's very familiar with *Brigadoon* since both of his daughters have starred in it. Abby Mueller (currently on Broadway in *Kinky Boots*) starred as the leading lady Fiona MacLaren in the Marriott Theatre's last revival of *Brigadoon*, while Jessie Mueller (the Tony Award-winning star of *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*) starred as the sidekick Meg Brockie in a high school production.

"These changes are really first-rate. People are going to be rather stunned by the new gravity of the show," Mueller said. "It still has the harmony and the light-hearted moments, but even those are kind of fed by an urgency of the situation."

"We want to retain what people love about the show, and that is the magic and the charm and the passion of the piece," Hill said. "The biggest compliment to me is if people come to see the show and didn't notice the (revisions) and simply got swept up in the story.

That would make me so happy."

**Brigadoon runs from Friday, June 27, through Sunday, Aug. 10, at the Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn St. Previews run through July 6, with a press opening on Monday, July 7. Regular performances vary, but are largely 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays (also Tuesdays on July 22 and 29), 2 and 7:30 p.m. Thursdays (no matinee on July 31), 8 p.m. Fridays (no show July 4), 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays (no matinee July 12), and 2 and 7:30 p.m. Sundays (no evening show July 27). Tickets are \$25-\$98 (subject to change); call 312-443-3800 or visit [www.goodmantheatre.org](http://www.goodmantheatre.org).**

There is also a free public screening of the 1954 film version of *Brigadoon* starring Gene Kelly and Cyd Charisse at 6:30 p.m. Sunday, June 29, at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion, 201 E. Randolph St. Visit [www.millenniumpark.org](http://www.millenniumpark.org) or call 312-742-1168.



Sandra Oh and Raul Castillo in *Death and the Maiden*. Photo by Michael Courier

## THEATER REVIEW

### Death and the Maiden

Playwright: Ariel Dorfman

At: Victory Gardens Theatre at the Biograph, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.

Tickets: 773-871-3000;

www.victorygardens.org; \$40-\$42

Runs through: July 20

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The allegorical theme often found in medieval art lending our play its title shares its cognomen with a string quartet by classical composer Franz Schubert, the latter a favorite of the “doctor” who assisted in rape and torture of political prisoners during a recent occupation by military insurgents. Fifteen years later, with democracy restored, Geraldo Escobar, newly appointed to serve on the committee investigating the previous regime’s crimes-against-humanity, brings home a guest one evening—only to see his wife succumb to long-buried memories triggered by the stranger’s personal idiosyncrasies.

Audiences in 2014 are unlikely to dwell on Paulina Escobar’s injuries—atrocities (those safely perpetrated by foreign governments, anyway) are fodder for dinner-table conversation nowadays. Nor are playgoers inclined to doubt that Roberto Miranda was the one who inflicted them—what enlightened American would dispute a victim’s account of her abuse? The questions of whether Paulina has earned the right to execute her tormentor and whether this circumvention of due legal process echoes the very injustices Geraldo’s tribunal was created to address are, likewise, less important, twenty years after Ariel Dorfman first raised it, as that of just what *can* reunify a society whose citizens still fester under hostile mistrust of their neighbors.

This is why, despite a scenario proposing a (perhaps) innocent man held captive by a gun-brandishing PTSD-crazed avenging angel, it’s a mistake to view this play as a standard-issue thriller—especially since an epilogue suggests that its events may be occurring solely within Paulina’s mind as she prepares to assume the role that her husband’s office will demand of her. Director Chay Yew understands this, deliberately muting the text’s sensational aspects to highlight the issues, public and domestic, relevant to deciding the outcome of the seemingly unresolvable stand-off.

He also understands that three people talk-

ing for 100 intermissionless minutes can swiftly grow visually and aurally fatiguing. William Boles’ revolving beach house, allowing conversations to be conducted both indoors and out, introduces movement to the stage picture, as does Mikhail Fiksel’s immersive soundscape, but it’s the attention to subtext that Sandra Oh and John Judd exhibit that generates the necessary tension between Paulina and Roberto. (Raul Castillo’s Geraldo, except when the plot requires a show of anger, comes off as curiously apathetic, perhaps reflecting Paulina’s subjective perception of her spouse.) You may—or may not—go home contemplating the heavy burden of forging peace among the world’s warring factions, but you won’t find a more articulate presentation of the arguments than in this skillfully forged production.

## CRITICS’ PICKS

**Avenue Q**, Mercury Theater Chicago, extended through Oct. 26. This Tony Award-winning hit musical that smartly spoofs Sesame Street feels right at home at the intimate Mercury Theatre. And now with an extension through October, the show is finally getting the long Chicago run it really should have had when it was brand new. SCM

**Mud Blue Sky**, A Red Orchid, through June 29. Three female flight attendants and a teen-aged male pot dealer in a motel room, but it’s not an adolescent porno fantasy unless cougars are your thing. The situation is highly improbable but the acting and comedy are excellent. JA

**The Two Gentlemen of Verona**, Spectralia Theatre, June 21-Aug. 3. Just in case the polar vortex hasn’t retreated completely, this production touring the city parks is set in the Canadian Yukon during the gold rush of 1896, allowing its actors to dress appropriately. For dates and locations, log onto www.spectralia.org. MSB

**One Hit Wonders**, Black Ensemble, through June 29. Why quibble about plot when your revue’s score includes “I Will Survive,” “It’s Raining Men” and Yando Lopez warbling a heart-fluttering rendition of that cruising classic, “Hey There Lonely Girl?” MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

## THEATER REVIEW

### The Golf Ball

Playwright: Kestutis Nakas

At: The Bridge in The Orphanage

at First Lutheran Church, 634 W. 31st St.

Tickets: 312-307-5194;

www.brownpapertickets.com; \$12

Runs through: July 6

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

There’s this twentysomething playwright named Ian, see, who’s in love with a would-be actress named Sheena. He’s written a play for her, rented the Theatre at the Lake facility and invited all his family to see it, but Ian’s showbiz-diva mom sneers at both his art and his muse—even as she, herself, cougar-stalks a novelist more than a decade her junior. Meanwhile, her invalid brother (who might have AIDS), has allowed the apartment building he owns to deteriorate, despite the efforts of oafish manager Sammy, whose druggie daughter Mosh suffers from unrequited passion for Ian and disdain for lovesick schoolteacher Maury. Offering avuncular and largely unheeded advice is Sean’s doctor and old family friend Sol.

If your immediate response is to chuckle at the notion of a best-selling author seeking a cure for his writers’ block by aimlessly hitting golf balls into Lake Michigan (an environmentally unfriendly hobby that will prove the undoing of the infatuated Sheena)—well, Chekhov always insisted that *The Seagull* was a comedy. Kestutis Nakas’ tidy adaptation dispenses

with bored Russian aristocrats summering in Crimea to zero in on bored Lincoln Park bohosh-turned-boojies with an analogical checklist replete with references to Ten Chimneys, Harbor County, Vanity Fair magazine, Meryl Streep and a russet-jumpsuited Mosh declaring “Orange is the new black! I’m in prison!” His goal, according to a playbill note, is to provide modern playgoers the familiarity with which Chekhov’s original audience would have viewed the seminal dramatist’s portrait of his society.

There’s no harm in attempting to render classic literature accessible to other cultures—recent seasons have seen Chekhov relocated to New England and Afghanistan—but what lends *The Bridge*’s inaugural production its undeniably collegiate atmosphere is its performance space in the annex of Bridgeport’s First Lutheran Church. The configurations mandated by the wide shallow stage, actors costumed from their own wardrobes and conference-chair seating cannot help but reinforce the DIY ambience already generated by the sight of temporarily displaced altar accoutrements at the auditorium’s entrance.

Still, as a theatergoer was heard to remark during intermission, “Baby Theater, Baby Steps.” What this mostly young troupe may lack in budget, equipment or rehearsal time, it more than redeems in alacrity and enthusiasm. If this vanguard start-up in a South Side neighborhood on the brink of rejuvenation falls short of the professional leagues now, check back in a year or two. Steppenwolf wasn’t built in a day, you know.



Orville and Wilbur Did It! Photo by Michael Brosilow

## THEATER REVIEW

### Orville and Wilbur Did It!

Playwright: David Zellnik;

Songs: Zellnik and Eric Svejcar

At: The New Colony at Signal

Ensemble Theatre, 1802 W. Berenice Ave.

Tickets: www.thenewcolony.org; \$10-\$20

Runs through July 20

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

The New Colony prides itself on creating world premieres devised via a process of actor improvisation workshops with a playwright or two who pens a final script. Sometimes the result is an acclaimed hit like *5 Lesbians Eating a Quiche* (ending its extended revival run June 29 at the Chopin Theatre), or a disappointing mishmash like the new comedy *Orville and Wilbur Did It!*

The premise for *Orville and Wilbur Did It!* is promising at it shows the behind-the-scenes misadventures of actors and a stage manager as they tour to elementary schools around the country with a not-so-great children’s musical about the Wright brothers. Naturally, there’s conflict of clashing artistic personalities, who hooks up with whom and some recreational drug use thrown in.

But one problem with David Zellnik’s script is that he clings too much to comedy bits that were probably hilarious in the improvisation process, but are now leaden and exhausting. One scene about an actor (Alex Grelle) pooping his pants goes on far too long, while a recurring joke about an adopted Scottish otter by the obsessed lesbian stage manager, Jen (Jessica London-Shields), strains credibility at each reappearance.

Zellnik’s script could also benefit from some cutting, perhaps reducing the jokes about the selfishness and stupidity of supporting actors like Melitta (Morgan McNaught) and Pandro (Joey Romaine) in favor of the conflicts between the show’s leading men who play the brother aviators.

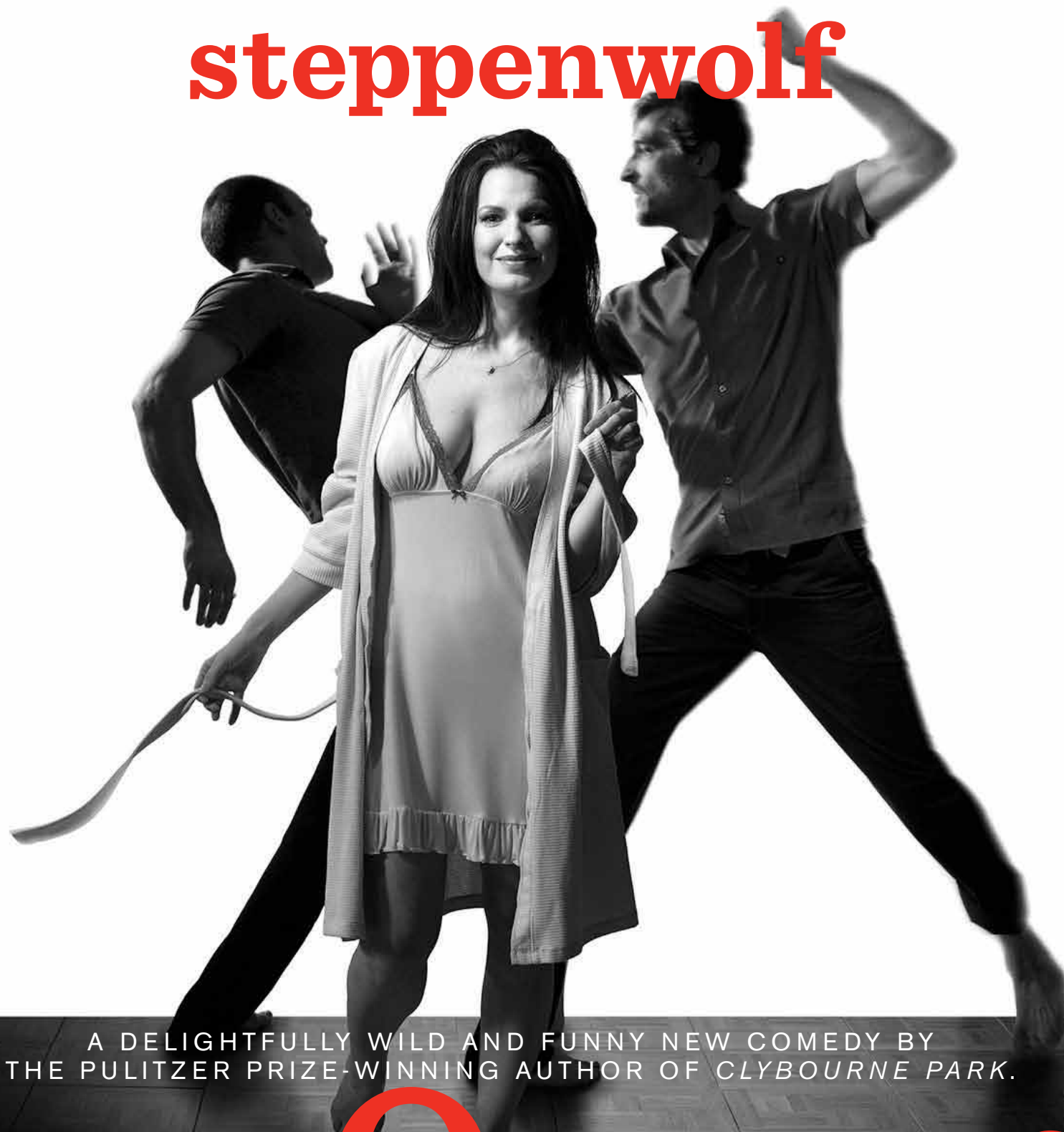
The main arguments between Zack (Evan Linder) and Jasper (Kevin Stangler) has to do with their ideas of how gay men in relationships should behave (and of their previous attraction to each other in college). Zack plans on marrying his jealous boyfriend, Miguel, once the tour concludes, while Jasper is more than happy to have a break from a triad relationship with older sugar daddies in favor of hooking up with guys online.

Also woefully underutilized is the aging actor character of Scraggs (Josh Odor), whose troubled background and past experience of being kicked around in show business could have been explored with more depth and humor to contrast with the naive ambitions of his young cast mates.

Despite the meandering story and so-so character arcs, the cast members of *Orville and Wilbur Did It!*, under director Andrew Hobgood, clearly do enjoy performing their material, and they do elicit plenty of laughs. They’re all particularly great at performing the scenes from the overenthusiastic show within a show—especially the peppy synthesized songs penned by Zellnik and composer Eric Svejcar.

*Orville and Wilbur Did It!* definitely does have its comic highpoints, making you laugh at the weird foibles and oddball situations of performers on the road. But it ultimately stumbles in its overall construction, which could have been much tighter and better focused.

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## THEATER REVIEW

## This Is Our Youth

Playwright: Kenneth Lonergan  
 At: Steppenwolf Upstairs Theatre,  
 1650 N. Halsted St.  
 Tickets: 312-335-1650 or  
[www.steppenwolf.org](http://www.steppenwolf.org); \$20-\$82  
 Runs through July 27

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Chicago-area theater audiences should consider themselves extremely lucky that producer Scott Rudin picked Steppenwolf Theatre Company's intimate upstairs space for his starry Broadway-bound revival of Kenneth Lonergan's *This Is Our Youth*. This 1996 off-Broadway drama clearly has the potential to be the latest "I saw it in Chicago first" boasting moments when it comes to the Windy City's stature as a preeminent theater town.

What's first noticeable about the production is the star power attached. Recognizable actors Michael Cera (*Arrested Development*, *Juno*) and Kieran Culkin (*Igby Goes Down*) are respectively cast as the privileged and aimless drug users Warren Straub and Dennis Ziegler, while young fashion-world wunderkind Tavi Gevinson (editor-in-chief of *Rookie*) plays the role of fashion-design student Jessica Goldman.

Then there's the attachment of Tony Award-winning director and Steppenwolf Ensemble member Anna D. Shapiro (August: Osage County, *The Motherf\*\*ker with the Hat*) interpreting an early acclaimed work by Lonergan, who would go on to pen esteemed screenplays for *Analyze This*, *You Can Count On Me* and *Gangs of New York*.

So, does this revival of *This Is Our Youth* live up to all the heightened expectations? Not quite yet—but that's what an out-of-town try-



Michael Cera in *This Is Our Youth*. Photo by Michael Brosilow

## SPOTLIGHT



GayCo, Chicago's oldest LGBTQ sketch comedy troupe, unleashes **Pridezilla** on unsuspecting audiences for its Pride Month celebrations. The show features a guest visit by a local "gay-lebrity" like burlesque performer Tamale Sepp (on June 27) or *Nightspots* Magazine editor Kirk Williamson (on June 28), and then the cast will improvise comedy sketches on the spot based upon the shared stories. Each performance also features guest improvisers from around town. *Pridezilla* continues at 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday, June 27-28, at The Playground Theater, 3209 N. Halsted St. Tickets are \$12; call 773-871-3793 or visit [www.gayco.com](http://www.gayco.com). Photo courtesy of GayCo



out is for.

No doubt Shapiro will need her cast to offer bigger performances when they move to the traditional proscenium space of Broadway's Cort Theatre. But for now she has everything finely articulated for Steppenwolf and maintains the company's in-your-face reputation and acting style.

Cera is hilarious as Warren, who steals \$15,000 from his tycoon father when he's kicked out of the house. Cera is also a great foil to the very charismatic Culkin as Dennis, who is full of self-centered bravado. Both Cera and Culkin get across their characters' privileged lives, and are great when it comes to their startling Act II revelations that may change the course of their lives.

Gevinson doesn't have as much acting experience as her fine peers, but it's clear that she has the potential to catch up and hold her own

with them. In the meantime, she does need to work on garnering some laughs from her Act II speeches and her overall earnestness of a young woman still trying to figure out her effect on men and what she ultimately wants out of life.

Although set in New York in 1982, *This Is Our Youth* still feels fresh and vital for our times (even if the telephone technology onstage is antiquated). Far from being yet another play that seemingly glamorizes troubled and drug-addled young adults, the work posits serious questions about the inequities of wealth and how it doesn't necessarily bring about happiness.

So get your tickets if you still can. Boast about seeing stars up close, but ultimately savor their fine performances in a work that sears with its wry observations.

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## '30 Queer Plays in 60 Minutes'

### June 27-29

The Neo-Futurists will present its annual Pride Weekend benefit "30 Queer Plays in 60 Straight Minutes," a special edition of *Too Much Light Makes The Baby Go Blind: 30 Plays in 60 Minutes* that combines queer and gender binary-smashing plays from the past with new work to benefit and support local LGBTQ organizations.

This year's beneficiary is Project Fierce ([ProjectFierceChicago.org](http://ProjectFierceChicago.org)), and all shows will be at The Neo-Futurarium, 5153 N. Ashland Ave.

Performances will take place Friday, June 27, and Saturday, June 28, at 11:30 p.m. and Sunday, June 29, at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$9 plus the roll of the die; advance passes are \$20 with a roll-back refund at the door.

An extra benefit performance will take place Thursday, June 26, at 11:30 p.m. All tickets are \$20, with all proceeds going to Project Fierce. Call 773-275-5255 or visit [www.neofuturists.org](http://www.neofuturists.org).

## Jane Lynch to emcee Lyric's 60th-anniv. concert

Lyric Opera general director Anthony Freud announced that Jane Lynch—the Emmy-winning actress acclaimed for portraying coach Sue Sylvester on the hit television series *Glee*—will serve as master of ceremonies for Lyric Opera of Chicago's 60th Anniversary Concert, Nov. 1, at 6:30 p.m. at the Civic Opera House.

The Dolton, Illinois, native "cut her theatrical teeth at The Second City, Steppenwolf Theatre, and in many church basements all

over the greater Chicagoland area, helping her become the comedic talent she is today," as her official bio notes.

Sir Andrew Davis will lead the Lyric Opera Orchestra and Chorus; members of the Ryan Opera Center; and a roster including Renee Fleming and jazz legend Ramsey Lewis, among others.

Tickets are available to subscribers from \$49 at [lyricopera.org](http://lyricopera.org). Patrons wishing to attend the Diamond Ball that follows the concert should contact the Lyric Women's Board Office at 312-827-5681. For more information about the 60th Anniversary Concert, visit [lyricopera.org/anniversaryconcert](http://lyricopera.org/anniversaryconcert).

## Dance for Life Aug. 16

Six of Chicago's top dance companies (Giordano Dance Chicago, Joffrey Ballet, River North Dance Chicago, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Ensemble Español Spanish Dance Theater and Visceral Dance Chicago) will come together Aug. 16 at the annual Dance for Life, the largest performance-based AIDS fundraising event in the Midwest.

There will be world-premiere performances courtesy of choreographers Randy Duncan, Harrison McDoldowney and Jeremy Plummer.

A gala reception will take place at 5 p.m. at the Hilton Chicago's Grand Ballroom, 720 S. Michigan Ave. The performances will start at 8 p.m. at the Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, 50 E. Congress Pkwy.

This year, funds raised through this year's Dance for Life will benefit the AIDS Foundation of Chicago, The Dancers' Fund, Agape Missions, NFP and MADE: Making A Daily Effort.

Tickets are \$25-\$600 (the latter including admission to the gala reception and premiere seating at the performance); call 312-922-5812 or visit [www.danceforlifechicago.org](http://www.danceforlifechicago.org).

## NUNN ON ONE: THEATER

# Joe Mantello talks 'The Last Ship,' 'The Normal Heart'

BY JERRY NUNN

Sting has launched his musical *The Last Ship*, debuting first in Chicago before heading to Broadway. It tells the story of the English seafaring town of Wallsend, a shipyard community full of strapping men working day in and day out.

Openly gay actor Joe Mantello directs the show and has an extensive theater resume. He worked on Broadway's *Wicked*, *Take Me Out* and *Assassins*. He directed Terence McNally's *The Ritz* and was nominated for a Tony with his role Louis in *Angels in America*. He was also nominated for *The Normal Heart* for Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role that led him to a different part in the recent HBO version of the hit drama.

He directs *The Last Ship* along with *Casa Valentina*—productions that were both featured on the Tony Awards recently.

**Windy City Times:** Hi, Joe. You are originally from Rockford, Illinois?

Joe Mantello: Yes, I am from Rockford.

**WCT:** You have an Italian background?

JM: I do. My father is full Italian and my mother is half. My family is from Calabria.

**WCT:** Were they conservative growing up?

JM: No, actually they were very supportive and encouraging. They drove me to play practice. They were great.

**WCT:** When did you come out of the closet?

JM: When I went away to school when I was 17.

**WCT:** Was it a challenge to come out in Rockford?

JM: I think it was a challenge to be out at that time. I was so fortunate to go to an arts school where it wasn't looked upon to be odd or second class. It was an easy transition.

**WCT:** Did you always want to be in theater?

JM: I was a precocious kid, I think. I don't know if this is still true but at the time I was growing up there were a lot of opportunities to do theater in Rockford. There were several community theaters and a professional theater. My high school did incredible productions. I remember going from play to play for five or six years. I got the bug and went to North Carolina school of the Arts for college then moved to New York.

**WCT:** You have done so much there it is hard to cover everything.

JM: [Laughs] I have been doing this a long time!

**WCT:** I saw *Take Me Out* when it was here. Was this show ahead of its time because of athletes coming out of the closet currently?

JM: Yes, I think it was ahead of its time. It is time for a revival of it.

**WCT:** Talk about your journey to *The Last Ship*.

JM: I was invited to come see an early workshop of it when it was still quite long. I spoke to Sting and joined the team.

**WCT:** How was it working with him?

JM: He's the greatest.

**WCT:** He seems very laid back today.

JM: That's exactly what he's like.

**WCT:** What has been a challenge of directing *The Last Ship*?

JM: I'm hesitating because doing musicals can be quite difficult, but this one has been relatively smooth sailing, if you will. It's been great.

**WCT:** It seems to be a very butch show, from what I have seen. Are there things especially for LGBT audiences?

JM: Well, it depends on if the audience is looking for something that speaks specifically to those issues. I tend to look at things a hu-

man being. There are things in our show that are universal about struggle and defining who you are as a community. The subject matter is not specifically our community, it is about a community.

**WCT:** Talk about *Casa Valentina*.

JM: It is Harvey Fierstein's first new play in over 30 years. It is about a resort that existed in the Catskills in the sixties. It was run by a married couple. He was a [cross-dresser] and she owned a wig store. They opened and ran this resort for heterosexual men who enjoyed cross dressing.

These two antique dealers came across a box of photographs at a flea market a few years ago and it was photographs from this place of these men.

**WCT:** What did you think of *Normal Heart's* television debut?

JM: I think it's quite a beautiful film. It is



Joe Mantello.

different than the play but it's essential in its own way. To me theater is about language and filmmaking is about visual and pictures. There are things that we showed in the film that you can't really do onstage. It is completely different and yet I think it's equally powerful.

**WCT:** Favorite moment from *Angels in America*?

JM: I think that play hit the world like dynamite going off. To be a interact with an audience that was discovering Tony Kushner's writing for the first time was unforgettable.

**WCT:** Did you ever think *Wicked* would go on for this long?

JM: I'm always surprised by everything in life so, no, I didn't. I thought it was a good idea for a musical. I thought if we got it right it might run for a few years.

**WCT:** How is it being back in Chicago?

JM: I love it. I am going to do a play at Steppenwolf in November. It's a new play by a playwright named Lisa D'Amour, who wrote a play called *Detroit* that played a few years ago there at Steppenwolf. This show is extraordinary with a massive cast. It is called *Airline Highway*.

**WCT:** I look forward to seeing it.

**The Last Ship** battens down the hatches at the Bank of America Theatre, 18 W. Monroe St., until July 13. Visit [www.BroadwayInChicago.com](http://www.BroadwayInChicago.com) or call 800-775-2000 for tickets today.

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Windy City Performing Arts. Photo courtesy of the organization

# LGBT music groups help Russian youths with 'Beautiful' project

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL BLICKENSERFER

This month, LGBTQ communities and their allies across Illinois are celebrating a major step forward in the achievement of equality. Spectator numbers for the Chicago Pride Parade have grown exponentially with each passing year alongside the exuberance of LGBTQ participants and the number of companies, churches and political figures walking in solidarity with them.

Fewer than 5,000 miles away, those who dare to show their LGBTQ colors run the risk of fines, imprisonment, violent assault and murder. Three days after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the Defense of Marriage Act as unconstitutional, a federal law was passed in Russia that essentially denies that country's LGBTQ community and their allies the right to answer dehumanizing speech or assertions—a law ultraconservative groups in the United States support. According to Russia President Vladimir Putin, the law was designed as a safeguard to Russian children.

A U.S. State Department warning to LGBTQ travelers in Russia reads: "Violence against the LGBT community has increased sharply since the law was passed, including entrapment and torture of young gay men by neo-Nazi gangs and the murder of multiple individuals due to their sexual orientation."

Further laws have been proposed that would remove children from LGBTQ families. Earlier this month, The Daily Beast reported that "Russian authorities are putting pressure on all kinds of institutions—banks, landlords, employers—not to do business with LGBT people and LGBT organizations."

The Nuremberg laws passed in Germany in 1935 began with the gradual erosion of Jewish liberties in order to "safeguard the future of the German nation."

In December 2013, the It Gets Better Project launched "You Are Beautiful," a campaign aimed at emboldening LGBTQ youth in Russia with videos containing voices of support. Moved by the stories coming out of Russia while—at the same time—wondering about the path down which the anti-gay laws are taking that country, the Windy City Gay Chorus

and Aria Women's Chorus (known collectively as Windy City Performing Arts, or WCPA) collaborated with Chicago filmmaker Jason Knade to create a song and video for the campaign that resounds with the message "You are beautiful, just the way you are."

The project began in early January when Windy City Gay Chorus member Tedd McTee brought up the "You Are Beautiful" campaign to WCPA Artistic Director Paul Caldwell during a discussion about the situation in Russia. "We don't know what life is going to be like for the Russian LGBTQ community," McTee told Windy City Times. "We can't really tell them it's going to get better. All we can say is 'no matter what happens, we're here and we believe in you and love you.'"

Caldwell wrote the song that was then translated into Russian by a musician friend of his—a task that proved more difficult than Caldwell had imagined. "He came back to me and told me that there are no Russian words for 'gay,'" Caldwell recalled. "He said that the words that exist are so derogatory that they cannot be used in this setting. So he had to call us 'The Chicago Choir of Non-Traditional Sexual Orientation.' That was shocking to me."

"How does love get wings? How does love get wings?" Caldwell's song asks. "Love gets wings when the world sees and starts to sing."

Knade created a story line for the video and recruited Lucas Segovia and Graham Maverick—two dancers from the Joffrey Ballet—as performers. He shot it over the course of two days in locations across Chicago. It begins with a frightened man sitting alone in a living room. Slowly he comes to the realization that he is beautiful and begins to dance, gradually reaching greater and greater heights. He meets another man in a park and the pair move in synchronicity with each other. The images of the dancers are intercut with the chorus members, each of their faces coated in an expression of hope. Fear is finally replaced with joy.

When Caldwell watched the final product, he was awestruck. "I felt like it was the most beautiful thing I had ever been a part of," he said. "All I did was write a song and teach it to the chorus. Jason and the dancers were able to take that and run with it. That's the amazing

thing about artistic collaboration."

"I read the lyrics and loved the whole metaphor of letting a voice be heard and singing for everyone to hear," Knade recalled. "I wanted to accomplish that visually. The dancers are adding on to that metaphor by expressing themselves in a physical and visceral way."

Knade added that, although he was honored to be a part of the project, he was also overwhelmed by the importance of it all. "I knew I really had to do it justice," he said.

Christy Hasselson is an alto with the chorus who contributed her talents to the song. "The whole situation over there is bigger than me. Bigger than us," she said. "An admonishment of the Russian government in the media is just not going to do it and Putin doesn't care about sanctions."

"When the Olympics games were going on, everyone was talking about it," McTee added. "Now I feel like people here in the United States have gone back to talking about mar-

riage rights and not about how LGBT people in other countries are being treated."

The video has been uploaded to YouTube and the You Are Beautiful campaign website. Caldwell also transmitted it to a media source in Russia. However—to protect that source—he asked Windy City Times not to reveal any further information about it. "Russian Americans who I know are telling me that Putin is eventually going to curb access to websites," he said. "I've even heard that you won't be able to check Facebook without first leaving the country."

"Just because no one is talking about it doesn't mean it's still not an issue," McTee said. "Things over there are getting worse."

**The song and video can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kxgLLHx42o0>.**

**For more information about the It Gets Better Project's "You Are Beautiful" campaign go here: <http://www.itgetsbetter.org/content/russia>.**



Karen Mason.

## Karen Mason performing 'Divas' thru June 30

Vocalist, recording artist and actress Karen Mason heads into Chicago June 19-30 to perform her acclaimed one-woman show, "The Secrets of the Ancient Divas," at Davenport's, 1333 N. Milwaukee Ave.

The show pays homage to singers such as

Barbra Streisand ("People"), Doris Day ("Secret Love"), Eydie Gorme ("If He Walked Into My Life") and Bette Midler ("From A Distance").

Show times are at 8 p.m. (except the Sunday, June 29, show at 5 p.m.). There is a \$35 cover charge/two-drink minimum. Reservations are recommended by calling 773-278-1830 or visiting [www.davenportspianobar.com](http://www.davenportspianobar.com).

## Marketplace offers chance to meet Gaga July 11

IfOnly, an experiential marketplace that donates a portion of its proceeds to charities, is offering "The Ultimate Little Monster Experience at arRAVE"—a chance for fans to meet Lady Gaga.

The experience is a behind-the-scenes all-access meet-and-greet at Gaga's ARTPOP Ball Tour that will benefit her Born This Way Foundation. Designed by Gaga herself, the Ultimate Little Monster Experience is the first of its kind being offered to the public, and fans will only have the opportunity to meet her at these sold-out concerts with all-access tickets by purchasing via [www.ifonly.com](http://www.ifonly.com).

The first such opportunity will take place July 11 at Chicago's United Center.

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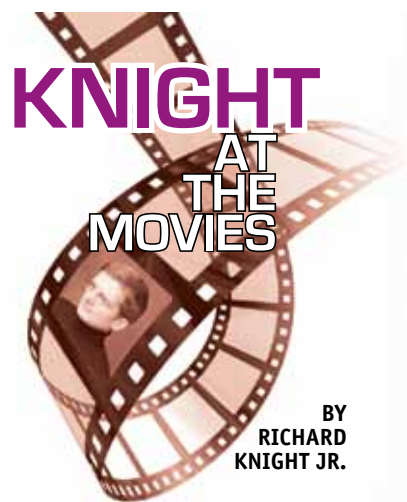
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BY  
RICHARD  
KNIGHT JR.

## Jersey Boys; film notes

About an hour into Clint Eastwood's adaptation of the jukebox musical sensation **Jersey Boys**, the introduction of a gay character into the showbiz story of The Four Seasons changes this quasi-musical into a full-blown one. At last, the real emphasis is on the music—the songs, performances, the recordings; the process that helped elevate this early 1960s singing quartet into legendary status. Okay, so the character—Bob Crewe (essayed by Mike Doyle), the quartet's producer and sometimes lyricist who refined their sound and brought them to the top of the charts with songs like "Sherry," "Walk Like a Man," and "Big Girls Don't Cry"—is portrayed as an over-the-top stereotype (complete with limp wrist, mincing moves and derogatory cracks likening him to Liberace). Stereotypes aside, the Bob Crewe character also finally brings to the movie something that was apparently a hallmark of the Broadway musical it's based on and has been missing here: pizzazz.

Up until that point, the story—as laid out in Marshall Brickman and Rick Elice's script (who also did the book for the Broadway musical)—focuses on the close ties of the group with some rather unsavory underworld types not unfamiliar to fans of *The Sopranos* and *The Godfather*. (The movie is like *Goodfellas* with songs thrown in for the hell of it.) Everyone claims to have a fascination with the "angelic" falsetto vocal stylings of lead singer Frankie Valli (John Lloyd Young, who played the role onstage), but we learn nothing about where Valli's talent sprang from, how he came to sing in said falsetto and whether he was razed for sounding like a girl (something he surely had to overcome). Most importantly, we have not heard a vocal from Young that is worthy of all the praise. (The decision to perform the songs live is one of the film's major missteps.)

Nor do we see much passion for music beyond the standard biopic trappings by Valli and his cohorts, easily the world's oldest cinematic teenagers (Stockard Channing in *Grease* aside) when first glimpsed in 1951 slogging away in the showbiz trenches. Instead, Eastwood emphasizes those mob ties and the differences between Valli—he with an apparent innocence to be protected at all costs—and his wisened-up pal with the wiseguy connections, Tommy DeVito (Boardwalk Empire's Vincent Piazza). The most prominent connection is Gyp DeCarlo (a very funny Christopher Walken, the local mob boss).

Fellow goombah Nick Massi (Michael Lomeda), the group's bass vocalist, is of zero interest. Although the arrival of the nerdish Bob Gaudio (Erich Bergen), who writes the hit melodies that finally elevate the group from their round of Jersey one nighters to the big time, is fun with his fish-out-of-water elements, it's really not until the aforementioned gay, gay, gay Bob Crewe enters the picture that the dry, longwinded and completely wrongheaded movie finally ramps up a bit—but only for a bit.

The slack pacing (matched by the dishwater brown and muted purples of the cinematography—the antithesis of what a musical like this



Jersey Boys. Image by Keith Bernstein

one needs) is then replaced by a series of increasingly melodramatic, disconnected scenes (slices of Valli's fractious personal life that are presented with little or no subtext), culminating in the group's disintegration, which is hastened by the revelation that Tommy's put the group's finances at risk, with "the boys" wanting their dough, or else. After years of working off the debt Valli's comeback hit, his solo recording of "Can't Take My Eyes Off of You" (whose lyrics were reportedly penned as a tribute to Crewe's boyfriend) becomes the movie's 11 o'clock number (perhaps the only song in the history of movie musicals where the horn section upstages the vocals).

During the film's coda—set in 1990, when the group is inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame—when Frankie avers that it was "all about the music" you think, "Gee, I'd like to have seen that movie cause this one sure wasn't." Then we proceed to an end-credit montage with the entire cast, in true Broadway fashion, belting out a batch of Four Seasons hits that finally is all about the music. Ironically, as the credits are rolling, Eastwood finally deigns to elevate the music and the energy to a level that the preceding 137 minutes could have desperately used.

While *Jersey Boys* isn't exactly a must-see movie for showtune queens like myself (and now I don't feel so bad missing the stage version), there are a lot of other queer-tinged movie musicals out there to get one in the mood for *Pride*. A few suggestions would include *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and *Mamma Mia!* As for some great backstage '60s-set musicals, look no further than *Dreamgirls*, *Hairspray*, *Ray* and, yes, even Kevin Spacey's labor of love, his Bobby Darin biopic *Beyond the Sea* that, in retrospect, is a much better movie than *Jersey Boys*.

### Film notes:

—Renowned actor **Kevin Kline**—Oscar winner for his hilarious performance in *A Fish Called Wanda*, star of the gay-themed comedy *In & Out* and the featured actor as legendary gay composer Cole Porter in *De-Lovely*, among dozens of other film roles (Dave, Sophie's Choice, *Soapdish*, *Grand Canyon*, *Cry Freedom* among them)—is being honored with a career achievement award from the Chicago International Film Festival (CIFF) at its summer gala on Saturday, June 28, at the Four Seasons Ho-

tel, 120 E. Delaware Pl. The lavish evening, a fundraiser for CIFF that is celebrating its 50th year, begins at 6 p.m. with red-carpet arrivals and will include an in-depth, clip-laden discussion with Kline about his storied career. [www.chicagofilmfestival.com](http://www.chicagofilmfestival.com)

—The group *Pride Films and Plays* (PFP) is presenting the third annual **Queer Bits Film Festival** Monday, June 30, at the Pub Theatre, 3914 N. Clark St., with doors at 6:30 p.m. and screenings at 7:30 p.m.. The fest includes eight shorts and three episodes of locally produced Web series—all receiving their Chicago premieres.

David Zak, executive director of the organization, describes the line-up as including everything from "a sexy comedy about two straight actors stripping down to rehearse a gay love scene, a touching and truthful story of a father and son trying to reconnect in the wake of a traumatic experience, a light-hearted documentary about a lesbian couple trying their hand at filmmaking, and a powerful and action-packed drama about two young men fighting for love in an institution waging war on homosexuality." PFP ensemble member Tom Chiola is featured in one of the films in the line-up, *A Heart Felt*. [www.pridefilmsandplays.com](http://www.pridefilmsandplays.com)

## First Chicago Jewish Film Festival thru June 29

JCC Chicago presents the first Chicago Jewish Film Festival (CJFF), "Through a Jewish Lens," through June 29, held at The Music Box Theatre, the Cinemark/Century in Evanston and the Illinois Holocaust Museum, with other performance events at Chicago's Victory Gardens and at the Mayer Kaplan JCC in Skokie.

Featured films will include: *The Pin* (2013), a view of Holocaust survival; *Before The Revolution* (2013), the untold story of the Israeli paradise in Iran; and *A Precious Life* (2010), the story of an Israeli doctor, a Palestinian woman and a journalist seeking treatment for her baby.

Tickets are \$12/adults; \$10/seniors & students, or \$60 for an eight-film festival pass. Visit [www.ChicagoJewishFilm.com](http://www.ChicagoJewishFilm.com).

This year, BA plans to create an even bigger and better celebration of storytelling, art and community. To achieve this goal, BA is asking people to contribute to the crowd-funding campaign on the website, [Indiegogo.com](http://Indiegogo.com).

Visit <http://blackalphabet.org>.

## Black Alphabet Film Festival July 2-3

The 2nd Annual Black Alphabet Film Festival will take place Wed.-Thursday, July 2-3, at the DuSable Museum of African American History and Center on Halsted.

Established in 2013 and named precisely

because of the mouthful naming LGBTQ/SGI inclusivity can be, Black Alphabet (BA) is a non-profit Chicago-based collective of Black sexual and gender minorities committed to art, culture and entrepreneurship in the "Black alphabet" community.

Visit <http://blackalphabet.org>.

## Moorehead among Radio Hall of Fame inductees

The late actress Agnes Moorehead (probably best known as Endora on the classic TV series *Bewitched*) will be among those who will be honored at the Chicago-based National Radio Hall of Fame's ceremony Nov. 9 in Los Angeles.

It will mark the first time the induction ceremony has taken place outside of Chicago.

Among the inductees is Moorehead, whom many sources cite as being a lesbian. Born in 1900, Moorehead began her career as a singer on KMOX/St. Louis. In the 1930s she moved to New York, and by 1935 was one of radio's busiest and most versatile actresses. During the 1940s she co-starred with Lionel Barrymore in *Mayor of the Town* and became "the First Lady of Suspense" by appearing in more than 25 episodes of the long-running series. Television brought her more fame through her role as Endora before she passed away on April 30, 1974.

Other inductees include Charlie & Harri-gan, Barry Farber, Jon Miller, Dick Orkin, *This American Life* with Ira Glass and Stanley E. Hubbard. For updates, check [www.Museum.Tv](http://www.Museum.Tv) or [www.radiohof.org](http://www.radiohof.org).

## MOVIES

# French actor Niney portrays fashion icon Yves Saint Laurent

BY LAWRENCE FERBER

Before he was cast as designer Yves Saint Laurent (YSL) in director Jalil Lespert's biopic of the same name, French actor Pierre Niney knew little about fashion. During a recent interview, however, the svelte 24-year-old at least felt qualified to judge fashion dos and don'ts.

"What the heck?" he laughed while examining a photo of a primed and manscaped queen in a "lateral flash thong," which pulls a man's junk to one side, leaving the other hip and a good part of the public area bare. It ultimately makes one's groin resemble a grotesque Nike swoosh. "How does it stay on?" Niney said with a laugh, puzzled. "That's gonna be a big 'no!' A fashion no-go!"

The sumptuous Yves Saint Laurent charts YSL's 28-year ascent from the 21-year-old *wunderkind* tasked with overseeing Christian Dior's fashion house to an icon in his own right; his struggles with crippling shyness, depression, drugs and promiscuity; and complicated, drama-fraught relationship with his partner in love and business, Pierre Bergé (Guillaume Gallienne).

Bergé, in fact, served as an advisor to the film, sharing intimate details with Niney and making priceless connections and introductions between Niney and members of YSL's social circle, while affording the production access to archival materials and original clothing items. "We get along pretty well, and he felt confident with us and the project," Niney notes.

The relationship between Bergé and Saint Laurent had previously been touched upon and illuminated to varying degrees in a trio of documentaries, including 2010's *L'Amour Fou*, and 2002's *5 Avenue Marceau 75116 Paris* and *YSL: His Life & Times*. Meanwhile, this year should see release of a second narrative biopic, directed by Bertrand Bonello and simply titled *Saint Laurent*, which premiered at Cannes this past May but does not have Bergé's approval.

Asked why he thought Bergé stayed with Saint Laurent despite all the tensions and psychological traumas involved—during one partially improvised scene, director Jalil instructed Niney and actress Victoire Doutreleau, who plays YSL's muse, to genuinely make Gallienne furious by mocking him—Niney stated, "When you understand the love and goodwill that Pierre had for Yves, you understand why he stayed. The other thing is that Pierre is a man who needs to be needed. He felt it was a mission to help this artist, his creative life, to give it to the world. He's such a good businessman and at the same time a protector of artists. Even if it was tough and violent to live with a tormented genius."

A member of Paris' prestigious Comédie-Française state theater company, Niney spent five months intensely preparing for the role, working to get down Saint Laurent's voice, manner, and mindset. He even spent time in a few Paris gay bars that YSL frequented.

The insight Niney ultimately garnered (plus a prosthetic nose and glasses) helped bring the



Guillaume Gallienne and Pierre Niney. Photo by Thibault Grabherr © Tibo & Anouchka

man back to life. "I really loved a line that got cut from the movie," Niney said. "It's during the first meeting between Yves and Pierre. Yves was speaking, and at some point Pierre said, 'you speak very low.' And Yves answered, 'I know—it's to force the other person to really listen to me.' His shyness was real, but he learned to use it like a weapon."

Currently shooting the thriller *A Perfect Man* (formerly titled *The Scarecrow*) in the south of France and playing Philippe Cousteau, son of famed diver Jacques Cousteau, in another biopic, *The Odyssey*, Niney admitted his connection to YSL has disappeared. In fact, he absconded to Australia following the shoot (his girlfriend's from Brisbane) to disconnect and

get back into his own head. "I spent so much time in my version of YSL, I had his habits," he admitted, "and it was hard to get out of that voice and body. It took me one month. I went to Australia to be far away from him and close to snakes and sharks."

Yet, thanks to the production, Niney said he maintains an enduring respect and admiration for the rarely acknowledged human side of the YSL fashion house and its creators.

"I like the idea it's a family business first," he said. "At the time it started, it was a really intimate thing. We met a longtime YSL seamstress and she told us, 'I have two kids—and their names are Pierre and Yves.'"

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# 10th annual Chicago Pride Fest

Photos by Ed Negron and Jerry Nunn. See more online at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com)



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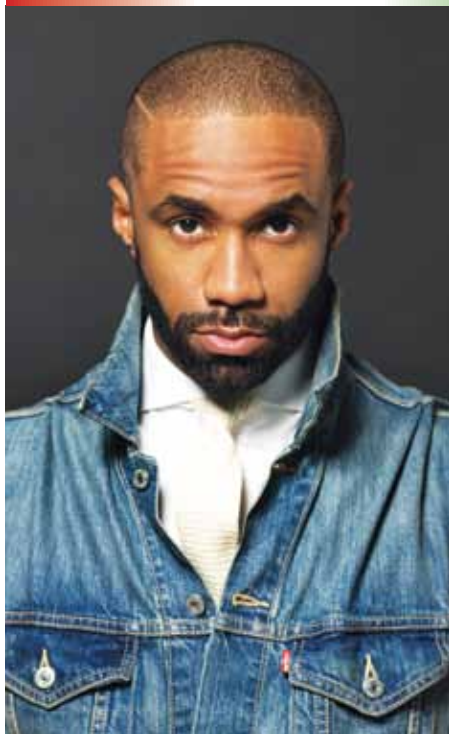
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# PRIDE WEEKEND



Will Sheridan.

## Will Sheridan named parade grand marshal

Will Sheridan has been named the grand marshal of this year's Chicago Pride Parade.

Sheridan is a former Villanova University basketball player who also played professional basketball internationally. He is a former night-life/music scene writer for Source Magazine and current performing artist (new wave mix of dance, hip-hop and pop).

Chicago's June Pride Month kicked off this year with dozens of same-sex couples getting legally married at several events around the city and state. In addition, throughout the month of June, there are close to one hundred different events in Chicago celebrating Pride Month, with the Annual Pride Parade being the largest.

The Chicago 45th Annual Pride parade is scheduled for Sunday, June 29, at 12 p.m. The parade will start at the corner of Broadway and Montrose, proceeding south on Broadway; then south on Halsted; then east on Belmont; then

south on Broadway; then east on Diversey to Cannon Drive, in Lincoln Park. The parade will feature floats, decorated vehicles, marching bands and walkers, representing community businesses, organizations and elected government officials.

Pride parades are staged in more than 125 cities worldwide, with more than 65 of them in the United States and at least 12 taking place on the last weekend of June each year.

## Petitioners want Harris as parade's co-grand marshal

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A Change.org petition has gone online calling for state Rep. Greg Harris to be named as a grand marshal for the 2014 Chicago Pride Parade.

The petition (<http://chn.ge/1nvpPR7>), directed toward Pride Parade organizer Richard Pfeiffer, reads, "...This year Illinois has reached full equality under the law. Our right to love has been recognized! One of the most vocal pioneers of this movement has been Illinois State Representative Greg Harris. His dedication and resolve to fight for equality came to fruition this year, this month in fact. ... It is

for this reason we call for Greg Harris to be the 2014 Chicago Pride Parade Co-Grand Marshal."

Pfeiffer did extend an offer on Sunday to Harris to be grand marshal, but Harris said he felt most comfortable being with the many politicians who worked on this together, including Sen. Heather Steans and Gov. Pat Quinn.

A Facebook page about the issue (<https://www.facebook.com/HarrisForMarshal>) has been active since Nov. 6, 2013.

But Pfeiffer told Windy City Times that local politicians are rarely chosen as grand marshals.

"Most major Pride parades have 'national' grand marshals, people who are known at a national level," Pfeiffer said, adding that they often are individuals who have had a public 'coming-out.'

Nevertheless, Harris will have "a prominent position towards the front of the parade."

Singer, musician, recording artist and former athlete Will Sheridan was named as this year's grand marshal. The possibility of a second marshal has been floated, but Pfeiffer said organizers were still trying to determine that person's availability and could not comment on it yet.

Pfeiffer said the marshals are usually drawn from community suggestions, and then organizers set about seeing if they are available.

"That happens year after year," Pfeiffer said. "If you don't get your first choice, you move on to the second one."

## Back Lot Bash June 26-29, to feature Bowersox

The 11th annual Back Lot Bash will take place in Andersonville and Rogers Park June 26-29.

The line-up for the women's festival includes acclaimed singer/songwriter Crystal Bowersox (Friday, June 27), Erin McKeown (Friday, June 27), popular bands Hunter Valentine and Your

Villain My Here (both Saturday, June 28) and host Lauren Russell (The Real L Word) (Saturday, June 28). There will also be Sunday, June 29, guest appearances from Camila Grey (Uh Huh Her), Leisha Hailey (The L Word & Uh Huh Her) and Kate Moennig (The L Word). Lea DeLaria of Orange Is the New Black headlines Thursday Comedy Night on June 26.

The comedy night will take place at Mayne Stage, 1328 W. Morse Ave., while the musical performances will be at 5238 N. Clark St.

A three-day weekend pass is \$45; visit [BackLotBashChicago.com](http://BackLotBashChicago.com).



Right: Lea DeLaria. Left: Matt Frey, who run last year's men's division in the Proud to Run 5K. Photo by Carrie Maxwell



## Dyke March June 28 in Humboldt Park

Orgullo en Acción (OEA) and the Chicago Dyke March Collective (CDMC) will bring the Dyke March to the Humboldt Park community for the first of two years.

The march will take place Saturday, June 28. It will kick off at Roberto Clemente High School (on the southeast corner of Western Avenue and Division Street) at 3:30 p.m., proceeding west down Division street to the boat house in Humboldt Park.

The Latina/o PRIDE Picnic, which has been held in the community for almost 10 years, will be the ending point for the Dyke March rally. The picnic (4-7 p.m.) will incorporate elements that have made both events a tradition in the LGBTQ community.

See <http://chicagodykemarch.wordpress.com>.

## Proud to Run on June 28

Proud To Run—a 10K run and 5K run and walk that celebrates LGBTQIA pride—will take place Saturday, June 28.

A part of Pride Week since 1982, more than 2,200 people participated in last year's event by running, walking, volunteering and sponsoring.

The event will start at Montrose Avenue at Simonds Drive (east of Lake Shore Drive). The 10K starts at 8:04 a.m.; the 5K starts at 8:15 a.m. On-site registration is \$45.

The Chicago Spirit Brigade and Lakeside Pride

Music Ensembles will be on hand to entertain event participants, volunteers and spectators.

## New Pride race June 26 along lakefront

Registration is now open at [ILoveRuns.com](http://ILoveRuns.com) for the first-ever lakefront PRIDE 5K run/walk, which will take place Thursday, June 26. Star Events is sponsoring the event.

In an effort to plus-up the fun and to further unite the community, everyone is encouraged to register with a partner. Those who "couple up" will each receive a special \$5 registration discount.

The new race, produced by Star Events, kicks off at 7:30 p.m. near the lakefront at Fullerton Avenue and Lake Shore Drive. Awards will be given for the top individual finishers and the top pairs. A post-race party near Diversey Harbor, featuring DJ Adam LeBlanc of the popular local band Sixteen Candles, will immediately follow the race and last until 10 p.m.

The \$50 individual registration fee includes a limited edition T-shirt designed by Chicago's Borris Powell of Borris Powell Designs; coupons and special gifts from local area businesses; and two drink tickets for use during the post-race party.

The PRIDE 5K race will benefit the new Center on Halsted Senior Center, set to open this fall. Final packet pickup will be at the race location June 26 at 5-7 p.m.

For more information and to register, visit [ILoveRuns.com](http://ILoveRuns.com).

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# tello Films documents hip-hop/soul duo God Des & She

BY JANEAN L. WATKINS

What do you get when you blend hip-hop, pop and soul with a queer dynamic duo? You get the Midwest-bred God Des & She. The eclectic pair bridged the gap between these three genres to bring a new sound and relevant message to the masses.

Not many artists make music that speaks for multitudes of people who find themselves without voice. But these artists have taken on that responsibility with pride. Some people may remember God Des & She from their featured spot on the L Word during season three. Or you may have caught one of their shows, as they currently perform for packed audiences around the country. They stand out as the creators of songs that reinforce the fact that being gay or different can, and should, be celebrated.

"The reason I started rapping is because I felt our community was completely invisible and we didn't have a voice and I almost felt like it was my calling—my duty to be a voice for the invisible," said God Des.

Their message and dedication to their fans didn't go unnoticed by tello Films' writer/director team of Julie Keck and Jessica King. According to tello, the four-part series "Never Give Up" is a tell-all that showcases the beginnings of God Des & She's partnership, dedication to their fans and what they do on a regular basis to make society better for members of the LGBT community.

The docuseries gives viewers a glimpse into the lives of the artist by interviewing family members, and the artists themselves, to showcase who they are, where they come from and where they learned to love what they do.

"We wanted to showcase God Des & She because they are so dedicated to their fans," said Julie Keck, Chief Creative Officer and writer for tello Films. "This duo tirelessly tours, puts out new music and interacts on social media... you can see in "Never Give Up" how much their performances mean to their fans."

In the four-part Web docuseries, the crowd goes wild for the group as it gets everyone involved in their interactive performance. With releases such as "Love You Betta," a soulful hip-hop song about unrequited love and "Lick It," an instructional tune for those interested in learning how to please folks of the female persuasion, this duo covers the gambit of subject matter while maintaining a freshness that seemingly keeps listeners coming back for more.

"They don't make music for the money or the fame," said Keck. "They do it for the people who love their music and this fuels everything they do."

There are other artists who express appreciation for the fans. However, the act God Des & She takes it a step further when performing or being out and about among fans.

"Doing music for my job has always been my dream. The fact that, the reason that I have this job is because these people pay money to come and see me, buy my stuff, support me, I'm gonna take the time to sit and meet every single one of those people. ... They do mean a lot to us, genuinely mean a lot to us," said She.

The duo has released four albums that can be found at [www.god-desandshe.com](http://www.god-desandshe.com). On the latest album, United States of God Des and She, they continue to promote a message of acceptance and empowerment with the songs like "God, I Know You Love Me."

The song's chorus, "Please change the hearts of those who judge me in your name..." isn't something commonly heard in mainstream music, but it stands as a message to those who spread hate instead of love. The poignant lyrics



God Des & She. Photo from tello Films

are an ode to the need for LGBT people to understand their own worth and value.

Filmmakers at tello are waiting to see how "Never Give Up" is accepted by viewers before they will consider extending the series. In the meantime, they're always on the lookout for work from artists that are on the radical side of self and community empowerment.

"[There are] no plans for more music-based shows just yet, but we're always talking with Riot Grrl Ink about a documentary series featuring their artists. We love their radical capitalism ethic and their passionate support of queer artists," said Keck.

To view the series Never Give Up and other LGBT-themed shows, visit [www.onemorelesbian.com/tello/webseries](http://www.onemorelesbian.com/tello/webseries).

## National Women's Music Festival June 26-29

The 39th National Women's Music Festival (NWMF) will take place June 26-29 at the Marriott Madison West in Middleton, Wis.

Headliners include Cheryl Wheeler, Catie Curtis, Lucie Blue Tremblay, Dos Fallopa, Sandra Valls and Beth Kille, among others.

In addition to a total of 18 musical and comedy acts comprising almost 40 individuals, the festival includes workshops.

Visit <http://wiaonline.org/>.

## Chigaygo's 'Big Gay Pride' show June 26

Chigaygo, Laugh Factory Chicago's queer comedy showcase, is celebrating Gay Pride with its "Big Gay Pride Anniversary-ish Show" on Thursday, June 26, at 8 p.m. at 3175 N. Broadway.

Poppy Champlin will headline the evening of gay and gay-friendly comedy; other acts include Chicago comics Tamale, Rachel McCartney and more. Scott Duff will host.

Visit [www.LaughFactory.com](http://www.LaughFactory.com).



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**STRIBILD can cause serious side effects:**

- **Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis),** which is a serious medical emergency. Symptoms of lactic acidosis include feeling very weak or tired, unusual (not normal) muscle pain, trouble breathing, stomach pain with nausea or vomiting, feeling cold especially in your arms and legs, feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
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- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or serious liver problems** if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking STRIBILD for a long time. In some cases, these serious conditions have led to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any symptoms of these conditions.

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- **For a list of brand names for these medicines,** please see the Brief Summary on the following pages.
- **Take any other medicines to treat HIV-1 infection,** or the medicine adefovir (Hepsera®).

## What are the other possible side effects of STRIBILD?

**Serious side effects of STRIBILD may also include:**

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- **Bone problems,** including bone pain or bones getting soft or thin, which may lead to fractures. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicines.
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### STRIBILD® (STRY-bild)

(elvitegravir 150 mg/cobicistat 150 mg/emtricitabine 200 mg/tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300 mg) tablets

Brief summary of full Prescribing Information. For more information, please see the full Prescribing Information, including Patient Information.

### What is STRIBILD?

- **STRIBILD is a prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before.** STRIBILD is a complete regimen and should not be used with other HIV-1 medicines.
- **STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.** You must stay on continuous HIV-1 therapy to control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses.
- **Ask your healthcare provider about how to prevent passing HIV-1 to others.** Do not share or reuse needles, injection equipment, or personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them. Do not have sex without protection. Always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.

### What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?

#### STRIBILD can cause serious side effects, including:

1. **Build-up of lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis).** Lactic acidosis can happen in some people who take STRIBILD or similar (nucleoside analogs) medicines. Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Lactic acidosis can be hard to identify early, because the symptoms could seem like symptoms of other health problems. **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms which could be signs of lactic acidosis:**

- feel very weak or tired
- have unusual (not normal) muscle pain
- have trouble breathing
- have stomach pain with nausea or vomiting
- feel cold, especially in your arms and legs
- feel dizzy or lightheaded
- have a fast or irregular heartbeat

2. **Severe liver problems.** Severe liver problems can happen in people who take STRIBILD. In some cases, these liver problems can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis). **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms of liver problems:**

- your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice)
- dark “tea-colored” urine
- light-colored bowel movements (stools)
- loss of appetite for several days or longer
- nausea
- stomach pain

**You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking STRIBILD for a long time.**

3. **Worsening of Hepatitis B infection.** If you have hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection and take STRIBILD, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking STRIBILD. A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before.

- Do not run out of STRIBILD. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your STRIBILD is all gone
- Do not stop taking STRIBILD without first talking to your healthcare provider
- If you stop taking STRIBILD, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly for several months to check your HBV infection. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or unusual symptoms you may have after you stop taking STRIBILD

### Who should not take STRIBILD?

#### Do not take STRIBILD if you also take a medicine that contains:

- adefovir (Hepsera®)
- alfuzosin hydrochloride (Uroxatral®)
- cisapride (Propulsid®, Propulsid Quicksolv®)
- ergot-containing medicines, including: dihydroergotamine mesylate (D.H.E. 45®, Migranal®), ergotamine tartrate (Cafergot®, Migergot®, Ergostat®, Medihaler Ergotamine®, Wigraine®, Wigrettes®), and methylergonovine maleate (Ergotrate®, Methergine®)
- lovastatin (Advicor®, Altoprev®, Mevacor®)
- oral midazolam
- pimozone (Orap®)
- rifampin (Rifadin®, Rifamate®, Rifater®, Rimactane®)
- sildenafil (Revatio®), when used for treating lung problems
- simvastatin (Simcor®, Vytorin®, Zocor®)
- triazolam (Halcion®)
- the herb St. John’s wort

#### Do not take STRIBILD if you also take any other HIV-1 medicines, including:

- Other medicines that contain tenofovir (Atripla®, Complera®, Viread®, Truvada®)
- Other medicines that contain emtricitabine, lamivudine, or ritonavir (Atripla®, Combivir®, Complera®, Emtriva®, Epivir® or Epivir-HBV®, Epzicom®, Kaletra®, Norvir®, Trizivir®, Truvada®)

#### STRIBILD is not for use in people who are less than 18 years old.

#### What are the possible side effects of STRIBILD?

#### STRIBILD may cause the following serious side effects:

- **See “What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?”**
- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before you start and while you are taking STRIBILD. Your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking STRIBILD if you develop new or worse kidney problems.
- **Bone problems** can happen in some people who take STRIBILD. Bone problems include bone pain, softening or thinning (which may lead to fractures). Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people who take HIV-1 medicine. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck (“buffalo hump”), breast, and around the middle of your body (trunk). Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The exact cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known.
- **Changes in your immune system** (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome) can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you start having any new symptoms after starting your HIV-1 medicine.

**The most common side effects of STRIBILD include:**

- Nausea
- Diarrhea

**Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.**

- These are not all the possible side effects of STRIBILD. For more information, ask your healthcare provider.
- Call your healthcare provider for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

**What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking STRIBILD?****Tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including:**

- If you have or had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis B infection
- If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if STRIBILD can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking STRIBILD.
  - There is a pregnancy registry for women who take antiviral medicines during pregnancy. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Talk with your healthcare provider about how you can take part in this registry.
- If you are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you take STRIBILD.
  - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
  - Two of the medicines in STRIBILD can pass to your baby in your breast milk. It is not known if the other medicines in STRIBILD can pass into your breast milk.
  - Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

**Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements:**

- STRIBILD may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how STRIBILD works.
- Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you take any of the following medicines:
  - Hormone-based birth control (pills, patches, rings, shots, etc)
  - Antacid medicines that contain aluminum, magnesium hydroxide, or calcium carbonate. Take antacids at least 2 hours before or after you take STRIBILD
  - Medicines to treat depression, organ transplant rejection, or high blood pressure
  - amiodarone (Cordarone®, Pacerone®)
  - atorvastatin (Lipitor®, Caduet®)
  - bepridil hydrochloride (Vasacor®, Bepadin®)
  - bosentan (Tracleer®)
  - buspirone
  - carbamazepine (Carbatrol®, Epitol®, Equetro®, Tegretol®)
  - clarithromycin (Biaxin®, Prevpac®)
  - clonazepam (Klonopin®)
  - clorazepate (Gen-xene®, Tranxene®)
  - colchicine (Colcrys®)
  - medicines that contain dexamethasone
  - diazepam (Valium®)
  - digoxin (Lanoxin®)
  - disopyramide (Norpace®)

- estazolam
- ethosuximide (Zarontin®)
- flecainide (Tambocor®)
- flurazepam
- fluticasone (Flovent®, Flonase®, Flovent® Diskus®, Flovent® HFA, Veramyst®)
- itraconazole (Sporanox®)
- ketoconazole (Nizoral®)
- lidocaine (Xylocaine®)
- mexiletine
- oxcarbazepine (Trileptal®)
- perphenazine
- phenobarbital (Luminal®)
- phenytoin (Dilantin®, Phenytek®)
- propafenone (Rythmol®)
- quinidine (Neudexta®)
- rifabutin (Mycobutin®)
- rifapentine (Priftin®)
- risperidone (Risperdal®, Risperdal Consta®)
- salmeterol (Serevent®) or salmeterol when taken in combination with fluticasone (Advair Diskus®, Advair HFA®)
- sildenafil (Viagra®), tadalafil (Cialis®) or vardenafil (Levitra®, Staxyn®), for the treatment of erectile dysfunction (ED). If you get dizzy or faint (low blood pressure), have vision changes or have an erection that last longer than 4 hours, call your healthcare provider or get medical help right away.
- tadalafil (Adcirca®), for the treatment of pulmonary arterial hypertension
- telithromycin (Ketek®)
- thioridazine
- voriconazole (Vfend®)
- warfarin (Coumadin®, Jantoven®)
- zolpidem (Ambien®, Edlular®, Intermezzo®, Zolpimist®)

**Know the medicines you take.** Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine. Do not start any new medicines while you are taking STRIBILD without first talking with your healthcare provider.

**Keep STRIBILD and all medicines out of reach of children.**

This Brief Summary summarizes the most important information about STRIBILD. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can also ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about STRIBILD that is written for health professionals, or call 1-800-445-3235 or go to [www.STRIBILD.com](http://www.STRIBILD.com).

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## NUNN ON ONE: MOVIES

# Jose Antonio Vargas on being gay, immigration reform

BY JERRY NUNN

Jose Antonio Vargas is a Pulitzer Prize-winning writer and activist who can add filmmaker to the list now with the documentary Documented.

Raised in the United States from the age of 12 after immigrating from the Philippines, Vargas has made a life entirely on his own. He's written for The Washington Post, The Huffington Post and the San Francisco Chronicle, among others.

In 2011, the already openly gay man came out as an undocumented immigrant in New York Times Magazine. The Obama administration halted the deportation of immigrants with the passing of the DREAM Act but Vargas did not qualify due to his age.

Windy City Times met with the filmmaker after a recent Chicago screening of Documented to learn more about his current struggles.

**Windy City Times: Hi, Jose. When did you first discover you were good at writing?**

Jose Antonio Vargas: My freshman year in high school was the first time I read a book that sounded like me, The House on Mango Street, by Sandra Cisneros. The story was based in Chicago [and is] about a Mexican-American growing up.

I never really thought I would be a writer. I loved film. I was going to be a theater major in college and direct, not act. I was obsessed with [director] Mike Nichols growing up.

When I found out that I was undocumented,

I wound up doing journalism. I thought if I didn't have the right kind of papers then what if I am in the newspaper? I was 17 and wanted to write my way into America! I did that for 13 years.

I made a list of what I thought success was about, such as writing for The New Yorker or winning a big prize. To my surprise I ended up doing all of them. After making good money, then I was able to live in Manhattan, where I had always wanted live since watching Woody Allen movies as a kid.

I was miserable. I think my depression started after my Mark Zuckerberg profile ran in The New Yorker. I remember thinking something had to stop. No one was threatening to out me. I could have just kept going. This is why the closet is such an interesting parallel.

To this day, journalism is the hardest thing to do because I never feel like I have enough words. I feel like when I am writing something I have to wrestle with myself. I made a life out of it but it's something I loathe to do. It's so challenging for me.

**WCT: So the filmmaking must be a different avenue for you.**

JAV: This is more natural for me, although I did underestimate how difficult it is to write voice over narration for film. I had to write those narrations to make them as simple and economical as possible.

**WCT: Do you have a favorite piece you have written?**

JAV: Zuckerberg was hard because I had six



Jose Antonio Vargas.

weeks with the profile. People usually take months to write one article for them.

I did an HIV series for a year. The first film I made was on the AIDS crisis in Washington DC. I was really proud of that. People didn't know that Washington DC had the highest new cases of AIDS in the country. The title of the film was The Other City.

The AIDS epidemic is the intersection of so many things that we don't want to talk about in society with drugs, sex, and race. Those three things are so taboo. I wound up working on the story for a year.

**WCT: You have stated that coming out undocumented was a bigger deal than coming out as being gay. Can you explain that?**

JAV: That is because of where I am from. If I had grown up in Kentucky I don't know if it would have been that easy. I might have been in the closet about both things for many years.

When I found out that I was an illegal faggot at sixteen years old I made the decision that I was going to be so successful that no one could stop me or break me. Isn't that the most delusional thing you have ever heard? I never took a break. My career went so fast. The past year has been looking back at it. I never really saw myself until I saw the film. I don't like looking at myself in the mirror, which is ironic because I am all over the paper. It is coming to term with who I am. Guess what? This country made me who I am. I don't make sense without my mom. None of us do.

**WCT: This film must be therapeutic.**

JAV: Incredibly. It is cathartic. If it provides

a way for people to face their own lives then we did the job.

**WCT: With same-sex marriage being legal in some states, this doesn't solve your problem?**

JAV: I'm 33 so this might be the time to date. I never really did that. I always would run away from people. When The New York Times essay came out three years ago I heard from people in my past who wanted to know why I didn't tell them. I couldn't because once I told them they would be a part of it. Once you tell someone then you make them an accessory.

When I told Peter Perl, my editor at The Washington Post, I felt so guilty that I lied to him and now I was dragging him into this thing. You should read all of the articles that came out because he got reprimanded. I was afraid that he would be fired.

They say you can't expect people to love you until you love yourself. It sounds corny and trite but I believe that. It would have been unfair to be in a relationship when I can barely make sense of myself.

**WCT: Where did the age 30 come from as the age cutoff for the DREAM Act?**

JAV: Random. It was introduced by Dick Durbin, a senator from Illinois, in August 2001; then, 9/11 happened a month later and [the measure] was not passed. When it was first introduced, it was 21 and younger. As the years went by it became 25 and older. It was 23, 25, 28, 30, 31, 33, back to 30. How did they pick the number? We don't know! Is there a magician out there that thinks how many people we can screw today?

**WCT: What do you want people to do now?**

JAV: We are fighting for more than immigration reform. We are fighting for the dignity of people and liberation. More than anything Define American is trying to change media and culture. Again, LGBT rights would not have happened without culture shifting.

When we were shooting the Time cover the whole time I was thinking, "Man, I wish Ellen was here." I remember buying Time Magazine when she was on the cover. I put it in my bedroom because I was still in the closet. That moment and Matthew Shepard made me feel I need to come out. My fantasy was that Ellen Degeneres would have been in that room. We are coming out to let people in.

I am for immigration reform but also something bigger than that, changing hearts and minds. It is about figuring out a country that is so dramatically demographically changed. That is why we call it Define American. I want people to check out the website and my film.

**Documented airs on CNN on June 29 and airs again July 5, with Netflix availability directly after.**

**Visit [www.defineamerican.com](http://www.defineamerican.com) to learn more today.**

## Lambda Literary Award winners announced

The winners of the 26th Annual Lambda Literary Awards (the "Lammys") were announced June 2 in a gala ceremony that co-mediienne Kate Clinton hosted in New York City.

Alison Bechdel and Kate Bornstein received special honors. Cartoonist Justin Hall, award-winning creator of the series True Travel Tales, presented the Board of Trustees Award for Excellence in Literature to Bechdel (the comic strip Dykes to Watch Out For; graphic memoirs Fun Home and Are You My Mother). Bornstein received the Pioneer Award from her life partner, Barbara Carrellas.

Among the many category winners were Luis Negron's Mundo Cruel: Stories (Gay General Fiction), Chinelo Okparanta's Happiness, Like Water (Lesbian General Fiction), Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore's The End of San Francisco (Transgender Nonfiction) and Susan Choi's My Education (Bisexual Fiction).

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

## McNally's 'Some Men' opens Aug. 16

Pride Films and Plays will present the Chicago premiere of Terrence McNally's Some Men. David Zak and Derek Van Barham will co-direct, and the production will feature many of the artistic ensemble Members of Pride Films and Plays.

Some Men presents a kaleidoscope of gay characters set within some of the events that bent the arc of gay history in the United States.

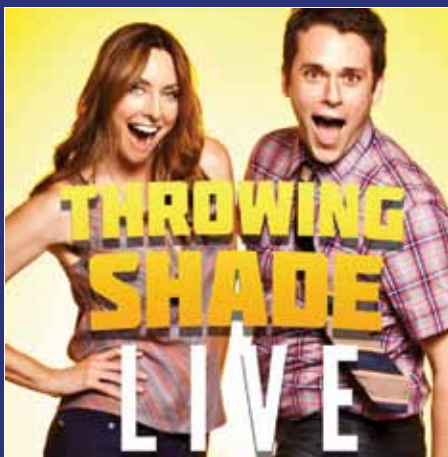
The production will generally run Thursdays through Sundays Aug. 16-Sept. 14 at Rivedell Theatre, 5779 N. Ridge Ave. (Previews are Aug. 14-15.)

Tickets are \$15 for previews; \$25 for Thursdays; and \$30 for Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays; visit [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com).

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# Upcoming event focuses on trans military service



Aaron Belkin.

"We Have Waited Long Enough: Open Transgender Service in the U.S. Military," a discussion with Aaron Belkin of The Palm Center, will take place Wed., Aug. 20, 6-8 p.m. at The Keith House, 1900 S. Prairie Ave., Chicago.

After Belkin's talk there will be a book-signing by Diane and Jacob Anderson-Minshall, authors of *Queerly Beloved: A Love Story Across Genders*.

Windy City Times newspaper is hosting, and the event is free; however, RSVP to [editor@windycitymediagroup.com](mailto:editor@windycitymediagroup.com).

President Obama made history this year when the White House said it is open to a review of Pentagon policies banning transgender troops from serving. In the history of the republic, no president has ever signaled a willingness to consider transgender military service. "When we win (and we will win), we will look back on the White House statement as the the beginning of the end of the ban," Belkin said. But what will it take to cross the finish line,

to convert the President's general openness to reconsidering discriminatory policy into actual political change? Come discuss the prospects for change with some of the participants in process.

Belkin is a professor, author, activist and dancer. Since 1999, Belkin has served as founding director of the Palm Center, which The Advocate named as one of the most effective LGBT rights organizations in the nation. He designed and implemented much of the public education campaign that eroded popular support for military anti-gay discrimination, and when "don't ask, don't tell" was repealed, the president of the Evelyn and Walter Haas Jr. Fund observed that, "this day never would have arrived (or it would have been a much longer wait) without the persistent, grinding work of the Michael Palm Center." Harvard Law Professor Janet Halley said of Belkin that, "Probably no single person deserves more credit for the repeal of 'don't ask, don't tell.'" Currently, the Palm Center is engaged in a long-term initiative to address transgender military service.

As a bonus, there is also a book-signing after Belkin's talk. Imagine if, after 15 years as a lesbian couple, your partner turned to you and said, "I think I'm really a man." For Diane and Jacob (nee Suzy) Anderson-Minshall this isn't a hypothetical question. It's what really happened. Eight years later, the couple not only remains together, they still identify as queer, still work in LGBT media, and remain part of the LGBT community. They paint a portrait of love, not only to each other, but to the San Francisco Bay Area, LGBT publishing, and the queer community. *Queerly Beloved* is a love story that flies in the face of expectations and raises questions about the true nature of identity, sexuality, and love.

—From a press release



Andy Karol's photo of Kia.

## 'Human Space' about gender, sexuality

"The Human Space"—an exhibition of works from Chicago-based photographers Andy Karol and Oli Rodriguez—will take place through July 26 (complete with opening and closing receptions on those dates) at Beauty and Brawn Art Gallery & Think Space, 3501 W. Fullerton Ave.

Karol's "Eden: Expressions in Gender" brings gender fluidity and variance center stage with its 30 black-and-white, fine art nude portraits of subjects expressing their own non-conforming gender. Rodriguez's "Papi Project" is an interdisciplinary project that includes 3-D photographic sculptures, video, photography and performance.

Visit [www.beautyandbrowngallery.com](http://www.beautyandbrowngallery.com).

## Lakeview East Festival of the Arts Sept. 13-14

The Lakeview East Chamber of Commerce will host and produce the 10th Annual Lakeview East Festival of the Arts Saturday, Sept. 13 and Sunday, Sept. 14.

The 2014 festival will showcase more than 150 juried artists with original paintings, sculpture, photography, furniture, jewelry and more.

Unique to the festival this year will be a special Friday, Sept. 12 evening anniversary kickoff party as well as a 3-D mapping building projection of the festival's 10-year history upon the Lakeview Athletic Club each night of the festival at 6:30-10 p.m.

Lakeview East Festival of the Arts asks for a \$5 donation upon entrance. Those who donate will be entered to win round-trip tickets to any scheduled destination courtesy of Southwest Airlines.

Visit <http://www.lakevieweastfestivalofthearts.com> or call 773-348-8608.



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## BOOKS

# 'Little Reef and Other Stories' full of rich tales

BY FRANK PIZZOLI

When I met up with Michael Carroll in his Chelsea/NYC flat to interview him, his energy matched the verve of his short stories—right there, to the point, ready to go. In 12 tales, some connected, Carroll, 49, draws easily recognizable characters. There is humor. Human flaws are laid out but not judged. There's room between the words for readers to fill in their own thoughts.

Carroll is a good storyteller, which may reflect his colorful life. He was born in Memphis, grew up in northern Florida and lives in New York. He's been a Peace Corps volunteer, a waiter, a janitor, a writer's assistant and a college instructor. His work has appeared in Boulevard, Ontario Review, Southwest Review, The Yale Review, Open City and Animal Shelter, as well as in such anthologies as The New Penguin Book of Gay Short Stories (which David Leavitt and Mark Mitchell edited).

He collaborated with his husband, Edmund White (A Boy's Own Story), on the suspense story "Excavation" for Joyce Carol Oates' New Jersey Noir. His interviews with Ann Beattie and Wells Tower were included in the recently revamped Chattahoochee Review, where his first story was published, and where he is New York Editor. Little Reef and Other Stories is his first collection published this month (June) by the University of Wisconsin Press.

**Windy City Times: How did Little Reef happen for you?**

Michael Carroll: I wanted to accomplish a couple of different things with the stories. I wanted stories that were shorter rather than longer. Today's reading habits have moved toward shorter pieces. Shorter stories are better for public readings too.

**WCT: Did you accomplish your goal?**

MC: Yes, I think I have. And to accomplish my goal I had to change my writing style. These stories are different from my previous work which has appeared in literary journals (Boulevard, Ontario Review, Southwest Review, The Yale Review) or The New Penguin Book of

Gay Short Stories. I now write in shorter sentences, nothing ornate or imposing. Simple and direct is my new way of proceeding when I write.

**WCT: Does your cleaner writing style reflect you as an individual?**

MC: Well, I'm not big on existential questions as an individual or as a writer. My characters are there in their situations, moving along. I present my characters. I don't manipulate them per se. I'm not big on motive.

**WCT: Your story openings are inviting. Your first sentence pulls a reader into the story.**

MC: The first sentence of a story is the impulse or thought that starts the creative process for me. Then I develop a story. I may write only the first sentence and then it sit for a while. When my next thought comes I'm back into the story. I do not rely on a classical structure of beginning, middle, end. In fact, I never have an ending in mind. My endings happen as I write.

**WCT: Your stories, your characters, they cover a lot of territory, younger couples, older couples, intergenerational exchanges. Are your characters drawn from real people?**

MC: In some instances yes, others no. I rely on my memory but then fill in where needed or in ways that make the basic story more interesting.

**WCT: Werewolf opens with: "After a while, I got so tired of going back to Florida not because I didn't miss it but because each time I returned I got more and more disappointed by my life, and by myself." You were born in Memphis and raised in Florida. Is Werewolf about your life?**

MC: What I did was come up with that first sentence and probably simultaneously, or by the second or third line, I knew that the narrator would be talking about a friend based on my friend from high school. More than half the time I work almost straight from real life, fictionalizing by changing names, collapsing the time into something dramatically condensed, and creating a fictional situation that brings the characters together or back together. In



Michael Carroll. Photo by Eileen O'Donnell

this case, I worked from my friend's real past with drugs and overdoing it, which in high school and college I was very judgmental about. I wanted to push myself to imagine his ultimate illness and what that would look like dramatically, so I gave him liver disease.

**WCT: Stories like Werewolf, in general, develop quickly for you?**

MC: I wrote the story very quickly, the first eight pages in an evening (I'd abandoned a crappier never-to-be-finished story earlier that day and out of that frustration come up with something new; I hate not working, and I was trying to finish this sequence of stories that became Little Reef).

Oddly, after the book was accepted and this story was twice anthologized, I got word that my friend had died. Almost a year later, but suddenly and in his sleep. And I felt weird about it. I've written about him in much earlier stories, in a different style. This was more direct. And then I wrote a little two-minute thing about him for the radio back home. One's personal life, rather than constricting the writer part of you, suggests itself in many different ways. It doesn't bring Tom back, but it did when I first wrote it, because I wanted to remember him when he was still alive. Now I can just go back to being sad. But other people have liked it a lot.

**WCT: Your writer's vice has a real sense of humor. Are you funny in real life or only when you write?**

MC: I find humor in daily life and say funny

things now and then. I really like making my characters say funny things or have humorous observations or reactions to situations.

**WCT: You see your characters with the hawk eye of a committed voyeur. Not in a transgressive way, but your scenes as they are told reflect your characters flaws, redeeming qualities, foibles. Are you a people-watcher?**

MC: I write in a bar in NYC's Chelsea District, the Barracuda, and a story in there is named for the place that gave me a refuge during happy hour and wine and inspiration. I fictionalize to some degree or another. In the eponymous story set at Barracuda, I asked myself what was the deal with these girls who hang out with gay boys?

Then I came up with a first line and gave her a lower-level job in PR, a past life, and two drunk gay-boy pals. At other times, particularly in the second half of the book, it's all of it, but I mean almost all of it, straight from real life, only the names have been changed. Mostly. Except for when Perry goes home with an organic goat farmer and cheese maker in Maine in the next to last story, and some of the sex and the very ending of the final story.

**WCT: Your short stories read like opening chapters of novellas or full-length novels. Have any of your stories grabbed you that way, maybe the beginning of a novel?**

MC: I intended the stories to be separate pieces even though they are linked. That is, even though they add up to a larger story of intertwined lives I didn't want to give them an overall novelistic arc. I was asked by one of the earlier readers reviewing my book at the press if I didn't want to reconfigure them as a novel, but no. I wanted them to read separately and wholly. And in any event only half of them are related.

The other half are completely separate and could only be part of a novel with considerable pain and annoyance (and I wanted to move on and write a novel, which I've since done). I also wanted some of them to be short enough for public readings. But some are too long to be read in their entirety. Maybe I'll read this or that part of a longer one from time to time.

**WCT: I wanted to ask about your husband, Edmund White, whom you married Nov. 8 after being together since 1995.**

MC: We're going on 20 years together. I've said in interviews about my writing and this book that I've needed, and always had, Ed's support and encouragement as I developed my writing. I did not attend a high-powered writing program. When I thought I needed criticism, Ed provided encouragement.

SAVE THE DATE

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# Gaysia:

Adventures in the  
Queer East

by Benjamin Law

\$16.95; Cleis Press; 283 pages  
BY SALLY PARSONS

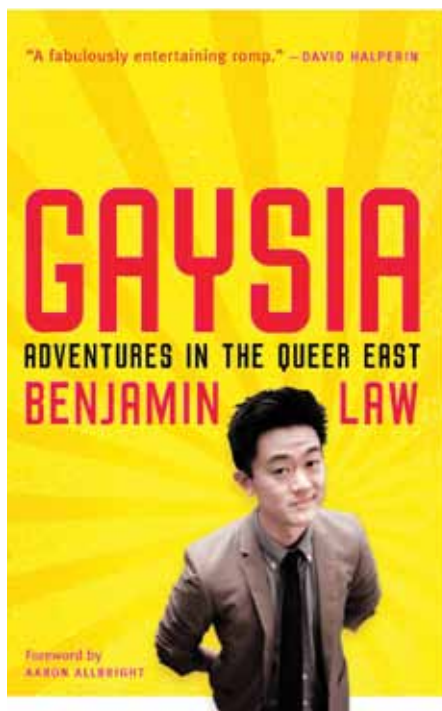
This is one of the most fascinating books I've read this year, in which the reader gets to explore the world of LGBTQ culture in seven Asian countries as seen through the eyes of a young gay Australian journalist of Chinese heritage.

This account, written in a most accessible, breezy style, gets the Western reader to thinking about how different cultures experience, absorb and categorize various aspects of LGBTQ life—and how lucky we have it here compared to some of these cultures.

Law travels to Indonesia, Thailand, China, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar (Burma) and India. He introduces us to local people, customs, laws and attitudes. He shares with us his personal reactions to what he encounters.

He starts out on the island of Bali, where the gay scene (especially for foreigners) has exploded. Caucasian Westerners with a lot of money are called "bulés." Gay bulés are heartily embraced. He meets Eelga, who has a thing for hot sex with older European guys "because hot."

Law discusses the social, health and economic implications of the growing sex trade. Young gay Indonesians from other islands live openly queer on Bali, far from the disapproving eyes of their families. Balinese gays, however, have to be more discreet, as word travels quickly. In Bali, a man must get married. This creates conflicts for gays. And, Law points out, although gay tourism helps the economy, it hurts the culture. Locals are troubled that Bali might become the next Bangkok, known for its active sex trade. Many sex workers don't use condoms; there is little sex education. HIV rates among



men who had sex with men increased by 10 percent over the course of a year.

And so it goes. On to Thailand, where Law witnesses the world's biggest beauty pageant for transsexual women. While a lot of fun, it is one bright moment that passes quickly in a society where trans women do not have legal status and are ignored for most of the year.

In China, gays rely on the Internet for connection with other gays. And, as the Chinese Internet is carefully monitored, they have to be careful. Gays are not recognized at all. They are ghosts. Among others, Law meets Xian, a lesbian activist and possibly the first in her country to have contacted other lesbians online. Xian explains that the highest rate of violence toward lesbians is from their parents. In Chinese culture, your identity is inextricably tied to that of your family. "It wasn't possible to turn your back and run," explains Law.

June 25, 2014

51

In Japan, Law discovers that drag queens, camp gays and trans are popular on TV—but no LGBT people are taken seriously. "So much of queerness in Japan seemed to be a performance for straight people," he writes.

In Malaysia, both Christian and Muslim tenets treat homosexuality as an affliction that can and should be cured. Ex-gay organizations flourish.

Myanmar is particularly oppressive for gays. Between 15,000 and 25,000 die each year from a lack of antiretrovirals (ARTs). The government is estimated to have the worst spending on health in the entire world. (The origin of these stats is not clearly cited although presumably from UN agencies).

Law ends his journey in India, where he attends his first Pride parade and meets a guru, Swamiji Baba Ramdev, who claims he can cure homosexuality. Ramdev sees gays as heterosexuals who have developed bad mental habits. Through practice of pranayam and meditation one can develop mastery over perverse habits, according to him.

Law also meets dedicated Indians working tirelessly through organizations set up to educate gays about protective sex and to repeal an Indian law that outlaws gay sex.

Gaysia raises interesting questions for those who like to ponder such things. How has our culture molded the development of LGBTQ rights in this country? How do we engage with or think about LGBTQ folk from other countries, whose gay culture has been molded—or suppressed—by norms and values different from ours?

Most of the book spotlights males and their struggles and triumphs. It's disappointing for the women, but it's still a fascinating read.

## 'Chicago Independent Bookstore Day' on July 12

Nine Chicago independent bookstores are teaming to create the first Chicago Independent Bookstore Day on Saturday, July 12.

To encourage Chicago readers to visit their own neighborhood store as well as the other unique stores in different neighborhoods—from Hyde Park to Logan Square to Andersonville—indie stores are offering special deals, free books, and refreshments. Customers will also receive a handful of puzzle pieces from each participating store that will fit together to create an exclusively designed frameable print by Lilli Carré.

Participating stores include The Book Cellar (Lincoln Square), 57th Street Books and Seminary Coop (Hyde Park), Sandmeyer's (Printer's Row), Unabridged Books (Lakeview), Open Books (River North), City Lit Books (Logan Square), Powell's Bookstore (University Village) and Women & Children First (Andersonville).

Email [wcfllinda@gmail.com](mailto:wcfllinda@gmail.com) for more information.

## July 26 magic event to benefit AFC

Five magicians—Eugene Burger, Trent James, Patrick Livingston, Benjamin Barnes and Robert Charles—are staging an event that will benefit the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC).

The event will take place Saturday, July 26, at 7:30 p.m. at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St.

Tickets are \$25; see [magical.BrownPaperTickets.com](http://magical.BrownPaperTickets.com).



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15th annual

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### MatthewAdamczyk

Matthew Adamczyk, 29, was born and raised in central Massachusetts.

From a very early age he has focused on two things: drawing and dancing. Deciding to pursue the career in dance first, Matthew enrolled in a local studio and after a few years, at the age of 16, he enrolled in the Harid Conservatory for classical ballet in Boca Raton, Florida. While there, he spent much time at school in art class honing his talents for visual art. One painting won a Gold Key in the Scholastic Arts and Writing competition and went on to the National competition held at the Guggenheim Museum in NYC.

Upon graduation in 2003, he was offered a position at the Joffrey Ballet as an Arpino Apprentice, and was promoted to full company member in 2005. After a few years establishing his place in the company and Chicago, Matthew decided to focus on his art and make it into a second career. In 2011, he created his website DancingPainter.com, showcasing his creations as well as his extensive resume as a dancer.

Ever the philanthropist, he has volunteered his talents to events like Dance For Life and Embarc, and has submitted works of art for several silent auctions benefitting both local and national charities. Matthew also sits on the Joffrey Ballet marketing comity and has assisted Executive Director Greg Cameron in establishing a new relationship with Chicago's LGBT community.

**DID YOU KNOW?** In his senior year of high school, Matthew spent two periods testing and creating recipes as the teacher's aide in the culinary arts department.



### JacquesAgbobby

Jacques Agbobby, 16, was born in Togo, Africa, and came to the U.S. seven years ago. He moved to Chicago with his family to seek treatment for a family member with HIV/AIDS as well as better educational opportunities for his siblings and himself.

The transition was very difficult for Jacques and he suffered from frequent bullying, he was ostracized not only because of his skin color and accent, but for his sexual orientation as well. Rather than focus on the prevalent hardships or dwell on the traumas of his past, Jacques chooses to look at the bright side of his story. In eighth grade, Jacques (who now identifies as gay) produced an anti-bullying PSA that was featured in Time Out Chicago; he was later asked by the organization "Facing History and Ourselves" to speak at its national benefit dinner.

Jacques currently attends high school at the Chicago Academy for the Arts on a full scholarship. He is also an ambassador for the National Youth HIV and AIDS Awareness Day foundation, where he volunteers as a fundraiser and speaker on behalf of people living with HIV/AIDS. This past year, Jacques helped his school raise more than \$4,000 for Children's Place, an organization that provides day care for children who's been affected/effectd by HIV/AIDS.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Jacques just won a Youth Courage Award from Colin Higgins Foundation for his activism in the HIV/AIDS and LGBTQ community.



### RicardoAlbarran

Ricardo Albarran, 24, is currently the testing together coordinator at Howard Brown Health Center.

Born and raised in the Little Village and West Lawn neighborhoods of Chicago, Ricardo attended the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC), where he earned a Bachelor of Science in community health. He dedicated much of his free time volunteering at Frances Nelson Health Center, Champaign County Health Care Consumers, and assisting in two different research projects alongside UIUC professors that related to health disparities in Latino/a populations.

He also served as president of the Aspiring Latinos in Medicine Association (ALMA) and finished his junior year, receiving a Student Leadership Award at UIUC.

After volunteering in the Latino/a community of Urbana-Champaign, Ricardo then felt personally compelled to focus his time on the other side of his identity after leaving UIUC, serving the LGBTQ community in Chicago. In May 2013, he applied and was hired as a clinic-based health educator at Howard Brown Health Center, and has since provided HIV testing and counseling services to hundreds of individuals in the community, while incorporating Personalized Cognitive Counseling into some of his work.

This past May, he was promoted to coordinate the Testing Together program at Howard Brown, a program in which couples can receive their HIV test results together. Ricardo hopes to one day combine his love for travel and passion for health care to serve different communities not only within his hometown of Chicago, but across the nation.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Ricardo is a huge fan of horror films. He also has two 1-year old Pomeranian pups, LoLa and Rocco, who jump at him in excitement every time he comes home from work.



### TrianAlexander

Trian Alexander was born and raised in the Uptown area of Chicago. After attending Connecticut College, they returned to Chicago in 2013 to complete their bachelor's degree. Due to complications Trian had to leave their family home, and rely on the kindness and support of individuals of LGBT community.

Through that support, Trian became a volunteer videographer and editor for the Trans Oral History Project and an intern for Affinity Community Services. In the early spring of 2014, Trian spoke on a panel for Amnesty International about their experience as a homeless non-binary trans\* youth of color. Trian continued to support homeless youth advocacy through assisting at the May 2014 Windy City Times LGBTQ Homeless Youth Summit. Trian is continuing to work through Affinity Community Services as an advocate of the Black and brown trans\* communities, in the hope to see conditions improve for current and future generations.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Trian doesn't like the moon. Seeing a full moon makes them physically uncomfortable.

# LucyBaglin

Lucy Baglin, 25, grew up in Guildford, England, and moved to the United States at age 13. Lucy returned to England to complete her master's degree in public health at the University of Surrey in 2010, before finally deciding on Chicago as a place to start working in public policy.

As policy coordinator for the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC), Lucy's role is to lead state and federal mobilization efforts to enhance and expand grass-roots support for HIV/AIDS and LGBT-related advocacy issues, including helping to recruit and engage new AIDS advocates for the statewide Illinois Alliance for Sound AIDS Policy (IL ASAP). A critical, and favorite, part of her work is helping HIV/AIDS advocates develop their stories, speak up and become strong leaders in their communities.

She also works to implement key non-discriminatory provisions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) by contributing to HIVHealthReform.org as well as Chicago's Trans Healthcare Access coalition.

Lucy's goal is to always work in a field where she can contribute to the fight for political, economic and social justice.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Lucy does not have a middle name.



# JohnnyBegale

Johnny Begale, 27, grew up in a northwest suburb of Chicago. Throughout his schooling, he focused on athletics, good grades, and quality time with family and friends. He received his bachelor's degree in accounting at Illinois Wesleyan University, where he played club volleyball and was involved with the Office of Residential Life.

Staying on track, Johnny obtained an audit winter internship with McGladrey & Pullen in Chicago during his junior year, which turned into a full-time position following graduation. Before facing the real world, Johnny backpacked through Europe for a month, and upon coming home, was ready for a new chapter in his life—and came out to his family and friends.

Shortly after coming out, Johnny realized a career in accounting was not the best route for him. He left the accounting industry to figure things out, and started working at the family meat market in Lake View. Feeling more comfortable with his current job and himself, Johnny was on the lookout for a career he could be passionate about. Almost a year ago, he had the urge to "pay it forward" and started a non-profit called Equality America. His goal in creating this group was to help people visually show their support for marriage equality and the LGBTQ community as a whole.

Since creation of the group, Johnny, alongside his family and friends, has sold hundreds of wristbands and key chains bearing the name "Equality America" in the hopes of offering visual support to those struggling with their sexual orientation. Equality America continues to evolve and through transparency and vulnerability is an organization which hopes to motivate members of the LGBTQ community who struggle with their sexuality to become confident in who they are and be true to themselves.

**DID YOU KNOW?** During Johnny's Eurotrip in 2009, his group of friends decided to bypass hostels and hotels for a night in Nice, France, and instead sleep on the beach. Just their luck—the beach was full of stones and not sand, but it was nothing grapefruit and wine for dinner couldn't cure.



# MonicaBeverlyHillz

Monica Beverly Hillz, 29 has been through many transformations in her life. The latest one has turned her into an advocate for transwomen everywhere. She came out as a transgendered woman as a cast member in the fifth season of RuPaul's Drag Race. Monica has been telling her story and spinning across dance floors since.

Monica's glory is a tribute to the two women who gave her life. Elsie De Jesus, Monica's biological mother, gave birth to Monica when she was impossibly young and tormented by life on the streets. At the age of 4, Monica—or "Meño," as she was known as a child—was adopted by her mother's sister, Gladys. Raised on the rough streets of Chicago's Latino Northwest Side, Monica—who sashayed and stole her sisters' clothes and high heels—was like no other boy. When Gladys died tragically, leaving behind five children, Monica, then 15, moved to Kentucky to join her biological mother.

In small-town Kentucky, Monica was the only openly gay person at her high school. Monica soon moved back north to Chicago, where she began performing in drag. By 18, she became the main diva at various Latino gay clubs like Rancho Luna, Mambo Cafe and Club Dulces. When street life in Chicago proved too brutal, Monica followed in her mother's footsteps and moved to Kentucky. There Monica became a cast mate at her town's only gay bar. Soon after Monica was called to Hollywood to compete in RuPaul's Drag Race. The rest, my beautiful humans is history in the making!

**DID YOU KNOW?** Monica is horrifically scared to get behind the wheel of a car? She would rather ride a bike or get a piggy back ride to her gigs.



# AnnieCastronovo

Annie Castronova, 23, originally from Worcester, Massachusetts, studied political science at Saint Michael's College (SMC) in Burlington, Vermont.

As a student at SMC, Annie became involved with HIV/AIDS activism through the Student Global AIDS Campaign. To develop a better understanding of the global HIV/AIDS pandemic, Annie studied abroad in Gulu, Uganda. In Uganda, Annie researched the positive impact community health-workers had on HIV/AIDS prevention strategies as well as the delivery and destigmatization of ARV treatment.

After graduating in May 2013, Annie joined the Episcopal Service Corps and began working at Chicago House & Social Service Agency's TransLife Center. At the TransLife Center, Annie assists program staff with housing, medical, legal, and pop-in programming. Annie also volunteers at the Transformative Justice Law Project of Illinois' Name Change Mobilization, where they assist transgender and gender variant individuals with obtaining their legal name change. Annie has committed to a second year of the Episcopal Service Corps and will be continuing their work at Chicago House. After their service year, Annie plans on attending law school in hopes of developing skill sets that will make them a better advocate for the LGBTQAI+ community.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Annie auditioned for the Real World during their Senior year of college and got through to the second round, but tanked the group interview and never got called back again?



# BreezyCephus

Breezy Cephus 22, born in Chicago and raised in Hopkins Park, Illinois.

Breezy started volunteering at an early age, first at Pembroke Nursing Home in 2003 and then at New Beginnings shelter for abused cats and dogs. In 2009 she relocated to Chicago. She attended Dawson college to obtain her GED and NCCER certification in 2011.

She received an award from the Center on Halsted for leadership and activism in 2013. Also, Breezy was part of a group of people who went to Springfield to talk to senators about funding for homeless youth in 2014. In addition, she was a youth organizer for an LGBTQ homeless youth summit held this year. She is currently volunteering with the SAGE program and belongs to a group called the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Breezy collected stuffed animals until she turned 20 years old.



# DustinErikstrup

A native of Minnesota, Dustin now calls Chicago home after nearly 11 years in the Windy City. Dustin studied Marketing Communications and Retail Business at Columbia College. He was a key member of the management staff that launched Taverna 750, a popular bar/restaurant in the Lake View neighborhood.

Dustin began his fundraising career in 2009, leading his CMSA flag football team in the annual benefit, Leather & Lace. After four years of this popular event, the group has raised more than \$7,000 for Birch Family Camp, with donations and participation growing each year.

As the manager of special events for Center on Halsted, he has successfully developed and executed LGBTQ community events, exceeding fundraising goals while increasing the visibility of Center on Halsted and its mission.

Dustin is a leader in the Network of Development Professionals for many LGBTQ non-profits; meeting quarterly to stay connected about how to partner on community initiatives including the Unity in the Community Pride parade entry. He is also a member of the Gay Marketers of Chicago.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Dustin is usually eating something—and his eyelashes are real.





## Pastor Jamie Frazier

"A fresh voice..." These are words that people often use to describe Jamie Frazier, affectionately known as, Pastor J. A native of Moncks Corner, South Carolina, Jamie owes much to the mother, Irene Frazier, and grandmother, Dorothy Frazier, who raised him. These two women taught Jamie the importance of serving God and loving people.

Jamie attended Vanderbilt University on a full-tuition scholarship. While at Vandy, he, among other things, launched a successful campus ministry.

Now a seminary student, Jamie, 28, recently started The Lighthouse Church of Chicago. The heart of this church's mission is clearly expressed in its motto: "Passionate About Jesus. Serious About Justice." The Lighthouse strives to be a congregation where Christ is worshipped, all are welcome, and justice is pursued! You can learn more about both Pastor J, as well as The Lighthouse, at [www.lighthousechicago.org](http://www.lighthousechicago.org).

**DID YOU KNOW?** Pastor J can't cook, and finds single men who can simply irresistible!



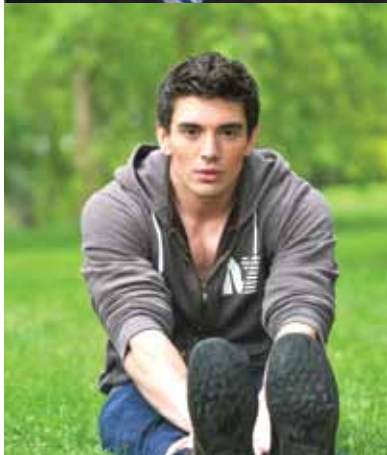
## Nick Furtwengler

Nick Furtwengler, 29, was born in the suburbs of Cincinnati, Ohio.

After earning his bachelor's degree from the University of Cincinnati, he moved to Chicago to attend the Chicago-Kent College of Law. While in law school, Nick joined the board of the Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago (LAGBAC) as a student board member. After law school, Nick joined LAGBAC as a full board member and became the chairperson of the Programming & Events Committee.

In his capacity as chairperson, Nick organizes free legal-education seminars for students and practitioners that focus on LGBT issues in the legal world. Nick works in the Chicago office of Deloitte Tax LLP in the firm's corporate tax-consulting practice. His practice includes analyzing tax returns for potential refund opportunities and corporate controversy issues.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Nick's pinky fingers are crooked—and Anthony Bourdain has Nick's dream job.



## Steve Grand

Not long ago, Steve Grand, 24, was a little-known Chicago singer-songwriter.

That changed July 2, 2013, when his self-funded music video, "All-American Boy," posted to YouTube. The song—about unrequited love between two men—went viral, accumulating more than 3 million views, landing Steve on Good Morning America and CNN and catapulting the song to BuzzFeed's list of the "24 Most Brilliant Music Videos from 2013."

Steve has been hailed as a "viral sensation" and one of this country's "first openly gay country stars."

Steve released a second single, "Stay," then a third, "Back to California," which offers a sneak peek at his first full-length album due out this fall.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Steve has the third most-funded music project in Kickstarter's history.



## Zach Haller

Zach Haller, 30, was born and raised in the Twin Cities suburbs, graduating with honors from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2006.

Since college, Zach has been recognized for leadership and creativity in the fields of fitness, technology, entrepreneurship and immigration law. As a fitness instructor with the Chicago Athletic Clubs, Zach has created original class formats while bringing new styles and perspectives to age-old formats, and has been featured in TimeOut Chicago, WCIU-The U and NBC Chicago. While living in Chicago, he was inspired by the lack of a universal, Web-based lost-and-found system, and went on to launch FoundInTown.com in January 2012 to solve this problem with a patent-pending lost device recovery service. He and his work with Found in Town have been featured in Fast Company, Business Insider, MSNBC, Crain's Chicago Business, TimeOut Chicago, and WGN Radio. Zach was a 2013 Fellow of the Startup Leadership Program, a highly selective, world-class training program for outstanding founders and innovators.

Having more than seven years of experience in immigration law as a corporate paralegal, Zach has also volunteered coordinating and facilitating pro bono visa clinics around Chicago, and recently had editorial work published in Crain's Chicago Business advocating for pragmatic immigration reform. Currently he is employed by Microsoft Corporation, managing key aspects of Microsoft's nonimmigrant visa program.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Zach is fluent in Spanish, stemming from a love affair with Shakira's first album while in high school, and typically eats breakfast several times a day.



## Anna-Rose & Hannah Ii-Epstein

Anna Rose Ii-Epstein, 30, and Hannah Ii-Epstein, 30, have been married since July 2011 and live in Chicago. They are both founders of Nothing Without a Company (NwaC), and are artists who strive to create fulfilling work wherever they go.

They have both worked with companies such as Mary-Arrchie Theater Compnay, Silent Theatre, The Inconvenience and Nothing Special Productions. Anna Rose has also worked with The Goodman, Steppenwolf, Victory Gardens Theater, Redmoon, Pride Films and Plays, About Face, and Windy City Performing Arts. Anna Rose is a licensed massage therapist who focuses on energy work and body awareness through breath control. Hannah is finishing Columbia College Chicago with a major in fiction and a minor in playwriting. You can contact them through their website at [iiepstein.com](http://iiepstein.com).

**DID YOU KNOW?** Anna and Hannah had their ceremony on a beach in Hawaii. When they kissed, a rainbow appeared across the sky.



## Iu-Luen Jeng

Iu-Luen Jeng, 28, is an art therapist and social justice activist working with LGBTQ youth who experience homelessness and trauma in Chicago.

Over the past five years, she has provided clinical services and supervised numerous students in a concerted effort to develop mental health leaders in the LGBTQ community. After chairing the Ethics Committee of the Illinois Art Therapy Association over the past two years, she was recently elected to lead the association as director of committees and community. At the intersection of her clinical and activist passions, she organizes rallies to defend the rights and equality of LGBTQ individuals, women, and immigrants and facilitates LGBTQ competency trainings for practitioners in Chicago and in her native Taiwan.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Iu-Luen is born to be an enthusiastic foodie. She is passionate about every detail in this experience, from the table arrangement to the new restaurant review. She believes that food is an essence of daily living.

## JoeKaiser

Joe Kaiser, 27, is a lifelong Chicago resident who received bachelor's degrees in political science and computer science from the Illinois Institute of Technology in 2009.

Joe joined Chicago Bruise Brothers Roller Derby in 2011, skating under the name Rude Gus. Gus is currently the president of the Chicago Bruise Brothers, head referee for the Chicago Red Hots and an announcer for the Windy City Rollers. In 2013, Gus refereed at the USA Roller Sports Roller Derby national championships. Gus is a founding member of the Trans, Gender Non-Conforming and Intersex Athlete Network and earlier this year wrote the Men's Roller Derby Association's non-discrimination policy, hailed as "incredible" by derbyfrontier.com for welcoming nonbinary individuals and removing definitions of genders and barriers for inclusion.

This fall, Gus will be skating in the Chicago Bruise Brothers' 2014 home season at the Lombard Roller Rink.

**DID YOU KNOW?** In addition to Rude Gus, Joe has skated under the names Merb Ferguson, Pope Trans/cis and Benedict Thundersnatch.



## JacobKosior

Jacob, 27, is originally from Indianapolis, Indiana. He graduated from Princeton University in 2010 with a bachelor's degree in politics before moving to Chicago for a public service fellowship position at Center on Halsted. Jacob served as the Center's director of special events & volunteers for two years, during which time he oversaw the organization's fundraising events and volunteer program.

In 2012, he left his position at Center on Halsted to begin graduate school and, this May, he received his master's in urban planning and policy from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Jacob is now a project manager for Luxury Living Chicago Realty, where he manages leasing at the firm's exclusive rental properties.

Jacob lives in East LakeView with his wonderful boyfriend, Paul, and can usually be found running along the lakefront trail.

**DID YOU KNOW?** In 2013, Jacob lived in the woods for ONE month as a participant on The CW's Capture, a reality competition based on The Hunger Games.



## IggyLadden

Iggy Ladden is a 24-year-old LGBTQIA therapist and co-project manager of the TransSafe resource center at Chicago House's TLC. They (Iggy uses gender-neutral pronouns) helped shape and run TransSafe from its inception and continue to support its growth in meeting the needs of Chicago's trans and GNC (gender non-conforming) community.

Iggy has been particularly instrumental in developing TransSafe's policies, procedures, community relationships and trauma informed clinical approach. In addition to their work at Chicago House's TransLife Center, Iggy offers LGBTQIA-oriented yoga, meditation, and counseling services at IntraSpectrum and Chicago Counseling Associates.

Iggy moved from Fort Collins, Colorado—where they did volunteer work supporting LGBT youth at the Lambda Center (now called "The Center")—to Chicago to study non-profit management and social entrepreneurship from the University of Chicago School of Social Service and Administration. They received their undergraduate degree from Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado—an education which laid the bedrock for Iggy's unique Buddhist-inspired, social justice-oriented, and somatically-focused approach to therapy and community leadership.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Iggy has now spent more than a year of their life in meditation retreat. Iggy goes on days-long/monthlong meditation retreats to deepen themselves emotionally and spiritually.



## KeyshiaLaymorris

Keyshia Laymorris, 24, was born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia, and came to Chicago when she was 14. She spent time in jail and was awarded to DCFS at a young age. She is an openly HIV-positive worker in the LGBT community, and went to Chicago House when she was 23.

She worked with Bonn Wade as an LGBT youth organizer. She currently works as a HIV prevention outreach worker at Howard Area Community Center. She also worked with Tracy Baim, Kim Hunt, Breezy Connor and Bonn Wade on the Windy City Times LGBT Homeless Youth Summit.

Keyshia's passion in life is to help build leadership for young members of the LGBT community, especially transgender women of color letting them know there is positive work being done in the community. She really wants to do her best in giving back and trying to be a better person. Her mantra is, "Being successful starts from within. You can do anything you put your mind to as long as you don't let anyone take you for granted and show that you're here to stay and people will not dictate your pace."



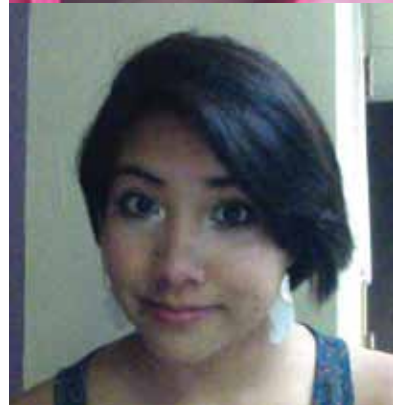
## KatyaMazon

Katya Mazon, 18, is a straight ally in the LGBTQ rights movement. She has been a member of the Alliance Youth Committee for two years, where she organizes youth summits for up to 400 youths. At these summits she has led workshops on strengthening gay-straight alliances, developing leadership skills, addressing racism in schools, supporting friends with mental illness, and understanding the impact of misogyny.

In addition to education and organizing, Katya has been leading Youth Committee efforts to advocate for policies supporting transgender and gender non-conforming students in Chicago public schools. Katya is also involved with InTransit Empowerment Project, supporting immigrant, undocumented, displaced and refugee people through art and activism.

She is on theboard of the National Runaway Safe line, where she is also a liner and has been trained in crisis intervention. Lastly, Katya has organized events and helped with funding and the development of QYES (Queer Youth Exploring Spirituality), a grassroots organization based in Cicero, Illinois.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Katya and her family have found more than 10 dogs in the past two years, one of which they have kept and named Pepper.



## ParkerMarieMolloy

Parker Marie Molloy, 28, is an essayist and transgender media advocate from Chicago, focusing her writing on feminism and gender-related topics.

She currently works as a freelance journalist, and has contributed writing to The Advocate, Rolling Stone, The Huffington Post, Salon and Talking Points Memo, among other outlets. Her commentary following the death of Dr. Essay Anne Vanderbilt was praised by The Nation's Dave Zirin as something that "should be read in journalism classes."

A passionate conversationalist, Molloy espouses the belief that through a change in the media's treatment of trans people, society can begin breaking down some of the systemic oppressions trans individuals face. Earlier this year, Molloy released her first book, which Thought Catalog Books published. She is currently working on a novel. She blogs at parkthatcar.net and regularly posts updates on her twitter profile: @ParkerMolloy

**DID YOU KNOW?** Parker is a classically trained guitarist who spent her first three semesters in college majoring in classical and jazz guitar performance—only to realize that a degree in guitar performance would be virtually worthless in the job market.





## Carlos Orengo

Born and raised in Chicago, Carlos Orengo, 28, didn't always know he would go into social services.

His desire to become a comic book artist, writer or even an interior designer led him to believe he would be an artist in one way or another. However, after working several jobs in customer service and clothing retail, he knew his desire to help others would be more fulfilling than existing in a merchandising world.

Carlos studied at Northern Michigan University and later at Loyola University. He found rewarding work at the Howard Brown Health Center, where he became a patient services representative. Shortly after, he worked on cutting-edge research studies such as Project PrEPare and iPrEx OLE, and then became an outreach health educator. About a year and half later, he was promoted to manager of HIV/STI services at Howard Brown Health Center, and has learned so much in this new role.

As a bilingual Latino gay man, Carlos understands that there is great need for HIV/STI education that caters to individuals not speaking English as their first language. Through his work, he will continue to break down the barriers that exist due to language and overcome stigma surrounding HIV/STIs.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Carlos is writing a sci-fi/fantasy novel based on his teen years, during which he came to terms with his sexuality and dealt with family issues. Look out for it in the upcoming years!



## Charlie Rice-Minoso

Charlie Rice-Minoso, 25, worked as a lead field organizer in 2013 for Equality Illinois and Illinois Unites for Marriage, the campaign that successfully secured the freedom to marry in Illinois.

Born and raised in Chicago, Charlie graduated Columbia College with a bachelor's degree in marketing communications with a concentration in public relations. During his time at Columbia, he established his bonds with the LGBT community by becoming vice president of Common Ground, the school's LGBT student organization, and by interning for Equality Illinois' 2010 get out the vote campaign, "Vote Naked."

After graduating in 2011, Rice-Minoso began his career at industry leading public relations agencies representing top consumer and corporate brands. Charlie later returned to Equality Illinois in 2013 for the marriage equality fight. From Rogers Park to Belleville, Rice-Minoso traveled the state to inform, engage, recruit and empower Illinois' LGBT and allied community on ways that they could help pass SB 10.

Charlie continues to give back to the community through his involvement with local nonprofits Equality Illinois, After School Matters and Firsthand Aid to Cuba.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Charlie is a textbook Scorpio and a EuroCuban mutt. When he's not giving back to the community, Charlie enjoys boating, working out and traveling.



## Rachel Schipull

Rachel Schipull, 29, spent her early years in the Florida panhandle before moving to the Chicago suburbs at the age of 7.

She has a bachelor's degree in English literature from Calvin College, and a master's in higher education from the University of Toledo. After working in higher ed for a number of years, she recently quit her job, became a holistic life coach and went back to school for a certificate in urban agriculture through the Windy City Harvest program. She's currently interning at the Regenstien Fruit and Vegetable Garden at the Chicago Botanic Garden.

Her end goal is to incorporate her love of growing her own food and environmental sustainability into her life coaching practice. She would like to help people learn to grow food in whatever urban space they have, be it a deck, a windowsill, a backyard or a community garden plot. In her spare time, she sings with Windy City Performing Arts, where she met her wife, Kristl. Together they started a blog about sustainable living and queer issues, called Sustainably Queer.

**DID YOU KNOW?** When Rachel was a kid, she had a one-eyed cat named Randy, after singer Randy Travis.



## Sara Semelka

Sara Semelka, 30, was born in Chicago and raised in the western suburbs. Early on, she fell in love with the art of storytelling and the power of truth-telling, and moved to Columbia, Missouri, to earn a degree at the University of Missouri's School of Journalism. She became a member of the NLGJA, the national association of LGBT and allied journalists; interned at Chicago Reporter magazine; and then returned to Columbia, where she worked a news reporter for three years at the Columbia Daily Tribune.

Sara eventually earned a master's degree in public policy, and landed back in Chicago in 2011. She began interning at the AIDS Foundation of Chicago and now leads AFC's Chicago Female Condom Campaign. She is also a lead organizer for the National Female Condom Campaign and Global Female Condom Day. She also helps manage and creates content for HIVHealthReform.org, a national project focusing on HIV health care in the post-Affordable Care Act era.

Her goals for the coming year include broadening outreach to young MSM (men who have sex with men) and the health care providers that work with this population to promote the use of internal condoms as a risk-reduction safer-sex tool.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Sara also interned at a voter education non-profit based in Montana, where she lived in a cabin on the edge of a national park, swam in mountain springs and biked alongside moose for a summer.



## Brad Setter

Bradley Setter, 24, was born in the suburbs of Detroit. Brad joined the Marine Corps at the age of 17 and was based in California and did two tours during the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" era.

He is currently the president of Pride Alliance at College of DuPage, the school's gay-straight alliance. He won the Benjamin P. Hyink Student Leader of the Year for his activism on and off campus. Brad has led Pride Alliance to be designated Club of the Year, and has brought more visibility to the LGBTQ community through such efforts as organizing the Second Annual Drag Show, getting students to the March on Springfield, and being a host committee member for the Friend Movement's anti-bullying panel at the Center on Halsted.

In addition, Brad has been a host for QHub at Project Vida, has been educating students about HIV/AIDS, and worked with Illinois Unites for Marriage in the suburbs.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Brad keeps two blank dog tags on his key chain to remember the military members who have died and will die for our country.



## Chadwick Stadt

Chadwick, 27, is a singer songwriter full of midwestern heart, charm and fresh confidence. He currently volunteers annually at the Center On Halsted and has led painting workshops, performed live acoustic shows, as well as serving as a mentor to LGBT youth in the youth program. Chadwick believes community cohesion can be created through the visibility of strong mentors through the advocacy of young people embracing their artistic talents and using them to change the world.

Chadwick has performed at various benefits and fundraisers for philanthropic ventures in Chicago. Last year he was prominently featured at the third annual Over the Rainbow fundraiser at Sidetrack, which generated close to \$15,000 for Gilda's Club Chicago, an organization that supports families and friends impacted by cancer. Chadwick has been seen performing at Chicago PrideFest, Parlour On Clark, Wang's Chicago and The Twisted Vine.

**DID YOU KNOW?** As a kid, Chadwick used to collect Pez dispensers and has a collection of over 300 different kinds!

## Em Vanderlinden

Em VanderLinden, 23, works at Center on Halsted in Community and Cultural Programs.

Born in Chicago and raised in Des Moines, Iowa, xe returned to Chicago with the Princeton Project 55 Fellowship. Xe graduated from Princeton University with a degree in politics, specializing in Latin American politics. Xe will attend Northeastern University School of Law in the fall.

Em plans to continue xir work in gender non conforming and trans communities in the legal sphere.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Em has a pet rabbit named Regina, who xe hid underneath xir dorm room bed during fire inspections.



## Jenine Wehbeh

Jenine Wehbeh, 26, is a Palestinian, born in a refugee camp in Lebanon; she lived in a refugee camp in Syria until the age of 6.

Following her arrival to Chicago, she spent a great deal of time with her mother at work as an organizer in the Arab communities on the Southwest Side. When she was old enough, she became a youth leader and then youth organizer and worked to build solidarity across struggles.

She is currently the education justice coordinator at the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance. Her work centers on creating equitable access to education for all students by working to end school pushout and the school-to-prison pipeline. In addition, Jenine is currently pursuing her master's degree in elementary education at Roosevelt University.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Jenine has a birthmark shaped like a dancing man on her left arm.



## Kasey White

Kasey White is a 23-year-old poet, painter and advocate for homeless and LGBTQ youth. Born and raised on the South Side of Chicago, she spent a portion of her teenage years bouncing around between friends, family members and sleeping on the street. Kasey is prominently featured in the 2014 film *The Homestretch*, a documentary about unaccompanied homeless youth. On behalf of herself and the film, she regularly addresses crowds, conferences and thought leaders. Kasey's insights provide an intimate look at the problems that face homeless and LGBTQ youth.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Before Kasey was the subject of a film, she made her own short documentary, *Home Sweet Home?*, that played at the National Film Festival for Talented Youth.



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reception**5:30pm** event**6pm**

center**on**halsted

**3656**north**halsted**

Free event. Catering by Polo Cafe & Catering

hosted by  
**kirk**williamson & **scott**duff

# ENJOY YOUR PRIDE CHICAGO!

## Windy City Gay Idol finals June 25 at Mayne Stage

CHICAGO—Windy City Gay Idol, now in its 12th year, marches to the finals in search of the best amateur LGBTQ singer in the Chicago area. The finals will be at Mayne Stage, 1328 W. Morse Ave., on Wed., June 25, at 7 p.m.

VIP tickets for \$25 are on sale now and include reserved seating, tableside food/beverage service, access to VIP bar lounge, a ballot to vote and raffle prize entry (no additional fees). General-admission tickets include a ballot to vote and raffle prize entry. All tickets may be purchased at <http://www.maynestage.com> or in person at the Mayne Stage box office.

The Windy City Gay Idol Finals concert also will feature guest performances by Broadway Star and Mac Award Winner Karen Mason, who will perform her marriage equality song, "It's About Time;" international burlesque performer Michelle L'amour and the 2013 Windy City Gay Idol, Maria Pahl.

These top 13 singers have been culled from over four months of competitions throughout Chicago's bars and clubs. Throughout the competitions preliminary, semifinal and even at the final event, the audience votes.

Every audience member at the finals will get a ballot to vote and be entered to win all prizes including Smirnoff merchandise, Ravinia tickets for Carrie Underwood, tickets to Margaret Cho, and other top Chicago performances. PLUS someone in the audience will win a "Trip for Two to Curacao" for Five Nights courtesy of the Island of Curacao and American Airlines.

After more than a decade, Windy City Gay Idol has grown into the largest and most highly anticipated competition in Chicago's LGBTQ community with the Grand Finale held during Gay Pride Week.

Past Windy City Gay Idol winners have gone on to sing at Wrigley Field, Soldier Field, Allstate Arena, Market Days and at festivals around Illinois, Milwaukee, Toronto and Vancouver. In addition, the 2012 Windy City Gay Idol Finalist

Josh "JDA" Davilla landed in the Top 40 on Fox's American Idol 2013. Plus the 2008 Windy City Gay Idol Finals featured a then-unknown Lady Gaga as a guest performer. Audiences never know what they will see and hear at the Windy City Gay Idol Finals.

Windy City Gay Idol, produced by Windy City Media Group, crowns the new 2014 Windy City Gay Idol at the Finals event at the gorgeous Mayne Stage (1328 W. Morse) in Rogers Park. This will be an amazing night of entertainment, with Chicago's best singers vying for the title of Windy City Gay Idol in front of a packed house and a panel of guest judges.

The 2014 Windy City Gay Idol Premium sponsor is Smirnoff. Other Sponsors include Ketel One, Tanqueray, Don Julio, Creaoke, Broadway in Chicago, American Airlines, SpeedPro Printing, Ravinia, Mini of Chicago, and Thompson Hotels. Plus Travel Partners: American Airlines and the Island of Curacao.

Guest judges will be 2014 Jeff Award-winning Chicago director Lili-Anne Brown, Second City improviser/actor/director Mitchell Fain, and Jeff Award-winning actor/singer Rob Lindley. The Finals competition will be hosted by local personality, Sofia Saffire.

The 2014 Windy City Gay Idol winner crowned at Mayne Stage is awarded a prize package worth more than \$7,500 including \$1,000 in cash, a 6 day/5-night trip to Curacao (including airfare), Smirnoff gift basket, an iPad mini, theater and concert tickets, performance opportunities, plus the coveted title of Windy City Gay Idol 2014.

See <http://www.maynestage.com> for tickets and information.

### Windy City Gay Idol 2014 finals:

Wed., June 25: FINALS, Mayne Stage, 1328 W. Morse Ave., 6 p.m. doors, 7 p.m. start.

VIP tickets (includes fees): \$25. See <http://www.maynestage.com> for tickets and information.

### BOOK REVIEW

## Queerly Beloved: A Love Story Across Genders

by Diane and Jacob  
Anderson-Minshall  
\$16.95; Bold Strokes  
Books; 235 pages  
BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Why do you stay with the one you love?

You can count the ways: he makes you laugh. She's tender, kind and generous. You love being in his arms. He's a good dancer. She's hot.

There a million reasons to love, each as individual as the lovers. But what if your partner changed? What if it was a big change—like the one in "Queerly Beloved" by Diane and Jacob Anderson-Minshall?

At first, says Diane Anderson-Minshall, it was "just supposed to be about sex."

Suzy Minshall was a "hook-up," a knock-out with long legs and blonde hair—just the type of woman Diane fell for. It didn't take long for them to move in together, or to become the "perfect lesbian couple."

But Diane always knew that Suzy felt unsettled. She "tried on many things in the search for identity" but—aside for a job she fiercely loved and sadly lost—there was something else, something different simmering in Suzy. Diane sensed it months before Suzy did but, though she was terrified of the imagined implications, she let Suzy come to a realization and reason herself.

Suzy wasn't a lesbian, she was a man—but it was complicated.

As a woman, Suzy was a feminist and was deeply committed

to the LGBT community; the lesbian community, specifically. Diane was founder of and editor for several lesbian publications. It bothered Suzy (Jacob) a lot, during the transition, to think that he might no longer be a part of that which he'd embraced for much of his life.

Still, with the help of the woman he'd married four (or five, depending on who's telling the story) times, Suzy (Jacob) continued with his transition.

He began with hormones, a meaningful name change, and "top surgery." Diane, though she mourned what was lost, helped with a keen fashion sense and advice not to be "that kind of man." Jacob spent time re-examining his life, noting

that his gender dysphoria had been inherent for a long time, the clues scattered like "breadcrumbs."

He'd never wanted to be a girl.

"I just wanted to be me," he says, "in a male body."

Let's put this right on the table: "Queerly Beloved" ain't bad.

It ain't great, either.

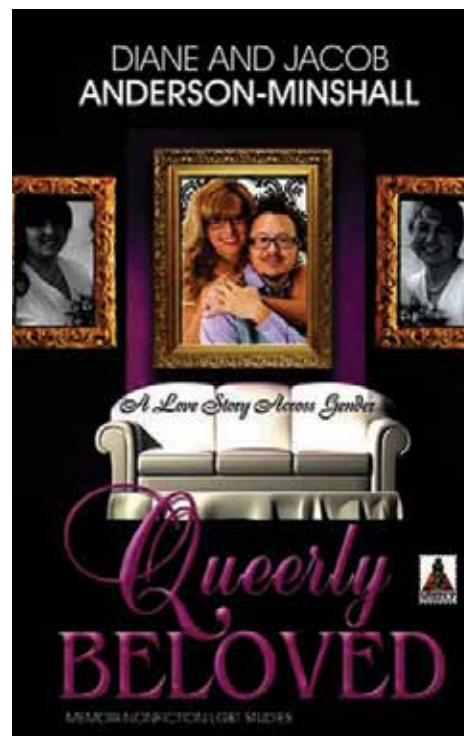
My biggest irritation here was that authors Diane and Jacob Anderson-Minshall repeat themselves a lot. If, in fact, the repetition had been cut from this already-short book, it would've nearly been a pamphlet. There's also plenty of time spent on the authors' personal reasoning with a doth-protest-too-much slant, and very intimate oversharing that comes after adamant vows of not sharing.

And yet, though the irritations made me wince, there's a decent overall story here. Look harder, and you'll find a deeply personal look at transitioning from the aspect of both the transitioner and the person who's loved him for most of their lives.

If you're a sucker for romance, that

right there could be enough reason to plunge into this book. Just be aware that Queerly Beloved might be one that's tough to stay with.

Want more? Then look for The Blind Eye Detective Agency Series by Diane and Jacob Anderson-Minshall; or Punishment with Kisses by Diane Anderson-Minshall.



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## BOOKS

# 'Sons of Wichita' looks at Koch upbringing, reveals gay brother

REVIEW BY SARAH TOCE

**Sons of Wichita:** How the Koch Brothers Became America's Most Powerful and Private Dynasty takes a look into the lives of Charles and David Koch—the Koch Brothers—as they embark on purchasing political campaigns and creating their own version of America. Along the way, the book provides a gay brother reveal and some stories that will make your skin crawl backward.

Written by Mother Jones senior editor Daniel Schulman, the in-depth biography spirals through hundreds of interviews with family members, friends and supporters in an effort to paint a picture of what life most certainly resembled from inside the Koch clan at the beginning of their reign. Legal documents and public records are scattered between the covers in an effort to unveil whatever indignities are left behind.

At the center of the story is the unwavering Fred Koch—the aggravated father to Charles, David, Frederick and David's twin brother, Bill; and husband to Mary. A myriad of appalling scenarios ensue—one in which Fred uses his religious and social beliefs to pit the children against one another. Being a former boxer himself, Fred encourages his sons to "fight like men" and put their fists up proudly. Schulman writes that "during one bout, Bill bashed his twin over the head with a polo mallet," adding that "David still bears a scar from the time Bill pierced him in the back with a ceremonial sword."

The event appeared to leave no tangible mark on Bill, however. A collector of fine wines and women, Bill's competitive sportsmanship earned him the America's Cup in 1992 for yachting. He equated this historical moment to resembling "10,000 orgasms."

But perhaps most notable in the entire tome is what happened to Frederick. Simply stated, he was gay ... and homosexuality was not a family value in the Koch household.

A family friend remarks in *Sons of Wichita* that Fred feared he had been too kind to Freddie, and that's why he turned out to be so effeminate.

"I think Fred Koch went through this kind of thing that I must have been too affectionate; I must have been too loving, too kind to Freddie, and that's why he turned out to be so effeminate," said John Damgard, who went to high school with David and remains close with David and Charles. "So he was really, really tough on Charles."

Schulman writes: "Fred and Mary Koch's oldest son, Frederick, a lover of theater and literature, left Wichita for boarding school after 7th grade and barely looked back. Charles, the rebellious number two, was molded from an early age as Fred's successor."

Frederick currently preserves a plethora of historic homes around the world, boasting priceless art collections and fanciful remedies that only he knows about. His alignment with the other Koch brothers is a severed connection, to put it mildly, and his personal whereabouts are not for public consumption.

What happened to Charles in his early adulthood served to mold the entire Koch legacy as we see it today.

"After eight years at MIT and a consulting firm, Charles returned to Wichita to learn the intricacies of the family

business. Together, he and David would build their father's Midwestern company which as of 1967 had \$250 million in yearly sales and 650 employees, into a corporate Goliath with \$115 billion in annual revenue and a presence in 60 countries. Under their leadership, Koch Industries grew into the second-largest private corporation in the United States (only the Minneapolis-based agribusiness giant Cargill is bigger)," Schulman writes.

The money kept on rolling in.

The book states, "David and Charles amassed fortunes estimated at \$41 billion apiece, tying them for sixth place among the wealthiest people on the planet. (Bill ranks 377th on Forbes' list of the world's billionaires.) The company's products would come to touch everyone's lives, from the gas in our tanks and the steak on our forks to the paper towels in our pantries. But it preferred to operate quietly—in David's words, to be 'the biggest company you've never heard of.'"

Flying under the radar appeared to catapult the Tea Party movement and sink the GOP simultaneously, and members could (quietly) thank David and Charles for that. One thing they could not solidify, though: the U.S. presidency.

Schulman writes, "After backing a constellation of conservatives, from Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker to South Carolina's Jim DeMint, Charles and David mounted their most audacious political effort to date in the 2012 presidential campaign, when their fundraising network unleashed an estimated \$400 million via a web of conservative advocacy groups."

"Just as their father, a founding member of the John Birch

Society, had once decried the country's descent toward communism during the Kennedy era, the brothers saw America veering toward socialism under President Obama. Charles, entering his late 70s, had not only failed to see American society transformed into his libertarian ideal; with this new administration, things seemed to be moving in the exact opposite direction," Schulman writes. "Now he and David, along with other allies, would wage what he described as the 'mother of all wars' to defeat Obama and hand Republicans ironclad congressional majorities."

Still, try as they might, David and Charles could not sink the Black man from Chicago as he raced for the top political spot in the United States.

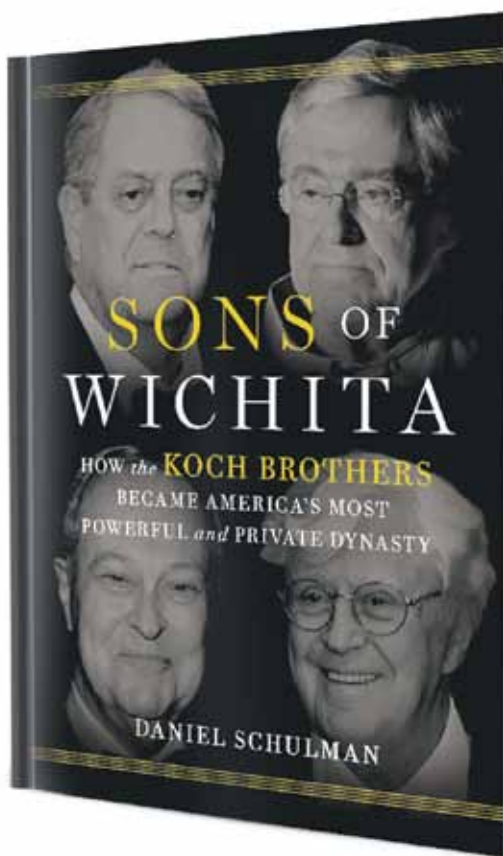
But would their distaste come as any surprise? Racial injustice was ingrained into the Koch household from the beginning. The book recalls Fred's warning of a "vicious race war" in which communists would pit Black Americans against white.

Infighting and outfighting

seemed to be the Koch Brothers' way.

Schulman recalls in the book that Bill hired a private investigator to bug his brothers' offices and pick through the garbage cans at their homes. He planted false memos aimed at rooting out spies in his own company, Oxbow, who he suspected were secretly working for his brothers.

Regardless of how the Koch brothers' activities have imploded on those around them, one thing's for sure: It's been anything but boring in the ring of terror they've so diligently created for the rest of us.



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## BOOKS

# Laura Erickson-Schroth's work looks at the trans\* self

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL BLICKENSERFER

Growing up in Brooklyn, New York, Laura Erickson-Schroth wanted to play sports with boys, wear masculine clothing and benefit from all the opportunities that had been given to her male friends simply as awards for their gender.

At home, her mother kept a copy of the Boston Women's Health Collective's groundbreaking 1971 book *Our Bodies Ourselves*—a publication that has been hailed as enormously significant in addressing inaccurate perceptions ranging from abortion to body image to violence against women. The book and its message proved to be a huge influence on Erickson-Schroth. "It was so radical when it first came out," she remembered. "I got to read through it when I was going through puberty. It was so helpful for me to read stories from such a diverse group of people. They were talking about things like rape and lesbianism—all taboo topics at the time—yet they were brave enough to say something."

By the late '90s, Erickson-Schroth was studying psychology in Middlebury College in Vermont. There, she became actively involved in the LGBT community. When she eventually started medical school in Dartmouth, two things happened to set her on a path that—without ever being transgender herself—would inexorably tie Erickson-Schroth to the stories, challenges, dreams and the struggle for rights and recognition of trans\* people around the world.

As a med student, she met a number of transgender patients. Some of her friends who had been part of the lesbian community in college were starting to come out as transgender. "They hadn't come out when we were in college," she said. "I mean, it wasn't something people talked about too much in small town Vermont. But—once I was in medical school—people who were close to me were identifying as transgender."

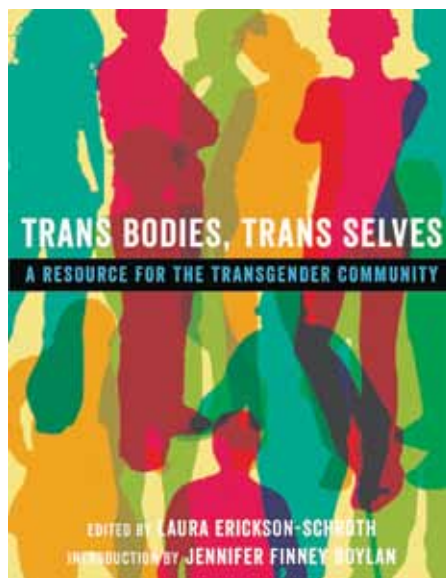
In talking to both her friends and her patients, Erickson-Schroth began to notice a clear disconnect between the transgender community and health care providers. "Health providers were seen as gatekeepers," she said. "It was hard to trust providers after a long history of [trans people] not having the best treatment. In some cases, providers were trying to be helpful but didn't know how."

An idea came to her: What if trans\* people, their families, friends and the general public had a resource much like *Our Bodies Ourselves*? What if they could open a book and be able to access the latest information on health and wellness, how to navigate legal issues and terminology, how to deal with challenges with employment, religion and family life? What if the history, art and culture of the transgender community was discovered, laid bare and celebrated? What if there were real stories, thoughts and ideas of trans\* people that were not undercut by media sensationalism?

*Trans Bodies, Trans Selves* (Oxford University Press) launched May 20 in Manhattan. It is written by and for trans\* people and the gender non-conforming community. It serves as an invaluable resource for anyone interested in transgender issues and includes chapters that address—among a host of other topics—general, reproductive and mental health, medical and surgical transition, legal issues, race, ethnicity and spirituality. There is a section of the book that details the various stages of trans\* life such as what it is like to grow up as a gender non-conforming child, to enter middle and old age as a trans\* person and the terrible isolation that can often encompass. The book concludes with chapters that draw together the

beautifully rich culture and blazing activism that has cemented the foundation of trans\* history.

What makes the book so very unique is that it is not defined by one person's story or set of experiences. It is 600-plus-page encyclopedia of everything trans\* that is drawn from the cumulative knowledge and multifaceted abilities of people across the country. It is the result of five years of tireless and impassioned labor from a team of more than 50 trans\* authors, each of whom wrote a chapter alongside multiple contributors. "It was an exhaustive process," Erickson-Schroth said. "There were a lot of people involved at a lot of different levels. For example, there was someone who worked

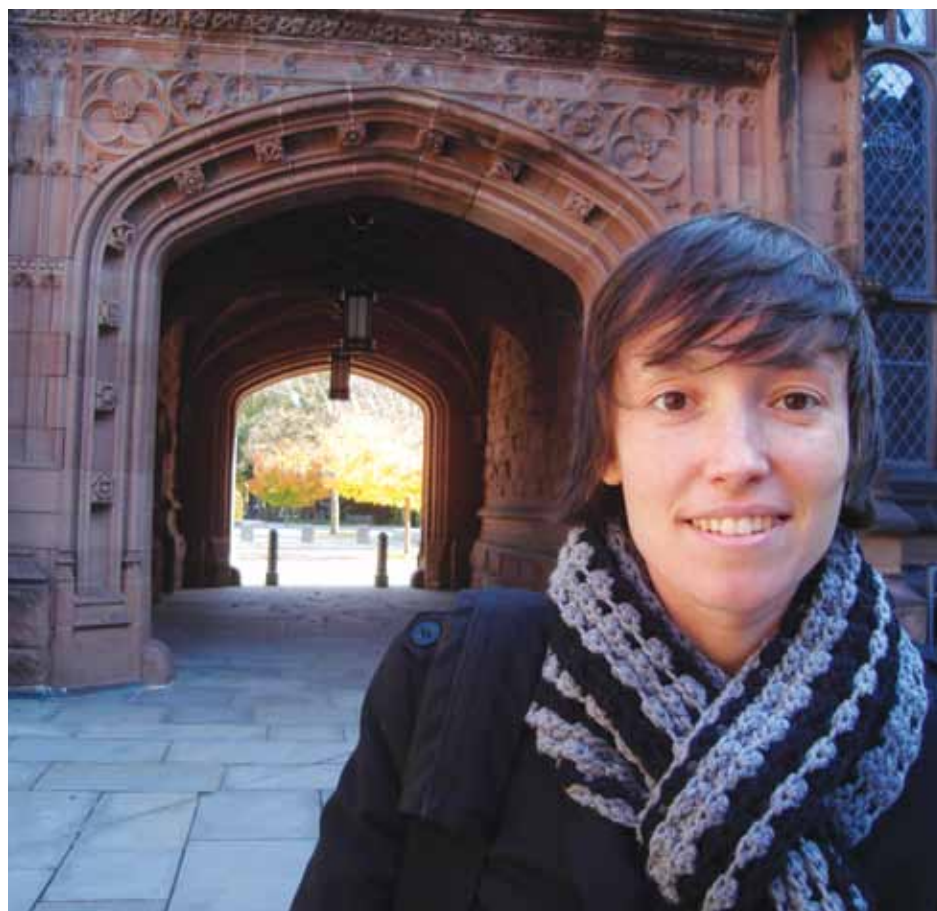


as the short piece editor, someone who worked as the art editor. There were people who were organizing college interns who volunteered to do research or media outreach. As far as the authors, we either took applications or reached out to specific people we knew. In terms of contributors of short pieces or art, it was the same process; we heard from people who sent in their personal stories, artwork or photography. We also went out and looked for them."

In addition, Erickson-Schroth and her team held trans\* forums across the country and in Canada. Attendees divided into groups, discussed and gave their opinions as to what should be included in the book. There was also an extensive online survey that, to date, has received over 3,000 responses. "It was important for us to get together a group of diverse voices," Erickson-Schroth said. "Because—within the transgender community—there are so many opinions and so many backgrounds and we had a number of issues we felt were important to address."

The website for *Trans Bodies, Trans Selves* makes those issues abundantly clear, maintaining that the book contains "a worldview that supports human rights for all people. While the focus of the book is transgender and gender non-conforming people," it says, "we understand that a struggle for one group is a struggle for all. We emphasize the fact that economics, the prison industrial complex, and strict anti-immigration laws are forms of oppression employed to divide people."

Such a monumental undertaking was not always easy and Erickson-Schroth admitted there were innumerable long nights spent scouring information, amassing spreadsheets and going through call and email lists. "There was a lot of person power needed," she said. "And that came in the form of volunteers. It really was a team effort and I am so thrilled to have so many people who participated and supported us."



Laura Erickson-Schroth. Photo from Erickson-Schroth

For Erickson-Schroth, it is the stories contained within *Trans Bodies, Trans Selves* that will inevitably make the book so accessible to people both within and outside of the trans\* community. "I think one of the best ways to learn about a group of people is to hear what they themselves have to say," she explained. "I've heard thousands of stories and I feel so very privileged to have had my life enriched by the trans\* community. I've learned so much during this process about the beautiful diversity that exists within it."

*Trans Bodies, Trans Selves* is not a project that ended with the very last word in the book. It is now a non-profit with an exponentially growing following via social media and on its website, [www.transbodies.com](http://www.transbodies.com). The book is the first step in the organization's mission to disseminate knowledge about trans\* issues. "The

first goal is to take all of the proceeds that we make from the book and use them to get copies out to as many people as possible," Erickson-Schroth said. "We hope to be able to offer the book at reduced or no cost to individuals who aren't able to pay, or schools or community centers providing support services for trans\* communities."

Erickson-Schroth hopes to eventually leverage the success of the book in order to provide more resources for trans\* people. "One of the most common things people told me that when I was working on this book was 'God I wish that existed when I was growing up,'" she recalled. "I think we are going to see people have more knowledge at an earlier age. That's the most important thing: hearing other people's stories and knowing that that you are not alone."

# Lesbian author Sipperley launches 'Brave Bilbuggies'



Illustrator Alex Martin and Author Genevieve Sipperley. Photo by Carrie Maxwell

To celebrate the publication of her first children's book *The Brave Bilbuggies*, lesbian author Genevieve Sipperley and illustrator Alex Martin held a book launch party at Simon's Bar and Tavern June 19. About 45 people at-

tended the event featuring raffles, giveaways and book-signing.

The book centers around Tulipwood, a rogue flower who has been stealing from the forest creatures and the meadow, and the Brave Bilbuggies' quest to find the stolen belongings and teach Tulipwood a lesson about sharing.

"The book was written three years ago but it was a struggle to find the right illustrator who could bring my characters to life. ... Then Alex came along and illustrated one of the pages in the book and after that I knew she was the right illustrator for the book," said Sipperley. "I've written screenplays and short stories before but I've always wanted to do a children's book because I like making up stories for kids."

"The characters are inspired by my childhood especially Ugi the bear which is based on my stuffed animal bear that was in my crib when I was born, which I still have. This book is the first one in a series and I'm very, very excited."

Martin said, "I really enjoyed working on this project with Genevieve. We worked for about three months, which is really fast for a project like this. The story Genevieve weaved made it easy to draw the characters because as an artist I have to be inspired by the characters."

"If the story is good it's easy to do the drawings. This is my first time illustrating a children's book and I'm really excited because I usually draw comics [and] animations, and do graphic design."

See [www.thebravebilbuggies.com](http://www.thebravebilbuggies.com) for more information.

Photos and text by Carrie Maxwell

## BOOK REVIEW

### Artificial Cherry

by Billeh Nickerson

\$14.95; Arsenal

Pulp Press; 96 pages

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

A little of this and a little of that...

It's the way conversation flows when you're with a friend. You mosey from subject to subject, you touch upon a funny story which leads to another topic you can both gnaw on before you move to something totally different.

That's a glue that holds you together. It's the stuff of friendship. And in the new book *Artificial Cherry*, by Billeh Nickerson, it's several points to ponder.

In his travels, poet and spoken-word artist Nickerson has seen it all. More or less.

He's seen interesting things done with a glass eye, an object you almost never hear about unless it has to do with a certain actress. He's seen buildings that have been gentrified, and remembered the particular reason why they resonated so well in his memories, struggling not to blurt the truth to his unsuspecting host. He's been asked peculiar questions by a doctor in Montreal just before he "fell in love with the possibility of what a misplaced medical chart could offer my anatomy..." And he's pondered the usefulness of thumbs. (Imagine hitchhiking without them.)

His experiences haven't all been odd: While apartment hunting, he noted the dirt and other objects left behind by previous tenants. He couldn't ignore something so poignantly personal, though; something that "shadowed everything in its wake."

And then there was the Pacific Northwest Elvis Festival, held on the "shores of Okanagan Lake" in Canada and filled with fun and food.

More than twenty Elvis impersonators gathered to entertain fans of the King.

The most impressive thing about those fans, says Nickerson, was that they actually cleaned up after themselves.

In this book, Nickerson pens poems and short essays about these and other things. He writes about poetry that he couldn't bear to read publicly in the days after 9/11 and that was uncomfortable, even years later. He wonders what would have happened if Mary had named Jesus something else (knowing, surely, that the name of a Montreal credit union would have to change, too). And he writes movingly of his grandfather's dream of running with dogs, his grandmother's dreams of dancing, and he hears the music to accompany both.

Though it's brief—a little too brief, I thought—*Artificial Cherry* contains plenty: sass; silliness; a bit of the scandalous, wry observations; "irony;" laughs; absurdity; sadness; and observations that will make you stop and think.

Nickerson has a great eye for what most people don't notice, in fact, and his poems bring those things to light. There's really no theme to this book—just poems and very short musings on whatever Nickerson deems fit, which gives it a good browse-ability. No matter where you jump in, though, the rest of his work will beg to be read and you'll happily oblige.

At well under 100 pages, this book won't take you long to read ... the first time. Past that, it's something you'll want to read again and (maybe) read aloud because *Artificial Cherry* is the real deal.

Want more? Look for *Let Me Kiss It Better* or *The Asthmatic Glassblower: And Other Poems*, both by Nickerson.

## We raise our glasses to Marriage Equality at last!



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# Flower of Iowa: E-book looks at WWI soldiers' romance

BY TERRI-LYNNE WALDRON

This summer marks the 100th anniversary of World War I, a global military devastation that took place between 1914 and 1918.

In his first published book, *Flower of Iowa*, openly gay author and writer Lance Ringel crafted a historical fiction that takes place during the summer of 1918. The book centers around U.S. soldier Tommy Flowers and British military man David Pearson, two young men in their late teens who share a close friendship that soon blossoms into romance, played out against the backdrop of WWI.

Windy City Times talked with Ringel about two soldiers in love, meeting war veterans and working with Meryl Streep.

**Windy City Times: When did you start writing your ebook *Flower of Iowa*?**

Lance Ringel: I came up with the notion of it way back and started writing it 21 years ago in 1993. It took me four-plus years to do the first draft, and I had been tweaking and revising it ever since. It's felt like it has come of age and it needed to get out in the world and now it is.

**WCT: As you moved forward in life since 1993, were there changes you made to the book?**

LR: Actually, no. It's more about how I've been received because there were a lot of people who found the topic kind of controversial when I started shopping it after I finished the first draft. Another wonderful thing that happened to me—that made everything pos-

sible—is that there are now ebooks and there wasn't such a thing in the 1990s.

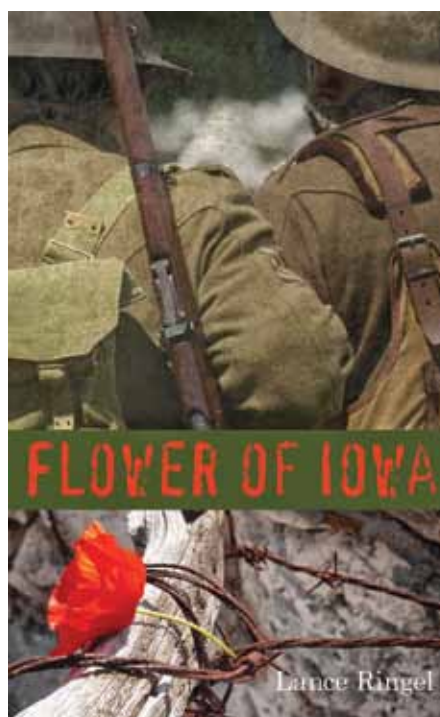
**WCT: Have you ever met any WWI veterans?**

LR: I was actually working at Windy City Times during a time when I was writing this and I was living in Chicago. I had gone to the 75th-anniversary observance of the end of the First World War; [the event] was held in suburban Chicago. At that time, in 1993, there were still people alive. There were about 70 vets there and they were all in their 90s and they're all gone now. The last doughboy [the nickname given to members of the U.S. Army in World War I] died a few years ago, so that was the most striking difference where people with first hand memory of this war—in terms of having been in uniform—are gone. Anybody else that is still alive is in their 100s and was a very small child.

**WCT: Did you talk to any relatives of men who had been involved in romantic relationships with other men during that war?**

LR: I've not met anybody personally but in the research I came across, a reasonable amount of evidence shows—given how much we've been erased from history—that there was that kind of activity and romance in the First World War.

I took several trips to Europe to research this. I was on a plane coming back from Iceland and there was this woman on the plane sitting next to me; she asked me what I was doing and I told her. She then said, "My aunt was one of



the only American women who went over to France during the First World War and served as a nurse." I've got copies of her letters. I had already been thinking about a character like Sister Jean [the Canadian nurse in the book], and that really helped me solidify part of what I wanted to do around her character.

**WCT: Tommy and David do not refer to themselves as "gay" or "homosexual." Would there have been another label put on them?**

LR: You have to keep in mind that the period that we are writing about—most people don't even have words for it. On the flip side of that, most men, amongst each other, were much more physically casual and comfortable with each other. When Tommy and David first meet, they literally sleep together—all they do

is just sleep together—but soldiers did that because there wasn't any label that anybody put to things like that.

**WCT: Neither of these two soldiers feel any sense of regret after being intimate.**

LR: What's interesting about what happens in the book is that they cross the line while in England but it doesn't happen while they are at the front. The morning after they have to learn to come to terms with it. In some ways they do and in some ways they deal with it the way a lot of soldiers may have dealt with it. They don't have a sense of being part of a different group; they just realize that this is something that makes them happy.

**WCT: Was it difficult to write a historical fiction book?**

LR: It was challenging but rewarding. WWI is very well-documented and when you're writing historical fiction, one way you can do it—which is the way I chose to do it—is to really do your research about what happened and weave your characters and your plot with what happened. That is a lot more work and it is also more fun.

**WCT: Did you pull from your own life to write Tommy and David's story?**

LR: I lived in a very different time and I came out later than these two did and I also think of coming out as a continuous process, from the time you first tell one person to the time you tell the world.

**WCT: You are a writer at Vassar College. What does your job entail?**

LR: The job is to write primarily for the president of the college. I have also had the good fortune of being the principal writer of the stage reading that we did all around the country and in London for our 150th anniversary. We premiered it in New York, with alums like Meryl Streep and Lisa Kudrow reading.

**The ebook *Flower of Iowa* is at <https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/434195> or <http://www.barnesandnoble.com>.**

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## TRAVEL

# Las Vegas: Something old, a lot that's new

BY ANDREW DAVIS

"Welcome to the city of Lost Wages."

These were the words from a flight attendant during a recent excursion to Las Vegas, Nevada. However, this statement was also an anachronism of sorts—as Vegas now has a whole lot more to offer than gambling (despite the numerous opportunities throughout the city). And there's probably no better place to start than a new diversion that's attracting people in droves: The LINQ.

## LINQ-ing up

The LINQ (at The Venetian) is a complex: a shopping, dining and entertainment district that aims to have something for everyone.

Among the restaurants are Chayo Mexican Kitchen + Tequila Bar, the casual cafe Squeeze, Flour & Barley, Brooklyn Bowl, Ghirardelli Ice Cream and Chocolate Shop and, of course, a Starbucks.

That certainly is not all. Tag Bar & Lounge (an interactive lounge that features a full-service bar with 300 beers from around the world and state-of-the-art electronic table game) and The Purple Zebra (with a self-serve daiquiri bar with 20 flavors) provide nightlife, while shopaholics can indulge in eyewear (Chilli Beans), shoes (Bella Scarpa and 12AM: RUN) and gadgets (Koto).

However, the highlight for many is probably the High Roller. At 550 feet tall, it's the world's highest observation wheel. The High Roller has 28 glass-enclosed cabins. Passengers can enjoy stunning Las Vegas views in a 30-minute ride,

As with most large hotels, there are numerous options in every realm, including nightlife and restaurants. One of my most enjoyable experiences throughout the whole trip was at **Michael Mina Pub 1842**, a casual eatery that specializes in huge portions. The lobster corn dog (with mustard creme fraiche) would keep just about anyone coming back for more, but it's far from the only great item: Try the fish tacos, the beef brisket plate or the jalapeno cornbread.

Somehow, with all the food I consumed, I managed to work out a couple days. The spa has all the items you'd expect from such an establishment (everything from soft towels to steam rooms to massages) but there's a state-of-the-art fitness center with cardiovascular and weight equipment.

## Eat to the beat

One of the things I noticed was the abundance (or, some might say, overabundance) of celebrity-endorsed restaurants. That's not to say they don't offer excellent fare, though.

At Paris Las Vegas, there's **Gordon Ramsay Steak**. There were several interesting (in a good way) aspects of this place, from the ceiling art (which reportedly replicates Ramsay's hand movements when he works with a Wellington) to the various uniforms the employees wear that denote positions (food runners, hostesses, servers, etc.). Possibly because of its size (a two-story dining area), the restaurant is not conversationally challenged.

As for the food, delicious options abound, from blue crab soup to the American rib cap



The entrance to The Venetian in Las Vegas. Photo by Andrew Davis

Aria) is for the more sophisticated diner—and it's noticeable from the menu to the impeccable service. (When a place has sweetbreads has an appetizer, you're definitely not at Dairy Queen.) Other offerings include veal cheeks, bacon-wrapped pork loin, pan-roasted halibut and Kobe skirt steak. The place even has an absinthe menu.

I also had breakfast at **Sugar Factory**, in Paris Las Vegas. It's a good thing I'm open-minded, because some of the dishes would initially throw off some people—although they were quite tasty, indeed. For example, there's the Fruit Loop panna cotta and a surprising favorite: the Sugar Factory Signature Burger—complete with a white-chocolate bun. By the way, beware the goblets filled with delectable cocktails—you may wake up in a place and have no idea how you got there (not that I would know).

One thing I've noticed, though (and it makes sense for such a tourism-driven city like Vegas, and I've seen it in Chicago) is how casual people dress—even at some of the finer establishments. Things are more about convenience now; it's a new day.

## Away from the strip

Most visitors stick to the Vegas strip. However, there's definitely much more out there.

One attraction is **The Neon Museum** (with guided tours offered through Sept. 15). There are approximately 150 signs out in the boneyard (yes, they call it that), and the history surrounding them is fascinating. By the way, there are several rules (only cameras are allowed; no cigarettes, even electronic ones), so keep that in mind.

After going to the museum, take in a local eatery like **Park on Fremont**. This place has a funky, yet friendly, vibe—along with an eye-catching art collection and some innovative dishes. You cannot leave without trying the Philly mac-and-cheese steak sandwich or the fried chicken-and-waffle sandwich.

Any party place in which the attire is "casual attire or costumes" is fine by me. If that's

your thing, you'll definitely appreciate **Ghost-Bar DayClub** (GBDC), in the Palms Casino Resort. The views from the roof are spectacular, to say the least—and, although the crowd was younger, I still found myself bobbing my head to the music (mostly hip-hop). I used to live for 1-6 a.m.; now it's 1-6 p.m. (when this party hits).

## Miscellaneous: Cirque, shopping

I even managed to take in a couple **Cirque du Soleil** shows. **Zarkana**, which is at ARIA, "is a spirited journey through an abandoned theater where an extraordinary circus comes back to life," according to its website. For those who have never seen a Cirque show, it's amazing. However, I've seen about 10 at this point, and it is well-done—but it didn't dazzle.

However, the following night I saw Cirque's **Michael Jackson One** (at Mandalay Bay—and, boy, it's probably the best Cirque show I've ever seen. Not only are some of my favorite MJ songs showcased (like "Stranger in Moscow"), but the show meticulously re-creates some of The Gloved One's most famous moves. It's definitely a must-see.

As for shopping, one can rarely do better than the **Grand Canal Shoppes** at the Venetian. There are literally dozens of shops with name-brand items (Cole Haan, Banana Republic, Billionaire Italian Couture, etc.), all set in a replica of Venice, complete with singing gondoliers whose voices echo throughout the site.

## A new day for gay bars

Entrepreneur Victor Drai has announced the opening of **Liaison**—the first-ever gay nightclub at a Las Vegas casino. Located at Bally's, Liaison is in the space that Drai's famed After Hours nightclub occupied. Liaison will be a seven-night-a-week experience featuring an eclectic mix of hip-hop, rap, top 40 and a drag night.

Many thanks to R&R Partners for arranging this trip, and to Presidential Limousine for the service.



The Liberace sign at The Neon Museum. Photo by Andrew Davis

the time it takes for the entire wheel to rotate. Additionally, each air-conditioned cabin is equipped with two benches for seating.

I will definitely have to check this out the next time I'm in Vegas.

## A "Grand" ol' time

Recently, while in Vegas (before The LINQ opened), I stayed at the **MGM Grand**—which was more cavernous than I had imagined. I did have the privilege of being in one of the Stay Well suites, which focuses on helping the weary or sick traveler. Among the amenities in these rooms are healthful menu options, a vitamin C shower, an air purification system and even a dawn simulator alarm clock.

I had. However, the sticky toffee pudding (served with brown butter sugar ice cream in the shape of a stick of butter) is pure heaven on earth—honestly, it's one of the best desserts I've ever tried.

Then there's **Tom Colicchio's Heritage Steak** at The Mirage. The 220-seat restaurant will focus on meats prepared entirely over an open flame—from wood-burning ovens to charcoal grills. Something I'll have to try once I make my way back there is the lobster hushpuppy dish. Of course, my steak was cooked very well—although seeing the television in the semi-private area can be a boon or a bane, depending on your dining situation.

The artisanal American restaurant **Sage** (at

## BOOKS

# Kordale Lewis: Instagram celebrity looks at abuses, love in memoir

BY ANDREW DAVIS

It started, innocently enough, with a photograph.

Kordale Lewis posted images of him and his partner, Kaleb, doing everyday things with their family (such as brushing their daughters' hair)—and the gay dads received tons of diverse opinions about the pictures.

Now, Kordale has come out with the memoir *Picture Perfect?*, a moving and sometimes brutal look at the abuses he endured growing up as well as how he and Kaleb have built a family together.

**Windy City Times: This is practically a case where a picture is worth a thousand words (or maybe more), correct?**

Kordale Lewis: Well, that's why this book is out—because people think it's so perfect. My life has not always been perfect. I wasn't really happy until about four years ago, when I met my fiancée.

**WCT: How'd you two meet, by the way?**

KL: We met on Facebook. He sent me a message, and was taken back because he's an Omega [Psi Phi fraternity] so I thought it was a "catfish" [situation]. Then, we Skyped each other.

**WCT: You're the only one of the couple listed as the author. Why is that?**

KL: When we went viral, a lot of production companies contacted us. I went to one company in downtown Atlanta, and they asked me to explain the photo that went viral. I said, "It was just a picture of us with our daughters at 5:30 a.m." Then they asked me to explain my childhood. Once I did that, they said you need to write a book. I said, "No; it's in my past," and they said, "You really should because a lot of people can relate to what you went through."

So I talked with my fiancée and I talked with my friend—and they encouraged me to do it. So we started with a timeline, at age 5 until the time the photo went viral.

At 5, I was molested by my mother's boyfriend, who was in a gang—plus my mother wasn't there for me when I told her about what happened to me. I also talk about how my mom abused me and went to jail; to this day, she's still an addict. My father's been in prison since I was 2. I also talk about how I tried to kill myself. It's not easy being a Black gay man in a homophobic society.

The [molesting] happened on more than one occasion, but I thought that was how life was supposed to be—especially because I knew I was different and because my mother wasn't supporting me.

When I was younger, I knew I was gay but I didn't want to be gay, but I found comfort in a friend who was pretty flamboyant. [Unfortunately,] he ended up hanging himself. But for the book, my lawyer said I had to change almost everyone's name in the book.

**WCT: You've obviously gone through so much. Was one part of the book harder to write than any other?**

KL: Well, I'll say this: For the past few months, my relationship with my fiancée has been up and down. I think he now understands that I was traumatized.

By the way, I have not read the book, and will not. Most of the book was dictated to the editor—and I could see the things happening. I would start crying, and I don't like people to see that I'm weak. I'd then be cranky with my fiancée after [the sessions].

**WCT: However, you do know sometimes it takes strength to cry and get over the hurdle.**

KL: Thank you. I've always wanted to have

the perfect family. Writing this book is when I realized certain things about my family, like my father never getting out of jail. I always want to be the father who's there for my kids.

I didn't really start living until I was 16, and I got this girl pregnant. She knew I was gay, but I had three kids by her.

**WCT: We've been talking about strengths and weaknesses. Do you feel you're stronger now than you've ever been?**

KL: I do. I really do.

**WCT: What do you want readers to get out of your book?**

KL: I want readers to know that gay people already have hard lives. People truly don't know gay people's stories—we go through some of

the same things other people go through.

When you attack gay people, especially kids, it can really affect their lives. It can damage a kid—and I didn't have that support back then. Today, I really don't talk with my family; I just have my kids and my fiancée.

You can be abused and no one will talk about it. But have gay dads with kids, and it's World War III. I do want to give people hope that [having a family] is possible. I hope this book will break stereotypes that people have about gay people.

**WCT: Do you think you'll ever write another book?**

KL: Well, I've been told that a bigger publishing company may pick up the book. If that happens, then I guess the book may be translated into other languages and sold to other countries. If they want to know about my and Kaleb's relationship or about integrating family, we could talk about that. But I've really told everything at this point.

**Picture Perfect? is available at many online retailers (including Amazon) as well as the website <http://www.kordalenkaleb.com>.**



## We Have Waited Long Enough: Open Transgender Service in the U.S. Military

A discussion with Aaron Belkin of The Palm Center

Wed., Aug. 20, 2014  
6-8 p.m.

The Keith House

1900 S. Prairie Avenue, Chicago

The event is free but there will be a donation request

President Obama made history this year when the White House said it is open to a review of Pentagon policies banning transgender troops from serving. In the history of the republic, no president has ever signaled a willingness to consider transgender military service. When we win (and we will win), we will look back on the White House statement as the beginning of the end of the ban. But what will it take to cross the finish line, to convert the President's general openness to reconsidering discriminatory policy into actual political change? Come discuss the prospects for change with some of the participants in process.

Aaron Belkin is a professor, author, activist and dancer. Since 1999, Belkin has served as founding director of the Palm Center, which The Advocate named as one of the most effective LGBT rights organizations in the nation. He designed and implemented much of the public education campaign that eroded popular support for military anti-gay discrimination, and when "don't ask, don't tell" was repealed, the president of the Evelyn and Walter Haas Jr. Fund observed that, "this day never would have arrived (or it would have been a much longer wait) without the persistent, grinding work of the Michael Palm Center." Harvard Law Professor Janet Halley said of Belkin that, "Probably no single person deserves more credit for the repeal of 'don't ask, don't tell.'" Currently, the Palm Center is engaged in a long-term initiative to address transgender military service.



### Plus: Booksigning by Diane & Jacob Anderson-Minshall

Authors of *Queerly Beloved:*  
A Love Story Across Genders

Imagine if, after 15 years as a lesbian couple, your partner turned to you and said, "I think I'm really a man." For Diane and Jacob (née Suzy) Anderson-Minshall this isn't a hypothetical question. It's what really happened. Eight years later, the couple not only remains together, they still identify as queer, still work in LGBT media, and remain part of the LGBT community. They paint a portrait of love, not only to each other, but to the San Francisco Bay Area, LGBT publishing, and the queer community. *Queerly Beloved* is a love story that flies in the face of expectations and raises questions about the true nature of identity, sexuality, and love.

RSVP to: [editor@windycitymediagroup.com](mailto:editor@windycitymediagroup.com)



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# Hull-House: Chicago's queerest home?

BY JASON CARSON WILSON

Home queer home.

Hull-House is quite possibly among the queerest abodes in the nation. Renowned social-justice advocate Jane Addams, who's rumored to have been a lesbian, lived there. Gender & Sexuality tours immerse visitors in Chicago and Hull-House history, while pondering an enduring question: Was Jane Addams gay?

"She our guiding light," Jane Addams Hull-House Museum Educator Lina Reynolds said while gesturing toward a portrait of Addams.

The museum, 800 S. Halsted St., has conducted tours every Friday in June. Popularity prompted the museum to continue the tours during July. Addams isn't the only queer element featured. Contrary to convention wisdom, according to Reynolds, Hull-House wasn't a homeless shelter.

It was an intentional community led by women. Addams led Hull-House, with Mary Rozet Smith by her side most of the time. When they were apart, Addams would take a large painting of Rozet Smith with her on trips, when it was hanging in her Hull-House bedroom (when it hangs now after being found in the basement).

"This relationship has been looked at and talked about a very long time," Museum Educator Michael Ramirez said.

He said they were partners for more than 40 years, bought a home together and talked about adopting children. However, there's no definitive proof. Despite the debate among some circles, the LGBT community claims Addams as one its heroes.

She's among those honored on pillars in Boystown.

"Why not call a spade a spade?" Ramirez said.

Unlike Hull-House residents Edith Abbott and Sophonisba Breckinridge, Addams and Rozet Smith burned their intimate letters. Still, their relationship, Ramirez said, inspires some intrigue.

The community included married couples as well as single men and women, characterizing itself as a family of choice. So, Reynolds noted that creating families of choice mirrors what LGBT people do today.

"It's a really interesting experiment with domestic space," Reynolds said.

Community members were from Addams' social class. Gerard Swope, who became president of General Electric, and Julius Rosenwald, a Sears co-owner, both lived at Hull-House. With that said, community space didn't consist of Hull-House alone. It and 13 buildings occupied the area where University of Illinois at Chicago now stands.

Only Hull-House and its dining hall, which is now a museum, remain standing. Reynolds said, in Hull-House's heyday, 10,000 people took advantage its various programs each week. Hull-House operated, in that location, from 1889 to 1963. Hull-House residents took a buyout and formed the Hull-House Association, which closed in 2012 due to financial problems.

Child care was among those programs. Children were given baths and immunizations. And, they also had the chance to attend summer camp. The portrait of Jenny Dow hangs in a museum recreation of a classroom.

Community members established the city's first juvenile justice system and paved the way for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Reynolds highlighted some contradictions. Hull-House created a social safety net and a "chosen family," while empha-



A room in Hull-House. Photo by Jason Carson Wilson

sizing the nuclear family in public.

Abbott would become of the dean of what is now the University of Chicago's School of Social Service Administration. Breckinridge became the first woman to graduate from University of Chicago Law School.

Abbott and Breckinridge never called themselves lesbians. Interestingly, they were accepted by each other's families. However, at that time, acceptance of being different only went so far. People could be arrested and prosecuting for cross-dressing.

It was only allowed on Halloween, according to Ramirez. Police, he said, often raided "gay balls" after midnight—since Halloween was over. Ramirez also talked about an early marriage equality case. Death revealed Nicolai de Raylan was actually a woman, so her wife couldn't receive the inheritance. The De Raylans weren't at Hull-House.

Ramirez and Reynolds sifted through documents on a table in one of the downstairs rooms. They had one purpose in mind.

"It's basically to see how queerness has always been here," Reynolds said.

Other Hull-House residents included Ellen Gates Starr (who co-founded Hull-House with Addams), whose sexual orientation is easy to pinpoint, Reynolds said. Starr was a bookbinder, who bound a book of poetry by Sappho.

Sappho was a poet, who hailed from the island of Lesbos. Of course, both are roots of the words Sapphic and lesbian. In fact, Starr helped re-introduce Sappho to the world. Addams and Starr's once close relationship deteriorated, according to Reynolds. Starr left Hull-House and spent her last days in a convent.

**Tours take place 3-4 p.m. on Fridays throughout June and July, with the exception of Independence Day.**

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# 'Chat Daddy' returns to radio landscape

BY JASON CARSON WILSON

A familiar face has brought his voice back to Chicago's airwaves.

Well-known Windy City media personality Art "Chat Daddy" Sims' new weekly show, "Real Talk, Real People with Chat Daddy" debuted on WVON 1690 AM. The broadcast airs 6-9 p.m. on Fridays. The show's format, according to Sims, is a first for the nation's oldest Black radio station, describing it as a "magazine-style" show.

"When I say a 'magazine-style' show, just imagine you're reading your favorite magazine," he said.

Magazines have a cover story, Sims said, while the inside may be filled with lifestyle or relationship stories. Sims has created a different kind of show, featuring celebrities and everyday people alike—Black, white, gay or straight. They'll discuss hot topics, lifestyle issues as well as relationship issues.

Sims is a bona fide media talent. He's worked in print, radio and television in Chicago—the nation's third-largest market—for nearly 20 years. Sims and Mark Lewis hosted "The Real Deal Experience" on BlogTalkRadio.

Sims has written for the Chicago Defender and was a columnist for Blacklines (a Windy City Media Group product no longer in publication). He also appeared on television on WCIU's You & Me this Morning. However, only one media genre truly enamors Sims.

"Radio has always been a major love," he said. "I can really be me. Radio is me ... the stripped-down, natural me."

"Real Talk, Real People with Chat Daddy" will feature discussion of hot topics, lifestyle issues as well as love and relationships. Sims said no topic will be taboo. The show, in part, is meant to inspire and sustain sorely communication within the Black community.

"We, as a people, especially African-Americans, need to have much more open and honest dialogue about our lives," Sims said.

He said the community is reticent about "touching subjects that most people refuse to talk about." Sims wants to explore how tackling ignored topics can bring the Black community to "a place of healthiness."

How to help young Black men and the shortage of "good Black men" are among the topics ignored. Sims conceded that Black, gay men often get the blame for the small inventory. He pushed back on the claim.

"I've heard a lot of that. I've gone back and forth about that," Sims said. "I honestly think that Black men don't understand the concept of commitment, to begin with. I think a lot of them feel something better will come along."

Sims said he "found it funny" that many people got married June 1—when Illinois' marriage-equality law went into effect.

"The crazy part is that I didn't see two Black men getting married that day," he said. "I only saw Black men with other races."

Sims himself is in a relationship with someone of another race. In order to protect his relationship, Sims said only five people have actually seen his partner.

"I'm so afraid I'll have to fight people to keep my relationship healthy and whole," Sims said.

While love and relationships will be focus, Sims plans to explore all facets of life. Other show topics include Illinois' concealed carry law, the negatives of texting and the economics of gay marriage.

"I hope people get good energy ... get the power of positive vibes," Sims said. "I want them to take it seriously and have fun."

While he's happy this opportunity has come along, Sims said "everything comes with resistance." Stereotypes have spurred resistance of Black gay men.

"Often, [they] are looked on as characters," he said.

With that said, resistance isn't a new concept for Sims. Life, he said, is based on struggles. Discrimination has been at the root of those struggles.

"I've truly become a master of manipulation," Sims said. "Being Black is one thing; being gay is [quite] another."

Progress, Sims said, is in the eye of the beholder.

"As much as we are making history, there's a long way to go in being accepted and appreciated," he said.



/windycity  
mediagroup



Art "Chat Daddy" Sims. Photo courtesy of Sims

## Jennifer Lopez out with 10th album

Jennifer Lopez's 10th album and her first for Capitol Records, A.K.A., is now out.

A.K.A. features collaborations with French Montana, Rick Ross, TI, Pitbull, Iggy Azalea, Tyga, Sia, Chantal Kreviazuk, Kirby and Chris Brown. Among the other collaborators/producers are Max Martin and Diplo.

Songs that have already been released include "First Love" (video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BfgoiYu9EUE>) and "I Luh Ya, Papi."

Lopez's first album, On the 6, debuted in 1999.



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# Artist captures punk vibe at new site's entrance

BY ROSS FORMAN

Homo Riot, the moniker of the noted Los Angeles-based street artist, spent about 22 hours (June 14-15) creating the new, colorful, graphic—and certainly gay, in words and images—stairwell entrance look and feel down into Chloe's, the new dance club that occupies a portion of what once was Spin Nightclub near the corner of Halsted and Belmont streets in Boystown.

From floor to ceiling heading down into the color, Homo Riot gave the walls a punk rock

look and feel, reminiscent of the 1970s and 1980s, a throwback to CBGB in New York, he said.

CBGB (country, bluegrass and blues) was a music club in New York City that became known for spotlighting punk and new wave bands, as well as hardcore punk bands. The club closed in October 2006.

"It's cool; I'm excited about [the look]," Homo Riot said, in between strokes with his paint brush as he put the finishing touches on the design.

And he's certain many will be snapping selfies as they enter—with the pink and "piss yellow," as he called it, coloring on a collage of more than 150 different images (more than 1,000 total) formed paper Mache-style on the brick walls.

"I like that there are some aggressive images; there is so much going on [among the images]," he said.

The genesis of Homo Riot happened around the Prop 8 decision in California in late 2008. He had been an artist and was "really upset" by the decision. So we went out to rebel against the verdict on same-sex marriage. Since then, the Homo Riot look has "grown and evolved, meaning a lot of different things to lot of different people," he said. "For me, it's sort of a continual exercise in outing myself, getting comfortable with my sexuality."

The real-life Homo Riot has had a partner, Luis, for 20 years.

Homo Riot hails from northwest Florida, in a conservative family, where the only gay people he came across were the church organist and the city florist. They were really flamboyant,



Homo Riot's work at Chloe's. Photo by Ross Forman



Homo Riot's work at Chloe's. Photo by Ross Forman

which is anything but Homo Riot, but they struck it.

Homo Riot had a show in Chicago a couple of years ago and also did street art locally, such as in Wicker Park. The new management team of Chloe's and Whiskey Trust, which occupies the remainder of what once was Spin Nightclub, saw him then—and remembered his work.

When they inquired if he'd create the look for the entrance to Chloe's, he was "psyched, really excited," he said.

The look is hypermasculine, with a deviant

tone.

"It's awesome," said James Rhine, the general manager at Chloe's and Whiskey Trust—and part of the three-person management team. "His art is precisely the vibe we wanted to create for Chloe's; it's exactly what we envisioned. It's freakin' cool."

Homo Riot did the Chloe's entrance by himself, admitting he would have liked an assistant for the project, which also could have used another six hours more or so. Still, he added, "I like it."



## Atlantic to unleash 'Hedwig' soundtrack

Atlantic Records has announced the release of Hedwig and the Angry Inch—Original Broadway Cast Recording, the musical companion to the eight-time Tony-nominated show starring Neil Patrick Harris.

The release comes 15 years after Atlantic released the cast recording for the original production in 1999, and 13 years following Atlantic's release of the original motion picture soundtrack for the film incarnation.

Songs on the 14-tune album include "Wicked Little Town," "Midnight Radio," "The Origin of Love" and "Angry Inch."

The soundtrack is available for pre-order and will be available for download July 1. The album will be available at physical retailers beginning July 15.

## Hough tour in Chicago July 11

Celebrity siblings Julianne and Derek Hough are starring in their own all-new dance production, "Move Live on Tour," on-

stage across North America.

Julianne is a two-time professional champion on ABC's Dancing with the Stars, and has been in such films as Rock of Ages, Burlesque and Safe Haven. Derek is an Emmy winner and the only five-time champion on Dancing with the Stars.

That includes a stop at the Chicago Theatre on July 11.

For tour routing and to purchase tickets, go to [moveliveontour.com](http://moveliveontour.com); VIP packages will be available through VIPNation.com.

## Beth Orton's 'Central' being reissued July 8

The group 3 Loop Music will reissue Beth Orton's Central Reservation as a two-CD expanded edition on July 8.

The follow up to Beth's acclaimed debut Trailer Park, 1999's Central Reservation featured the hit singles "Stolen Car" and "Central Reservation," and spent 56 weeks in the album charts, selling more than 500,000 copies.

The new album will contain key B-sides, including the "Spiritual Life Ibadon" remix of the title track plus unreleased live recordings and demos.



# From the field to the press box—and loving it

BY ROSS FORMAN

Laura Flynn started playing soccer at age 5 and played competitively until college—and she long dreamed of one day being a pro soccer player.

The problem was, while growing up and improving as a player, there was no league for women in the United States.

Flash-forward to 2014 and the National Women's Soccer League—the NWSL, as it is known—is a nine-team organization, from Boston to Seattle.

The Chicago Red Stars are now in its sixth season, and Flynn is in her first as the team's director of marketing and communications. Flynn, as she's known, moved to Chicago this past December after living in Portland, San Francisco, New York and Boston. She is originally from Philadelphia.

Flynn, 31, lives in West Town and is openly gay.

"Now, I have the opportunity to be part of that very league I dreamed of one day playing in. It's my job now, and my privilege, to make it sustainable so other girls can live out their same dream," she said.

Flynn's playing career was stalled by serious injuries, and when she stepped away from the sport, "it changed the game for me," she said. "I see it in a new light. And now I am able to understand the game from the player's perspective, and the fans—because I've been both."

Flynn came out to most of her friends in her early or mid-20s, and a few years later to her family. "Almost everyone I told already knew, or at least had a feeling, but it took me some time to become comfortable in my own skin," she said. "I really struggled for much of my 20s to figure out who I was, and what I wanted for my life. I got to a point though when I craved authenticity in my relationships—with my family, with my friends, with my partners, and with myself. And when I put that first, and valued authenticity more than anything, life changed ... for the better."

Flynn said working behind-the-scenes in sports is a "great experience," though seemingly never-ending. Thirteen-hour days are commonplace, and forget about days off during the season.

"Working in sports is not as glamorous as it sounds at times, but I can honestly say I come home every night and am proud of the work I've done," she said. "I'm selling, or as I like to say, sharing, a product that is incredibly special, and important. Our players, I really do believe, change people's lives. They are role models for so many. Like I said, it's hard work, but it's all worth it when you see a young soccer player smile after getting an autograph or high-five from their favorite player, or [you] see a full stadium of rowdy soccer fans enjoying the world's favorite sport. It's an honor to work in women's soccer, to be part of the National Women's Soccer League, and most importantly, to be a member of the Chicago Red Stars front-office."

Flynn's working-world resume includes stints in New York, working for Equinox Fitness, one of the top fitness chains in the country. In 2010, she worked for the Philadelphia Independence women's professional soccer team. And, before joining the Red Stars, she was a personal trainer and sports manager for the Sports Club/LA in San Francisco.

"There will never be just one career highlight, though ask me again after the Red Stars win the NWSL Championship this year," she said.

Flynn said working for the Red Stars has been an incredible experience, one she wouldn't trade for anything.

"The Red Stars organization is extremely sup-

portive of the LGBT community, and at the core promotes equality for everyone—players, staff members, fans, and partner organizations," she said. "The Red Stars recently became a member of the Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce Chicago, and are looking to play a more active role in supporting businesses in the community."

Flynn added, "Everyone in life must overcome obstacles, some more often than others. But, I think the important thing to remember, and the thing I try to focus on in tough times is, every hardship, every bump in the road is a learning lesson. Those struggles and how you react to them shape you as person. They make you stronger. I am grateful for every bump in the road I've traveled because it has brought me here to this very place, and brought a lot of incredible people into my life. The best piece of advice I can give, is to be grateful for the struggle. It's all worth it in the end."



Laura Flynn. Photo courtesy of Flynn



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# Chicagoan Eric Lueshen played college football—while openly gay

*Michael Sam made headlines this spring as the first openly gay football player drafted into the NFL, as the St. Louis Rams selected the former University of Missouri standout in the seventh round. But before Sam, Eric Lueshen was on track for football stardom with one of college football's most storied programs, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln—and Lueshen was openly gay on the team. And this was more than 10 years ago. Lueshen's story—as an out Division I college football player—broke the day after Sam's this past February. Now 29 and living in Chicago, Lueshen shared his journey with Windy City Times.*

BY ROSS FORMAN

He was bullied for years in school, told he ran funny, mocked for being gay, and even for being smart.

He had battles at home, often feuding with his dad long before he confirmed to his parents that he was gay. He even had physical battles with his dad, and the police were repeatedly called to their small-town Nebraska home.

Eric Lueshen had a rough, troubled time as a teenager. He was a ward of the state for two years, forced to live in a group-home for a few months, and even was twice admitted to a hospital's suicide ward.

"I think what really saved me was music and animals. We had a lot of pets; that helped a lot," said Lueshen, who was a percussionist in the band at Pierce High School, a group that was very open, very accepting. "That was kind of my safe haven."

Sports also played a huge role in Lueshen's life, especially his junior year in high school—when colleges from across the country, including numerous Division I programs, came calling. All wanted the blonde-haired Lueshen to sign with their football team.

Lueshen, you see, was a good kicker—a really, really good kicker. In fact, as a junior in high school, he attended a football kicking camp run by the only kicker in the Pro Football Hall of Fame, Jan Stenerud, who played in the NFL from 1967-1985. Many college kickers also were at the camp as instructors.

Lueshen won every competition at that camp against other high school kickers, and also against all of the starting college kickers. At the end of the camp, Stenerud even took off his Hall of Fame ring and put it on Lueshen's finger and said, "You'll have one of these someday."

Lueshen ultimately landed at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, a perennial powerhouse.

But, "my story is so much more than just the football story," he said.

## Growing up & coming out

Lueshen was raised in conservative Pierce, Nebraska, which had about 1,600 residents at the time, and he now jokes that the city has "boomed" to 1,700. His high school's graduating class in 2003 had, oh, about 85 members.

Lueshen grew up playing numerous sports. He played club soccer and was good enough to play seven years for the state's Olympic Development Program. Lueshen also played basketball, baseball, wrestled, and competed in both cross-country and track & field.

He was a four-year varsity athlete in both football and track & field.

During a family vacation to Disney World as a junior, Lueshen met a guy at Rainforest Café—a part of the tale that his parents didn't know until years later. Lueshen had, instead, told his parents that he met a friend at the pool, and

that he was going to hang out with him and some friends for the next few days.

In reality, it was the guy from Rainforest Café, who was gay.

That interaction confirmed to Lueshen that he too was gay.

Lueshen came out to close friends as a high school junior, at age 17.

But it wasn't the perfectly planned coming-out to his parents.

Lueshen as a junior was working at a nearby McDonald's. He met a guy and they developed a very close relationship. One day, the friend gave Lueshen a handwritten letter and said, "Don't read it until you get home."

Lueshen put it on the passenger seat of his car and forgot about it.

His dad found and read the letter.

Lueshen eventually got home and the doors were locked, which was a rarity.

So he knocked. Kerwin Lueshen, his dad, answered and immediately said that they needed to talk.

Lueshen confirmed to his parents that he was gay. Mom accepted it, yet Dad was admittedly homophobic.

As a senior, Lueshen said he didn't have any problems on the football high school team and many locals were accepting of the gay athlete because he was talented and being recruited by such programs as Fresno State, Arizona State, Kansas State, Iowa, and countless Division II schools.

He ultimately chose to stay in-state, attend the University of Nebraska, as much for the school's academic strength as its football power.

For the first two months on campus, no one asked his sexual-orientation, so he never shared that he was gay. No reason to, though he knew people in the athletic department thought he was gay. "I wasn't hiding it from them; it just never came up. I'm a big believer in someone judging me based off of my character, morals, and values—not my sexual orientation," Lueshen said.

It was confirmed in October, at lunch with two friends from the team: Corey McKeon and Sean Hill, both from suburban Naperville.

They said, "So Pretty Boy, we have a question for you."

And Lueshen knew what the question was going to be.

McKeon asked, "Are you gay?"

Lueshen said he was and asked if that was a problem. Both immediately said it was not; they just wanted to know.

"It was probably one of the easiest coming-out experiences of my life," Lueshen said.

Word spread quickly that Lueshen was gay—to his teammates and coaches, to the athletic department as a whole, around campus, and seemingly everyone in Nebraska and in surrounding states.

That included about five or six football teammates who were "really homophobic," said Lueshen, who now admits he was "legitimately scared for my life at times," fearing what they might do to him.

Lueshen had a physical altercation with one of them—and he quickly learned to steer away from them.

"I kept telling myself that the bullying and homophobic slurs will end, eventually, once they get to know me. I set out to prove to them that I am a great athlete just as they are, and that I am not just some stereotype they conjured up in their heads," Lueshen said.

Eventually, they changed—but it was a year later, on Lueshen's birthday, no less.



Eric Lueshen. Photo from Lueshen

Lueshen was out at a party with McKeon and Hill when the leader of the small pack of homophobes from the team came onto the scene. He was, though, cheery, perhaps drunk.

Still, Lueshen was nervous, fearing it would lead to another physical altercation.

Instead, his teammate handed Lueshen a bottle of Crown Royale to share, and when he learned it was Lueshen's birthday, he said to keep the bottle.

The 300-pound lineman then put his arm around Lueshen and came clean.

"I was a homophobe. I didn't know how I was going to finish out my career at Nebraska with an openly gay teammate," he told Lueshen. "There were times when I thought I was going to beat your ass. In fact, I didn't even know how to be around you. But, through getting to know you, I've learned that you are not the stereotype of what everyone likes to say gay is. You are a really cool guy. You're fun, funny, smart."

Other homophobes from the team then approached too, and more teammates.

The leader then said to Lueshen, "If anyone has any problem with you, ever, even says anything bad about you, let me and the guys know because we'll take care of it."

Lueshen was shocked.

"That was such a monumental point of acceptance in my life. That was huge to me," he said.

Lueshen has forgiven all of them.

"I understand that ignorance is something that's learned and can be broken through education and experiences," he said.

Lueshen also had a major turning-point in his relationship with his dad as a college freshman—when he spent the day with his dad and they talked openly, candidly. The elder Lueshen admitted he was homophobic, based on his upbringing and military background. They talked for hours, bonded and rebuilt their relationship. Their relationship went from "highly, highly dysfunctional to one now where he's one of my biggest supporters," Lueshen said. "I'm so proud of the man my dad has become."

Lueshen joined the Nebraska football team at its bowl game after the 2003 season, though he was not playing.

By the fall of his junior year academically (sophomore eligibility), he was finally listed on the team's depth chart as its No. 1 kicker. However, he was injured during a two-a-day prac-

tices in the fall, and by the time he returned, he had already been replaced.

Then, on March 8, 2006, Lueshen had career-ending spinal fusion surgery.

"Nothing could prepare me for not being able to walk by myself, and having sports taken away from me in the blink of an eye. It was a very difficult pill to swallow," he said.

Lueshen backed away from all sports—even as a fan—to help his emotional healing.

Instead, he spent his senior year focused on academics—and had a 4.0 GPA in chemical engineering.

"I never was going to live a lie or live in fear; I was going to be myself. I'm proud that I had the tenacity, the guts to do what I did. Nebraska athletics, as well as the minds of countless people throughout the Midwest, were forever changed by me just being myself. Someone had to be the first to open the closet door at Nebraska, and I'm glad I was able to be that person," he said.

## Welcome to the Windy City

Lueshen moved to Chicago after graduating and has lived here since, calling the Andersonville neighborhood home. Following his passion for helping people, he decided to pursue his PhD in biomedical engineering at UIC, which he is currently in the final stages of completion.

He has also become a loud advocate for the LGBT community.

When Michael Sam came out in February, Lueshen shared a congratulatory post about Sam on Facebook, and also included a brief mention of his stint as an openly gay football player.

The next day, Lueshen was being interviewed for the first time about being a former openly gay college football player by a radio station based in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Lueshen admitted he was nervous for the interview, mostly because, "I didn't want to offend my former teammates, friends, coaches, or the athletic program."

Eventually, Lueshen saw the long-term benefits of sharing his story.

The interview lasted about 45-minutes.

Lueshen has, over the past few months, had numerous LGBT advocacy opportunities, not just the focus on his drug delivery methods to the brain and central nervous system research for his PhD. He has been interviewed by both national and international media outlets, and even co-hosted a sports talk show. He has also helped lobby the Nebraska State Senate on its gay rights bills.

Lueshen recently volunteered at Midsommar Fest for HRC and helped out at the Proud To Run booth. He also spoke at an HRC's Athletes For Equality event, held at Scarlet Bar in Lakeview.

On June 18, Lueshen will be at Victory Gardens Theatre in Chicago, part of a three-person panel headlining a discussion on oppression and torture in the LGBT community after the performance of *Death and the Maiden*, starring Sandra Oh (TV's *Grey's Anatomy*).

Then, on June 27-28, he will be the youth ambassador for Heartland Youth Pride and the grand marshal for the Heartland Pride Parade and Festival—the same pride events in Omaha, Nebraska, and Council Bluffs, Iowa, that Lueshen went to 10-plus years ago during his college football days.

"Being the grand marshal is a huge honor; I get goose bumps just thinking about it," he said. "Just knowing that my story of struggle, love and acceptance has empowered and inspired so many people has made the negative memories and all the hardships into some of the most positive experiences in my life."

"Before my story broke, it wasn't always easy to look back at my college football days and say that the positives outweighed the negative. Now for sure they do. I know that I forever changed Nebraska athletics, and the mindset of so many people in Nebraska and elsewhere."

And he's continuing to do so in Chicago and beyond.



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Up2Us. Photo courtesy of the organization

## Nonprofit pushes sports as a safe space for youth

BY ROSS FORMAN

A New York-based national not-for-profit organization is pushing forward with its initiative to promote sports as the solution to the challenges facing America's youth, including LGBTQ individuals.

Up2Us partnered late last year with the Ben Cohen StandUp Foundation, which awarded Up2Us a grant to develop Making Sports A Safe Place, a co-branded bullying-prevention program, which has been piloted this year. The grant will help Up2Us develop the Safe Space Toolkit, a set of strategies and activities to help coaches address bullying issues and also provide LGBT-sensitivity training.

The charity's Chicago chapter teamed with the Chicago Park District and Ald. Pat Dowell, among others, in early May for Community Wellness Day at Wentworth Gardens. The event encouraged health, wellness and fitness through a variety of sports.

"The Up2Us Field Day is a great example of how neighbors and community based organizations can work together to create safe and healthy spaces for everyone to enjoy. I [was] pleased to be a part of this event because it celebrates the wonderful families that make up this community," Dowell said in a statement.

Tena Kunik, regional director for Up2Us (Chicago), said the event "was awesome," attracting about 300.

"Sports and sports-based youth development are part of the solution, trying to address the needs of high-risk youth and the youth that have been exposed to trauma," Kunik said.

The May event had attendees as old as 70 and about 35 coaches.

Chicago is one of four cities nationally (New Orleans, Miami and Los Angeles) with a regional director, such as Kunik, to help elevate the awareness of the organization.

Up2Us was formed four years ago and has been prevalent in Chicago for the past three years. Up2Us, according to its website, "harnesses the power of sports to reduce youth violence, promote health, and inspire academic success for kids in every community. Our research, training, and on-the-ground initiatives



Tena Kunik. Photo from Up2Us

empower sports programs across the country to become a united force for meaningful change."

The charity teams with about 750 members across the country, including about 60 here in Chicago, across a variety of sports, such as, Chicago Run, which was founded in 2007 to aid in the fight against childhood obesity.

"Thanks to utilizing Up2Us services, Chicago Run was able to serve over 16,000 students this academic year," Amy Witt, director of development & strategy for Chicago Run, said in a statement.

Other local members aligned with Up2Us include After School Matters, Soccer Without Borders Chicago, Chicago Youth Boxing Club, Team M3, and the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago, among others.

Kunik said one of the strengths of Up2Us is its coaching program, filled with trained coaches/mentors who often are ethnically-reflective of the community they are serving. Plus, the coaches are "super trained in youth development, and how to use sports within the context of youth development so you get greater outcomes," she said. "For instance, a soccer

player may score two goals in a game, as opposed to one, and that's great—but if you can walk away with two new friends, that's better.

"While sports often tend to be gender-specific, and often very male-dominated, we want to play a role in changing that context—and looking at sports as a vehicle to create greater physical activity, but also to create a safe and open space for everyone involved. One of the ways we are trying to do that is by addressing bullying, and by creating a level playing field, so that everyone can be engaged and show that everyone has just as many skills as anyone else. Thus, it takes away that atmosphere of being picked on," for being less skilled or because of sexual-orientation or gender identity.

Kunik added, "We really work with our coaches to create an atmosphere where it's not the

great players and then everyone else. It's really about creating that safe space."

Up2Us has a successful Coach Across America program, launched in 2010, that places and trains role models to bring sports-based youth development to underserved communities, inspiring children to be leaders.

"Up2Us can play such a key role in creating a safe space for youth at a young age, including LGBTQ youth, so they can feel comfortable being who they are—and they are surrounded by other people who are comfortable with who they are," Kunik said. "Often, all it takes is that one caring adult who can be there for a youth, one who may be dealing with [negative aspects] of coming out of the closet. That Up2Us coach can be there, to help him or her through that tough time."

## Nat'l sports hall of fame names newest inductees

The National Gay & Lesbian Sports Hall of Fame board has announced its choices for the second induction class.

Inductees include Billy Bean, retired MLB player; Wade Davis, executive director of You Can Play and retired NFL player; Tom Daley, Olympic medal-winning diver; Gareth Thomas, retired rugby player; Esera Tuaolo, retired NFL player; Brittney Griner, decorated collegiate athlete and active WNBA player; Diana Nyad, endurance swimmer; Fallon Fox, mixed martial artist; Chris Mosier, founder of Transathlete.com; Nike, corporation; Stand Up Foundation, anti-bullying non-profit; Mark Bingham, rugby player (deceased); Jerry Smith, NFL player (deceased); Mayor George Moscone, straight ally and former mayor of San Francisco (deceased).

The induction of the second class of honorees will be held at 7:30 p.m. at Center on Halsted on July 11, in conjunction with "Out at Wrigley" on July 12.

Sponsors include Anheuser-Busch, Southern Comfort, ChicagoPride.com, L Stop, Grab Magazine, Center on Halsted, Windy City Times, Fitness Formula Club, Crew Bar and Grill, Supergurl Images, MTM Chicago and Horizons Cafe.

Tickets for the induction ceremony are available at [www.gayandlesbiansports.com](http://www.gayandlesbiansports.com).



Esera Tuaolo. Photo from Liz Thomson

## Australian teams commit to ending homophobia

In Australia, all four football codes as well as Cricket Australia have presented a united front in Sydney, emphasizing the need to end anti-LGBT discrimination in sport, The West Australian reported.

The agreement came ahead of the Bingham Cup, the world cup of gay rugby, with all codes agreeing to introduce policies in line with the new Anti-Homophobia and Inclusion Framework by the end of August. It marks the first time in all the major professional sports in a country have collectively committed to tackling discrimination based on sexual orientation with inclusion policies.

In a statement Dave Pocock—a Bingham Cup Sydney 2014 ambassador who plays with the Australian Wallabies—said, in part, "I think it's a travesty that people aren't able to participate in sports for fear of being judged or who do participate and aren't open about their sexuality. I hate the idea of people missing out on sport because of the fear of being discriminated against."

## 'OUT at Wrigley 2014' to take place July 12

"OUT at Wrigley 2014" will take place Saturday, July 12, at 3:05 p.m. at Wrigley Field, 1060 W. Addison St.

Bud Light, MTM Chicago and sUpErGuRL Images, in conjunction with ChicagoPride.com, are sponsoring the 14th annual event. The Chicago Cubs will host the Atlanta Braves.

Tickets are \$57 (terrace reserved passes) or \$130 Budweiser patio deck tickets. Those who purchase the latter will receive such perks as a complimentary gift bag; and all the food and drinks they can consume.

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

## Billie Jean King to speak at CFW annual luncheon

Activist/tennis icon Billie Jean King will be the keynote speaker at The Chicago Foundation for Women's (CFW's) 29th Annual Luncheon on Sept. 18 at the Hyatt Regency Chicago, 151 E. Wacker Dr.

A networking reception will take place 11 a.m.-12 p.m. The luncheon and keynote address will take place 12-1:30 p.m.

Visit [www.cfw.org/luncheon](http://www.cfw.org/luncheon).

# Triathlon junkie: Chicago has done 35 races—in five years

BY ROSS FORMAN

Nic Ruley and Brett King dated for nine years before tying the knot in Montgomery County, Maryland, where they met—and their wedding was on the first day it was legal: Jan. 2, 2013.

They had it at an old school at the courthouse, and since it was the first day same-sex weddings were available in Maryland, NBC was there—and they shot footage of Nic and Brett. And that footage is now the same-sex wedding stock footage used by NBC News whenever another state gets marriage equality.

The two likely will appear on NBC once again after Illinois opens the marriage gates for the LGBT community.

Nic, who prefers not to hyphenate their last names, is 36 and an adjunct professor at Columbia College Chicago in the Television Department. Brett, who prefers the hyphen (King-Ruley), is an office manager at Columbia College Chicago.

They live in East Lake View.

Nic also loves triathlons, having completed 35 races over the past five years—and this spring he joined Team In Training (TEAM), the endurance-training program supporting the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. He is, naturally, a tri coach for TEAM.

"Being a queer athlete, racing triathlons has almost felt like a political act," he said. "My relationship with sports growing up was really, well, non-existent. I mean, unless you count theater and marching band as sports. Athletics weren't very welcoming to gay kids during my formative years. I mean, kids always wanted

to play smear-the-queer, but that wasn't really the sports scene that I wanted to be involved in. So being involved [now] and being visible is a way for me to do my part and carve out some space for the gay community. I know it's not much, but hopefully, we can make sports a little less hostile for gay kids who will feel free to pursue whatever their passion is, whether it's triathlon or musical theater or both."

King Ruley's first foray into the tri world was through the Chicago Triathlon, and his coach that year, Scott Hutmacher, introduced him to the sport "in way that was both intimidation-free and accessible, which is something I hadn't expected," he said. "That approach is what got me across the finish line and what got me hooked. He showed me that it wasn't just a challenge, but also this amazing hobby that you could love, even while it kicked your ass."

"I coach because this is something that I want to pass on to my athletes: the love of the sport, as corny as it sounds. I'm a believer in the religion of triathlon and hope to convert as many as possible."

King Ruley also is hooked on his TEAM, with coaches sporting green training shirts and the throng of participants sporting purple attire.

"TEAM has done such a magnificent job balancing mission and training," he said. "They provide athletes with the tools, not just to finish, but to really succeed in reaching their own personal goals in regards to their fitness and the race that they are running, all while generating much needed revenue for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Illinois. They have the personal approach to training that I wanted as



Nic Ruley (left) and Brett King.  
Photo from Ruley

an athlete, so I'm thrilled to be working with them this season."

King Ruley brings an endless supply of enthusiasm, plus a sense of fearlessness, and a love of the sport. Maybe a little panache too, he added.

"I am a firm believer in consistency and long-term results, which require a lot of discipline, especially early on," King Ruley said. "If you can get up and run for a bit once, it's fantastic. Bully to you for getting out there and doing it. But if you can sustain that for 90 days, you'll be amazed how you feel and how your body and mind change."

King Ruley will be competing this summer in the tri at Gay Games 9 in Cleveland—and he's driven to return home with a medal.

"I'm attracted to triathlon because it teaches you to live. Each of the sports is about overcoming challenges and adversities," King Ruley said. "When you swim, you have to overcome the water. When you bike, you have to overcome the machine. When you run, you have to overcome yourself. But learning to use that adversity to move through it is the key. I think the same thing applies to life. It's about asking yourself, 'What is challenging me right now and

how can I use this to succeed?'"

King Ruley said his favorite endurance-sport memory was finishing Ironman Texas in 2012, which he tagged, "one of the most incredible experiences of my life."

He admittedly was not 100-percent ready for that race, but, he has a superstition about racing—that he must complete at least two of the same distance races in a year, in case one is absolutely miserable.

"I signed up for Ironman Texas as a pre-race for Ironman Wisconsin. That way, one could be terrible and it'd be no big [deal]," King Ruley said. "I expected [the Texas event] to be terrible, so the bar was set so low that every step of the race exceeded my expectations."

"[Renowned triathlete] Chrissie Wellington was at the finish line putting medals on all of the athletes, which was a total surprise to me. When I saw her, all I could think was 'Holy shit, this is Chrissie Wellington!' So I dropped to me knees and kissed her feet, which the medics and volunteers frowned on, thinking I had passed out. But when I got up she smiled and gave me my medal and said congratulations. It was magic."

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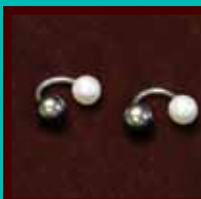
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# Hudson Taylor: LGBT ally in Russia and beyond

BY ROSS FORMAN

Hudson Taylor was admittedly nervous going to the Winter Olympics earlier this year in Sochi, Russia, to promote the Principle 6 (P6) campaign, launched by Athlete Ally, the gay-rights advocacy organization that he founded and serves as its executive director.

Taylor was certainly aware of Russia's staunch, much publicized anti-gay propaganda laws.

But there was no way he was missing this worldwide platform to spotlight gay rights.

"I had two primary goals for the trip: ensure that athletes and fans were free from persecution at the Games and, second, use the Games as an opportunity to raise awareness and support for the LGBT Russian community. I think we were able to do both," Taylor said. "I wish there had been more attention or focus paid to Russia's anti-gay propaganda laws during the Games, though."

Taylor spent six days in Russia, talking with media, Olympians, fans and more about Principle 6, often wearing the red T-shirt extolling the P6 message: Sport does not discriminate on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise.

Principle 6 of the Olympic Charter states that "Any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement," and the IOC has confirmed that this includes sexual orientation.

More than 50 Olympians—current and former athletes, from the Summer and Winter Games, Olympians and Paralympians—signed the P6 pledge, including the Australian bobsled team.

And the first two Russians he encountered on his journey stood by his cause too, thus helping settle Taylor's nerves.

"Sure, I wish there was more [positives] to have come out of Sochi, but, at the same time I'm also really happy with the level of support [received]," Taylor said. "I went [to Sochi] with two objectives: one, talk to as many people in the media as possible, and second, to work with the Olympians to help give them a safe opportunity to show support for the Olympic charter and, as a by-product, speak out against Russia's anti-gay propaganda laws."

Most of the athletes who have participated in the P6 campaign have taken to social media to voice their support, including pictures of themselves in a P6 shirt, hat or scarf, or holding up six fingers.

Taylor also met with the official White House delegation while in Russia.

Taylor, 27, was an NCAA All-American wrestler who has gone on to coach the sport collegiately—and he remains one of the most vocal, most prominent straight allies for LGBT rights.

"There's so much going on in sports right now. All of the professional sports leagues are investing in training and education for their coaches, athletes, staff around issues of diversity and inclusion. So it's a very exciting time to be doing this work, and Athlete Ally is very proud to be doing it," said Taylor, who has a two-fold purpose for his advocacy organization: education and resources, and through mobilization and awareness.

"On one side, it's about trying to identify visible allies, be it in professional athletics, Olympics or Paralympics ... really, anyone who would constitute as being a potential role model, getting them to be vocal about their commitment to LGBT respect and inclusion."



Hudson Taylor. Photo by Frank Louis

On the education side, Taylor trains about 60 college athletic departments annually, plus the NBA and Major League Baseball to help with their efforts. "Basically, anyone who could benefit from being better educated is receiving that information and then helping those [already] on board make a greater impact on their team and in their community," he said.

Taylor, who attended the University of Maryland and is now a coach at Columbia University in New York, is one of many high-profile straight allies from the sports world. Football players Chris Kluwe and Brendon Ayanbadejo have long stood for LGBT rights, along with NBA player Kenneth Faried, among others.

"Until the last few years, there was a sentiment that you needed to be [gay] in order to advocate for the LGBT community. I think that's really started to change," Taylor said. "We've seen individuals who may not seem as though they have a personal and vested interest in [gay rights] speaking out. They are realizing that showing respect for the LGBT community is not an issue of gay rights, but [rather], an issue of human rights. So, as a result, we've seen more athletes come out, more allies speak out [in support], and more teams take a stand than any other time in history. I think that's due in part to the broadening demographic of those who are actively trying to make their sport's space more inclusive."

Athlete Ally has a load of high-profile supporters, including Andy Roddick and Yogi Berra, among others. Stars standing alongside Athlete Ally is "incredibly important," Taylor said.

"We operate under the philosophy that there has never been a successful social-justice movement for a minority group without the support of the majority. So, having the support of so many high-profile professional athletes says a lot about what the culture and climate is in the athletic community, and also makes a really clear statement to that next generation of athletes, and hopefully shows them that, being an athlete and being gay and competing at an elite level are not things that are mutually exclusive," Taylor said. "Due to the support we've been able to get from the professional athletes that we work with, we've been able to grow in a very short period of time, and hopefully we'll

continue to educate and advocate in the areas and communities that need it most."

Despite the challenges, Taylor is optimistic that, in three to five years, there will be no obstacle standing in an athlete's way such that he or she perceives coming-out, and remaining active, is not possible. "We're getting there, and as I often say, this is not the beginning of the end, but rather the end of the beginning," he said. "We have a lot more work that needs to be done if we are going to create that safe and inclusive environment for LGBT athletes."

## First-ever LGBT sports cruise to set sail in October

BY ROSS FORMAN

The softball season culminates annually with the prestigious Gay Softball World Series, under the North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance (NAGAAA) banner, a non-profit organization founded in 1977.

Players brag about Series they've played in, titles won, and lifelong friends built on and off the fields of play during the multi-day tournament.

"Over the last several years, we have had people ask us about the possibility of organizing something outside of the Gay Softball World Series (GSWS) where NAGAAA members could get together," said James Williamson, a NAGAAA assistant commissioner and the GSWS athletic director. "What we [at NAGAAA] are really about is supporting the LGBT athletic community and helping it thrive any way possible."

To that, NAGAAA is launching the inaugural LGBT Athletes At Sea: the 2014 Halloween Party & Cruise from Oct. 26-Nov. 2, a Caribbean adventure aboard the Navigator of the Seas from Royal Caribbean International.

"Putting on the Athletes At Sea cruise is giving me an opportunity to give back to our community in a more social way, yet still honoring the experiences of LGBT athletes," said Williamson, 43, who lives in Cathedral City, California, and, for the past 14 years, has been a practice leader consultant at Kaiser Permanente.

Williamson, who is openly gay, has attended 18 World Series, competed in 17, finished second in two (2008 and 2008 in the B-Division), and won one (2012, B-Division).

Williamson predicted the softball group on the cruise will be anywhere from 30 to 45 cabins, and noted that there is another LGBT group on the same ship, too. Combined, there likely will be more than 200 LGBT on-board, "which will make for some pretty festive events," he said.

"For those who attend, my goal is that they walk away with some awesome memories, new friends and a deeper understanding of the special bond we all share as LGBT athletes," Williamson said. "For those who don't attend, but hear about the cruise either before or after, my hope is that just hearing about it causes them to give some thought to what the LGBT athletic community is and how it fits into the larger community. For those who have never heard of NAGAAA, my goal is to use this to let them know that we exist and that we are out there continuing our mission to provide opportunities for the LGBT community to participate in sports in a safe and fair environment."

The cruise features two noteworthy celebrity attendees: rugby star Colby Jansen, who is married to transgender porn star Gia Darling.

"Colby has played rugby at the top level of U.S. competition and has been successful internationally. He is one of the very few

The progress to date has been better than expected in certain respects, he said.

"I've been pleasantly surprised by all of the progress we've made, but am very aware of the fact that there are lots of teams and communities that are not as progressed on this issue," he said. "I believe athletes, by and large, will be judged on their athletic performance, not their sexual orientation, but we need to make sure that that is a message that is being echoed by those in positions of power within all of the professional leagues."



James Williamson. Photo from Williamson

people out there who have come out as an LGBT athlete and continued to play at that highly competitive level in the 'straight sports world,'" Williamson said. "He can give attendees a unique glimpse into that world, validate some of the fears we had while playing as closeted athletes, but also shatter some of those same fears. He has a wonderful story of support, acceptance and respect that reaffirms just how far we have come as a society. What I hope people get from his story is that your ability on the field is all that matters to the outcome of the game, and who you are as a person is all that matters to the strength of the team—your sexuality doesn't make you stronger or weaker as an athlete."

"Through her relationship and marriage to Colby, [Darling] can offer insight into the impact being an LGBT athlete in a 'straight world' can have on a relationship; she can relate what she has seen and experienced by Colby's side. She also can offer a perspective on how the LGBT athletic community is a part of the transgender culture."

"As a very successful businesswoman and motivational speaker, my hope is that Gia will impart to all of us, both leaders and players, a better understanding of how athletics is perceived in the transgender community—the positives, the negatives, the barriers, etc. While she is only one voice for that community, I am personally very excited to open my eyes and learn how we can become more inclusive of everyone that would be a part of our LGBT athletic community."

For more information about the cruise, or to register, contact Williamson by email at james@nagaaasoftball.org or by phone at 503-449-9096.

# Force faces off against Mother Nature, opposition for playoff win

BY ROSS FORMAN

The biggest obstacle that the Chicago Force encountered June 21 in its playoff game was Mother Nature, not the opposing West Michigan Mayhem.

After a two-hour lightning delay, the Force crushed the Mayhem 66-0 to advance to the Eastern Conference semifinals against Miami, which defeated Atlanta on June 21.

"We came back just as strong, or stronger, after the [weather-related] break," said defensive standout Elisha Okrey.

Chicago struck less than three minutes into the game as Amber Kimbrough sprinted 80 yards for a touchdown on the team's first offensive play from scrimmage.

And then the storm came, clearing the field and the stands.

When play resumed, Chicago looked like an unstoppable force, building a 26-0 lead in the first quarter and a 50-0 edge at halftime.

"It was a totally awesome game," said Chicago quarterback Kerri Olivar, a rookie on the team, yet a seven-year player (formerly with Las Vegas). She replaced the injured Sami Grisafe, and Olivar threw five touchdown passes (319 yards of passing offense) to win the DLG Management Game Day Offensive MVP.

"We definitely commanded every snap; this was almost surreal for me. To be a part of this team, and contribute this much, it was awesome. We really were in a good groove today; we took care of business."

Jeannette Gray was, as always, an offensive



Chicago Force quarterback Kerri Olivar. Photo by Ross Forman

standout, scoring four receiving touchdowns.

Kelsey Casey also scored on runs of 16, 10 and 3 yards, while Jill Airaki had a 45-yard touchdown reception.

Okrey said Olivar was "excellent" and added that her throws were "right on" the spot. "Under pressure, she really did well," Okrey said.

Paula Lehtinen (five tackles) was named the DLG Management Game Day Defensive MVP.

The Force battle Miami July 5 in the team's next playoff game.



Michael Sam.

## Michael Sam at sports show June 27-29

Michael Sam—who recently became the first gay man drafted into the NFL—will be among the celebrities appearing at the Fanatics Authentic Sports Spectacular at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, 5555 N. River Rd., Rosemont, on June 27-29.

On May 10, the St. Louis Rams used a seventh-round slot in the 2014 NFL draft to select Sam. He came out in interviews with ESPN's "Outside the Lines" and the New York Times on Feb. 9.

Sam will be at the event June 27. Among the many other athletes slated to be at the show are the NBA's Tony Parker, former Chicago Cub Andre Dawson, ex-Chicago Bull Dennis Rodman

and Chicago Bear Jared Allen.

Admission for adults is \$10 (with VIP entry costing \$99). See <http://www.fanaticsaauthenticshows.com/shows/chicago-june-27-29>.

## Ty Pennington at Disco Dash June 26

Home-improvement expert Ty Pennington will be at the 4th annual Disco Dash 5K and 10K race on Thursday, June 26, at Soldier Field's Stadium Green.

The race is followed by a '70s dance party outside the stadium, and runners are encouraged to dress up in their best disco-era costumes for fun and prizes.

Early bird registration runs through April 30, with entry fees reduced to \$40 for the 5K and \$45 for the 10K race. Registration for youths 12 and under is \$20 through June 15 to encourage families to participate. More information and online registration information is at <https://www.guaranteedrate.com/news/disco-dash-2014-announcement>.

## Clay-court tennis tourney July 12-13

Second City Tennis (SCT) has opened registration for The Chardonnay, its annual clay-court doubles tournament.

The tournament will take place July 12-13 at the Diversey Public Tennis Center 140 W. Diversey Pkwy. Played on Har-Tru green clay, this annual tournament also features a cookout for the players, a consolation round and a relaxed atmosphere for players across many playing levels.

The cost is \$100/team. Rules and registration instructions can be found at <http://www.secondcitytennis.com>.

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## Laughing Bird

BY MEGHAN STREIT

Former *Top Chef* contestant Chrissy Camba has taken over the Lincoln Square space occupied for several years by Tank Sushi and transformed it into an upscale Filipino restaurant. It's refreshing to have a relatively unexplored cuisine getting some exposure in Chicago, especially at the hands of a high-profile chef.

My experience with Filipino food has been limited, mostly to dishes prepared in small batches in the kitchens of Filipino mothers, so I didn't have a great idea of what to expect at **Laughing Bird**. I found many of the flavors familiar, as Filipino cuisine incorporates flavors from China, Spain and the United States, and the tastes and textures that were new to me whet my appetite for more.

People who frequented Tank Sushi will find the decor hasn't changed dramatically. It remains unremarkable, but is sleek, dark and modern enough so as not to detract from the dining experience. For the next few months, I'd recommend enjoying an al fresco meal on the sidewalk patio. You'd be remiss to pass up the cocktails and go straight to wine. The \$11 boozy concoctions are cleverly conceived and expertly mixed. My favorite was the rhubarb Rickey, an effervescent combination of gin and club soda with bright notes of rhubarb and lime. Rather than compete with one an-



Lumpia at Laughing Bird. Press photo

other, the flavors combine effortlessly creating a cocktail that tastes almost as if it was simply poured from a can (except, of course, for its notable freshness).

Instead of bread, the meal at Laughing Bird begins with shrimp chips, crunchy crackers with the consistency of Funyuns (but with a far less offensive flavor). Other pre-meal nibbles available to order range from traditional Filipino finger foods like lumpia (fried spring rolls) to items with more of a global influence like oyster mushroom and Taleggio empanadas.

Of the more substantial small plates, I highly recommend the burrata. The delicate, oozing cheese is served with lightly charred spring

onions and an unusual "cocojam" that tastes like a not-too-sweet caramel pudding. It comes with hunks of fresh pandesal, a dense and sweet Filipino bread sprinkled with sizable crystals of sea salt. When eaten all together, the cheese, jam, bread and onions form a complex sweet/salty bite that is surprisingly delicious. Also worth trying is the crispy pork belly. The log of succulent meat is fried on the top forming an outer layer that is almost like a (very fatty and flavorful) crust. Ever so slightly grilled watercress provides a bright and fresh contrast to the rich pork.

The entree offerings feel thoughtful and edited—a highlight reel of Filipino cuisine

rather than a smorgasbord. The menu is peppered with a few clever deviations from tradition and a judicious infusion of seasonal spring ingredients. The Adobo chicken is billed on the menu as "the national dish of the Philippines," and it only takes one impossibly juicy bite to comprehend its popularity. The chicken was some of the most tender I've ever been served, and it's marinated in a straightforward mix of vinegar, soy and garlic that complements the meat, but doesn't overwhelm it. The chicken is served with plain jasmine rice and pickled green papaya. It's a meal that manages to be simple but not bland—the epitome of comfort food.

The pancit palabok is another dish that could easily make regulars out of first-time visitors to Laughing Bird. Made with thin fried rice noodles, it might be considered the Filipino equivalent of pad thai. These noodles are cooked in a salty pork and shrimp sauce that lends ample flavor. It's topped with mounds of tender pork, shrimp and smoked mackerel and sprinkled with crispy pork rinds that add a welcome crunch.

One of the desserts, an irresistible rhubarb cobbler, is one of Camba's notable breaks with Filipino tradition. Instead, she honors the flavors of late spring—and with great success. The tart fruit is cooked properly until just barely tender and covered in sweet crumbles. A generous dollop of thick and noticeably fresh whipped cream unites the sour and sweet flavors in bite after glorious bite.

**Laughing Bird is at 4514 N. Lincoln Ave.; call 773-506-2473 or visit [www.laughing-birdchicago.com](http://www.laughing-birdchicago.com).**

**Do you need some more Sugar & Spice in your life? Follow me on Twitter @SugarAndSpiceMS for inside scoop and commentary on Chicago's dining scene.**

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DISH: RESTAURANT PROFILE

# Epic

BY KATE LEVINE

With a name like **Epic** (112 W. Hubbard St.; <http://epicrestaurantchicago.com>), I expected to be dazzled. However, while it was far from an “epic” fail, the food was good, not great.

My friend and I started with drinks from the specialty cocktail list. The Effen Avocado (Effen Cucumber, avocado purée, lime, agave nectar) was refreshing and sweet, but not cloyingly so. The Ginger (Brugal Extra Dry, Pama, Domaine de Canton, cranberry, ginger beer) had a mild ginger flavor. Both seemed appropriate for summer sipping.

For our first course, we tried the seared foie



The Ginger at Epic. Photo by Andrew Davis

gras with buttermilk donuts holes, balsamic and strawberry-rhubarb jam—a dish that sounded intriguing, for sure. The preparation was small but pretty and the foie gras was expertly seared; however, the dish lacked balance. The foie gras overpowered the donuts, and some additional crunch was needed.

Next up was the large kale and mushroom salad (perfect for splitting), with manchego cheese, pork-belly croutons, radishes and white balsamic. The flavors worked well together and the salad was nicely dressed, but the true stars were the croutons, which were essentially small, crunchy bits of pork belly.

After that, we had three house-made pastas. Mostly out of curiosity, we ordered the generous half portion of the almond orchiette, a



The seared foie gras at Epic. Photo by Andrew Davis

pasta made from almonds and served in a goat-cheese sauce with roasted cherries. Neither of us had heard of almond pasta before, and our opinions were split after tasting. To me, the pasta was too dense and tasted nothing like the nut; my friend liked the density and flavor more.

The mac-and-cheese side (manchego, triple cream brie, goat cheese) just didn’t work, as it was a bit bland.

For his entrée, he ordered the parmesan gnocchi with Swiss chard, lamb sausage and fennel butter. He thought the flavors played off each other well but that the dish could use a bit more meat.

I ordered the daily catch—a large, seared hunk of albacore tuna served with onion, squash, roasted tomatoes and tarragon butter. My friend found the dish to be too salty, but I thought everything was tasty, albeit a bit oily.

Each month, Epic donates its proceeds from a particular dessert to a charity. This month, it’s mocha tres leches cake and The Michael J. Fox Foundation. This very moist cake was by far our favorite dish of the evening. In fact, the accompanying cocoa-nib biscotti wasn’t needed.

If anything is epic about the place, it’s the size. There’s a bar/lounge downstairs, a dining room upstairs and rooftop seating. We sat in the dining room on the second floor. It’s modern and trendy, with floor-to-ceiling windows, varying textural elements and metallic accents. The crowd mostly was young and professional, with a smattering of couples. It also helps to have a server as attentive as the one we had.



The space at Epic. Photo by Andrew Davis

## 2014 NGLCC National Business and Leadership Conference July 29 – August 1 Caesars Palace | Las Vegas



### Grow Your Business with NGLCC!

Join us at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada July 29 to August 1 for the largest NGLCC conference to date! You will experience robust programming, unparalleled networking, and special events that will help you grow your business. The 2014 NGLCC National Business & Leadership Conference will be the biggest and best yet with over 700 LGBT and allied business owners, corporate decision makers, government representatives, and chamber leaders attending. The conference is designed to promote economic development for all business, so whether you are an entrepreneur, business owner, corporation, community leader, or ally, the conference has something for you!

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# 2014 VOTING GUIDE

VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE FROM THE FINAL 13 AT

**MAYNE STAGE**

1328 W. MORSE AVE.

WED., JUNE 25



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## Age

32

## Relationship Status

Ridiculously single

## Your Gay Idol?

Troy Longest (the first out gay person I ever met)

## Why should you be the next Gay Idol?

"I've loved to sing since I was a child and studied musical theatre in college, but often lack confidence when asked to 'be myself' and sing (i.e. karaoke)."



## Age

33

## Relationship Status

In a relationship

## Your Gay Idol?

"My older brother, who was trans and queer in the '90s when I was a teenager and coming out myself. He passed away when I was 21."

## Life's soundtrack?

"Happy," by Martin Sexton

## Why should you be the next Gay Idol?

"Because music and singing is my greatest love and passion."



## Age

23

## Relationship Status

In a relationship

## Your Gay Idol?

My lifelong friend, "Grandpa" Will

## Life's soundtrack?

"No Boundaries," by Kris Allen

## Why should you be the next Gay Idol?

"I'm more than just someone who loves to sing; I can also entertain with my friendly and socially confident personality."



## Age

36

## Relationship Status

Single

## Your Gay Idol?

Divine

## Life's soundtrack?

"I Believe I Can Fly," the Yolanda Adams version

## Why should you be the next Gay Idol?

"Because I have all the charisma, uniqueness, nerve, and talent that a bitch needs to make it in this world."



## Age

Unicorn

## Relationship Status

"Currently ethically Non-Monogamous with someone else's toothbrush in my bathroom."

## Your Gay Idol?

Laura Jane Grace

## Life's soundtrack?

"Reasons to Not Be an Idiot," by Frank Turner

## Why should you be the next Gay Idol?

"There isn't a lot of representation for gender non-conforming pansexual people like me."



## Age

21

## Relationship Status

In a relationship

## Your Gay Idol?

Melissa Etheridge

## Why should you be the next Gay Idol?

"If I should happen to win, I'd use my music to help encourage other young people to follow their dreams."



## Age

25

## Relationship Status

Single but ready for the right guy.

## Your Gay Idol?

Lady GaGa

## Life's soundtrack?

"We Can't Stop," by Miley Cyrus

## Why should you be the next Gay Idol?

"I believe I have the ability to take the title to another level and turn myself into a well-known Chicago name."



## Age

30

## Relationship Status

Single

## Your Gay Idol?

Frank Ocean

## Life's soundtrack?

"Like You'll Never See Me Again," by Alicia Keys

## Why should you be the next Gay Idol?

Because "all of the boys and all of the girls are begging to If you seek Amy ..."



## Age

35

## Relationship Status

In a committed relationship

## Your Gay Idol?

Elton John

## Why should you be the next Gay Idol?

"Because I love bringing everyone together through music. Having confidence in myself has brought out the best in me over time."



## Age

62

## Relationship Status

Single (and fancy free)

## Your Gay Idol?

Ellen Degeneres

## Why should you be the next Gay Idol?

"I have been singing since I was 12. I am self-taught and have always dreamed of making it big."



## Age

33

## Relationship Status

Whipped

## Your Gay Idol?

Kelly Clarkson

## Life's soundtrack?

Jurassic Park theme song

## Why should you be the next Gay Idol?

"In high school I was voted 'friendliest.' I love people for who they are, and encourage them to accomplish their goals."



## Age

58

## Relationship Status

Recently separated

## Your Gay Idol?

Somone who is admired and respected for their talent and how they present themselves.

## Life's soundtrack?

"What the World Needs Now," by Dionne Warwick

## Why should you be the next Gay Idol?

"I share my passion; my many talents; my dedication for rights for all, regardless of age, gender or race."



## Age

25

## Relationship Status

In a relationship

## Your Gay Idol?

Brandi Carlile and Amber Heard

## Life's soundtrack?

"Don't You Worry 'Bout a Thing," by Stevie Wonder

## Why should you be the next Gay Idol?

"When I perform I pour my soul onto the stage. I am completely at home and myself—actually the best part of myself."



THANKS TO ALL THE VENUES FOR GIVING US SUCH TALENT!

WINDY CITY MEDIA GROUP WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS FOR HELPING TO MAKE THIS YEAR'S WINDY CITY GAY IDOL THE FIERCEST ROUND TO DATE:



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TWELFTH ANNUAL

CHICAGO'S BIGGEST GLBT CONTEST  
NOW IN ITS 12TH YEAR!THE 2014 FINALS AT  
**MAYNE STAGE**

1328 W Morse

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25****6 PM DOOR / 7 PM START****VIP tickets \$25**

Includes reserved seating, table-side food/beverage service, access to VIP bar, ballot to vote and raffle prize entry (no additional fees).

**General admission tickets \$10**

Includes a ballot to vote and raffle prize entry.

[www.maynestage.com](http://www.maynestage.com) for tickets and information**GUEST PERFORMERS**Broadway Star  
**KAREN MASON**International burlesque performer  
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\* WINDY CITY MEDIA GROUP INCLUDES WINDY CITY TIMES, NIGHTSPOTS, WINDY CITY QUEERCAST AND WINDYCITYMEDIAGROUP.COM \*

## CLASSIFIEDS

## CLEANING SERVICES

**CHESTNUT CLEANING SERVICES:** We're a house cleaning service for homes, small businesses and small buildings. We also have fabulous organizational skills (a separate function at a separate cost that utilizes your assistance) for what hasn't been cleaned in many months or years due to long-term illness, depression, physical/mental challenges, for the elderly, if you have downsized and more. Depressed about going home to chaos? We can organize your chaos, straighten out your chaos, help you make sense of your chaos and finally clean what is no longer chaos. Can we help you? Bonded and insured. **Chestnut Cleaning Service:** 312-332-5575. [www.ChestnutCleaning.com](http://www.ChestnutCleaning.com) (11/20/14-52)

## COUNSELING



### LOVE FROM THE CENTER OF WHO YOU ARE

Life Coaching • Ceremonies  
Office & Phone Appointments

**Rev. Jacki Belile, CEC**  
Nurturing Pride & Faith for 20 Years  
773-655-4357  
[www.livingwellministries.net](http://www.livingwellministries.net)

## EVENTS

**SOBER & PROUD:** Celebrate Pride Weekend with a Sober BBQ and Dance Party! Karaoke, talent show, HIV Testing, free food, + more. Suggested \$10. **Bonaventure House**, 825 W. Wellington Ave., Saturday, June 28, 6pm-11pm. (6/25/14-2)

## HELP WANTED

**ORGANIZING JOBS**  
WORKING AMERICA

Field Organizer  
\$12.25/Hour

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After 90 Days

**APPLY NOW**  
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FIGHT TO RAISE THE MIN. WAGE!

**ARE YOU A HEALTHY EATER?** Looking to work for a healthy eating restaurant in Lakeview? Experience preferred, FOH & BOH stop into Bountiful Eatery 3312 N. Broadway, Chicago or email your resume to: [bountifuleatery@gmail.com](mailto:bountifuleatery@gmail.com) (7/9/14-4)

## HOME IMPROVEMENT

**MAKE YOUR HOME LOOK FABULOUS!** Winter is a great time to fix up your home. Add crown molding, a fresh coat of paint, or a facelift for you bathroom. "A+" with BBB. Licensed-Bonded-Insured, One year Warranty. Free Estimates! **Andy OnCall** 773-244-9961. 847-328-3100 [www.getandy.com](http://www.getandy.com) (9/10/14-26)

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## MASSAGE

**FIRST-CLASS ASIAN MALE MASSEUR.** London-trained and qualified. Over 25 years of worldwide experience and 100% attuned to your needs. Satisfaction assured. Please call **Dennis** at 773-248-9407 (12/3/14-26)

## PERSONAL TRAINER

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## LEGAL SERVICES

**The Law Office of  
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## SPIRITUALITY



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Welcoming Churches**

**60+ ministries celebrating  
LGBTQ lives**

[www.chicagowelcomingchurches.org](http://www.chicagowelcomingchurches.org)

## TRAVEL / B&amp;B

**CHARMING TRAVERSE CITY BED AND BREAKFAST**, on M-22, minutes to town, bike trail, local wineries, excellent restaurants, sand dunes, Cherry Festival, and Film Festival. [www.innisfaire.com](http://www.innisfaire.com) (8/6/14-8)

## WEDDING SERVICES



**Weddings and Ceremonies for Couples**  
Marguerite H. Griffin / Life Cycle Celebrant™  
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[www.meaningfulmarguerite.com](http://www.meaningfulmarguerite.com)

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## WINDOW TREATMENTS

**WONDERING WHAT TO DO WITH THOSE WINDOWS?:** Call me! I take care of it all from design through installation, customizing to your needs. **JOSEPH RICE Interiors, Inc.** Full Decorating Services with a specialty in window treatments for over 25 years. 773-271-2361. [www.JosephRiceInteriors.com](http://www.JosephRiceInteriors.com) (9/10/14-13)

**GAY OWNED AND OPERATED FOR OVER 35 YEARS** - certified Hunter Douglas® priority dealer, custom window treatments, free estimates and design consultation - see our ad in "Connexions" - serving all of Chicago and Suburbs - **HOM**, 847-541-4848, [www.hombyrayandson.com](http://www.hombyrayandson.com), [john@hombyrayandson.com](mailto:john@hombyrayandson.com) (2/11/15-am)

## REAL ESTATE

## FOR SALE - OUT OF TOWN

**TIME TO MOVE SOUTH** Had quite enough of Chicago Winters? Bring a toothbrush and resettle into a nice Southern Life with EVERYTHING furnished. **3-bedroom plus studio \$117k.** Google "Craigslist 4514532469" (6/18/14-1)

## HOUSE FOR SALE

**ROGERS PARK/WEST RIDGE.** Immaculate brick two bedroom, 1.5 baths, den and additional family room. Separate dining, full basement, two car garage, beautiful yard, central air, wood burning fireplace. **\$283,000.** View property here: <http://tinyurl.com/q8l4un2> [tobby.fried@bairdwarner.com](mailto:tobby.fried@bairdwarner.com) 312 772-1649 (6/25/14-2)

## OAK PARK HOUSE FOR SALE

**2 STORY, 3 BEDROOM HOUSE IN GAY-FRIENDLY OAK PARK.** Wood-burning fireplace, art glass windows, finished basement, deck, balcony, lush garden. \$349,800. Contact John Spillane at ReMax in the Village, 708-434-2180 / [johnspillane@remax.net](mailto:johnspillane@remax.net). (7/3/14-2)

## RELOCATION / MOVING

**RELOCATION / MOVING?** FREE Relocation Kit + FREE Buyers Representation! On-line: [WWW.GAYREALESTATE.COM](http://WWW.GAYREALESTATE.COM) or Toll Free 1-888-420-MOVE (6683). **No Cost or Obligation to be Represented by the Nation's Top Gay & Lesbian Realtors.** (8/6/14-26)

*Like no place on Earth!*

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First town to have domestic partners' registry.

First town to have same-sex marriages in the South.

Still has 4 seasons, just winter isn't as long or harsh (some days in January still get into the 60s and sometimes 70!).

I sell EVERYTHING from raw land and tiny cottages deep in the woods, to resorts, executive estates, and lakefront homes on beautiful Beaver Lake. No request is too small.

Current listings include a family park, (Go-Carts, Mini-Golf, etc.), nightly lodging in converted cabooses, and a camp resort with 10 cabins, general store/restaurant, and gas station on the White River, with some of the best trout fishing in the world! These are a few of MANY!

**Ken Riley**  
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# CALENDAR

Brought to you by the  
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**WINDY CITY  
TIMES**

**nightspots**

## Wed., June 25

**Kelly Cassidy annual fundraiser** \$1000-\$50. RSVP [eric@blueprintcampaignconsulting.com](mailto:eric@blueprintcampaignconsulting.com) 5:30pm - 7:30pm Hamburger Mary's 5400 N Clark 773-562-9559 <https://secure.actblue.com/contributepage/marys2014>

**Reception for Mark Schauer, candidate for governor of Michigan** Host committee in formation: Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Mike Axelrod, Sue Berghoef, Brian Dailey and Elzie Higginbottom, Host \$2,500, Friend \$1,000, Tickets \$500. RSVP, please contact: Tony Yost at 202-547-5797 or [Tony@bhstrategiesllc.com](mailto:Tony@bhstrategiesllc.com) or Crystal Perkins at 210-414-3418 or [Crystal@markschauer.com](mailto:Crystal@markschauer.com) 5:30pm - 7:30pm University Club of Chicago 76 E Monroe St Chicago Tickets: <http://markschauer.com/625chicago>

**Windy City Gay Idol Finals Competition** Highly anticipated competition in Chicago's LGBTQ community, a search for the best amateur LGBTQ or allied singer in the Chicago area. More info and finalized start times to come. 6:00pm Mayne Stage 1328 W Morse Ave <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com>

**BGCC "Men at Sea" Annual Pride Boat Cruise** The ninth year of the Men at Sea cocktail cruise. Lakefront cruise on the Anita Dee II shows off the best views of the downtown skyline with the sun setting behind, then an amazing view of Navy Pier's fireworks show. Enjoy expansive hors d'oeuvres options and fabulous views from the water for only \$34 for a three-hour cruise. After the cruise, the boat will remain docked until 10:30 pm, time for maybe just one more cocktail. Tickets: <http://pridecruisechicago.brownpapertickets.com/> 6:30pm - 10:30pm DuSable Harbor, 111 N. Lake Shore Dr.

**Fabibat: It's "Pride" not "Prude"** Come on down to Double Door's Door No. 3 for a Pride party like no other. Music from The Peekaboos. Residents DJs Adam El and LDY PRBLMS, drag performances from our resident drag host Lucy Stoolie, Curlene Ribbon, Genni Cyde, and the queens of The Saffire House. Do312 will also be giving away a \$25 gift certificate for your bar tab if you enter to win on FABITAT's Do312 event page. 9:00pm - 2:00am Double Door 1572 N Milwaukee <http://do312.com/events/2014/6/25/live-its-pride-not-prude>

## Thursday, June 26

**What Does Marriage Equality Mean for My Health Care? CANCELLED** 2:00pm - 5:00pm Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center, Olson Auditorium, 836 W. Wellington Ave., Chicago 800-323-8622

**Out saxophonist Dave Koz** With Mindi Abair, Gerald Albright and Richard Elliot on their second summer tour together. Dave Koz and Friends Summer Horns spent five weeks at No. 1 on Billboard's Current Contemporary Jazz Albums chart and is currently in the Top 20. 3:00pm Ravinia Festival 418 Sheridan Road Highland Park, Tickets: <http://davekoz.com/tour>

**Comedy kickoff, Back Lot Bash** Lea DeLaria, Caitlin Bergh, hosted by Sapna Kumar. \$20 advance online/\$25 door (limited). Doors Open 6pm 5:00pm Mayne Stage 1328 W Morse Ave Tickets: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/669706>

**15th Annual 30 Under 30 Awards** Thirty individuals under thirty years of age from all parts of the LGBTQIA communities will be honored. Windy City Times receives community nominations for the awards each spring and selects the best in LGBTQIA activism, business, culture, non-profit work and more. The awards are co-sponsored by the Center on Halsted, AIDS Foundation of Chicago and Chicago House. Last year's honorees listed online. 5:30pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Windy-City-Times-to-present-30-Under-30-awards-/43433.html>

**National Women's Music Festival** The 39th National Women's Music Festival (NWMF) kicks off Thursday evening, June 26, at

the Marriott Madison West, Middleton, with some of the most popular and enduring performers in the women's music genre, as well as a variety of new talents. 6:00pm - 11:00pm Marriott Madison West, Middleton, Wisconsin <http://wia-online.org> Tickets: <http://http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/526456>

**Birdhouse 2-14 Art Acution and Cocktail Party** Benefiting Chicago House. Co-Chairs: Jerry Sanfilippo, Spyros Petros, Denise Antonucci, Erik Retzer & Jim Josephson. Advance \$70, Door \$80. 773-248-5200x 209 6:00pm - 9:00pm, <http://www.chicagohouse.org>

**Live with Jenifer Lewis** Notable actor, comedian, and motivational speaker Jenifer Lewis will awe the audience with a candid discussion on life and happiness while discussing her own experience with bi-polar disorder and the impact of HIV among her community. Ms. Lewis will close out the evening in song. RSVP online 6:00pm - 8:00pm Baton Show Lounge 436 N Clark St Tickets: <http://events.aidschicago.org/site/Calendar?id=100681&view=Detail>

**Spanish-language forum on Bible, LG-BTs in June, July** For Spanish-speaking people who are interested in exploring the biblical texts from their own personal experience, in a serious way, and in a safe and affirming atmosphere for all people who identify as LGBT. Contact Esther Baruja at [estherbaruja@gmail.com](mailto:estherbaruja@gmail.com) or 312-320-1341. 6:30pm - 8:30pm Wellington Avenue United Church of Christ, 615 W. Wellington Ave., Chicago

**Pride 5K lakefront night race and party to benefit Center** \$50 registration includes limited edition t-shirt by Chicago's very own Boris Powell, coupons, gifts and two drink tickets for post-race party. Runners who couple up get \$5 discount. Benefits the soon-to-come Center on Halsted Senior Center. Packet pick-up June 20 ( 6-10pm ) and Saturday, June 21 ( 9am-5pm ) at Center on Halsted, gymnasium. 7:30pm near Lakefront, Fullerton and Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Tickets: <http://ILoveRuns.com>

**Remembering The Stranger - Transgender Jews In Our Congregations** Led by Rabbi Cindy Enger of Congregation Or Chadash in Chicago, a synagogue which serves Chicago's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered Jews and their loved ones. For reservations, call Ezra-Habonim at 847-674-4141. 7:30pm Ezra-Habonim, the Niles Township Jewish Congregation

**Chigaygo: The Big Gay Pride Anniversary-ish Show** Celebrating its one-year anniversary-ish with a big gay Pride Show. Scott Duff hosts a night of gay and gay friendly comedy featuring Poppy Champlin, Tamale, Rachel McCartney. 8:00pm The Laugh Factory Chicago, 3175 N Broadway <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Chigaygo-at-Laugh-Factory-Chicago/370857779682516>

**Veterans' Pride event** A table in the "F-Lobby" in celebration of the 1 year anniversary of DOMA being overturned with information the impact of this ruling on LGBT Veterans, active duty service members and federal employees. Information from Mandi Evanson [Mandi.Evanson@va.gov](mailto:Mandi.Evanson@va.gov). 10:00pm - 2:00pm Hines Veterans Administration Hospital

## Friday, June 27

**Celebration of marriage equality service** First, Bishop Wayne Miller of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) will preside. Second, a gay couple will be married at the service. Third, sixteen couples-straight and gay-will renew vows from early marriage or commitment services. Look online for actual start time. 10:00am Trinity Lutheran Church, Chicago <http://www.holytrinitychicago.org/announcements#marriage>

**LGBTQIA Pride Month Gender and Sexuality Tour** Bring Chicago history out of the closet with a tour of Hull-House and explore early 20th century stories of gender non-conformity, diverse definitions of family, and fierce self-expression. Was

Jane Addams a lesbian? We'll contemplate this commonly asked question that lacks a simple answer. 3:00pm - 4:00pm Jane Addams Hull House Museum 800 S. Halsted St. <http://www.uic.edu/jaddams/hull>

**Chicago Jewish Film Festival** opens Through June 29. Tickets are \$12/adults; \$10/seniors & students, or \$60 for an eight-film festival pass. 5:00pm - 11:00pm Music Box Theatre 3733 N Southport <http://www.ChicagoJewish-Film.com>

**Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame Pride and Joy Reception** On the rooftop at the Center. Surprise guests this year. Purchase your \$20 ticket early and enjoy music, full bar, and hors d'oeuvres with DJ Billy Brown. 21+. 3 drink tickets. \$20 tickets at door and online. 5:30pm - 9:30pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Tickets: <http://tinyurl.com/p3njdl>

**Or Chadash Pride BBQ and Beach Service.** office@orchadash.org 6:00pm Contact an organizer for location <http://orchadash.org>

**Chicago Summer Dance Outing** In the Spirit of Music Garden 601 S. Michigan Ave. Plan Be organizing a group. 6:00pm Grant Park 337 E. Randolph St Tickets: [www.facebook.com/PlanBe2.0](http://www.facebook.com/PlanBe2.0) Tickets: [http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp\\_info/chicago\\_summerdance0.html](http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/chicago_summerdance0.html)

**Windy City Empire's Pride Ceremony** An evening honoring Chuck Renslow. The Leather Daddy of all Daddies. Also celebrating why we have pride. Why pride is still needed. Tickets TBA 7:00pm Chloe's, 800 W Belmont Ave., Chicago <https://www.facebook.com/n/?events%2F1374645562820560%2F&aref=251228227&medium=email&mid=9b8cf8f62b98262bGef97043G6bGb081&bcode=1.1397674604.ABILZ42SUOWFHMAAGQ&nm=editor%40windycitymediagroup.com>

**Michael Jackson The Immortal World Tour** The Estate of Michael Jackson and Cirque du Soleil present Jackson's powerful music and lyrics brought to life with extraordinary power and breathless intensity. \$50 to \$175. 8:00pm Sears Centre Arena, Hoffman Estates 847-649-2270 Tickets: <http://www.cirqueclub.com>

**Hair Greenwich Village.** 1967. During the most tumultuous year in our nation's history, a group of young hippies explore sex, love, and rock 'n' roll while fighting for civil rights and the end of the war in Vietnam.. American Theater Company. \$43 8:00pm American Theater Company 1909 W Byron Ave., 773-409-4125 <http://www.atcweb.org>

**Back Lot Bash** Outdoor women's festival every Pride Weekend in Chicago. Each day showcases a different mix of music and entertainment for the entire community. Line up online includes LEA DeLARIA, CRYSTAL BOWERSOX, KATE MOENNIG, LEISHA HAILEY, HUNTER VALENTINE 9:00pm Back Lot Bash, 5238 N. Clark St., Chicago. Through June 29. <http://www.backlotbashchicago.com/schedule/>

**Pride Show/Lady GaGa ticket giveaway** Start off Pride weekend with Krave's special Pride show. Drink special, dance music, and a giveaway for tickets to Lady Gaga's artRAVE: The ARTPOP Ball. 11:00pm - 2:00am Club Krave 13126 S Western Ave Blue Island, IL 60406 <http://www.clubkrave.com>

## Saturday, June 28

**Dyke March** Supporting visibility for dyke, queer, bisexual, and transgender folk. Dyke March will kick-off at Roberto Clemente High School on the southwest corner of Western and Division at 3:30pm and march west down Division Street to the "Boat House" in Humboldt Park. The Latina/o PRIDE Picnic, which has been held in the community for almost 10 years, will be the ending point for the Dyke March rally and picnic from 4-7pm, which will incorporate elements that have made both events a tradition in the LGBTQ community. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/dykemarchchicago/>

**Big Deck Beach Party!** Boyz and gurlz, boards and beverages. Celebrate Summer at Sidetrack. 1:00pm - 7:00pm Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St <http://www.sidetrackchicago.com>

**Chicago Gay Pride Sailboat Excursion** 'Red Witch' Golden Sail Adventure Cruise for 50 women who love women. Appetizers, sushi and finger foods, campaign, wine and beer. \$45. Class entertainment in partner-



## I LOVE A PARADE

### Sunday, June 29

**The annual Pride Parade will kick off from Montrose Avenue and Broadway at noon.**

*Photo from 2013 event by Tim Carroll Photography*

ship with Affinity. 5th Annual Chgo Gay Pride Adventure Cruise. 2-4 p.m., <http://classceechicago.com/redwitch>

**Proud to Run** Proud To Run is a 10K run and 5K run and walk that celebrates Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex/Inquiring, & Allies (LGBTQIA) pride. We welcome everyone who wishes to join us in the celebration to show support, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression. Info via [info@proudtorun.org](mailto:info@proudtorun.org) 6:00pm Montrose Avenue near Lake Shore Drive, Chicago <http://www.proudtorun.org>

**Sober & Proud BBQ and Dance Party** Celebrate Pride Weekend with a Sober BBQ and Dance Party! The event includes a talent show, karaoke, HIV testing, free food, and more. An alternative to the weekend's drinking-heavy activities, hosted by Alexian Brothers Housing and Health Alliance. \$10 suggested donation. All are welcome. 6:00pm - 11:00pm Alexian Brothers Bonaventure House 825 W Wellington Ave <https://www.facebook.com/events/757844844266285/>

**Stonewall Riot Panel** A group of activists discuss next steps for the LGBT movement. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Unitarian Church of Evanston, 1330 Ridge Avenue, Evanston, IL 60201 <https://www.facebook.com/events/440529792758699/>

**Dyke March** The 2014 Dyke March will kick off at 3:30pm and march west down Division street to the boat house in Humboldt Park. The Latina/o Pride Picnic, which has been held in the community for almost 10 years, will be the ending point for the Dyke March rally and picnic from 4pm-7pm. Supporting visibility for dyke, queer, bisexual, and transgender folk. Information: [dykemarchchicago@gmail.com](mailto:dykemarchchicago@gmail.com)

**3rd Annual Chicago Pride Beach Bash** Located near the last lifeguard stand, closest to the pier, on the East end of Osterman Beach. 10:00pm - 5:00pm Hollywood Beach, 5800 N. Lake Shore Dr.

## Sunday, June 29

**Lakeside Pride Freedom Marching Band @ CHICAGO PRIDE PARADE** Lakeside Pride was born out of the idea to have a marching band in the Annual Pride Parade. Each year, hundreds of thousands of spectators gather in Chicago to celebrate the milestones associated with more than 40 years of fighting for LGBT visibility, dignity, and equality. 12:00pm Corner of Montrose Ave. / Broadway, Chicago (773) 381-6693 <http://www.lakesidepride.org>

**Pride Parade** Chicago gay pride parade and festival weekend. 12:00pm - 4:00pm Montrose/ Broadway <http://www.ChicagoPrideCalendar.org>

**Pride North** The North Side's largest neighborhood Pride party. Featuring 16 Candles, Justin Utley, and DJ sets by The Byrne Brothers and DJ Herrbear. Sponsored by Miller Lite and Nightspots. 12:00pm - 2:00am Glenwood Ave., between Farwell and Lunt

**LOVE Revolution** Chicago's newest outdoor post-Pride dance party. Featuring DJ Joe Gauthreaux and special guests Jump Smokers. Tickets available at Cram Fashion and online at [wantickets.com/loverevolution](http://wantickets.com/loverevolution). Limited number of VIP tickets avail-

able. Presented by Circuit Mom Productions and Bash Events. A portion of the proceeds to benefit Equality IL. 5:30pm - 12:00am Chicago History Museum 1601 N Clark

**The Human Space Exhibition Artists Talk** Beauty and Brawn exhibition explores gender and sexual preference in works by Andy Karol, known for her portrait photography in gender and sexuality, and Oli Rodriguez who explores technology and gay/queer hook up culture. 6:00pm Beauty and Brawn Art Gallery 3501 W Fullerton Ave <http://www.beautyandbrawn-gallery.com>

## Monday, June 30

**Proud Mary Post-Pride Brunch** Have one last Bloody Mary after Pride weekend at Mary's. Brunch until 3 pm. 11:00am - 3:00am Hamburger Mary's 5400 N Clark <http://www.hamburgermarys.com/chicago>

**11th Annual Salute to LGBT Veterans, Liberty and Justice for All** One hour program. Speaker LS2 Lee Reinhart, U.S. Navy, a veteran of Don't Ask, Don't Tell who has just returned from a year's duty in Kandahar, Afghanistan. Info [jamesdarby@aol.com](mailto:jamesdarby@aol.com). 12:00pm - 1:00pm Daley Center Plaza, 50 W. Washington St., 773-752-0058 <http://www.averchicago.com>

**Queer Bits Film Festival** Screening of LGBT shorts - many by local filmmakers. 7:00pm Pub House Theater <http://www.pridefilm-sandplays.com>

## Wed., July 2

**Black Alphabet Film Festival** Showcasing films and other works that highlight and explore the African American Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) and Same Gender Loving (SGL) experience. 3:00pm DuSable Museum 40 E 56th Pl., <http://blackalphabet.org>

**Propeller Fund application information session** Propeller Fund is administered jointly by Gallery 400 at the University of Illinois at Chicago and threewalls to promote informal and independently organized visual arts activities. 6:00pm, <http://www.propellerfund.org>

**Honduran LGBT Leader in Chicago** Since a 2009 U.S.-supported coup against the Honduras's democratically-elected government, rampant violence has engulfed the country's LGBTs, campesinos, unionists, human rights activists and journalists, giving it the highest murder rate in the world. Nelson Arambu from the Movimiento de Diversidad en Resistencia, a long time leader in Honduras's LGBT movement, will speak about the challenges that they face. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Berger Park Cultural Center 6205 N. Sheridan Rd <https://www.facebook.com/events/760825617281929/>

## Thursday, July 3

**United Black Pride Welcome Rooftop Party** See [www.windycityblackpride.info/](http://www.windycityblackpride.info/) for room rate and code. 6:00pm Inn of Chicago Skyline Terrace 162 E Ohio St 22nd floor <http://ubpride.com/events/>

## Friday, July 4

**Lakeside Pride Freedom Marching Band @ OAK PARK FOURTH OF JULY PARADE** Celebrate the birth of American independence in Oak Park at this 10th with Lakeside Pride and the Oak Park Area Lesbian and Gay Association (OPALGA). 10:00am Longfellow Park 610 S Ridgeland Ave Oak Park, IL 60304 (773) 381-6693 <http://www.lakesidepride.org>

## Saturday, July 5

**The Chosen Few** Old School Reunion Picnic In honor of Frankie Knuckles 6:00am - 8:00pm Jackson Park, 83rd and Hayes Dr. <http://ubpride.com/events/>

**PrideIndex Esteem Awards** Honoring individuals and organizations from Chicago and across the country including Craig Johnson, Sanford E. Gaylord, David Bridgeforth of DBQ Magazine, Trisha Lee Holloway of Howard Brown, Simone Koehlinger, Gregg Shapiro of boi Magazine, brklynboihood.com, colorlines.com, Thr Trevor Project, About Face Theatre, The Bayard Rustin LGBT Coalition (BRC), Teresa M. Adams & Can We Talk For Real, Urban Socialites Magazine, B-Boy Blues The Play and many more. 2:00pm - 5:00pm Sidetrack, 3349 N Halsted St., <http://www.TheEsteemAwards.com>

# BILLY MASTERS

"Being gay is not a choice, but being a Texas Republican is!"—Jon Stewart's quip after reporting that Rick Perry compared being gay to being an alcoholic.

As you probably know, Hillary Clinton is in the midst of her book tour. And she better tour hard because that book ain't selling so well—something that doesn't surprise me since she already wrote one book about the good stuff (and that one wasn't very good, either). Who should turn up at the book signing in Los Angeles but Chris Colfer. There is a series of photos with the Glee star in line to get an autographed copy. If these photos are sequential, it seems to me that Hillary actually didn't recognize Chris when he was standing right in front of her—or perhaps she didn't look up while she was signing (and not personalizing) the book. It looks like the assistant said something like, "Excuse me, Hill, but that's the gay guy from Glee!" Suddenly, Clinton looks up and her face registers shock/surprise/bewilderment—pick one when you see the photo on BillyMasters.com.

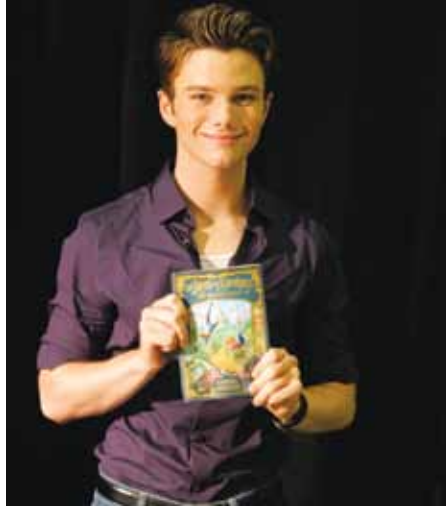
Time for a quick updated "Fayewatch." When last we caught up with Miss Dunaway, she had lost the rights to direct and star in a film version of Terrance McNally's Master Class, and was trying to find someone to finance it for her. Well, it's too late now. Reportedly, another company snatched the rights away from her and signed Meryl Streep to play the legendary Maria Callas. And Streep's got a real director: Mike Nichols. Right now, they may be asking: "Who's afraid of Faye Dunaway?" But wait till she gets their phone numbers.

It was recently brought to my attention that I neglected to acknowledge my 10th wedding anniversary. Oh, yes, your beloved bachelor Billy has enjoyed a decade of marital bliss ... kinda. The date: June 1, 2004. The place: The Abbey in West Hollywood. It was a mass gay wedding—a symbolic ceremony since gay marriage wasn't legal in California at the time. Margaret Cho was presiding. WeHo Mayor John Duran was officiating. By my side was gay-porn legend and bosom buddy Kurt Young—Duran's boyfriend. We're standing there amidst the other couples. Then someone gives us champagne. And cake. And a gift bag! Jay Leno congratulates us. As far as I'm concerned, we're married. Happy anniversary, doll.

On a sadder note (yes, sadder than my fake and fraudulent marriage), I must acknowledge the passing of a gay-porn star who was also kinda linked with me romantically. Days before the opening of my play Hollywood Uncovered, the person playing my leading man disappeared. As luck would have it, Cameron Fox was in town and gamely agreed to take on the role. With one day's notice, no one expected much from his stage debut—especially with script in hand. But I knew he'd deliver. He was charming, personable, sweet, kind, had a gorgeous body and a nine-inch penis. Whenever he screwed up or got tongue-tied (as it were), I'd turn to the audience, smile, unzip his pants and all would be forgiven. He made a potentially disastrous situation not only bearable, but fun. I ran into him recently and knew things weren't going well. Still, I was sad when I heard he passed away last week. If only more people knew that the person he was inside was even more beautiful than what they saw.

Shifting gears, we turn to our "Ask Billy" question. Jay in Sacramento asks: "I just saw Jersey Boys and wondered about the gay producer. Is that part true? And who was the actor playing him? He was so hot. Is he gay?"

So many questions. But the first question that should really be asked is: Who in God's name let Clint make this movie? I don't think I've been so embarrassed and angry about such amateurish and trite filmmaking in my life. But, as Faye would say, let's not even go there. The character you are referring to is Bob Crewe,



Chris Colfer visited a pretty prominent political figure, Billy says. Photo by Jerry Nunn

who was indeed gay—well, mostly gay. (He identifies himself as bisexual.) What is kinda glossed over in the film is that he wasn't just the producer—he wrote the lyrics to most of those hits. In fact, "Can't Take My Eyes Off Of You" was written as he watched a post-coital young man sleeping in his bed. So it's a gay love song. But you didn't ask about that.

The role was played by the dashing Mike Doyle. That name sounded familiar to me, so I immediately checked out the Billy Masters Archives, and what did I find? A choice item from 2008 where I answered a question from Roger in Toledo (I hope he's still reading this column) about the handsome hunk he saw in Paul Rudnick's play The New Century, opposite Linda Lavin. That was in fact the same Mike Doyle who walked across the stage—well, bounced across the stage—completely naked. Well, not completely naked. He was wearing a cock ring—I believe this was the first time a cock ring was officially used in a Broadway production. You most certainly should check him out on BillyMasters.com.

As to the second part of your question, Mike is openly gay. He was, for a while, the spousal equivalent of actor Matt McGrath, who most

notably helmed the national tour of Cabaret. They were good friends with another gay couple—Broadway performer and choreographer Denis Jones and the lovely Andrew Rannells. Nothing wrong with that. Two gay couples, hanging out together. Until Matt got a job out of town. Then Denis and Andrew kept Mike company. Sometimes, it was just Andrew. And, bing, bang, boom—a new couple is formed. Mike Doyle and Andrew Rannells have been together for over a year and everyone seems to be happy—at least everyone they're talking to!

When I'm relating the gay equivalent of Debbie Reynolds, Eddie Fisher, Elizabeth Taylor and Mike Todd, it's definitely time to end yet another column. Well, there is a difference—nobody went down in a plane crash (although I'm sure more than a few people went down). For all your gossip needs—past, present, and future—be sure to check out [www.BillyMasters.com](http://www.BillyMasters.com). And if you have a question, send it along to [Billy@BillyMasters.com](mailto:Billy@BillyMasters.com) and I promise to get back to you before I announce my next insignificant other. Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

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## Gaga, New Order, Mars, Etheridge at Summerfest

Milwaukee Summerfest have announced more than 75 headlining acts that will perform at the 2014 festival.

Scheduled Ground Stage headliners include New Order, Rise Against, Tegan and Sara, Ray LaMontagne, Joan Jett & the Blackhearts, Nas, Brand New, Ludacris, Fitz and the Tantrums, The Crystal Method, Neon Trees (whose lead singer recently came out) and The Neighbourhood, among others.

Previously announced Marcus Amphitheater headliners include Bruno Mars, Lady Gaga, Brad Paisley, Outkast and the Dave Matthews Band.

Summerfest 2014 will take place June 25-29 and July 1-6. Advanced sale discounted offers include a \$16 general admission ticket (\$18 value), a \$9 weekday admission ticket valid Tuesday-Friday, prior to 4 p.m. (\$11 value) and a "3 for \$42" multi-day pass. For more details, visit Summerfest.com, Facebook.com/summerfest or Twitter: @Summerfest.

## Indy museum showing gay-rodeo photos

"Blake Little: Photographs from the Gay Rodeo" is taking place at the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art in Indianapolis.

"Blake Little" will feature 41 black-and-white images of cowboys and cowgirls from the gay rodeo circuit, taken by Los Angeles-based photographer Little.

The exhibition will run through July 13.

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

**Blake Little rodeo photo. Image from Little**



## Michael Jackson tribute Aug. 28-30 in Gary

Katherine Jackson has announced that The 5th Annual Michael Jackson "King of Pop" Tribute Festival of the Arts will take place in Gary, Indiana, on Aug. 28-30 at 2300 Jackson St, Michael's birth home.

This year's tribute festival is different from previous years. The theme is "Art for Life," and the festival will be showcasing undiscovered talent.

The outdoor tribute festival is free to the public and will begin with the opening ceremony conducted by Gary, officials and a tribute to Michael Jackson from the Roosevelt High School marching band.

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## Ray J. Koenig III and Clark Hill PLC



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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# Millions show they are #ProudToPlay

BY ROSS FORMAN

YouTube launched its celebrity-filled 2014 Gay Pride campaign, #ProudToPlay, on June 3 to coincide with Pride Month, anchoring its efforts around sports—and it immediately received immense support, with an eye-popping tally of views for its original two-minute video, featuring LGBT athletes and allies.

The video—featuring out athletes Jason Collins, Michael Sam, Tom Daley and others, plus allies such as Kobe Bryant—was viewed more than 3.2 million times in fewer than 48 hours.

"This is huge. It's a powerful statement by the top two trafficked Web sites in the world, [YouTube and its parent company, Google], and continues to build momentum for 2014 as the year of the gay athlete," said Cyd Zeigler of Outsports.com. "Last year, [YouTube] made 'love' the theme of their Pride efforts. This year, it's sports. That says a lot about where LGBT sports issues are in our mainstream culture, and the role sports now play in the LGBT community."

"This is an important video not just because it highlights the emergence of gay athletes across multiple sports over the last few years, but because it shows the future of sports, where all athletes are proud to play whether they are gay or straight," said Brian Kupersmit, president of the Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA). "June is Pride Month where we celebrate ourselves and hopefully educate oth-

ers. More than 3.2 million people have watched this video so far and I hope they have learned something, mainly that gay athletes are here to stay and we are Proud to Play."

YouTube, in announcing the video, said it is #ProudToPlay: Celebrating equality for all athletes.

"From the Sochi Olympics to the recent NFL draft, this year has seen a growing, global conversation about the [LGBT] community in the world of sports," a YouTube statement said. "Many LGBT athletes are sharing their stories on YouTube, and the support they're getting from teammates and fans has helped others find the courage to do the same."

"Sports bring together people from all backgrounds and experiences through a shared passion, and YouTube shares that spirit of connecting diverse communities to make a difference. In celebration of the upcoming World Cup in Brazil and LGBT Pride month, we're honoring the LGBT athletes, their supporters, as well as the YouTube Creators who stand up for diversity in sports and elsewhere—all of whom help create an equal and inclusive playing field for everyone."

Raymond Braun, YouTube Marketing manager and the campaign lead, said in a phone interview June 4 that YouTube is "really excited and thrilled with how the community has responded to #ProudToPlay."

"We've seen that 2014 has really been a big year for sports, with the Sochi Olympics, the



#ProudToPlay campaign manager Raymond Braun.

[World Cup] in Brazil, and more, plus a string of celebrity role-model athletes who are coming out and sharing their stories. The goal of #ProudToPlay was to build on the legacy of #ProudToLove from last year and amplifying those voices and those conversations to promote equality in sports."

The video took about two months to produce.

"It's a message that everyone can get behind because it's about promoting equality and saying that it doesn't matter who you love, what background you come from ... it just matters what you do on the field, on the pitch, [or] on the court. And that's a message that resonates with all of the athletes [in the video], whether LGBT or not," Braun said.

YouTube's #ProudToLove campaign launched at the end of June 2013, yet the #ProudToPlay campaign is monthlong. And Braun said future similar campaigns are likely.

"Working on this [campaign] made me really encouraged and hopeful about the future,"

diverse range of content that's made for and specifically targeted for LGBT people. It gives them hope, inspiration, a positive vision for what their future can look like, a way for them to identify and connect.

"As a gay man, I now think about how incredibly valuable that could have been as a youth."

Anthony Nicodemo, an out high school basketball coach in New York, said, "I think the multimedia campaign is a great way to reach a large amount of student-athletes and let them know that they can be gay and successful in sports."

Collins, who plays for the NBA's Brooklyn Nets, said in a statement, "Proud to play means to me someone who is proud of all the things that makes them who they are, whether it be your race or religion or sexual orientation, heck, your height. It's important to be proud of who you are. As a professional athlete, we accept that we are role models. It's great that regardless of your sexual orientation, that the



## #PROUDTOPLAY

said Braun, 24, who is openly gay and based in London. "We thought there was a great, diverse roster of allies and LGBT athletes," in the video.

Not to mention President Obama, and it opens with a sports-driven message from the late Nelson Mandela—all set around the upbeat rhythm from Katy Perry's song "Roar."

Braun said they were "thrilled" to include Bryant's support in the video.

"When we communicated the campaign message [internally], so many people contacted me, asking if they could volunteer, if they could lend their expertise," Braun said. "One of the most inspiring things about this video is, it inspires conversation."

"I've gotten a lot of stories from LGBT youth who might live in an area without a lot of LGBT role models, so, for them, YouTube is the refuge where they can go and find this really rich,

conversation was started and people started talking about being gay in professional sports. If you're straight, just continue to be supportive. And if you see someone being bullied, or hear language that's inappropriate, speak up and speak out. It's very important to have those allies out there who are being brave for some of us who aren't yet ready to be brave on our own."

Bryant said in a statement, "Equality in sports has to be there for your team to be successful. It's these little building blocks that you learn through playing sports. The bravery of being yourself is really the anchor of it all. You have to be brave in your own convictions, you have to be brave about who you are and you have to be brave to step forward and step into the spotlight and declare to the rest of the world this is who I am."



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