

WINDY CITY TIMES

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

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Hillary Clinton with Tim Kaine in a photo she used to Tweet her announcement of his selection for VP.

UNCONVENTIONAL

DNC and RNC pick their slates

See inside for coverage of the conventions

PARTON ME
Dolly Parton talks new music, LGBT following.
Photo from Dolly Records

22



Donald Trump and Mike Pence.
Photo by Michael Key/Washington Blade

JIM KECK
A lifetime of activism.
Photo courtesy of Keck

6

JEN RICHARDS
Trans actress on Emmy nom for 'Her Story.'
Photo from Richards

23

LATONYA MALEY
Director of Broadway Youth Center.
Photo from Maley

9



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INDEX

NEWS
 Protest; column 4
 Activist Huls passes away 5
 Keck on lifetime of activism 7
 Broadway Youth Center's help, transition 9
 RNC roundup/DNC profile 10
 VIEWS: Mombian, Smith 16

ENTERTAINMENT/EVENTS
 THEATER: A look at 'Douglass' 17
 Duriel E. Harris talks 'Thingification' 20
 Dolly Parton interview 22
 Trans actress Jen Richards on Emmy nod 23
 NIGHTSPOTS 25

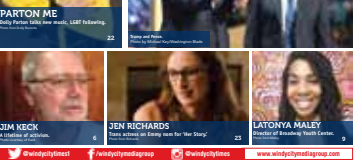
OUTLINES
 Classifieds 28
 Calendar Q 30

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UNCONVENTIONAL
 DNC and RNC pick their slates
 See inside for coverage of the conventions



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THE FRAME GAME
 Windy City Times reviews the theatrical production The Portrait.
 Photo of Cameron Piffner by Johnny Knight

PITCH PERFECT



Carly Rae Jepsen ("Call Me Maybe") was among those entertaining at the Pitchfork Music Festival.
 Photo by Jerry Nunn

BLUE BELLE



Stacey Magiera is in the new Cirque du Soleil show, Toruk, which is based on the film Avatar.
 Photo by Thierry Ballange

YOU AUTO KNOW
 The 2016 Chrysler 300 hauls class.

LOVE AND MARRIAGE
 Lesbian actress/director Amanda Bearse talks about her new web series and being on the TV classic Married ... with Children.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ
 Find out the latest about Caitlyn Jenner, George Takei and Rihanna.

plus
DAILY BREAKING NEWS

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Protesters at event marking 50th anniversary of Freedom summer.
Photo by Vern Hester

Protest marks 50th anniversary of MLK event

BY VERN HESTER

On July 20, the #LetUsBreathe Collective and its offshoot, Breathing Room, staged a protest march and rally to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King's Chicago Freedom Summer in Lawndale.

The protest addressed community issues plaguing Lawndale, such as poverty, mass school closures and police brutality. The rally also touched on the murder rate of trans women of color, addressed the issue of Ordinance 4878 and rebuilding the community by investing and creating in local assets.

The march ended at Homan Square, where protesters chained themselves to the entry of

the North Lawndale police station and were arrested for obstructing traffic.

Ordinance 4878, also known by the tag "Blue Lives Matter," is a bill that seeks to elevate police officers to a special class by offering them more protections.

As police officers looked on, protesters chanted, "I love Black people, I love Black trans people, I love Black queer people" as well as "I love being Black, I love the texture of my hair, and I love to rock it in the air."

As of the night of July 24, protesters were on day three of a takeover of the Homan Square area, tweeting with the has tag #Freedom-Square, saying they won't leave until the City Council cancels plans for 4878.

nington, a staff attorney at the Transgender Law Center.

The state of Wisconsin is one of 11 that has sued the Obama administration for its guidelines on transgender students. The issue has arisen in many Chicago-area schools as well, most notably at the Palatine-based Township High School District 211, where a group of students and their families sued in May, after a trans girl was allowed access to the girls' locker room and restrooms.

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel's story is at <http://bit.ly/2agnaAy>.

Steinem at Personal PAC luncheon

Personal PAC announced that this year's guest speaker at its Annual Awards Luncheon will be Gloria Steinem.

The luncheon will be held at 12 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 13, at the Hilton Chicago, 720 S. Michigan Ave.

Steinem is a writer, lecturer, political activist and feminist organizer. In 1972, she co-founded Ms. magazine, and remained one of its editors for 15 years. Her books include the best-sellers *Revolution from Within: A Book of Self-Esteem*, *Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions* and *Moving Beyond Words*.

See PersonalPAC.org.

Center on Halsted hosts sex-positive discussion

BY NINA MATTI

The latest installment of the Center on Halsted Chats, a monthly series of conversations hosted by leaders in the LGBTQ community to address relevant issues, was held last Wednesday and led to a lively discussion of sex parties and BDSM clubs in Chicago.

Sky Cotton, founder of Vespertine, and Harry Cross, co-founder of Men's Room, were the evening's guests. Despite having the shared experience of founding their respective sex clubs, they had surprisingly narratives of how they achieved that goal.

"You guys had it way easier than we ladies did," Cotton said to Cross. "We had hard labor [when Vespertine first started]."

Cotton noted that, when she first came onto the Chicago leather scene, it was a male dominated space. Her frustration with the lack of spaces for women inspired her to create her first ladies only play space in the basement of Jackhammer. "We would have to spend like three days leading up to the event cleaning," she said. "We would literally clean and bleach and clean for days... But we did it and it was worth it."

The women of Vespertine since have moved out of the leather shop basement and into their own dungeon space in Chinatown. "The parties there are packed," she said. "They're always packed. The ladies want to play just as much as the boys."

More than just the physical spaces have changed in the leather communities though. Both Cotton and Cross think that they're spaces reflect a more inclusive environment than they once did. "It's important to create spaces for your audiences. As long as everyone feels comfortable, it's fine to create spaces for everyone... I want to create space for a mixed crowd," Cross said. "At Men's Room, we welcome everyone. But do they all feel comfortable there? Do women feel comfortable?"

Vespertine, Cotton said, is having more success creating a party that will feel welcoming to diverse audiences. "Women of all shapes, sizes, ethnicities, gender identities, have been coming to Vespertine. We've been having [parties] for 12 years now," she said. "Our last party in May had the highest number of genderqueer, nonconformist, nonbinary, trans inclusive people all together learning and watching demos."

She said they present informative demonstra-

tions at parties to encourage newcomers to safely get involved in the fun.

While Cross sees Men's Room as more of a place for "people who have been doing this for a while," he said that safe sex education is an important component of the party. "Some of the guys that come don't use protection," he said, "and that's definitely a weight over the party. We want to make sure everyone's being safe. We provide resources to go get tested and prepped."



Harry Cross and Sky Cotton.
Photo by Nina Matti

Vespertine also puts an emphasis on safe sex. It partners with Howard Brown Health to provide testing kits and other tools to promote sexual health within the community.

"I am and always have been a safe sex advocate," Cotton said. "I think you should be able to engage when the occasion is right... Do it as often as you can with as many people as you can, but wrap it up and play it safe."

Vespertine and Men's Room may have started out as places for people to get it on, but they've become so much more than that.

"When you feel this energy from other people, you know you've made something special," Cotton said.

Cross agreed. "You see people interacting with each other in ways that they don't at a video bar or a wine bar," he said. "People do what they want. People feel free. Everyone comes together more and they feel like they can be themselves."

Chicagoan takes part in 'Wall Off Trump' protest

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A Chicago immigration activist was among those who took part in a large-scale "Wall Off Trump" protest outside the Republican National Convention in Cleveland July 20.

The protest was a response to Republican nominee Donald Trump's promise to erect a wall that would prevent Mexican citizens from crossing the U.S. border.

"It really seemed that the groups organizing opposition protests to Trump were rather small, so we were glad to do something like this," said Tania Unzueta of the organization Mijente. "There were about six or seven people from Chicago, who are queer and/or immigration activists, who took part."

She estimated that a total of somewhere between 200-300 people in took part in the protest, which was organized by Mijente, the Ruckus Society and Iraq Veterans Against the War, among other organizations. Unzueta added protesters had few problems with police or security at the event.

The protestors carried a large sign painted

like a brick wall; others wore bedsheets for ponchos to similarly represent the wall.

"We knew that we wanted a wall, but we didn't know at first what it would look like," said Unzueta, who was planning on taking part in a July 25 demonstration at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia.

"We're doing a march around deportation there," she added. "We are asking Clinton to tell Obama to put a moratorium on the deportations."

Monthly gatherings for LGBTQ APIs

Christ Church of Chicago (Tri-C) and Invisible to Invincible: Asian Pacific Islander Pride of Chicago (i2i) are sponsoring a monthly gathering for LGBTQ Asian and Pacific Islanders (API) as well as their family members.

The meetings take place on the fourth Sunday of each month, 3-5 p.m., at Tri-C, 6047 N. Rockwell Ave.

The sponsors said they would like to "create a space where people can share stories, information and resources, discuss [as well as] provide support to one another."

Email Chicago2i@yahoo.com or pastor@christchurchchicago.net.

Kenosha trans student alleges school bias

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A 16-year-old transgender boy sued the Kenosha (Wisconsin) Unified School District in federal court July 19, according to Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

The district's superintendent was also named in the suit, which alleges that the plaintiff, Ash Whitaker, was discriminated against on the basis of his gender identity. The lawsuit was filed by the Oakland, California-based Transgender Law Center on behalf of Whitaker and his mother.

According to the suit, school officials denied Whitaker access to the boy's restrooms, regularly used his birth name and female pronouns to refer to him and issued to him a green wristband to more easily monitor which restroom he was using. Whitaker previously tried to run for prom king at his school; the district initially refused to let him but later reversed its decision.

"These lawsuits are about the equal treatment of transgender students and making sure they are treated just like every other student in their schools," said Alison Pen-

Longtime activist Vernon Huls dies

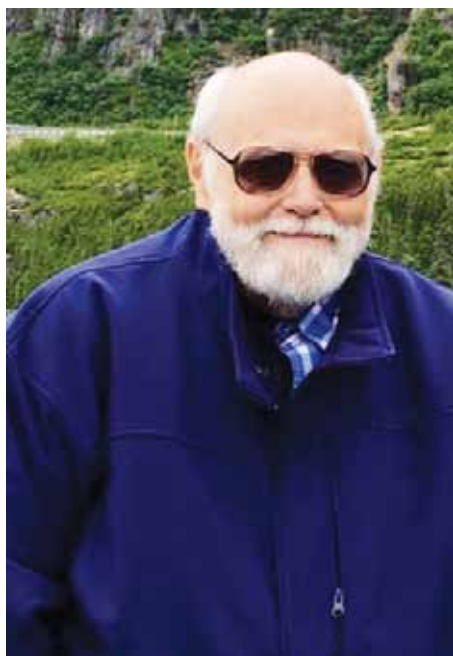
BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Vernon Huls, 67, a longtime Chicago-area LGBTQ activist and accountant, died July 21 at Northwestern Hospital of heart failure.

Lori Cannon—herself a longtime community HIV/AIDS activist and founder of Open Hand Chicago (now a division of the Heartland Health Outreach)—relayed Huls' death to Windy City Times.

At the time of his death, Huls was a resident of Town Hall Apartments, the new facility for LGBTQ seniors just south of Center on Halsted. He previously lived in the Lincoln Park neighborhood.

Huls was born Sept. 12, 1948, in Champaign,



Vernon Huls.
Facebook photo

Illinois, and grew up on a farm in Flatville, Illinois, before moving to Chicago. He graduated from Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, with a bachelor's degree in accounting.

He worked as an accountant at various firms until his retirement.

Huls is survived by his mother, Margie L. nee Olson, his sisters Velma and Vera, his brother Virgil, two nieces (Amy Hennigh and Angela McCabe), a nephew (Brandon Boastick), two great-nephews, two great-nieces, two great-great-nephews and one great-great-niece.

His father, Ernest J. Huls, preceded him in death.

Huls was a member of the now-defunct Illinois Gay and Lesbian Task Force (IGLTF), in which he served as treasurer for many years. He also spent most of his non-working hours on LGBTQ activism.

"We got to know each other when Vernon moved into Town Hall Apartments about two years ago," said former LGBTQ activist and friend Pat Cummings. "I was already living there and when he arrived we became fast friends. We spent time hanging out together talking about mutual friends and politics in what we call the Rainbow Room. I'll miss seeing him and talking to him about today's political climate. He will be greatly missed among the Town Hall community."

"Long before we had six-figure salaried CEOs of LGBTQ organizations, Vernon lobbied City Hall and Springfield as an advocate for the community," said LGBTQ-rights activist Rick Garcia. "I knew him during the days when he did this work on his own time and his own dime. We would travel to Springfield in his car on day trips to do this work when it wasn't popular. The work he did was cutting edge and laid the foundation for the successes we've had today. We stand on his shoulders and owe him

a debt of gratitude for fighting for us when few did."

"Vernon was a stalwart in the LGBTQ community before that type of activism was fashionable," said Cannon. "People like Vernon, Joanne Trapani and the late Bill Verrick set a gold standard for community activism which would morph into organizations we've come to know as IMPACT, the Federation for Human Rights, now known as Equality Illinois, and various local gay rights organizations that blossomed during the early days of organizing for LGBTQ human rights. It was these early efforts that set the foundation from which human rights legislation eventually passed to protect the day-to-day lives within the LGBTQ community of those who had no voice. We must never forget the early heroes like Vernon who decided to do the right thing despite overwhelming odds. Vernon leaves a remarkable legacy that we will all remember."

"Vernon was really proud of where he came from and had a tremendous love for his family,"

said Trapani. "We first met each other while working for the IGLTF. Everyone who knew him thought of him as an unselfish person who dug in and got the work done. He was great man and he'll be missed by the community."

Sidetrack co-owner and activist Art Johnston added, "Vernon was a longtime volunteer and leader of the IGLTF, which took on much of the civil rights work for our community in Springfield in the '80s. Committed, soft-spoken and intelligent, Vernon was one of the most reliable activists in Chicago. He was especially known for his thorough analyses of vote counts on LGBT bills."

"He was an active member of Town Hall the entire time he lived there including planning events such as the monthly potlucks in the Rainbow Room as well as hanging out with friends," said friend and fellow Town Hall resident George Garcia. "He'll be missed by myself and everyone else at Town Hall."

A private cremation ceremony will take place at Ewald-Barlock Funeral Home in Chicago. His ashes will be spread at the family farm in Flatville at a later date.

Town Hall Apartments will be holding a memorial service Saturday, July 30, at 3 p.m. Contact George Garcia for more information and to confirm attendance at 773-732-4897.

Schock grand jury dismissed with no indictment

After more than a year of investigation, a federal grand jury involving former U.S. Rep. Aaron Schock (R-Illinois) ended June 30 without indicting him.

"Our position has been and remains that while administrative errors may have been made during Mr. Schock's time in Congress, no aspect of this matter involves anything criminal," said George Terwilliger, Schock's lead attorney.

It was a case that involved, at one point, Schock's lawyers submitting approximately 3,000 records—most of them emails, text messages and documents—to federal prosecutors. Schock resigned from the U.S. House of Representatives in March 2015 amid questions about his campaign and office spending.

Schock is not free of possible federal charges, as a grand jury in Springfield could take up his case.

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James Keck reflects on lifetime of activism

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Longtime activist James Keck said he believes that there is tremendous validity to the expression “truth to power,” and that the best exemplars of that are young people.

“Young people have their own insight,” he explained to Windy City Times. “Their tenacity and challenges to the status quo [are] healthy as all get out.”

An exuberance and passion to do what’s right for the community has long fueled Keck, who has been involved with organizing since he was in his teens. He took part in the work surrounding Rev. Martin Luther King’s Chicago campaign in the mid-’60s, and went on to become “a full-blown professional community organizer” for labor and social-justice causes. Now a professional addictions and mental health counselor, he’s also taking on his former employer, which he alleges promoted an abusive working atmosphere.

A native of the West Side, Keck began his activist work when he was a student at Quigley Preparatory Seminary North.

“The neighborhood was going through racial change,” he said. “In those days, my home was right on the border where change was taking place. It could be extremely violent—house burnings, gang fights. It was extremely ugly.”

He became interested in studying about racial politics and went to the library and asked for a book on the topic. A librarian provided him with a copy of Saul Alinsky’s *Reveille for Radicals*.

“I read it, and I fell in love with it. I thought this was the greatest thing since Wonder Bread,” recalled Keck. He saw in the book that Alinsky was from Chicago. Keck looked up Alin-

sky’s organization in the phone book.

“I’m 15 years old and I call the office and I ask for Saul D. Alinsky, because I want to meet with him. The woman on the other end said, ‘Saul is out of town but there is a local organizer named Tom Gaudette who you can talk to.’ He was a Chicago organizer and an icon in his own right. He met with me for three hours and explained Alinsky-organizing to me.”

Gaudette encouraged Keck to try to convince his local pastor to try to raise \$5,000 for a neighborhood organizer. Keck and his father met the pastor.

“He wouldn’t give it to us,” Keck said. “As a typical 15-year-old, I’m really ticked off because this guy won’t do the right thing.”

The incident stuck with him for two years, until a sports injury sidelined him for a summer. A local priest whom Keck described as “a radical” invited Keck to help out at a priory in Garfield Park. One day, as he was mopping the floor, he overheard the priest take part in a meeting about the racial politics in Keck’s neighborhood.

“From that day on, I was going to be a civil-rights worker,” he said. “That was in ’64 or ’65.”

In 1965, groundwork for Rev. Martin Luther King’s Chicago Campaign began. Officially announced in early 1966 by King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Chicago Campaign was an expansion of their work from the South to the North, where they would fight inequities in housing, education and employment. Keck said his recollections were significantly different than how King’s time in Chicago was portrayed in the press at the time.

“The Chicago press loves to frame things as one person against another, so when Dr. King came to Chicago, it was ‘Old Mayor Daley vs. Dr.



Jim Keck.
Photo courtesy of Keck

King,’ and ‘Old Mayor Daley Outwitted Him’—wrong. That’s not what happened,” he said.

Keck explained that King was invited to Chicago by local civil-rights groups who had a hard time coalescing themselves.

“He was given carte-blanche, but his team couldn’t step foot into Chicago without the infighting starting all over again,” he said. “It immediately focused on Rev. James Bevel, who was a genius when it came to strategy. There were civil-rights leaders who fought him tooth-and-nail, and undermined him and what Dr. King was trying to do here.”

One such example, Keck explained, was when Daley and King met in order for Daley to prevent a march in suburban Cicero, a location the mayor feared would lead to a violent outbreak.

“[Cicero] was a scary place for Black people,” Keck said. “Black people may have worked in businesses there, but they had to clear out before dark. In the middle of that agreement [meeting between Daley and King], two of the Chicago leaders lead a march in Cicero, in defiance of Dr. King. They took his hand away from him. It turned out to be a bust. The people of Cicero stayed away from the march. ... It weakened Dr. King’s bargaining position with the mayor. It fizzled.”

Keck lamented that many of the city’s organizers stayed in their positions for too long, effectively making Chicago a parochial, small town, adding, “Alinsky said that, for anyone with an organization for more than five years, it was time to move on. There’s a lot of truth to that.”

Keck now marvels at his own chutzpah at the time, and admitted that he at one point butted heads with King’s team. When he was assigned as a marshal surrounding King, and was wearing a hard-hat, one of King’s colleagues asked Keck to remove the hat per King’s request, since it was “theoretically provoking violence by anticipating violence.”

Keck refused. “I looked at him and said, ‘You tell Dr. King, when it comes to this march, I know my people, and if I’m going to keep an eye on my own people, I need to protect my head.’ Here I was, 18 years old, and I said that.”

He eventually married, and did not come out of the closet as a gay man until the mid-’80s. “It had a lot to do with my becoming an alcoholic; I’m a recovering alcoholic. I had kind of a classic coming-out thing—I went to the bars every night. In my age group, that’s what you did if you were closeted. You showed up at the bars, and they were the social scene. I had a high tolerance for beer, and I was stupid enough to think drinking beer couldn’t hurt me. I was very fearful because I was a political personality in the city. Nobody picked up on it,” Keck said.

He became a counselor, he said, largely because he wanted a profession wherein he could be open about being gay and being in recov-

ery. But lately he’s been making public appeals for persons in the mental health professions to adopt a grassroots-style embrace of organizing and unionizing, a stance fueled by the treatment of employees he alleges he saw at his former employer.

Keck said he’s been distressed seeing mental health service providers favor models of leadership and decision-making that benefit the bottom line more than patient outcomes and employee morale. He has long been waiting to hear back from the Illinois Department of Human Rights about a complaint of discrimination and retaliation he registered against that previous employer, the Gateway Alcohol & Drug Treatment Centers.

In November, 2015, Keck summed up his position in an opinion piece he published for LinkedIn Pulse.

“Just as the use of idioms and metaphors is essential in our clinical work, the same can be said for organizing and advocacy,” Keck wrote. “However, when dealing with adversaries as slick and amoral as can now be found leading all too many service providers, we must understand that pleasantries and appeals to conscience or reason are, for all intent and purposes, exercises in futility. Such folks will not concede wealth and dominance so easily or without a fight. We must, therefore, learn together to carry a new tune.”

Report shows more bisexuality—and relaxed attitudes

A new report, “Changes in American Adults’ Reported Same-Sex Sexual Experiences and Attitudes, 1973–2014,” has found a rise in bisexuality among U.S. residents—as well as an increasingly relaxed reaction to it.

Using data from the General Social Survey (GSS), social scientists found that the percentage of men reporting male sexual partners had nearly doubled from 1990 to 2014, and the percentage of women reporting same-sex experiences had more than doubled during the same period.

Their study, published in the journal *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, also shows a dramatic increase in the percentage of individuals who find these sexual interactions acceptable. It also found that increases in same-sex sexual behavior were largest in the South and Midwest and among whites, were mostly absent among Blacks and were smaller among the religious.

The article can be found at <http://link.springer.com/journal/10508/onlineFirst/page/1>.

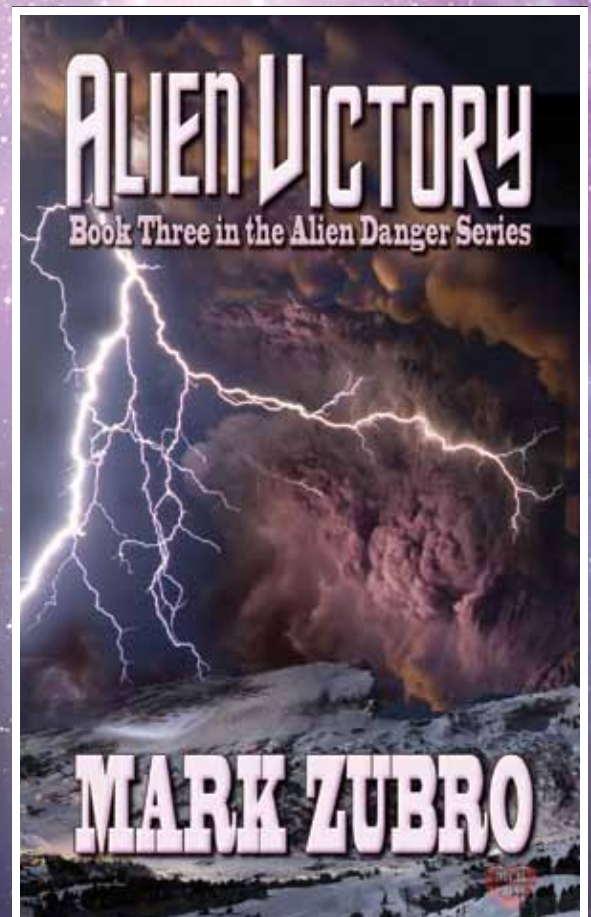
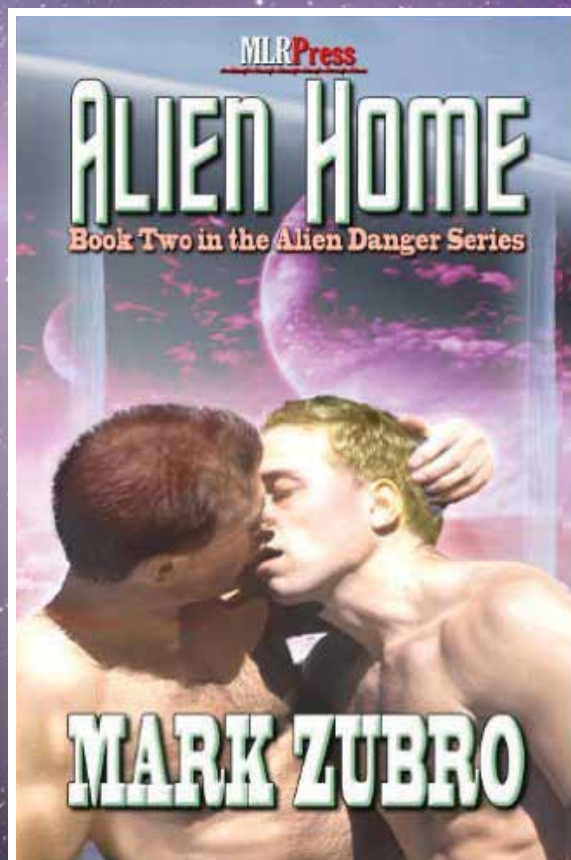
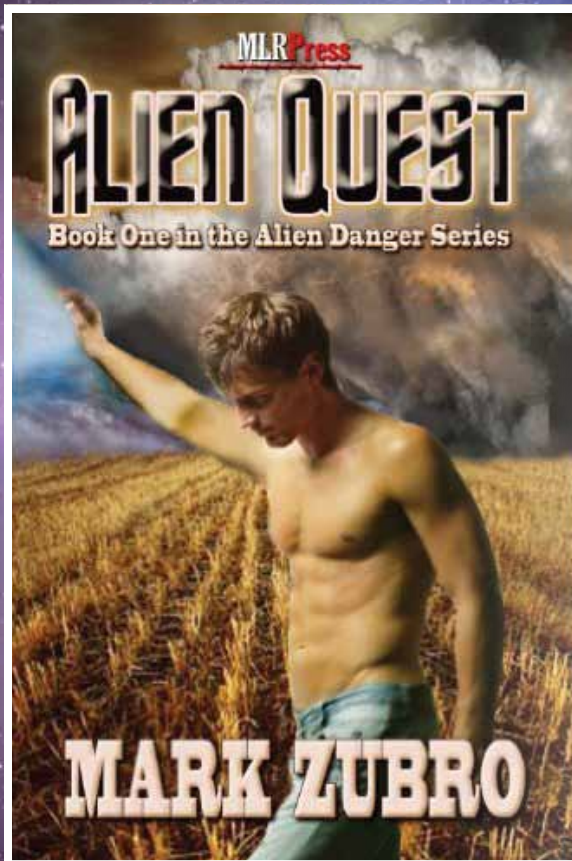
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Advocates: State puts persons with hep C and Medicaid at risk

BY MATT SIMONETTE

While the treatment and detection of hepatitis C have become significantly less difficult in recent years, the state of Illinois Medicaid system won't cover treatment for the disease until patients reach Stage 4, when their liver becomes cirrhotic, according to advocates and healthcare providers.

"It's heartbreaking, and it's not why I signed up to be at County," said Oluwatoyin Adeyemi, MD, an infectious diseases physician at Cook County Health and Hospital System.

Adeyemi was among several speakers July 21 at the daylong forum The Silent Epidemic: In-

patients of Hepatitis C in a matter of weeks.

"These two therapies leveled the entire scene of hepatitis C," said Bashar Attar, MD, gastroenterology and hepatology chair at Cook County Health and Hospital System.

But Harvoni and Eplusa, both manufactured by Foster City, California-based Gilead Sciences, are extremely expensive. A full regimen of Harvoni, for example, costs about \$94,500. Various providers and insurers have negotiated lower prices for Harvoni, but all too often, according to Jill Wolf, hepatitis C program director for Caring Ambassadors, Inc., agencies and other stakeholders use those price tags to shut down conversation about the drug's availabil-



Oluwatoyin Adeyemi.
Photo by Matt Simonette

creasing Access to Hepatitis C Treatment Care, held in observance of the National African American Hepatitis C Action Day and as part of an ongoing #BlackLivesMatter discussion series.

The medication Harvoni, which has greatly eased treatment of hepatitis C, was first marketed in 2014, and yet another medication, Eplusa, was just approved in June of this year. Prior to Harvoni, the standard treatment was highly toxic and promised a much lower rate of success. Harvoni and Eplusa both have had a success rate of well-over 90 percent in curing

ity. She said that treatment for hepatitis C is at "exactly the same place" HIV/AIDS was in the early '80s in terms of awareness.

"We're the poster child of the state not to live in if you have Hep C and Medicaid," said Wolf. "...There obviously are a lot of issues going on in our state. But hep C is very different than HIV, and mobilizing a community that is extremely diverse is really hard."

She added that patients with the financial resources can now be cured, but poorer patients must do without. Those patients without the means are told they're not sick enough to war-

rant treatment.

"Literally, the question to [physicians like] Dr. Adeyemi is, 'Is this because I'm Black? Is this because I'm poor?'" Wolf said. "The answer is, 'Yeah, that's why.'"

Illinois' law is in violation of federal Medicaid laws, according to Ruth Edwards, managing attorney for Legal Council for Health Justice. Her organization is looking for specific instances wherein Illinoisans have been denied coverage because their hepatitis C was not advanced enough; legal and service organizations in other states have filed suit against their state governments to get similarly onerous rules lifted. But medical providers frequently refrain from writing the prescriptions for Medicaid patients since they know the coverage will be denied, but advocates say they should write them anyway, to build up a history of denials within the state.

Ramon Gardenhire, vice president of policy for AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC), said that, while those state rules are obviously cause for concern, advocates need to address the medication prices, too.

"We have to make sure that we are holding pharmaceutical companies accountable, so they putting out these drugs priced in such a way that it allows a state to access it as much as they can, particularly a state like Illinois where we still face a huge fiscal crisis," he said. "We applaud the amount of work that goes into these drugs but we have an ethical responsibility to make sure there is access to them—unilateral access, not just people with commercial insurance."

Advocates are also pressing for increased hepatitis C testing, which is also sometimes

eschewed by government agencies and service providers for being too expensive. But Adeyemi said those concerns about cost are misguided. A negative result incurs a testing cost of about \$7. A positive result will indeed yield more medical expenses for the patient, but not as many as allowing hepatitis C to go undiagnosed and untreated for longer. According to Adeyemi, increased testing would save about 120,000 lives and about \$2.5 billion.

"Other countries have a plan for hepatitis C," she said. "It's really not that complicated."

Deaths from hepatitis C overtook the number of deaths from HIV/AIDS in 2007. There are about 5.2 million individuals around the world with the disease; for most people who are infected, it becomes a chronic disease, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Among those also speaking at the July 21 panel were Dr. Jim Lando of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS); Clelita Mathole of Gilead Sciences; Peter McCloy of Ruth M. Rothstein CORE Center; Edwin Ervin of Broadway Youth Center; Augustine Sharp of National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS, Inc.; and Cynthia Tucker of AIDS Foundation of Chicago. Sanford Gaylord of HHS' HIV/AIDS Regional Resource Network Program was the emcee. The forum was sponsored by Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH); Chicago Area HIV/AIDS Integrated Service Council (CA-HISC); the Primary Prevention Early Identification Committee (PPEI); HHS Regional Resource Network Program, Region V; Caring Ambassadors; and the Black Treatment Advocates Network (BTAN Chicago) as well as AFC and Gilead Sciences.

Activists sue City Council over open meetings

BY MATT SIMONETTE

LGBT- and housing-rights activists, on July 14, announced they were filing a lawsuit against the Chicago City Council for violation of the Illinois Open Meetings Act. The announcement was made in front of mayor Rahm Emanuel's office on the fifth floor of Chicago's city hall.

Activists contend that, despite being first in line—and arriving about 90 minutes early—for the May and June monthly meetings of the City Council, they and others were denied entrance, while guests and employees of the council and mayor were ushered inside by staff, ahead of the line, according to a statement.

The lawsuit was filed by activist Rick Garcia and Andy Thayer of Gay Liberation Network and Uptown Tent City Organizers. The suit aims to nullify a \$15.8-million deal for Montrose Clarendon Partners LLC that the council approved at its June meeting, according to DNA Info.

Garcia said at the announcement that he and a friend were fourth and fifth in line prior to the June 22 meeting, and that city personnel repeatedly let in a number of individuals they referred to as "interns."

"At 10 a.m., the officers informed us that the city council chambers were full," Garcia said July 14. "For more than two hours we stood there, and not one was let in. We could not hear or witness the proceedings of the City Council. ...I have never seen the general public excluded in this fashion, or such disregard for the general public."

Garcia alleged that as audience members left, new audience members were not let in.

"This intentional icing-out of the public—the public who has the right to see, and hear, and participate in council meetings—is wrong, and I believe it violates the Open Meetings Act," he said.

DNA Info's article is at <http://dnainfo.com/29Gtv98>.

State Rep. Sandack to resign

BY MATT SIMONETTE

State Rep. Ron Sandack (Downers Grove), one of the Republican legislators who voted for marriage equality, is resigning from the Illinois House, citing both "cybersecurity issues" and a desire to spend more time with his family as reasons, the Daily Herald reported July 25.

Some of Sandack's social-media accounts had disappeared in recent days. He engaged heavily on Twitter and Facebook, and on July 20 told the Capitol Fax blog that someone had tried hacking his accounts.

"It has been a tremendous honor and privilege to serve the people of the 81st district for the past four years in Springfield," said Sandack in a statement. "But after some cybersecurity issues arose, I began to re-evaluate my continued public service."

"I have always recognized there is no greater privilege than being a father and husband. My duties in Springfield has meant missing a lot of events in the lives of my children. I am no longer willing to miss important family events."

Sandack was facing off against Democratic candidate Greg Hose to retain his seat; it's now up to Republican leaders to determine his replacement.

Sandack narrowly won his second House election in 2014 with just more than 150 votes. His challenger in that race, Downers Grove social studies teacher Keith Matune, played on Sandack's 2013 vote in favor of marriage equality. Matune's supporters distributed campaign flyers that showed Sandack speaking at a marriage equality rally and implied that he was thus a radical. But Sandack said that he supported marriage equality because it was a positive reflection of "family values."

Daily Herald's article is at <http://bit.ly/29ZE81d>. Capitol Fax broke the news at <http://bit.ly/2a685m0>.



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Youth center supporting LGBT young adults, changing workspaces

BY NINA MATTI

Tucked away in the basement of the Wellington Avenue United Church is a refuge. It's not a place to find comfort in spirituality, as one may guess, but a place for LGBTQ youth to find support in social services, medical care and much more. The Broadway Youth Center (BYC) of Howard Brown Health is this safe haven.

BYC Director Latonya Maley, 28, is working her "dream job," she told Windy City Times, coordinating the day-to-day operations of the center. Maley has always been interested in LGBTQ health services. "In college, I was a baby dyke rabblouser," she said. "I was involved in student organizing for LGBT folks, LGBT folks of color, feminist organizing, sexual reproductive justice organizing, organizing for folks that were undocumented. I wanted to find a way to mush that all together."

To do that, she pursued a master's degree in public health at the University of Illinois at Chicago. "Social inequities have a consequence on people's bodies," she said she realized during her time in school, which eventually led her to a research position at Howard Brown and the BYC.

"Our mission [at the BYC] is to improve the quality of life and to advocate for the well-being of young people," she said. "Especially young people that are LGBT-identified or are experiencing homelessness. At the center of our mission are queer homeless folks, but if you take care of the most vulnerable, you're taking care of everybody else by having a body-positive framework of providing healthcare."

While her work can be rewarding, dealing with the "overwhelming need for the little bit of resources we have is really hard," Maley said. "But then there's also your own self-care. Balancing sustainability and self-care is difficult, but at the same time you know that this place isn't really about you. It's about the clients and their needs."

In order to better fulfill meet those clients' needs, BYC is designing a new space for its workspace, 4009 N. Broadway, that will open in January.

"We've got to have a safe space, a bubble, where [people seeking the BYC's services] can be loved," Maley said. "They can be queer; they can be trans. Their gender is wonderful. They're not at risk. They're safe. But then our programs end," Maley said. "I'm trying to be more thoughtful about how the loving, emotional healing and physical healing space ripple out into the community and create opportunities for neighbors to get involved too."

That's why, Maley said, she's even more excited for the new space, which the center is designing exactly for their needs.

"We believe in an integrated service model," she said. "It's important that healthcare also means emotional care; it means social care. If you want someone to be undetectable in their HIV status, they need housing, good food and can live in the body they want. We take mental health very seriously. They need opportunities for growth and development, which is why we offer youth development programming, drop-in programming, therapy services, and GED classes. The dream is all at the same time and the same place, which can't happen here [in our temporary location], but it will in the new space."

Initially, Maley said she was a bit hesitant about using the basement of the church as the center's transitory space.

"It's interesting that this space we're in now is in a church—a space that a lot of LGBT people might be afraid to enter," she said.

However, Maley said she thinks that the relationship between the church and the center



has been smooth and beneficial.

"Their priority is to make people feel loved, so I think they take a step back from the more dogmatic things to provide the space," she said. "They've been really supportive of us, but at the same time have been really good about letting us do our thing how we want. There may be some people that self-select out of coming to this space, but I think a lot of people do come here and they don't feel like they're in a church, so they don't experience the pain that churches may have caused them in their past. Our space doesn't feel like a church; it feels like a clinic or a day care [center]."

Once BYC settles in its new location, Maley eventually sees herself returning to nursing school while BYC is run entirely by people who formerly accessed BYC's resources and services. "We have to remember to move out of the way," she said. "Even though I'm a Black lesbian, I'm not in the group that most affected by HIV. A Black trans woman leading the BYC is a wonderful idea. I've got to move over to make space. Those that are most impacted by these health disparities should be leading the efforts that address them."

Latonya Maley.
Photo courtesy of Maley

Netanyahu calls for solidarity with LGBTs

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, on July 21, stressed the importance of the LGBT community as part of society.

Calling the Jerusalem Pride Parade (which took place the same day) a "march of unity," Netanyahu said in a video that people at the event would "be marching for one principle: All human beings are equal, all human beings were created in God's image, all human beings have a right to live their lives as they choose, with dignity and security."

Netanyahu also paid tribute to 16-year-old Shira Banki, who was murdered at last year's parade at the hands of an ultra-Orthodox radical, with the prime minister calling her a "brave, talented and loved" child. (That attack came shortly after the extremist had been released from prison after stabbing several people at the 2005 pride march.)

Shortly after the original Facebook post, Netanyahu released a video in English that differed from the Hebrew version in that it emphasized the way Arab countries treat the LGBT community.

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REPUBLICAN NAT'L CONVENTION

Day 4: Trump makes history with LGBT inclusion in acceptance speech

2016 hopeful accepts Republican nomination, invokes Orlando shooting

BY CHRIS JOHNSON, WASHINGTON BLADE

CLEVELAND—On the final night of the Republican National Convention (July 21), Donald Trump made history with an explicit pledge to protect LGBT people during his speech accepting the GOP presidential nomination.

Trump made the remarks when invoking the mass shooting last month at a gay nightclub in Orlando, saying the 49 left dead at the hands of a shooter who pledged allegiance to Islamic extremists were “wonderful Americans.”

“Only weeks ago, in Orlando, Florida, 49 wonderful Americans were savagely murdered by an Islamic terrorist,” Trump said. “This time, the terrorist targeted the LGBTQ community. No good, and we’re going to stop it. As your president, I will do everything in my power to protect our LGBTQ citizens from the violence and oppression of a hateful foreign ideology. Believe me.”

The audience at the Quicken Loans Arena applauded those words, a stark contrast to the Republican National Convention in 1992 when attendees chanted “Family Rights Forever/Gay Rights Never” during a speech delivered by anti-gay conservative leader Pat Buchanan.

In response to applause, Trump ad-libbed from his prepared remarks and said, “And I have to say, as a Republican, it is so nice to hear you cheering for what I just said. Thank you.”

Those words mark the first time a Republican presidential nominee invoked the LGBT community in a positive way during an acceptance speech at a GOP convention. In 2012, then-Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney took the opportunity of his acceptance speech to “honor the institution of marriage” at a time when the LGBT community was seeking the legalization of gay nuptials.

Ric Grenell, a gay Fox News commentator and delegate from California pledged to Trump, told the Washington Blade on the floor of the Quicken Loans Arena he doesn’t think “anybody is surprised” by Trump’s inclusion of LGBT people in his acceptance speech.

“Trump has always made perfectly clear that he has a lot of gay friends, that he is totally for equality,” Grenell said. “And for me, it’s actually, I know we have a lot of work to do within the Republican Party on gay rights, but it’s really emotional for me to be here on my seventh convention.”

Recalling being present in 1992 listening to Buchanan, Grenell said, “To be here and to really see the acceptance, we made dramatic progress in four years. I just think it’s time that the gay left leadership in Washington D.C. realize that we can remove this issue from being a partisan issue.”

But Trump’s enumeration of the LGBT community during his speech and pledge to protect LGBT people against terrorism stands in contrast to positions on LGBT rights he has staked out on the campaign trail.

Although Trump hasn’t had as much vitriol for LGBT people as he has had for other minority groups, Trump has told social conservatives to “trust” him to oppose same-sex marriage, said he would “strongly consider” appointing U.S. Supreme Court justices who would reverse marriage equality and offered conditional support for the First Amendment Defense Act, a federal “religious freedom” bill seen to enable anti-LGBT discrimination.

Moreover, Trump delivered the LGBT-inclusive speech in the same week delegates at the Republican National Convention ratified a party platform considered the most anti-LGBT in history. Among other things, the platform seeks to overturn the Supreme Court decision for same-sex marriage through either judicial reconsideration or a constitutional amendment.

On Twitter, Hillary Clinton pointed out when Trump thanked his audience for supporting LGBT inclusion in his speech, the Republican platform indicates support for widely discredited “ex-gay” conversion therapy:

“Your party’s official platform supports ‘conversion therapy,’ @realDonaldTrump. <https://t.co/RhgfCSNSxR>—Hillary Clinton (@HillaryClinton) July 22, 2016

Later in his speech, Trump may have undercut his pledge to LGBT rights by recommitting himself to appoint conservative justices to the judiciary—a move critics contend could lead to a reversal of the Supreme Court’s decision on same-sex marriage.

“We are also going to appoint justices to the United States Supreme Court who will uphold our laws and our Constitution,” Trump said. “The replacement of our beloved Justice Scalia will be a person of similar views, principles, and judicial philosophy. This will be one of the most important issues decided by this election.”

Trump also singled out evangelical Christians—a group that has historically opposed the LGBT community—to thank them helping in winning the Republican presidential nomination, saying, “the support they’ve given me, and I’m not sure I totally deserve it, has been so amazing, and has been such a big reason why I’m here tonight.”

To assist the evangelical community, Trump said he’d “work very hard” to repeal the 1954 Johnson Amendment, which prohibits tax-exempt organizations from endorsing or opposing political candidates. Undoing that language would “protect free speech for all Americans,” Trump said.

While Trump pledged to defend the LGBT community during his speech as opposed to seeking to marginalize it, the candidate did stoke fears about undocumented immigrants in the United States.

“Of all my travels in this country, nothing has affected me more deeply than the time I have spent with the mothers and fathers who have lost their children to violence spilling across our border,” Trump said. “These families have no special interests to represent them. There are no demonstrators to protest on their behalf. My opponent will never meet with them, or share in their pain.”

Invoking the names of individuals who were allegedly killed by undocumented immigrants in “sanctuary cities,” Trump renewed his pledge to build a wall on the U.S.-Mexico border and said Clinton wants to pursue a policy that amounts to “mass amnesty, mass immigration and mass lawlessness.”



Donald Trump.
Photo by Michael Key/Washington Blade

“We are going to build a great border wall to stop illegal immigration, to stop the gangs and the violence and to stop the drugs from pouring into our communities,” Trump said.

Chad Griffin, president of the Human Rights Campaign, pointed out on Twitter Trump’s attacks on other minority groups in response to the LGBT inclusion in the candidate’s acceptance speech.

“LGBTQ people ARE women, Muslim, Latinx, Jews, Black, immigrants, those w/ disabilities. @realDonaldTrump has attacked & maligned all of us.”—Chad Griffin (@ChadHGriffin) July 22, 2016

Trump’s pledge to build a wall along the U.S.-

Mexico border was apparently the source of ire for a “Code Pink” protester who made it into the Quicken Loans Arena with a banner reading, “Build Bridges Not Walls.” As she was being escorted out, Trump said, “How great are our police and how great is Cleveland?”

But the newly anointed Republican presidential nominee generally strived for a tone of inclusion throughout his speech. Although he maintained his priority would be “struggling citizens,” he said he’d be “considerate and compassionate to everyone.”

Introducing him on speech was his daughter

Turn to page 11

REPUBLICAN NAT'L CONVENTION

Day 3: Pence omits ‘religious freedom’ law in acceptance speech

Speakers enumerate LGBT inclusion in unprecedented way

BY CHRIS JOHNSON, WASHINGTON BLADE

CLEVELAND—The third night of the Republican National Convention (July 20) featured unprecedented LGBT inclusion from speakers on stage, but that embrace was undercut by omission of anti-LGBT histories and hints of support for anti-LGBT policy.

Republican vice presidential nominee Mike Pence exemplified the omission of a history of anti-LGBT action during his speech accepting the No. 2 position on his party’s presidential ticket. The candidate stayed away from the “religious freedom” bill he signed last year seen to enable anti-LGBT discrimination. That law sparked outrage by LGBT advocates and the business community forcing him to sign a “fix” limiting its impact.

The omission was most glaring during a portion of his speech on the economic prosperity he says Indiana has enjoyed during his tenure as governor.

“Indiana is a state that works because conservative principles work every time you put them into practice,” Pence said. “Today, while the nation suffers under the weight of \$19 trillion in a national debt, we in Indiana have a \$2 billion surplus, the highest credit rating in the nation, even though we cut taxes every year since I became governor four years ago.”

But according to a study earlier this year from Visit Indy, Indianapolis’s convention and tourist organization, Indiana lost up to 12 conventions and an estimated \$60 million in revenue after Pence signed into law the “religious freedom” bill.

Pence also made the case that Trump would



Gov. Mike Pence (right) with Donald Trump.
Photo by Michael Key/Washington Blade

appoint conservative justices to the Supreme Court, raising fears about the judiciary using “unaccountable power to take unconstitutional actions.” Although Pence didn’t enumerate on stage the Supreme Court decision in favor of same-sex marriage, conservative critics have charged that was one of the rulings in which justices overstepped their bounds.

Jim Obergefell, lead plaintiff in the lawsuit that won marriage equality nationwide and supporter of Hillary Clinton, said in a statement the impact of Pence’s decision to sign the law shouldn’t be forgotten.

“Donald Trump’s selection of Mike Pence is a clear message to the LGBTQ community in Ohio and across the country: he doesn’t believe we matter and he doesn’t believe we count,” Obergefell said. “In Indiana, Pence supported,

Turn to page 11

REPUBLICAN NAT'L CONVENTION

Day 4: Thiel declares, 'I am proud to be gay' at GOP convention

Paypal co-founder rejects anti-LGBT platform, debate on bathrooms

BY CHRIS JOHNSON, WASHINGTON BLADE

For the first time in 16 years, an openly gay speaker took the stage at the Republican National Convention—but the meaning of his words on LGBT rights is unclear.

Peter Thiel—a co-founder of PayPal and Facebook, and a California delegate supporting Trump—proclaimed his sexual orientation to attendees at the convention on July 21.

"Of course, every American has a unique identity," Thiel said. "I am proud to be gay, I am proud to be a Republican, but most of all I am proud to be an American."

The audience at the Quicken Loans Arena applauded when he made the declaration. Convention officials in neon-colored hats rallied the crowd in a chant of "U-S-A! U-S-A!"

As he spoke, three other openly gay delegates from California—Charles Moran, Ric Grenell and Juan Hernandez—were positioned in seats in the front row of the stage. Thiel was given

a prime speaking slot at the convention less than an hour before Donald Trump gave his acceptance speech to claim the Republican presidential nomination.

It was the first time since 2000 that an openly gay speaker addressed a Republican National Convention. At that time, then-Rep. Jim Kolbe spoke to the crowd. Although Kolbe didn't mention his sexual orientation and discussed trade policy, delegates on the floor turned their backs as he spoke.

Much of Thiel's speech consisted of promoting a positive climate for business growth as well as attacks on Hillary Clinton, but the Trump supporter also referenced LGBT rights.

In the aftermath of delegates at the Republican National Convention ratifying a platform considered the most anti-LGBT in the party's history, Thiel sought to minimize its impact.

"I don't agree with every plank in our party's platform, but fake culture wars distract us from our economic decline," Thiel said.

Based on the remarks, whether Thiel was rejecting the anti-LGBT platform language or those who would express outcry against it is hard to say.

Amid national debate on whether transgender people should be able to use the restroom consistent with their gender identity, Thiel was dismissive of the argument.

"When I was a kid, the great debate was

peal for support for Trump based on the shooting in his state at a gay nightclub that left 49 people dead and 53 wounded.

"I cried with the grieving moms and dads and brothers and sisters of the 49 people slaughtered by an ISIS-inspired terrorist," Scott said. "This war is real. It is here in America. And the next president must destroy this evil."

Last month, Scott acknowledged exclusively to the Washington Blade gays and Latinos were the victims of the Orlando shooting, but his words forget his lack of support for marriage equality or non-discrimination for LGBT people.

Chad Griffin, president of the Human Rights Campaign, said on Twitter the LGBT-inclusion on stage at the convention was heinous considering the anti-LGBT positions of the party and the speakers.

While some speakers made an effort for LGBT inclusion, others pledged Trump would pursue policies that might undermine LGBT rights.

Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi, making the case the president should obey of law, said she knows Trump and feels assured he'd "roll back Obama's unconstitutional executive orders." That could apply to executive actions Obama has undertaken on behalf of LGBT rights, including a 2014 executive order prohibiting federal contractors from engaging in anti-LGBT workplace discrimination.

Bondi also said Trump would "appoint conservative justices who will defend, rather than rewrite, our Constitution." Although she didn't explicitly identify the Supreme Court's decision, the ruling was implied.

Although Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) didn't make a live appearance at the convention, he also hinted at the possibility of Trump reversing the Supreme Court marriage ruling based on judicial appointments.

"Unlike Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton, he is committed to appointing constitutionalist judges who will respect the proper role of the judiciary," Rubio said.

Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) was more clever, invoking gay inclusion in a way that actually served as a threat to undermine LGBT rights.



Peter Thiel.
Tim Carroll Photography

about how to defeat the Soviet Union, and we won," Thiel said. "Now we are told that the great debate is about who gets to use which bathroom. This is a distraction from our real problems. Who cares?"

Again, it's unclear whether Thiel was being critical of LGBT advocates for seeking to protect transgender people against discrimination in bathroom use or whether he was speaking out against laws barring them from using the restroom consistent with their gender identity.

Chad Griffin, president of the Human Rights Campaign, interpreted Thiel's remarks as belittling efforts to ensure transgender people have access to the restrooms consistent with their gender identity and rebuked him.

"@peterthiel had an opportunity to push @GOP forward at #RNCinCLE. Disappointed he used it to dismiss attacks on our community."—Chad Griffin (@ChadHGriffin) July 22, 2016

After the speech, Moran told the Washington Blade Thiel delivered "a great message on economic prosperity and freedom."

"And the enthusiastic standing ovation he

"Freedom means religious freedom, whether you are Christian or Jew, Muslim or atheist," Cruz said. "Gay or straight, the Bill of Rights protects the rights of all of us to live according to our conscience."

Under this articulation, Cruz suggests "religious freedom," often invoked as excuse to engage in anti-LGBT discrimination, should take precedence over gay rights. That would be consistent with his presidential campaign in which he spurned civil rights laws penalizing businesses owned by individuals who refused service to LGBT people for religious reasons.

Cruz also made a veiled threat to the Supreme Court marriage decision when he said courts shouldn't make the states take uniform action throughout the country.

"Freedom means recognizing that our Constitution allows states to choose policies that reflect local values," Cruz said. "Colorado may decide something different than Texas. New York different than Iowa. Diversity. That's the way it's supposed to be. If not, what's the point of having states to begin with?"

At the end of his speech, Cruz made headlines when was booed by convention attendees. After a bruising primary with Trump, Cruz said during his speech attendees should go to the polls on Nov. 8, but told them "vote your conscience," not necessarily for the designate Republican presidential nominee.

John Fluharty, who's gay and former chair of the Delaware Republican Party, said the LGBT-inclusive words from speakers at the Republican National Convention doesn't make up for policy positions.

"Dribbling out a little lip service in front of the TV cameras does not, and should not, distract attention away from the fact that LGBTQ Republicans need to double-down on efforts to bring change to the GOP," Fluharty said.

"Just because we were thrown a bone tonight doesn't mean we should unleash our checkbooks or manpower until the party commits to inclusion and the protection of our civil rights."

got after his, 'I am gay, I am Republican, I am an American' line was a continued reinforcement that the body politic of the GOP is for an inclusive party for the LGBTQ community," Moran said.

Counterbalancing Thiel as an openly gay speaker were speeches on the same day from Tony Perkins, president of the anti-LGBT Family Research Council, and Jerry Falwell, Jr., president of Liberty University, which has an anti-LGBT reputation.

The day after Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) refused during his speech at the convention to endorse Trump, Perkins said he plans to cast a vote for the nominee in November, citing the candidate's pledge to appoint conservative justices to the Supreme Court.

Falwell touted Trump's pledge to repeal the 1954 Johnson Amendment, which prohibits tax-exempt organizations from endorsing or opposing political candidates.

"I truly believe Mr. Trump is America's blue-collar billionaire," Falwell said. "He is down to earth, loves America and the American people. He is a true patriot and a champion of the common man. Mr. Trump has added a plank to this party platform to repeal IRS rules sponsored by Lyndon Johnson in 1954 barring churches and non-profits from expressing political free speech."

On the other hand, Steve Bailey, superintendent of the North Coast District United Methodist Church, delivered the invocation that night using the term "whom you love"—a term of art often used to indicate gay people.

"We know that it's not right when lives are destroyed by addiction, when our justice system favors some, and punishes others," Bailey said. "When children and women are trafficked in our streets. Or when people are denigrated because of who they are or whom they love."

TRUMP from page 10

Ivanka Trump, who made the case so heavily her father would champion gender equality she seemed as though she were speaking at a convention with Democrats as opposed to Republicans.

"There have always been men of all backgrounds and ethnicities on my father's job sites and long before it was commonplace you also saw women," Ivanka Trump said. "My father values talent. He recognizes real knowledge and skill when he finds it. He is colorblind and gender-neutral. He hires the best person for the job."

Closing his speech, Trump reinvigorated use of the slogan that helped propel him to win the Republican nomination to run for the White House against Clinton.

"So to every parent who dreams for their child, and every child who dreams for their future, I say these words to you tonight: I'm with you, I will fight for you, and I will win for you," Trump said. "To all Americans tonight, in all of our cities and in all of our towns, I make this promise: We Will Make America Strong Again. We Will Make America Proud Again. We Will Make America Safe Again. And We Will Make America Great Again."

PENCE from page 10

fought for, and signed into law the ability for businesses to discriminate against individual members of the LGBTQ community. Trump and Pence are in lockstep when it comes to repealing marriage equality and opposing non-discrimination protections. Together, they represent the most divisive ticket I can imagine."

Speakers include LGBT people in unprecedented way

Other speakers on Day Three of the convention, titled "Make America First Again," enumerated LGBT people in the remarks in an unseen way at any time in history during a Republican National Convention.

Lynne Patton, vice president of the Eric Trump Foundation, invoked the LGBTQ acronym three times and said during the recent mass shooting in Orlando an Islamic terrorist "targeted members of the LGBTQ community."

A Black woman, Patton said, "As a minority, I personally pledge to you that Donald Trump knows that your life matters, he knows that my life matters, he knows that LGBTQ lives matter and he knows that veterans' lives matter and he knows that blue lives matter."

Newt Gingrich, former speaker of the U.S. House and failed 2012 Republican presidential candidate, took note in his remarks of anti-LGBT persecution at the hands of Islamic extremists.

"If our enemies had their way, gays, lesbians and transgender citizens would be put to death as they are today in the Islamic State and Iran," Gingrich said.

But those words come from the same Republican who saw the Defense of Marriage Act become law under his leadership as speaker in 1996, called marriage equality a "temporary aberration" and signed a pledge committing him to support a U.S. constitutional amendment that would ban same-sex marriage nationwide.

Florida Gov. Rick Scott made an emotional ap-



Michelle Obama at the DNC.

Photo by Michael Key/Washington Blade

DEMOCRATIC NAT'L CONVENTION

Day 1: Democratic stars take stage, defuse drama

BY CHRIS JOHNSON, WASHINGTON BLADE

PHILADELPHIA—Democrats appealed to both emotion and intellect while encouraging support for Hillary Clinton on the first day of their national convention, often peppering remarks with references to LGBT rights.

The most well-received speech came from First Lady Michelle Obama, who made a case to elect Clinton based on her tenacity and shared commitment to family.

"And make no mistake about it: This November, when we go to the polls, that is what we're deciding—not Democrat or Republican, not left or right," Obama said. "No, in this election and every election is about who will have the power to shape our children for the next four or eight years of their lives. And I am here tonight because in this election there is only one person who I trust with that responsibility, only one person who I believe is truly qualified to be president of the United States, and that is our friend Hillary Clinton."

U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), a favorite among progressives, delivered the keynote speech of the night and sought to take down Donald Trump for policies—as well as a personal history—she said undermines America.

"What kind of a man roots for the economic crash that cost millions of people their jobs?" Warren said. "Their homes? Their life savings? What kind of a man cheats students, cheats investors, cheats workers? I'll tell you what kind of man. A man who must never be president of the United States."

At one point, Warren slammed Trump for selecting Indiana Gov. Mike Pence as his running mate, saying he's "famous for trying to make it legal to openly discriminate against gays and lesbians."

U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), Clinton's rival during the primaries, sought to unify Democrats on a day when "Bernie-or-Bust" protesters raised their voices.

"I remember her as a great first lady who broke precedent in terms of the role that a first lady was supposed to play as she helped lead the fight for universal health care," Sanders said. "I served with her in the United States Senate and know her as a fierce advocate for the rights of children. Hillary Clinton will make an outstanding president and I am proud to stand with her here tonight."

Sanders in part made the case for Clinton by saying her appointments to the U.S. Supreme Court would protect LGBT people.

"Her Supreme Court appointments will also defend a woman's right to choose, workers' rights, the rights of the LGBT community, the needs of minorities and immigrants and the government's ability to protect the environment," Sanders said.

A noteworthy appearance was made by comedian and Sanders supporter Sarah Silverman. Declaring she'll vote for Clinton in the general election, Silverman told the "Bernie-or-Bust" crowd at the convention, "You're being ridiculous."

Similar to 2012, speakers at the Democratic National Convention enumerated support for the LGBT community throughout their remarks.

In a speech titled "We Will Rise," Sen. Cory Booker (D-N.J.) referenced gay people when touting the founding principles of the nation based on the Declaration of Independence.

"I am so proud that it was upon this foundation that we built a great nation and today, no matter who you are, rich or poor, Asian or white, man or woman, gay or straight, any religion or none at all, you are entitled to the civil rights and responsibilities of citizenship," Booker said.

Among the openly LGBT speakers on stage was Jason Collins, who was the first openly gay man to play for a team in the NBA and said the Clinton knew he was gay long before he came out publicly.

"Before I came out to the world on the cover

of Sports Illustrated, I came out privately to the Clinton family. I have known their family for almost 20 years," Collins said. "I knew that they would accept me for who I was; and that they would help pave a path for others to do the same. I am forever grateful for their words of wisdom back then and their unconditional support. They know that my sexual orientation made no difference in my ability to play basketball, just as someone's gender makes no difference in his or her ability to lead our nation."

tell your daughters they are empowered if their president reduces women to their physical appearance?"

Other openly LGBT speakers at the event included Randi Weingarten, a lesbian and president of the American Federation of Teachers, and Mary Kay Henry, a lesbian and international president of the Service Employees International Union.

Gay former Rep. Barney Frank, chair of the rules committee for the convention, made brief



Above: Sen. Elizabeth Warren. Below: Openly gay retired NBA basketball player Jason Collins and his brother Jarron Collins at the DNC.

Photos by Michael Key/Washington Blade



Appearing on stage with Collins was his twin brother, Jarron Thomas Collins, a professional basketball coach and a retired player in the NBA.

"How do you tell your kids not to be a bully if their president is one?" Collins said. "How do you tell your kids to respect their heritage if their president disparages it? How do you

opening remarks when he asked the convention to ratify the rules proposed for the event. Also appearing briefly on stage without speaking as a vice chair of the convention was Chad Griffin, president of the Human Rights Campaign.

See more photos from day one of the Democratic National Convention on facing page.

More DNC coverage online at www.windycitytimes.com and in next week's print edition.

DEMOCRATIC NAT'L CONVENTION

Clinton selects Kaine as running mate

Presumptive Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton has chosen Tim Kaine as her vice president.

Clinton selected Kaine after evaluating 24 contenders, and he was the only one of the contenders who met with Clinton twice. Clinton also considered individuals such as Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Cory Booker, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Labor Secretary Tom Perez.

Kaine is an experienced politician who is currently the junior senator of Virginia. He is one of only 20 people to have served as a mayor, governor and U.S. senator, and he headed the Democratic National Committee from 2009 to 2011. Kaine was first elected to office in 1994, serving as a city councilmember and, then, mayor of Richmond. He became lieutenant governor of Virginia in 2002 and was inaugurated as Virginia's 70th governor in 2006.

He is a ranking member of the Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee and the Foreign Relations Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations and Bilateral International Development.

Kaine is fluent in Spanish; he took a year off from Harvard Law School to run a technical school in Honduras. He actually gave a 14-minute speech on immigration entirely in Spanish on the Senate floor in 2013.

Some contend that the selection of Kaine is a divisive one. For example, the Progressive Change Campaign Committee was among the organizations not happy about Kaine's past support for big trade deals. (Interestingly, official Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump has criticized these deals as well.) However, Kaine has reportedly changed his position regarding such deals.

Also, the Associated Press spoke to convention delegates and found that Clinton supporters consider Kaine a "solid" choice who will appeal to a range of voters, while Sanders supporters are reportedly unhappy with Kaine.

Several groups came out in support of Clinton's choice. National Organization for Women President Terry O'Neill said, "From day one, Tim Kaine will be a vice president who will work to break down the barriers that hold women and marginalized communities back. Women



Sen. Tim Kaine.
Official headshot

will face difficult and far-reaching challenges during the next four years, and Tim Kaine is a proven leader who has rightly been called 'courageous, principled and value-driven.'"

Cecile Richards, president of Planned Parenthood Action Fund, said in a separate statement, "Senator Kaine is a thoughtful running mate with integrity, whose Senate record has proven he will stand strong against politically motivated efforts to restrict patient access to critical, often lifesaving health care. Senator Kaine has made it clear that he will protect women from government interference when it comes to their right to safe, legal abortion—a position supported by Planned Parenthood Ac-

tion Fund—and boasts a 100-percent rating on the Planned Parenthood Action Fund scorecard."

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka also praised the move, saying Kaine "has a strong record on workers' issues, ranging from raising the minimum wage to securing equal pay for equal work. He has always been a strong leader and will be an asset to the ticket."

LGBT groups also issued statement lauding the selection of Kaine. "While Donald Trump doubled down on discrimination by picking Mike Pence, Hillary Clinton has bolstered her campaign's historic commitment to LGBTQ equality by choosing Tim Kaine," said HRC President Chad Griffin. "Having proven time and time again that they have the experience, determination, and leadership needed to move equality forward for all Americans, we are confident Clinton and Kaine will tear down the walls of discrimination that hold all of us back. The stakes for LGBTQ people in this election couldn't be higher, and the choice for equality voters couldn't be clearer."

In addition, Equality California Executive Director Rick Zbur said, "With her selection of Sen. Tim Kaine, Hillary Clinton has highlighted the stark differences between her ticket and her opponent's. In contrast to the extremes of racism, xenophobia, sexism, and homo- and transphobia on vivid display by Donald Trump and his running mate, Kaine presents an alternative: a pragmatist who works across ideologies and across the aisle to get things done."

2016 Democratic National Convention: Day One

Photos by Michael Key/Washington Blade



Sanders supporters were vocal at the DNC Monday.



New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker speaking Monday night at the DNC.



Chad Griffin, president of the Human Rights Campaign (fourth from left) and Cubs co-owner Laura Ricketts (next to Griffin) on stage at the DNC Monday.

DEMOCRATIC NAT'L CONVENTION

Transgender activist to speak at DNC

Sarah McBride to deliver historic speech on Thursday

BY MICHAEL K. LAVERS, WASHINGTON BLADE

PHILADELPHIA — Sarah McBride this week will become the first openly transgender person to speak at a major party convention.

McBride — who is the national press secretary for the Human Rights Campaign Foundation — is scheduled to speak at the Democratic National Convention on Thursday. She is slated to take the main stage inside the Wells Fargo Center alongside U.S. Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney (D-N.Y.), who co-chairs the Congressional LGBT Caucus.

"I'm honored for this opportunity to share my story and to be the first transgender person to speak at a major party convention," said McBride in an HRC press release. "People must understand that even as we face daily harassment, tragic violence and an onslaught of anti-LGBTQ political attacks across the country, we are real people merely seeking to be treated with the dignity and respect every person deserves."

"I'm so proud to stand with the LGBT Caucus and speak out in support of Hillary Clinton, because we know she stands with us," she added.

McBride is a former staffer at the Center for American Progress. The American University graduate who is from Wilmington, Del., also played a leading role in securing passage of bills that added gender identity to Delaware's anti-discrimination and hate crimes laws in 2013.

"Sarah's personal story and unending commitment to LGBT rights makes her an invaluable voice to have in the conversation," said U.S. Rep. Mark Takano (D-Calif.), co-chair of the Congressional LGBT Equality Caucus, in a statement. "We look forward to working with



Sarah McBride.
Photo from Human Rights Campaign

her to make full legal and social equality a reality."

McBride is scheduled to speak at the Democratic National Convention a week after Donald Trump formally accepted the Republican Party's presidential nomination in Cleveland.

Delegates to the Republican National Convention last week approved a party platform that, among other things, opposes the use of federal funds to ensure trans people can use bathrooms consistent with their gender identity. Caitlyn Jenner on July 20 criticized North Carolina's controversial House Bill 2 — which bans people from using bathrooms in public buildings that are consistent with their gender identity and prohibits local municipalities from enacting LGBT-inclusive nondiscrimination ordinances — during her appearance at an event the American Unity Fund held at Cleveland's Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.

National Archives event focuses on LGBTQ rights, YEPP

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) hosted an event focused on LGBTQ human and civil rights July 15 at the Center on Halsted (the Center).

This was part of a two-day series of events under the banner—Amending America: LGBTQ Human and Civil Rights.

Modesto “Tico” Valle (CEO of the Center), Jane Markham (vice-president of public affairs at AT&T) and Jim Gardner (executive for Legislative Archives, Presidential Libraries and Museum Services for the National Archives) were the featured speakers.

Valle told the approximately 150 people in attendance that the Center is approaching its 10th anniversary.

“Our work is as relevant today as the day when the building opened in 2007,” said Valle. “It’s just as important as when a group of volunteers gathered together in 1973 to form Gay Horizons, our predecessor.”

Valle noted last summer’s *Obergefell* marriage-equality Supreme Court ruling and the response to that decision—what’s next?

“For all of us who do this work to promote full equality, the response [to that question] is, ‘Everything is next,’” said Valle. “Indeed over this past year and perhaps even more important this past month it’s clear that our work isn’t done. The Orlando massacre is a painful reminder that LGBTQ people are still the focus of hate and discrimination. The underlying racial discord around Black lives further illustrates gross racial injustice in our country. [We’ve also learned] that the transgender community is underserved and face legal, employment, educational and health barriers.

“Fortunately, we’re not alone in this work. Conversations like these are important because often the work we do can seem daunting, isolating and insurmountable. Let us use [this event] as a reminder that we’re in this together and that with love and compassion for one another equality will prevail.”

Markham praised NARA and the Center for the work they’re doing to advance equality and noted that AT&T has been committed to human rights for many years. She said that because of this she feels very optimistic about the future.

“The conversations that the National Archives Foundation is hosting is all about celebrating our successes, but to put them into context of where we’ve been and how far we have to go, and that only together will be able to progress,” said Markham.

“[This year] marks the 225th anniversary of the ratification of the Bill of Rights [which] constitute the first 10 amendments to the Constitution and are the catalyst for the Amending American initiative launched this year by the National Archives,” said Gardner.

Gardner noted that of the 27 total amendments to the U.S. Constitution, there have been more than 11,000 attempts to amend it. He said these conversations are designed to look at the ways in which everyone can ensure rights and justice in the 21st century. Gardner explained that these conversations have become more urgent in the past year.

“Tonight we’re beginning the discussion about a particularly important issue at a critical moment—we all know too well that LGBTQ rights remain contested today,” said Gardner. “The horrors of Orlando were just a month ago ... We can’t fix all the problems that trouble us

as we gather here, but we can provide a forum for talking, connecting and moving forward.”

A video featuring Rep. John Lewis (National Conversation on Rights and Justice honorary spokesperson) and narrated by journalist and commentator Cokie Roberts followed Gardner’s remarks. The video focused on the Constitution as a living document.

The evening also included a performance, “Making It Home,” from the Youth Empowerment Performance Project (YEPP). The performance featured a mixture of spoken word, dance, songs, performance art and video clips. Each performer showcased a snapshot of their lives with the other performers participating in those narratives. They received a standing ovation at the close of their performance.

Following the performance, YEPP Executive and Artistic Director Bonsai Bermudez and the performers participated in a Q&A with NARA Educational Specialist Michael Hussey.

A number of the performers said what would make for a better and more just world are ending barriers for transgender people, everyone being able to have the same privilege as everyone else and stripping labels away because they create stigma and oppression.

As for what is like to be a part of each other’s story, one performer said communication is the key while another performer noted

Michigan activist Montgomery dies

Michigan LGBTQ-rights activist Jeffrey Montgomery, the founding executive director of the Triangle Foundation, died July 18 at age 63, *The Metro Times* reported.

In 1991, Montgomery, Henry D. Messer and John Monahan co-founded the foundation, which later merged with Michigan Equality to become Equality Michigan. Montgomery was spurred to form the foundation by the fatal shooting of his boyfriend, Michael, outside a Detroit gay bar; people allegedly did nothing about the shooting, considering it just another “gay homicide.”

Equality Michigan Executive Director Stephanie White said, “We mourn his loss and send love to all of his family, including the vast network of chosen family who have loved him from all across the country and here in Michigan. Jeff leaves a giant legacy that won’t be forgotten. We are eternally grateful for all of the work that he’s done for our community.”

Sean Kosofsky, executive director of The Tyler Clementi Foundation and former policy director for Triangle Foundation, added, in part (via Facebook), “Jeff help build a team of bold and, dare I say, radical staff, board and interns. His brilliant tactical and communications skills helped build Triangle Foundation into a nationally respected institution feared by the right wing and admired by LGBT groups nationally. ... His contributions to the world are too many to enumerate. His absence from the professional activism is a gap too huge to explain.”

In a press release, Woodhull Freedom Foundation President/CEO Ricci Levy said, in part, “Jeff was a brilliant strategist, a remarkable teacher, a powerful leader, and, above all, my friend. For all the ferocity of his refusal to let others suffer harm, Jeff was a gentle soul. He cared deeply for those he served for so long, speaking out for human rights for almost



From left: Michael Hussey, YEPP performers Henri, Apollo, Zizi, Kariel, Bonsai Bermudez, Ahniya and Atlantis (sitting).

Photo by Carrie Maxwell

being an oppressor was really hard.

When asked how one can support YEPP in the work they do, Bermudez and the performers said monetary and food donations would be greatly appreciated.

This conversation continued the following day at the Chicago History Museum (CHM) with a keynote speech by openly gay poet Richard Blanco and discussions on legal and socioeconomic issues as well as a transgender and gender non-conforming focused panel.

three decades through his advocacy against violence, homelessness, HIV, and the recognition of the diversity of family, sex and sexuality.” (Montgomery was one of the founding board members of the Woodhull Freedom Foundation, also known as the Woodhull Sexual Freedom Alliance.)

“Jeff’s work leaves a lasting legacy and imprint on the LGBTQ movement in the United States and beyond. We are deeply saddened by the loss of this most precious friend,” said Sue Hyde, director of the Creating Change Conference, in a separate statement.

The *Metro Times* article is at MetroTimes.com/Blogs/archives/2016/07/19/michigan-lgbtq-activist-jeffrey-montgomery-dies.

Trans woman shot in Ind.; church disputes suspect’s link

In Evansville, Indiana, a trans woman was shot in the jaw by a 26-year-old man who has been connected to a hate group.

Gerald Duane Lewis was arraigned in the shooting of Crystal Cash at her place of business. Cash survived the attack and was able to provide a description of the attacker.

Lewis, using the name Gadiell Ben Israel, had been connected with the Israel United in Christ Church—a group the Southern Poverty Law Center lists as a hate group. The congregation has condemned homosexuality, interracial marriage and even voting.

However, the group disputes the link. Its website, IsraelUnite.org, has stated, “In light of the unfortunate situation that has transpired in Evansville, Indiana, Israel United in Christ Church finds it necessary to make it clear that Gerald Duane Lewis aka Gadiell is not a member of our organization.”

“Gerald was removed from the congregation months prior due to not adhering to the stringent guidelines of our organization. As

NARA and the National Archives Foundation partnered with the Center and the CHM for these weekend events.

Sponsors included AT&T, the Seedlings Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Chicago Community Trust and the Elizabeth Morse Genius Charitable Trust.

See <https://www.archives.gov/>, <https://www.archivesfoundation.org/amending-america/> and <http://www.wesayyepp.com/> for more information.

we staunchly stand alongside the Holy Bible and its tenets, Israel United does not teach or condone violence against any person. ... We pray that Gerald can acknowledge his sins and repent.”

At least 15 trans people are known to have been murdered in the United States this year, with the majority being individuals of color.

OUTspoken! LGBT storytelling to mark two years Aug. 2

Retell. Relive. Relate. *OUTspoken!*, Chicago’s monthly evening of LGBTQ Storytelling celebrates its two-year anniversary on Tuesday, Aug. 2. The August evening of storytelling and celebration will include special moments and surprises for the audience.

OUTspoken!’s second year included going on the road with a feature spot in Lifeline Theater’s *Fillet of Solo*, a special joint event with Chicago Public Libraries to present at Sulzer Library as part of Pride Month, and being a featured workshop at *Creating Change 2016* in Chicago.

OUTspoken! is curated by David Fink (co-founder of Acorn Theater in Three Oaks, Michigan), and emceed by Kim L. Hunt (executive director of Pride Action Tank) and Art Johnston (co-founder of Equality Illinois). August storytellers scheduled to appear are Hadeis Safi, Brad Lippitz, Erin Marshall, M Shelly Conner, Ella Nelson and Johnston.

OUTspoken! is presented at the Boystown bar Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St. Storytellers identify as LGBTQ but audiences of all walks of life are welcome.

OUTspoken! occurs on the first Tuesday of every month at 6-9 p.m. Doors open at 6 p.m., with the stories beginning at 7 p.m. There is no charge for this event. Storytellers vary month to month, but all identify as LGBTQ.



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Wellness group for trans youth on Saturdays

BeStrong—a physical wellness group for trans youth 14-24—will take place on Saturdays, 1:30-2:30 p.m., starting July 30 at 1834 W. Balmoral Ave.

Certified personal trainer Carsen Casica will lead the sessions, which involve weight training, cardio, sculpting and plyometrics, among other activities.

A fee of \$50 covers all 10 sessions. Call 708-280-5740 or email carsencasica911@gmail.com.

Gay Catholic retreat July 29-31

Dignity Young Adult Catholics will hold its third biennial retreat for DignityUSA's young adults and all young LGBT Catholics July 29-31 at the Cenacle Retreat Center, 513 W. Fullerton Pkwy.

The spiritual director will be Judy Brown, founder of The Hesed Project.

Registration is still open at <https://www.dignityusa.org/civCRM/event/info?id=81&reset=1>. There is a limit of 48 people.

For more information, visit "DignityUSA LGBT Catholic Young Adult Retreat 2016" on Facebook.

'State of LGBT Health Symposium' Aug. 18

The inaugural State of LGBT Health Symposium will take place Thursday, Aug. 18, 1-4 p.m., at Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law's Aspen Hall, 375 E. Chicago Ave.

This symposium will feature a keynote lecture by Karen L. Parker, director of the Sexual & Gender Minority Research Office of the National Institutes of Health, followed by a panel discussion with Northwestern faculty.

Visit http://isgmh.northwestern.edu/calendar_event/state-of-lgbt-health-symposium/.



in the LIFE
Matt Nielson
 TEXT BY TARINA HARGRAVS
 PHOTOS COURTESY OF NIELSON

- **Age**
54
- **Orientation**
Gay
- **Relationship status**
Partnered for more than 15 years
- **Last album purchased**
Purple Rain
- **Favorite color**
Blue
- **Favorite word**
"Go: because it means starting or commencing—it's a positive word."
- **Favorite place in the city**
Lakefront
- **Favorite recent event**
House-music party in Millennium Park
- **Biggest pet peeve**
Jumping to conclusions
- **Favorite places to travel**
Mediterranean, Central America, Australia
- **Little-known fact**
"I tend to be rather shy."

"Long and busy" is how Matt Nielson describes his day-to-day life. This isn't hard to believe with his leadership roles ranging from Chicago's deputy commissioner of the Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events, League of Chicago Theatres' board member and newly appointed member of Howard Brown Health's board of advocates.

Nielson told Windy City Times that Howard Brown Health isn't for the "faint of heart" and, though it may have had its challenges in the past with funding and grants, he's enjoyed seeing it flourish within the last few years.

Growing up in Chicago's suburbs definitely didn't limit Nielson's love for the city and traveling. When he's not overseeing fun events in Millennium Park or on his way to a board meeting, he enjoys the city's architecture or traveling the world. Nielson explained that between his work life and personal life, "there isn't much division unless I leave town which is probably why I like to travel so much, [laughing]."



Although traveling "one or two weekends out of the month" can be fun for Nielson, he holds his numerous positions close to his heart. Nielson added that even though he's transitioning from a member of the board of directors to a member of the board of advocates, he appreciates how Howard Brown has helped him grow with the help of "different people, outlooks, and experiences." He even went as far to credit Howard Brown Health for his "awareness and tolerance."

Regarding his thoughts on the LGBT community, Nielson said as he gets older, "younger generations are becoming more accepting," adding he hopes the world will soon provide more "safe havens and culturally competent care" not only for the LGBT community, but for everyone.



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letters



**Dana
RUDOLPH**

MOMBIAN

The Republican platform: Leaving out love

I had a good time poking fun at the plagiarism and grandstanding of the Republican Convention, as did many of my left-leaning friends. My amusement quickly turned sober, however. The fact remains that the 2016 GOP platform directly targets LGBTQ families and LGBTQ youth.

The platform asserts bluntly, "We do not accept the Supreme Court's redefinition of marriage and we urge its reversal, whether through judicial reconsideration or a constitutional amendment returning control over marriage to the states."

This view of marriage is tied directly to child-raising: "Traditional marriage and family, based on marriage between one man and one woman, is the foundation for a free society and has for millennia been entrusted with rearing children and instilling cultural values."

While they "honor the courageous efforts" of single parents who "should be treated with dignity and respect," the Republicans continue, "But respect is not enough. Our laws and our government's regulations should recognize marriage as the union of one man and one woman and actively promote married family life as the basis of a stable and prosperous society."

Their platform would also promote legislation to "bar government discrimination against individuals and businesses for acting on the belief that marriage is the union of one man and one woman." This would, of course, allow people to discriminate against same-sex couples and their families.

Then they claim: "Children raised in a two-

parent household tend to be physically and emotionally healthier, more likely to do well in school, less likely to use drugs and alcohol, engage in crime or become pregnant outside of marriage." Even if that's true (a point I leave aside for now), it doesn't lead to what the Platform calls the "inescapable conclusion" that "Every child deserves a married mom and dad." Two-parent households can just as easily have two moms or two dads.

I do agree with the platform's statement, "Families formed or enlarged by adoption strengthen our communities and ennoble our nation" and even "Private entities which facilitate adoptions enrich our communities." I balk, however, when it says we should "ensure these entities do not face government discrimination because of their views on marriage and family." Yes, truly private entities may have that right. But when private adoption agencies receive public funds and contract with the state, as many do, to place children who are in the state's care, it's a whole different ball game, and they should abide by non-discrimination laws.

The platform is also vehemently anti-choice. It would defund Planned Parenthood and similar organizations, which provide vital health care to LGBTQ youth, among other services.

It would also "[replace] 'family planning' programs for teens with sexual risk avoidance education that sets abstinence until marriage as the responsible and respected standard of behavior." Study after study has shown that abstinence-only programs do not lead to a reduction in sexual activity and may mean youth are less likely to use birth control or condoms. This harms LGBTQ and straight, cisgender children alike.

Not only that, but the platform touts "the right of parents to determine the proper medical treatment and therapy for their minor children." This phrasing is actually a thinly veiled modification of an amendment that called for support of "conversion therapy," or the curing of children who are LGBTQ, but which was seen as too extreme for the final platform, the Human Rights Campaign reported on its blog.

On another topic, the platform says that Title IX, which bans gender-based discrimination in education, is being used "to impose a social

and cultural revolution upon the American people by wrongly redefining sex discrimination to include sexual orientation or other categories." Among other things, the Obama administration has used Title IX to support transgender students' right to use the bathroom of their identity. Republicans in contrast want to restrict Title IX to stopping gender-based discrimination against (presumably cisgender) women and girls.

And not LGBTQ-specific, but worrisome after Orlando and other recent shootings, is the passage, "We oppose ill-conceived laws that would restrict magazine capacity or ban the sale of the most popular and common modern rifle.... We oppose federal licensing or registration of law-abiding gun owners, registration of ammunition, and restoration of the ill-fated Clinton gun ban." That rifle they mention? It's the AR-15, which the NRA called "America's Most Popular Rifle" in a January 2016 blog post. A version of the weapon was used in the 2012 shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School. The rifle used at the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando was a similar type of assault rifle, although a different brand.

There is much more in the platform related to education, immigration, health care, voting rights, protecting the environment, and other areas that impact our families (and many others). Read the whole thing at GOP.com.

The bottom line is clear: A Republican presidency would be a very dangerous thing to LGBTQ families and youth, especially if coupled with a Senate that remains Republican. Hillary Clinton may not be perfect—I realize opinions on her vary widely—but she is far, far better than the alternative.

One final observation. The platform states that the "daily lessons" of the American family, "cooperation, patience, mutual respect, responsibility, self-reliance—are fundamental to the order and progress of our Republic." I couldn't agree more—but also can't help noticing that they left out one of the most important family lessons of all: love. May love win in November.

Dana Rudolph is the founder and publisher of Mombian (mombian.com), a GLAAD Media Award-winning blog and resource directory for LGBTQ parents.



**Beth
LITRELL**

ASK LAMBDA LEGAL

Avoiding a name-change nightmare

Q: I am a transgender woman who would like to legally change my name. I live in Savannah, Georgia, and this issue has been a big deal lately after your client, Rowan Feldhaus, was denied a name change by a judge in Augusta. From reading the news articles, I know the judge's decision will probably be overturned, but what do I do if I encounter this problem when I seek my name change?

A: For many transgender people, a name change is one of the most important steps toward matching legal documents with their gender identity. Although there are few exceptions under which a court can deny someone the right to a name change, being transgender is not one of them. A judge cannot arbitrarily deny you a name change based on transphobic or sexist notions.

In Rowan's case, the judge stated that he would deny the requested name unless Rowan chose another middle name, because the name chosen, "Elijah," was not gender-neutral and he "do[es] not approve of changing names from male to female—male names to obvious female names, and vice versa."

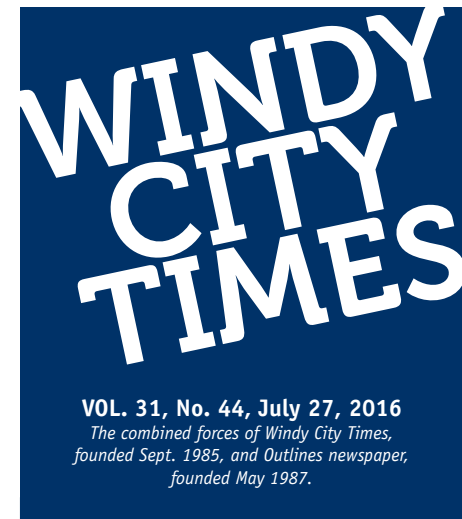
This happened despite the fact that Rowan took all necessary steps and provided all the necessary information for a name change. He also provided evidence to educate the court about transgender people and the need for identity documents that accurately reflect their gender identity. He produced an affidavit from his therapist, who confirmed that Rowan is transgender and was diagnosed with gender dysphoria, and that changing his name would

be an important part of his treatment. Rowan further testified that he was not delinquent on bills or trying to elude creditors by changing his name—generally considered the only valid reason to deny a name change.. But the judge still denied his request, even claiming it would be "dangerous" for a person not to know someone else's gender by that person's name.

The real threats to public safety come from those who refuse to respect name choices, gender identity or who abuse their authority because a name doesn't fit a sexist stereotype. We believe this type of sex discrimination is a violation of federal law and your constitutional rights. Lambda Legal will continue advocating for Rowan and others arbitrarily denied these important opportunities to be affirmed and protected equally under the law.

If you'd like to seek a name change and are concerned that you may encounter this problem, contact Lambda Legal's Help desk for more information, at (866-542-8336) or visit LambdaLegal.org/help.

Beth Littrell is a Lambda Legal senior attorney.



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WINDY CITY TIMES

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Uncle Julio's.



Jim Flint's 75th at Park West.



'Paint' house

Patti LuPone (above) co-stars with Christine Ebersole in *War Paint*.

Photo by Joan Marcus

18

THEATER FEATURE

'Douglass' provides alternative view of African-American hero

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

In the gallery of African-American freedom fighters, the face of Frederick Douglass is possibly the most readily identifiable, his photogenic visage immediately recognized by even the most rudimentary of scholars.

This star status is not unfounded: Born in 1817, the Maryland slave served under three masters before escaping to New Bedford, Massachusetts, where his shipbuilding skills enabled him to find work as a common laborer. His gift for stirring oratory soon led to his hire by the Massachusetts Antislavery Association, one of many abolitionist organizations proliferating in the northern states, where he later mentored under newspaper publisher William Lloyd Garrison. Fearing recapture by slave hunters, Douglass emigrated to England, where supporters negotiated with his former owner to purchase his freedom. Upon returning, Douglass settled in Rochester, New York, to publish his own paper, significantly titled *The North Star*.

This isn't exactly the story that author Thomas Klingenstein is content to narrate, though. In this world premiere docudrama, Douglass' Yankee supporters, while devoted to the cause of bringing an end to slavery, cannot help but invoke the prejudices of white privilege, however inadvertently.

Thus, we see Garrison, reluctant to lose his popular columnist, repeatedly caution Douglass against haste in pursuing his own business. British activist Julia Griffiths, visiting the United States, slips the married Douglass the key to her room at the local inn—assurance that the conspirators will have a place to confer in private, or invitation to an assignation with the handsome blackamoor? Further contributing to Klingenstein's central argument are Martin Robison Delany, an advocate of repatriation for Africans cruelly kidnapped from their native homelands, along with a shipyard owner called only "Mr. Davis."

Klingenstein is far from the first playwright to espouse a social agenda, but what distinguishes him from his confreres is his rejection of shock tactics in preference to a subtle revisionism amplifying a point of view often neglected today. His re-interpretation of popular myth, however, is designed to promote intel-

lectual detachment over emotional fervor.

The text for this "multimedia" production, directed by Christopher McElroen—founder of the Classical Theater of Harlem company and familiar to Chicago theatergoers recalling Court Theatre's Jeff-winning *Invisible Man in 1012*—precedes each scene with a summary of its action, in addition to excerpts from speeches by the key figures. As of a week before opening,

McElroen could only guarantee that the latter would be seen by first-nighters, but fully acknowledges the role that Brecht's "Alienation Effect" plays in the conceptualization of this American Vicarious production.

"Our goal is to acknowledge that the events about to unfold are events in a play, and that play is happening today," said McElroen. "We are in a theater, and will use this medium to look back at our shared history in order to have a conversation about events that remain present in our society today."

Why does Klingenstein feel it necessary, at this particular point in our history, that we confront the imperfections of our past? Actor Mark Ulrich, who plays Garrison, offered an answer: "The abolitionists deserve our admiration and gratitude. Many dedicated their lives to their ideals against vehement opposition, and in doing so, putting themselves, their families and their careers at great risk.

"Nevertheless, for as long as the movement was controlled by white citizens, it could not

avoid being tainted by bigotry, self-assessment leading the most devoted crusaders to think their positions unassailable. Klingenstein has chosen to shine a light on some of these individuals with an eye to examining our perspectives on racism today."

Asked what audience response the company anticipates, Ulrich did not hesitate. He said, "I imagine the audience will be moved by Douglass' monumental strength of character. Here was a man born into slavery, denied a formal education or even the right to literacy—yet he embarked on a life of voracious intellectual curiosity, self-education, human refinement and intrepid leadership that make him one of the most important figures in our nation's history. Looking back at Frederick Douglass, we hope, will help us to look forward."

The American Vicarious production of Douglass is at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave. Tickets are \$25; call 773-975-8150 or visit TheaterWit.org.



De'Lon Grant in *Douglass*.
Photo by Evan Barr

THEATER REVIEW

AD HOC [HOME]

Playwrights: The Ensemble

At: About Face Youth Theatre at Chicago Cultural Center's Claudia Cassidy Theater, 78 E. Washington St.

Tickets: 773-784-8565 or

AboutFaceTheatre.org;

Pay-what-you-can admission

Runs through: July 31

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

More and more LGBTQ youth have bravely started to come out at earlier ages from the generations before them. So it's great that Chicago's About Face Youth Theatre (AFYT) serves as an artistic resource to capture and theatricalize some of their stories.

The latest AFYT world premiere is AD HOC [HOME], and its diverse 13-member ensemble (who range in age from 14 to 23) are posed the simple question "What does home mean to you?"

The answers are very specific and individual—especially to each performer who self-identifies along the LGBTQ spectrum or as heterosexual allies. But the answers in AD HOC [HOME] can also be universal, especially if audiences find reflections of their own experiences of negotiating relationships within birth families throughout time or in creating chosen families of friends and loved ones.

A big credit goes to Ali Hoefnagel and Kieran Kredell. This co-directing duo help to theatrically shape the performers' personal stories into an hour-long series of fragmentary monologues and dialogues that serve as snapshots

AD HOC [HOME].
Photo by Emily Schwartz

into the lives of those onstage.

Framed against an idealized house-shaped backdrop with a series of explanatory text and animated images (a credit to set designer Arnel Sancianco and projection designer Paul Deziel), AD HOC [HOME] wisely weaves the performers' stories along a chronological progression from before infancy to where they are today. This provides a firm structure to the piece even as it jumps around from actor to actor.

Some ensemble members dig very deep into the past and current hurts they're experiencing—particularly trans performers like Isis

Mendoza and Elliot Hobaugh who relate stories of disdainful parental glances or arguments over preferred pronoun usage. All the performers also tap into the notion of safe spaces, which for many was shaken in light of the mass shooting at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando this past June.

Toward the end, the ensemble spends a good portion of time sharing how AFYT itself served as a supportive family of friends through the rehearsal process. Though it does appear that some performers are more comfortable onstage than others based upon their engaging stage

personas, it is very good that AD HOC [HOME] proves to be so inclusive in bringing together actors with so many different backgrounds and experiences.

The run of AD HOC [HOME] may be short, but pieces of the show will live on via a condensed outreach version that will be performed in the coming months at schools and other places by About Face's Youth Task Force. The message of the show resonates, especially since there is such a need among LGBTQ people to find and create supportive homes through preexisting and constructed families of friends and allies.

THEATER REVIEW

Chops

Playwright: Michael Rychlewski

At: Dashnight Productions at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave.

Tickets: \$35

Runs through: Aug. 14

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

When the author is a hometown boy and the stage picture consists of three guys over the age of thirty swapping Big Talk in a bar, the odds are that at least one of them is trying to put one over on the others. This auspicious debut by CPS teacher-turned-playwright Michael

Rychlewski fits snugly into the genre launched by David Mamet, whose tales of small-time hustlers continues to define the "Chicago style" of dramatic literature.

The bar, in this case, is Vince's tavern, located on the northwest side, but exhibiting a decor shared by neighborhood watering-holes the world over—notably, a juke box whose inventory is devoted to 1950s-era jazz. On this slow summer Sunday in 1984, Vince is ready to close early when his old buddy, Walt, waltzes in—almost literally, since he's accompanied by a conspicuously younger female companion. Later, another boyhood chum arrives—this is Philly, just in from the coast, flush with lucrative prospects. At first, the chat is mostly focused on the music—a topic on which the

youthful Kaki is curiously erudite—but gradually turns to memories of their glory days hobnobbing with the high rollers on Rush Street. Soon Philly proposes a deal involving smuggling illegal jewels into the country. It's not just about the money, though.

Well, of course it isn't! Did you think it was just the period libations (when was the last time you ordered a sidecar?) that render the men unable to remember Kaki's name? Did you dismiss Philly's claims to *cameratismo* with goodfellas in both Los Angeles and Miami as empty braggadocio? How does a barely post-adolescent babe come to reel off playlists with the expertise of Nat Hentoff? Did you forget that jazz is based in improvisation? Playgoers listening closely may detect clues, but who has

time to connect the dots when we're having such an entertaining good time (did I mention the storytelling contest)?

None of this would be possible without the superlative ensemble acting that is also Chicago's hallmark. Anchoring the action under Richard Shavzin's deft direction are veteran hard-guys Larry Neumann, Jr. and Randy Steinmeyer (the latter of whom is no slouch at swing dancing, either) in the roles of the cautious Vince and shrewd Walt, while Clare Cooney's Kaki oozes sleek sensuality and Daniel Patrick Sullivan's Philly displays just the right level of nervous sweat. Hobbyist writers often get a bad rap, but if Rychlewski has more plays like this one, he can look forward to a second career after collecting his pension.

THEATER REVIEW

War Paint

Playwright: Doug Wright (book), Scott Frankel (music), Michael Korie (lyrics)

At: Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn St.

Tickets: 312-443-3800;

GoodmanTheatre.org/WarPaint;

\$44-\$182

Runs through: Aug. 21

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

War Paint is an elegant and lavish show, with a lush, jazz-inflected score, gorgeous looks (especially Catherine Zuber's slightly-exaggerated 1930s-1960s costumes, gown heaven with matching massive jewelry) and star performances. War Paint demonstrates again that Patti LuPone and Christine Ebersole are superb singing actors fully dedicated to their roles, thoughtful yet ardent. Still, War Paint is missing something.

What it lacks is character development. From the opening moments set in 1937 New York City, its twin protagonists are fully formed, mature and near the summit of their ferociously competitive careers. Both Helena Rubenstein (LuPone) and Elizabeth Arden (Ebersole) were sixtyish and presiding over multimillion-dollar cosmetics empires, having established themselves internationally by



Christine Ebersole in War Paint.

Photo by Joan Marcus

1915. Focusing almost exclusively on their professional rivalry, War Paint never shows how the two women invented themselves (both were foreign-born and twice-married) or what obstacles they had to overcome.

In real life they intentionally never met although living within close proximity. In War Paint they meet once in old age at the end of the show, a funny and tender scene beautifully directed by Michael Grief with an exquisite unhurried pace. They comprehend that each one is the only person who fully understands the other. Like Blanche and Baby Jane, they might have been friends. Instead they have gone tit-for-tat as business titans for two-plus hours without either one making a life-changing personal choice. The audience can't take an emotional journey if the characters don't take one. Arden and Rubenstein have

powerful duets in Act I, "If I'd Been a Man" and "Face to Face," but they concern their professional lives not their personal ones.

As noted above, LuPone and Ebersole are extraordinary as women who are powerful, controlling and never lose their cool. They play larger-than-life characters but their performances are deft and specific, never oversized. Musically they are wonderfully paired, not only in the duets already mentioned but in back-to-back solos at the close of the show, "Pink" for Ebersole/Arden and "Forever Beautiful" for LuPone/Rubenstein. Still, fans expecting each to cut loose number in a really big number will be disappointed. Like the characters themselves, the score sometimes is intense but it's always carefully modulated without musical explosions. LuPone and Ebersole receive strong and charming support from Douglas Sills and John Dossett as marketing gurus who start with one beauty queen but switch allegiance. Dossett's character also is Arden's first husband, their divorce providing impetus for the switcheroo, which really happened.

In its approach to story, character and music War Paint has great integrity, even though it's still missing something essential. It condenses and alters biographical facts, but not beyond the permissible. The issue isn't what War Paint changes but what it leaves out.

CRITICS' PICKS



Between Riverside and Crazy, Steppenwolf Theatre, through Aug. 21. Cop shootings, economic insecurity and the troubles of marginalized citizens aren't funny in 2016, but at Steppenwolf, playgoers can expect to be entertained as well as enlightened. MSB

Death of a Streetcar Named Virginia Woolf, Writers Theatre, Glencoe, through Aug. 14. Tim Ryder and Tim Sniffen's comic mashup of great American theater dramas by the likes of Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, Edward Albee and Thornton Wilder is a laugh riot. SCM

Little Shop of Horrors, American Blues Theater at Greenhouse Theater Center, through July 31. Howard Ashman and Alan Menken's classic campy off-Broadway musical about a killer plant returns in a wonderfully sung and intimate production. SCM

Space Age, Free Street Theater at Pulaski Park Field House, through Aug. 1. Its scantily clad performer/authors may try to cram in too much, but this confessional performance art piece shares some very personal perspectives from a gay Latino and African-American angle. SCM

—By Barnidge
and Morgan

“AN INTRIGUINGLY JUICY AND GLAMOROUS NEW MUSICAL.”

-Chicago Tribune

“STARRING A DELICIOUSLY PAIRED PATTI LUPONE AND CHRISTINE EBERSOLE. BOTH ARE KNOCKOUTS.”

-The New York Times

“LUPONE AND EBERSOLE WRAP THEIR PRODIGIOUS VOICES AROUND A SWINGING AND SOARING SCORE.”

-The Washington Post

“BRILLIANT, POIGNANT AND SUPERBLY PERFORMED. A MUSICAL WHOSE BEAUTY IS FAR MORE THAN SKIN DEEP.”

-Chicago Sun-Times

TWO-TIME TONY AWARD WINNER

PATTI LUPONE

IS HELENA RUBINSTEIN



TWO-TIME TONY AWARD WINNER

CHRISTINE EBERSOLE

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PERFORMANCE

'Thingification' breathes new unique life into poetry

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

Poet, performance artist and activist Duriel E. Harris has accomplished something rare—she has elevated poetry from a medium that is usually read or studied and, instead, given it a more vibrant, multidimensional life on stage.

The co-founder of Call & Response (“a dynamic of Black women and performance”) and the Black Took Collective (described as an “avant-garde poetry/performance trio”) and associate professor of English in Illinois State University’s graduate creative writing program has published three poetry collections, including *Drag and Amnesiac*.

Her one-woman show *Thingification* is the embodiment of living poetry, Harris’ own experiences and an extension of the “race, gender, class and sexuality” explored in her books. The show takes poetry and frees it from the boundaries of print by endowing it with a cast of vivid characters and music.

A press release describes *Thingification* as transforming “trauma into transcendence and challeng[ing] the way we define difference. Set in various public and private spaces, Harris’ play transports audiences through time and space by enacting their collective ritual participation in the struggle against thingification—the annihilating objectifying force at the core of all oppressions.”

Thingification started out life in 2010 and has since played in New York and Chicago. It returns to Chicago for one night only on July 30 at the Greenhouse Theater Center in Lincoln Park.

Harris talked with *Windy City Times* about the show, its characters and the journey that audiences can take.

Windy City Times: Can you tell us about the genesis of *Thingification*?

Duriel E. Harris: A long time ago, people would read poetry to entertain the family. Now you have other art forms that, for some people, seem to be more dynamic and relevant.

As someone committed to poetry as a transformative art form, I was thinking about ways to get poetry to people and to have them experience the power of the word in utterance. I wanted a way to make poetry be central so that I could reach more people—not just those who go to poetry readings and some of the kinds of performances that I do that serve a more specific audience. I was in an adult acting workshop in Bloomington [Ill.] and talked to the teacher about the idea.

Then I got an invitation to Penn State to do a performance on sexuality. I started thinking, “What can I do that I have never done before?” I pulled the Phaneric Displays—assertive, empowering dramatic monologues—from my books. I put them in order and came up with a narrative to link them. I meditated on a title that would connect all the Phaneric Displays and the narrative that I had already starting putting together.

WCT: How is that narrative linked to your own experiences?

DEH: I came into Black feminist consciousness when I was in college where I was examining multiple oppressions. Then, in graduate school, I embraced the idea of intersectionality—that all these oppressions are linked. In order to make progress towards our own liberation, we must move toward liberation for everybody because oppressive forces work together. It really made so much sense to me to talk about it as thingification. This is not just about what happens to people who are victims or targets of oppression but also the

diminished humanity of those who enact this madness on others. We all become less than we could become.

WCT: That is a running theme in Aime Cesaire’s 1955 *Discourse on Colonialism* that you cited as part of the inspiration for the title. As you wrote, “Colonialization=Thingification.”

DEH: One of the reasons I was so excited to study literary theory in college was that I was given language for things that I had started to understand but had no language for. The Cesaire did that. It was reinforced, complicated and enriched by my reading of Elaine Scarry’s *Body in Pain* [The Making and Unmaking of the World (1985)] and thinking about the role of people in a social construct and how we serve as instruments and creators in the world. Books by people like Eckhart Tolle helped me think spiritually about what it is to be living in and contributing to a particular moment. How do you have an impact on your own consciousness in order to transform your situation even though there are things that are out of your control?

WCT: I was particularly fascinated with the characters in *Thingification* such as Mammy and Sarah. In your essay *Let Us Consider Sarah: Notes Toward Witness, Affect, Making, and the US Imagery*, you wrote about coming across a highly racist image of a stereotypical Mammy in an 1862 edition of *Harpers Weekly* and, at first, not knowing what to think of it. You go on to say that “The figures are activated, re-envisioned, re-presented in performance.” Will you expound upon that?

DEH: When I first discovered the image, I was thinking about the rhetorical gesture of a caricature being placed in Harper’s and the role it was serving at the time. I had an aversion to exploring her as a character because it hurt my feelings. The very core of me is shaken when I consider the reality that enslaved people endured in this country and elsewhere and then what people continue to endure because we have these manifestations of domination still existing today. It is obscene. My ancestors had to say “I will continue and endure” or “I believe it will get better” or just have the will to survive or I would not be here. I don’t have to carry it around with me all the time but I can face it and make something with it to help us with our own transformation.

WCT: But are people transforming or even progressing? Oppression, whether economic, or within the prison industrial complex or at the hands of police, is still very much a part of society.

DEH: We are now hearing about many things that we would not have before because of globalization and the way media works. Much of it is traumatizing. Using social media, people can speak hatred with anonymity and there’s a violent momentum that feels like we are dialing back to a terrifying past.

This system isn’t working. It’s distressing, it’s hard to simply be knowing that there are people who know nothing about me but want me dead just because of the color of my skin or what they perceive to be my sexuality. And that they can act with impunity. Racism, sexism, homophobia, classism—that shit hurts us and it doesn’t satisfy the hunger or the need of the people who are putting it out there. It’s never enough. I can’t watch the news because I will be paralyzed.

WCT: In *Thingification*, you also bring life to a drag performer named Shawn and then his persona, A-Diva! So you are playing a character who is playing a character. Was



Duriel E. Harris as Elle in *Thingification*. Photo courtesy of Harris

that a challenge?

DEH: Yes—in kind of the same way that Shawn is a manifestation of and an expansion of these different parts of myself, A-Diva! is an exploration of himself and all of the possibilities that lie there. When we think about more explicit performance, it can open up spaces for us that we don’t access in our day-to-day lives. A-Diva! is a part of that for Shawn as he is moving toward his own most full articulation and realization of himself. A-Diva! gives him permission to do that. These creations help us live more fully and be more expressive of all these different parts of ourselves and who we could be. We are never static. There’s always potential and possibility.

WCT: Would the same hold true for the other characters?

DEH: They come out of research and my experience with other people. I studied blues so Patricia, as a character, has come from a lot of work that I have done with blues as a living, breathing art form [as well as] its legacies and its use of improvisation, protest and indirection and how that worked when folks could not straightforwardly say what they wanted to say and not be lynched.

It feels so relevant right now because you can be Black, lying on the ground with your hands up and still get shot by the law. Like real people, all the characters have struggles:

How do you make it when the deck is stacked against you? You don’t have many choices. That’s the nature of oppression. But one choice is to embrace yourself and turn and support each other.

WCT: Many performers describe the feeling of being on stage as euphoric. How has it been for you?

DEH: It is an experience that helps me reconstruct myself from childhood trauma, sexual abuse and date rape. I have dissociative amnesia so I struggle to stay present in my body. Doing this show is quite amazing. Since I am the writer, composer and the performer, all of the choices reflect and enrich my experiences. Creating and performing Sarah and the other characters and the pain—and joy—that I experience exploring them impacts me both as a writer and as a performer.

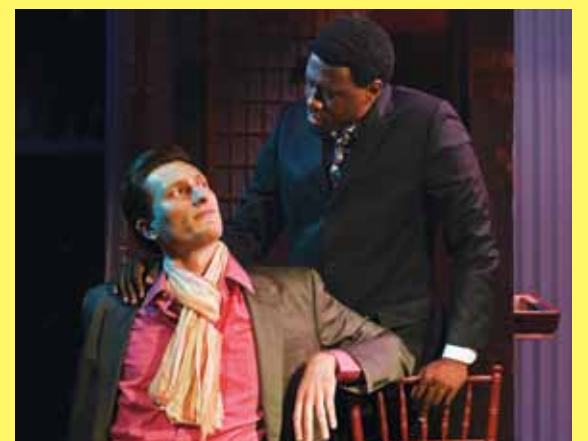
The bounty of it is I am able to bring together my emotional self and my mind with my music, poetry and performance—all things that feed me. The folks who see the show are witnesses to my transformations as a person and as the characters on stage. It’s hard work because I have to access parts of myself that I don’t always want to look at but I need to do it. It is my responsibility.

For tickets to *Thingification*, visit <http://www.thingification.org/#!tickets/c24vq>.

SPOTLIGHT

Steppenwolf Theatre may be offering an acclaimed take on Stephen Adly Guirgis’ Pulitzer Prize-winning 2014 drama *Between Riverside and Crazy*, but Eclipse Theatre Company has dedicated its entire season to this playwright famed for such works like *Jesus Hopped the “A” Train* and *The Motherfucker with the Hat*. The second play of Eclipse’s Guirgis season is his 2003 off-Broadway comic drama *Our Lady of 121st Street*. See how a group of diverse and tough New Yorkers react when the body of a well-respected (and feared) nun goes missing from a funeral home. *Our Lady of 121st Street* continues through Sunday, Aug. 21, at the Athenaeum Theatre, 2936 N. Southport Ave. Tickets are \$30 and \$20 for students with ID; call 773-935-6875 or visit eclipsetheatre.com.

Caption: Gail (Matt Thinnies) and Flip (Gregory Geffard) are in Eclipse Theatre’s production of *Our Lady of 121st Street* by Stephen Adly Guirgis, directed by Sarah Moeller. Photo by Scott Dray.



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Dolly Parton.
PR photo



Dolly Parton: Living the 'Simple' life

BY JERRY NUNN

The legendary Dolly Parton started performing for churches at age 6 and now, at 70, she shows no signs of stopping. Over the years Parton has carved out a career with hits like "Here You Come Again" and "Jolene." Her song "I Will Always Love You" was actually written about her professional break from Porter Wagoner but has gone on to have a life of its own making millions.

She created a theme park, Dollywood, that still continues to this day and has starred in many films, from 9 to 5 to Joyful Noise.

Parton's new tour, "Pure and Simple," lands her in Highland Park at the Ravinia Festival. Windy City Times spoke to her about her possible upcoming dance album and her LGBT following at a press conference.

Question: Can you start off with describing this new show?

Dolly Parton: We try to have a little something for everybody. I try to be as entertaining as I can be. We do all the hits that people expect me to do, "9 to 5," "I Will Always Love You," "Two Doors Down," "Here You Come Again," "Jolene" and more. I do a family segment where I do a lot of the songs from back home. I reminisce about who I am and how I got to be that way. I do some gospel stuff and try to be funny.

It is a small band with three of us on the stage. It is easy to hear and the simplest show I have ever done. We don't have a lot of big music and lighting. It is called Pure and Simple and it basically is.

Question: How do you describe the new album?

DP: It is called Pure and Simple. There are love songs I have written because I was married 50 years this past year to Carl Dean, my husband. I thought it would be a good time to do an album of love songs.

They are also pure in nature and pretty simple from the old records that I used to record long ago, which I think my true fans will really appreciate. It is nice at this age to still be making records. I've always loved singing and

writing. It comes out on August 19.

Question: Do you come up with new things throughout the tour?

DP: Yes, because I love the fans and they are all different. Just like you have lots of friends and they are all different, but you love them all. I know my fans for that night have not seen the show so I play to that particular crowd. I love doing concerts and it is a love fest for my audience and myself. I really enjoy doing it.

Question: How do you make the tour bus feel like home?

DP: First of all, I stay on that bus. I have it stocked with everything I like. I've got my favorite pillows, makeup and food on there. I cook before we go on the tour and I put stuff in the freezer so I have some good country food. We used to have caterers cook for us but I always have to have a little taste of that Southern stuff like chicken and dumplings or pork roast or fried corn or whatever it is I may fix. I can't eat it all the time because I have to wear my show clothes.

When I am away from home, the food makes me not so homesick.

Question: What is next after the tour?

DP: Well, I haven't done this extensive a tour in about 25 years. I have done a lot of European touring, but not like this. Afterward, I want to get more involved in producing television and films. I want to continue with Dollywood and my other business things.

Question: The TV movie Coat of Many Colors was a huge hit. How do you feel about it?

DP: It has always been my favorite song that I have written. So many people can relate to that and being made fun of for something you wore and made to feel less. It addresses a lot of things like love and kindness. There is not a lot of family faith-based shows on TV anymore. I think people are hungry for that. I think something simple and homey struck a nerve with people. We are doing another one called a Christmas of Many Colors: Circle of Love. It follows the same family. I'm excited about it and touched it did so well.

Question: What is your opinion about

country-radio stations not playing a lot of female artists?

DP: I think we have a lot of wonderful female artists in the business today. I am really proud of them too like Taylor and all of the great gals who are hot on the charts. I have always been proud to be a woman and I have always been treated well. Of course we would like to get played all the time. We certainly should be respected and appreciated for our talent just like everybody else. I think we are.

Question: When is your dance album with the song "Just a Wee Bit Gay" coming out?

DP: Every time I start to work on that, something else comes up. This big tour is keeping me busy through December and had to record an album to go with that. I have to put that dance album on the shelf again. One of these days I promise you I'm going to get that out.

That is one of the cute songs on it: "Just a Wee Bit Gay." It is a fun light-hearted tongue-

in-cheek kind of song. One day I will get it out. Thanks for asking.

Question: What accounts for your LGBT following?

DP: Well, I don't really know for sure—I'm just happy that it is. I feel people don't come to see me be me but, instead, come to see me be them. I have had a big following and benefited so long that a lot of people just grew up with me. I feel like a family member, like an aunt or a sister. I am different and have fought for the right to be myself as well. I think that is why gays and lesbians relate to me. They know I appreciate everyone for who they are. I think we should accept everybody for who and what we are. Why can't we be allowed to be that? I'm not out to preach no sermons but I am here to do work, sing my songs, and love people.

Turn to page 28

WCT Theatre Series launches

The 2016-17 Windy City Times Theatre Series has launched.

The cost is \$265 for all eight shows; 60 percent of all the possible subscriptions have already been sold.

The shows in the series are:

—Thursday, Oct. 6: Hand to God, by Robert Askins, at Victory Gardens Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.

—Saturday, Nov. 12: I Am My Own Wife, by Doug Wright, at About Face Theatre

—December: Holiday show, TBD

—Sunday, Jan. 8: Men on Boats, by Jaclyn Backhaus at the American Theater Company, 1909 W. Byron St.

—Friday, March 3: The Scottsboro Boys (book by David Thompson; music and lyrics by Kander & Ebb) at Porchlight Music Theatre, 4200 W. Diversey Pkwy.

—Tuesday, April 18: Shakespeare in Love (based on the screenplay by Marc Norman and Tom Stoppard) at Chicago Shakespeare Theater, 800 E. Grand Ave.

—Wed., May 24: Parade, by Alfred Uhry and Jason Robert Brown at Writers Theatre, 325 Tudor Ct., Glencoe

—Hir, by Taylor Mac, at Steppenwolf Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted St.

Email Amy@WindyCityMediaGroup.com for an order form.

Market Days talent unveiled

Northalsted Market Days has announced the musical acts for the Aug. 13-14 event that will take place on North Halsted Street between Belmont Avenue and Addison Street, 11 a.m.-10 p.m.

Among the acts performing Aug. 13 are Deborah Cox ("Nobody's Supposed To Be Here," at 8:45 p.m. on the Belmont Stage), Diana King ("Shy Guy," 4:30 p.m. on the Addison Stage) and Lez Zeppelin (7 p.m. on the Nissan Innovation Stage).

The following day has these stars, among others: Alex Newell (5:45 p.m. on the Addison Stage), Amy & Freddy (6 p.m. on the Aldine Stage), Erika Jayne (8 p.m. on the Belmont Stage) and Windy City Cowboys (3 p.m. on the Nissan Innovation Stage).

There is a \$10 suggested donation to Market Days. Visit Northalsted.com.

Saturday, Aug. 13

North Stage at Addison

1 p.m.: Lakeside Pride Jazz Combo

2:30 p.m.: The Gingers

4:30 p.m.: Diana King

6 p.m.: Chicago DJs

8:30 p.m.: Sir the Baptists

Nissan Innovation Stage

1:30 p.m.: Jake Miller

2:45 p.m.: Slo 'Mo

5 p.m.: King
7 p.m.: Lez Zeppelin
8 p.m.: Chicago DJs

Aldine Stage

1 and 6 p.m.: The Cabaret Project

Belmont Stage

1:30 p.m.: Drag Revue

4:15 p.m.: ABBA salute

6 p.m.: Lizzo

7:30 p.m.: La Bouche

8:45 p.m.: Deborah Cox



Deborah Cox.
PR photo

Sunday, Aug. 14

North Stage at Addison

1 p.m.: Drag revue

3 p.m.: Girl Power Night

5 p.m.: FHB

5:10 p.m.: Kaycee Ortiz

5:45 p.m.: Alex Newell

6:45 p.m.: Autograf (DJ set)

8 p.m.: DJ Ryan Kenney

Nissan Innovation Stage

1:30 p.m.: Sidewalk Chalk

3 p.m.: Windy City Cowboys

4:30 p.m.: Drag revue

6:30 p.m.: Rod Tuffcurls and the Benchpress

8:30 p.m.: 16 Candles

Aldine Stage

1:30 and 3:45 p.m.: The Cabaret Project

6 p.m.: Amy & Freddy

Belmont Stage

2:30 p.m.: Wedding Banned

5 p.m.: RJD2

6:15 p.m.: Catfight

8 p.m.: Erika Jayne

9 p.m.: Boy Band Review

Jen Richards in Her Story.
Photo courtesy of Richards

Jen Richards talks Emmy nomination and Trans 102

BY MATT SIMONETTE

For former Chicagoan Jen Richards, who is transgender, the Emmy nomination for Her Story—the web series she co-wrote and co-stars in—seemed surreal.

"It was a lot to process," said Richards, who now lives in Los Angeles. "I didn't think we were going to get it—not because I didn't think it was deserving. I think it was. It's just that it was a longshot because we are such a small, independent production. We had no studio-backing, marketing budget or celebrities attached."

Her Story is a six-part series centered on Los Angeles trans women; it debuted online last January. Its Emmy nomination in the Television Academy's new Outstanding Short Form Comedy or Drama Series category was the only one in its category not associated with an existing television program.

"We're such an outlier," Richards said. "We're the only indie show, the only YouTube show, the only queer show."

Richards and co-creator Laura Zak conceived of Her Story back when she was still living in Chicago. They expected to film the project

there and that it would mainly be a "labor of love" with a small audience.

"Everything changed when a producer out in L.A., Katherine Fisher, came across the script," Richards recalled. "Her only requirement was that we move production from Chicago to L.A. But she brought many more resources there than we could have done in Chicago, and people like our director, Sydney Freeland; our director of photography, Bérénice Eveno; and our editor, Bryan Darling. They were very professional people and, collectively, this kind of magic began happening. People would drop their fees. People would shift their schedules. People saw something special in the script and they wanted to be part of it."

Richards, who was also a regular on Caitlyn Jenner's I am Cait series, has been living in Los Angeles for about a year. "I've had my first L.A. winter, and I'm never doing another one in Chicago," she joked.

But she added that she also likes the scene she found in Los Angeles, a community of kindred-spirit creative professionals.

"They're content creators who aren't straight white men, basically. We're creating our own content, working together and supporting each

other's work," Richards said, comparing it to the group that had formed around filmmaker Judd Apatow.

"I feel it's like that, like we're going to be 'the' next group of people," she explained. "But it won't be a group of straight white men—it'll be a group of everyone but that."

Richards said she hasn't yet made any money from Her Story. "I've had some great things happen, but Angelica [Ross, her co-star and friend] and I are in a strange place. ... We are at a point where we have to show up on red carpets with hair and makeup, and be put together, and 'on'—but you're not actually being paid for any of it yet. I'm getting by, but mostly through the charity of friends. I've living with a couple in LA who have an extra room."

But she called such kindnesses "a queer thing. People in the queer community have invested in me. They want me to succeed. They take me out to dinner, give me a place to stay, let me borrow their cars, so I can do this work."

Another project in which Richards has a hand is More Than T, an upcoming documentary series exploring issues pertinent to the transgender community; she worked on that alongside Silas Howard, one of the directors of the Transparent series. Their project pairs longer-form documentaries with several short public service announcements, which are titled Trans 102. The first of those PSA's, about anti-transgender bathroom bills, was recently released online.

"We're taking for granted that there's a little bit of knowledge out there about trans people now, and we're going to try to push that conversation a little further. We shot the PSA's earlier this year. We fast-tracked the bathroom PSA because of HB 2," Richards said. The rest of the PSA's, she added, will likely be ready by late-summer or fall.

As for now, she's savoring the Emmy nomination.

"The best thing of all is that everyone else is so excited, as if they got the nomination too," noted Richards. "It feels like an affirmation for people of color, for queer people, for trans people. Everyone feels like they have a share in this nomination and that's really a nice feeling."

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'Love Unites Us' book event July 28

There will be an event featuring Love Unites Us: Winning the Freedom to Marry in America—a book with Lambda Legal Director of Education and Public Affairs Leslie Gabel-Brett and former Lambda Legal Executive Director Kevin Cathcart as editors—on Thursday, July 28, 5:30-8 p.m., at Joie de Vine, 1744 w. Balmoral Ave.

Lambda Legal's Women's Council will host the event. Pat Ewert, a contributing author in Love Unites Us, is the event's chair. Also, she will read her piece at the event.

With other contributing writers such as Evan Wolfson, Mary L. Bonauto, Jon W. Davidson and Paul M. Smith, Love Unites Us explains how same-sex couples achieved the right to marry.

Read more about the book at LambdaLegal.org/publications/love-unites-us.

Artist Lehrer chosen for Evanston honor

The 23rd Evanston+Vicinity Biennial, a prestigious juried exhibition, has selected artists Riva Lehrer, Rafael E. Vera, Timothy McMullen, Robin Dluzen and Ryan Thompson to put together in a show at the Evanston Arts Center during the 2017-18 season.

The Biennial exhibition runs through Aug. 28. Visit <https://www.evanstonartcenter.org/evanston-vicinity-biennial-2016>.

Michelle Malone in Berwyn Aug. 19

Award-winning singer/songwriter Michelle Malone is on tour—and will perform at Berwyn spot Fitzgerald's, 6615 W. Roosevelt Rd.

Malone has collaborated with artists from Steve Earle to ZZ Top.

Malone's latest effort, Stronger Than You Think, co-produced with Gerry Hansen, contains 12 songs. See MichelleMalone.com.



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DANCING ABOUT ARCHITECTURE

BY MARC 'MOOSE' MODER



Bringing the party together

Yes, we've all noted the vitriol floating about the webs this year. The hot-button issues have all our people up in arms and coming down hard on anyone who disagrees with the important issues of the day and who disputes their choice of who should run the world—girls. Of course, I'm referring to new singles out by long-term gay icons **Katy Perry**, **Britney Spears** and **Fergie**. Was there anything else happening?

The time has come, my fellow Americans, to lay down our arms and come together by taking an

even, fair and balanced approach to these simple songs of summer of 2016.

What's been said about Fergie's "M.I.L.F \$"(Mothers I'd Like To Follow...Money): "Fergie's stuck in 2006 and in a post-Iggy world, is her white lady rap needed?". Yes. Much like Nicki Minaj, being the only Top-40 female rapper standing, there's more than enough room for Fergie and Iggy. Especially since one of them actually can sing as well and does so way too far into the track. I'll admit, "M.I.L.F \$" is a dead re-



tread of songs of 2006's "The Duchess," but since her new LP is called Double Duchess, we'll accept it. When one comes back from a long break, one wants to be reminded of what one missed. So, this single should be considered a sequel, of sorts, before she (hopefully) hits us with a less Will.I.Am-y collection of tracks. Plus, the video and her body are just sickeningly hot, though points taken off for thinking it's still okay to say "on fleek."

What's been said about Britney Spears' "Make

Me (Oooh)" (feat G-Eazy): "Where's my Britney club banger?". Yes, like Janet Jackson before her, Brit Brit is known for smacking us up out the box with a killer dance/pop hit for her first singles. Well, since "Work Bitch" didn't light her last album, Britney Jean, on fire, she's shaking it up for the new album, #B9. Working with chilled out hip-hop sensation G-Eazy, the original B takes us to the bedroom. It's a shock to hear the first few notes of a Britney track that don't make you want to put on heels and stomp, but give this one a chance. Feeling yourself on the dance floor doesn't have to be so obvious. Recent hits by Ariana Grande, Bieber, Beyonce and Tove Lo prove you don't need the 4/4 beats. Sometimes you can just move, move, move (see "Make Me") slower, but just as sexy.

What's been said about Katy Perry's "Rise": "Um, it was called 'Roar'". Yes, I'll admit this sounds thematically like Katy's 2013 single "Roar" with a touch of "Dark Horse," but what do you want from the theme song to NBC's coverage of the Rio Olympics? Now, I've never been the biggest Katy supporter, so this comes from a neutral (at best) place, but this track is ten

times more earnest than "Roar" or any of the rip off tracks Rachel Platten spewed forth last year. "Rise" is exactly what we need from Ms. Perry right now: A simple, honest ballad of hope sung simply, produced well and ready in conjunction with the Olympics to get your hearts out of the gutter that 2016 has been so far. So get into it. It's time to "Rise."

Moose the DJ brings you his DILF\$, Saturday, August 6 at The SoFo Tap.

Lollapalooza Sideshow at Berlin

Step right up, folks. Red Bull, Do312, and Stardust invite you to let out your inner freak on Thursday, July 28, for the 7th Annual Lollapalooza Sideshow, at Berlin, 932 W. Belmont Ave. Enter a world of depravity and delight, where beauty and strange blur. The sideshow, in its seventh consecutive year, pays homage to the early '90s at Lollapalooza by revisiting the festival's side stage freak shows, alongside artists playing Lollapalooza. Join the fantasy as Berlin Nightclub transforms into a glorious playground full of outrageous antics, mystifying spectacle, and other-worldly debauchery.



Embrace the bizarre with DJ sets by LCD Soundsystem members Pat Mahoney, Gavin Russom and Tyler Pope. Marvel at the astonishing performances curated by Gutter Glam Mafia, featuring the twisted pageantry of Sally Marvel, MP, Mr. Spring, Sammy Trump, Spyder Dupree, JoJo Baby and The Dog Faced Boy, Half Woman (Debbie Fox) Half Man (Loren Agron), Eva la Feva The Snake Woman, Mark and Spider Shaina, and recent Vic Mensa album cover queen Lucy Stoole as The Bearded Lady. Hosted by effervescent ring-leaders Club Daddy Scott Cramer and Jenae Wrk Williams.9.3438 in

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Wishing a very sweet and happy 75th birthday to Chicago legend Jim Flint from The Baton and Continental. Photos by Kat Fitzgerald/www.MysticImagesPhotography.com

the DISH
Weekly Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR

Uncle Julio's

BY NINA MATTI

Originally opened in Dallas, **Uncle Julio's** (855 W. North Ave. and other Chicagoland locations; UncleJulios.com) has now spread to locations across the country, but its Texas roots are still strong. Everything from its south-of-the-border-inspired decor to its mesquite-grilled fajitas and "go big or go home" portions transports its patrons away from the busy Lincoln Park streets and into a truly laid back Texan experience.

Everything from my first sip of the strawberry guava lemonade to the very last bite of dessert was well-made, delicious and something I would definitely order again.

A few must-try items: The ceviche fresca was a wonderfully light and refreshing medley of shrimp, scallops and tilapia marinated in citrus juices that



Shrimp tacos at Uncle Julio's. Photo by Andrew Davis

served as a perfect appetizer to start a meal.

I ordered the jalisco fajitas for my entree. Our server recommended them, and they did not disappoint. They were a lovely combination of mesquite-grilled jumbo shrimp, chicken and steak topped with a garlic-butter sauce.

The real icing on the cake that was this meal, though, was the chocolate pinata my dining companion and I ordered for dessert. It was delivered in the form of a large, hollow chocolate ball suspended over a platter that was nearly the size of our table. Our server handed me a wooden baton and told me to hit the pinata. When I did, an assortment of fresh fruit and bits of homemade

churros came tumbling down. I would honestly return to Uncle Julio's just for that chocolate pinata. The fruit was all juicy and delicious; the shell was chocolate, so how could it be bad? And the homemade caramel sauce paired perfectly with the fallen items for dipping.

As if the chocolate pinata isn't reason enough to make a trip to Uncle Julio's, the atmosphere should be. Even at 3 p.m. on a Friday, the bar was pleasantly full of happy hour drinkers. Families and couples surrounded us in the dining area. The decor was charming and the staff was friendly and welcoming, but the food puts Uncle Julio's over the top.



SIDETRACK

Gorgeous things at the special Absolutely Fabulous 'Sync It party, Wed., July 20. Photos by Jed Dulanias

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OUR WEEKLY PICKS TO PLAN YOUR NIGHTLIFE CALENDAR

Fabibat:
Lucy's Birthday Bash



Wed., July 27, 9 pm
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Cum celebrate Chicago's favorite bearded queen, Lucy Stoolie, with performances from The Vixen, Nico, Imp Queen, Beverly Lately, Madame Marvel, Curlene Ribbon, Joan Waters and live music from The Cell Phones.

Salute the Peanut: Honoring George Washington Carver



Thu., July 28, 7 pm
Elixir Lounge,
3452 N. Halsted St.

An event filled with peanut-y drinks and treats to honor George Washington Carver's birthday. Presented by The Legacy Project, Northalsted Business Alliance and Center on Halsted.

CGHA Beer Bust and Hot Jock Contest



Fri., July 29, 8-11:30 pm
Crew Bar + Grill
4804 N. Broadway

Chicago Gay Hockey Association hosts this beer bust fundraiser. \$20 wristbands entitle you to 50 cent Lagunitas IPA. Raffle with great prizes. Hot jock contest with the players of the CGHA at 11.

July Queer Contra



Sat., July 30, 6:30-9:30 pm
Second Unitarian Church of Chicago,
656 W. Barry Ave.

Lauren Peckman will be calling and music will be provided by John Huber and Steve Hinds. To help pay for the band, caller and dance hall, we request attendees donate \$10.



"I used to think that I would be like Keith Harring or Robert Mapplethorpe. But instead I've become Neil Patrick Harris—only not as cool 'cause I can't tap dance."—Agustin (Frankie J. Alvarez) shares a secret with Patrick (Jonathan Groff) on Looking: The Movie. How does Paddy respond? "You could learn." And you wonder why the show was cancelled.

In these troubled times when you don't know who to trust, let me assure you that I, Billy Masters, have written each and every word of this column every week for more than two decades. Why, I was just telling my children Sasha and Malia about how this started—when their father and I were community activists in Chicago. Hold on. I might be channeling my inner Michelle Obama—something we all do occasionally. Who could blame Melania for that? Plus, Melania/Malia—they're very similar! While the hopeful First Lady is trying to find her way, might I suggest a niche which may fit her to a T: she can be the first First Lady to have intentionally posed topless! Oh, sure, Jackie Kennedy was a Hustler centerfold, but at least Melania had the good sense to get paid for it. Unless someone can prove me wrong with photos of a spread-eagle Eleanor Roosevelt (a sight precious few would ever want to see), I think Melania's place in history is secured. Am I the only one to note her resemblance to Caitlyn Jenner?

Political conventions are always big money-makers. And you know who made out well with the Republicans? Gay escorts. We hear the GOP couldn't get enough of men for hire. In fact, hookers were actually carpooling and being bused into the Cleveland area! The New York Post got a few of the rentboys on the record—without actually using their names, naturally. They provided such tantalizing morsels as, "Business has been way better. I've seen 10 clients so far;" "I normally only make \$200 to \$300, but I've been seeing lots of guys in hotels downtown" and "Most of them were first-timers. You could tell they were nervous, but once they became more comfortable, they seemed to be having a good time." Apparently, the female prostitutes did not experience a proverbial bump in business. But I bet they'll be doing banner business in the City of Brotherly Love!

You know how after you've broken up with someone, you start to romanticize the relationship? It wasn't that bad. Maybe you shouldn't have broken up. After a while, you give the ex a call and get together ... just to see. And you know what you will invariably discover? That you were right to break up in the first place. That sums up the long-awaited **Looking: The Movie**. Spoiler alert: HBO has found a way to unmemorably tie up the loose ends of a show that was unmemorable to begin with.

Only time will tell if this film will also (erroneously) be regarded fondly upon reflection. But it reminded me of every reason why initial viewers tuned out in droves. For the first half hour, I kept wondering, "Who talks like this?" I distracted myself trying to figure out whether the problem was the writing, the direction, the acting or (d) all of the above. Then, after 45 minutes, something finally happened. That oasis lasted 10 minutes. Precious little has changed for these characters since HBO put them out of their misery last March. But that didn't stop the thirtysomethings from apologizing for being out of touch. Hello? Is it 1983? Perhaps. After all, the



HBO's new movie isn't worth "Looking" at, Billy says.

Photo of Jonathan Groff and Russell Tovey from the TV series from HBO

best acting came from 1983 Best Actress Emmy Award winner **Tyne Daly**!

One member of the Looking cast had reason to celebrate last week. **Daniel Franzese** (formerly best known for his role in Mean Girls) got engaged. The proposal took place at the same North Hollywood Starbucks where he met his beau, Joseph Bradley Phillips, more than a year ago. Daniel gave the barista a ring and had him put it in a cup labeled "Mr. and Mr. Franzese." Needless to say, Phillips said yes. "Joseph has given me the best of his heart. Finding my soulmate has made all the years I struggled with myself worth it," said Franzese. Congrats!

Someone who didn't necessarily believe in monogamy was **Peter O'Toole**. According to Peter O'Toole: Hellraiser, Sexual Outlaw, Irish Rebel, the acclaimed actor had 1,033 lovers—give or take. The book includes quite juicy exploits. One of the most outrageous is about an evening he shared with **Richard Burton** and **Ava Gardner** while they were filming Night of the Iguana near O'Toole's home in Puerto Vallarta. After a night of heavy drinking, Gardner allegedly said to the duo, "There's a fire raging inside me. And I think that it will take two stout-hearted men—a Welshman and an Irishman—to extinguish the flame."

O'Toole later told his business partner, "She was right. It took the both of us to satisfy her that night." What makes the book even more timely is the inclusion of an affair Peter had with one of my dear friends. **Lady April Ashley** is noted as being one of the first Brits to have gender-reassignment surgery. As a woman with an unknown past, April was a successful model and actress in the '60s and was wooed by O'Toole. She didn't share her secret until they were at the height of passion. "I was born a boy," she told him. "Peter was too far gone at that point to worry about what sex I had been born," said Ashley.

Our "Ask Billy" question comes from Sander in Illinois: "A friend of mine just showed me a video of **Zayn Malik** (formerly of One Direction) sucking dick. It sure looks legit to me. Thoughts?"

Looks real to me, too. And the woefully over-worked Filth2Go forensic examiners have told me that no editing or altering has been done to the footage. But our legal team wants me to make it clear that we cannot say without any doubt that this is Zayn. We can say, however, that if you'd like to see someone who appears to be Zayn sucking on what appears to be an enormous dick (and sucking it rather enthusiastically), then go to BillyMasters.com.

When Melania needs a birth certificate to use the restroom, it's time to end yet another column. I bet if she gave the speech in her native Slovenian, nobody would have noticed—nobody except moi. Because we always get to the bottom of things at www.BillyMasters.com—the site that's multilingual. If you have a question, send it to Billy@BillyMasters.com, and I promise to get back to you before Zayn proves he doesn't suck. Until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.

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Event marks 10th anniv. of Gay Games

On July 23, The Pride Action Tank (PAT) hosted an event at The North End, 3733 N. Halsted St., that marked the 10th anniversary of the Gay Games taking place in Chicago. Attendees networked and participated in a silent auction, among other activities.

A percentage of the sales of MillerCoors products will benefit Pride Action Tank and the AIDS Foundation of Chicago.

The fundraiser's sponsors included PAT, AIDS Foundation of Chicago, Windy City Times, The North End, The Legacy Project, Northalsted Business Alliance and Team to End AIDS; MillerCoors was an event partner.

The 2018 Gay Games will take place in Paris on Aug. 4-12 of that year, with approximately 15,000 participants expected; visit Paris2018.com.



PARTON from page 22

Question: [Now-former] Gov. Pat Quinn declared it Dolly Parton Day in Illinois in the past. How did that feel?

DP: I was so touched and honored that there would be such a thing. I just hoped I could live up to that kind of a compliment. That is a beautiful state with beautiful people so I am honored to be lifted up to that level.

Question: What is the difference between you and the image you present onstage?

DP: I think I am pretty much the same. I'm as talky behind the scenes as I am on stage. I wear my heart on my sleeve and I say what is on my mind. People have come to know me for the last fifty something years like that. I don't believe I have too many secrets or people would know them by now.

I do love people and I think that comes from being brought up in a big family. I work harder at some things more than others but my personality is the same.

Question: What makes Dolly Parton get out of bed every day and be Dolly Parton?

DP: Well, I have to get up and go to work because I have worked myself into a corner. I made all of these dreams come true and now I have to be responsible for it. I'm a working girl. You don't just have a dream and let it go. You have to go out, work it, rework it, and branch out into other areas. I love what I do. I love to work. I have new dreams every day.

Parton turns the grass blue at Ravinia on Sunday, Aug. 7. Tickets and information can be found at Ravinia.org.

BOOK REVIEW

Outsiders: American Photography and Film 1950s-1980s

Edited by **Sophie Hackett and Jim Shedden**

\$29.95; Skira Rizzoli; 190 pages

REVIEW BY LIZ BAUDLER

Outsiders, put together by Sophie Hackett and Jim Shedden, unites its subjects around the idea of observation. It's hard to see how else edgy Diane Arbus and documentarian Gordon Parks end up in the same book, which stems from a current Art Gallery of Ontario exhibition. Outsiders' conceit is that these particular photographers and filmmakers were notably skilled at observing but not inserting themselves into the subcultures flourishing around them in the turbulent decades between 1950 and

1990. Hackett likens this group to the New Journalists operating roughly around the same time period; they didn't necessarily associate with each other, but they changed the rules of their art.

The sheer diversity of Outsiders is a testament to its mission. It opens with images from Casa Susanna a retreat for cross-dressers and proto-transwomen, then slides into a selection of Arbus. Parks' time with the Fontenelles, a struggling Black family in Harlem, was commissioned as part of a Life Magazine article. Because of the size of AGO's collection, Garry Winograd, most famous as a New York City street photographer, garners his own section. These photos almost look composed by comparison with the shots from Casa Susanna.

Although often the subjects were posing for the camera they communicate a certain intimacy which Arbus, Parks and Winograd lack as they capture moments: their photos convey composition. Stills from Kenneth Anger's 1963 Scorpio Rising anchor the later sections of Outsiders. Anger's admission that the bikers he filmed were all straight is ironic



in light of the film's place in the history of LGBTQ cinema. It also toys with how the images, while representations of the action, can serve their observer's gaze: Anger queered the straight bikers by dint of his desire.

Outsiders reads as a cogent introduction to each individual artist, but also to its thesis. Photographs take up a good half of the book, as well they should, but all of the essays included are crisp, thought and illuminating. In their differences, Arbus, Anger, Parks, Winograd and the other artists illustrate the many ways one can be an outsider and the importance of this kind of documentation. The rise of various mediums, Hackett and Shedden point out, offer more options to observe and to learn about those considered "the other." As Hackett writes, "the project thus feels important, even urgent, in its reminder of the power of photographers and filmmakers to help us see our world anew, with attention to detail and with empathy for the depicted subjects, whether we perceive those subjects to be like or unlike us."

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wed., July 27

Author Reading: Deborah Levy, HOT MILK Sofia, a young anthropologist, has spent much of her life trying to solve the mystery of her mother's unexplainable illness. When she and her mother travel to coast of southern Spain to see a famous consultant--their very last gasp at a cure--they meet Dr. Gomez whose strange methods that seem to have little to do with physical medicine 7:30pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago (773) 769-9299 <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com/event/author-reading-deborah-levy-hot-milk>

Thursday, July 28

Lollapalooza 25 Grant Park 337 E. Randolph St Chicago. Lollapalooza.com
South Loop Farmers Market Sustainable-foods marketplace featuring a partnership with McCormick Place. Thursday through Sept. 29. 4:00pm - 8:00pm On the grounds of the National Historic Landmark Second Presbyterian Church, 1936 S. Michigan Ave. <http://www.southloopfarmersmarket.com>

LambdaWomen & Wine: a pop-up event for LGBTQ women Women's Council of Lambda Legal's third pop-up event. Free and open to all LGBTQ women 5:30pm Joie De Vine 1744 W. Balmoral Ave. Chicago

Author Reading: James Magruder Love Slaves of Helen Hadley Hall: Every September since 1958 a fresh batch of residents arrives at the Yale graduate dormitory named after Miss Helen Hadley, a nineteenth-century ghost still residing at 420 Temple Street, New Haven, Connecticut. Every year she selects her favorites, follows their adventures,

FOREVER YOUNG
Thursday, July 28

Melissa Young (above) and Nick Sula will perform a benefit for The Center Orlando.

Image courtesy of Young

cheers on their romances, and picks up their lingo. 7:30pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago (773) 769-9299 <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com/event/author-reading-james-magruder>

OUT and PROUD: A Rainbow Celebration benefit for The Center Orlando Cabaret diva Melissa Young and Nick Sula takes audiences on a tour of the gay rights movement through song and comedy. One night only. Reservations online or by phone. 8:00pm Davenport's Piano Bar and Cabaret 1383 N Milwaukee Ave Chicago 773-278-1830 <http://DavenportPianoBar.com>

7th Annual Lollapalooza Sideshow. Depravity and delight, where beauty and strange blur in homage to the early 90's

at Lollapalooza, revisiting the festival's side stage freak shows, like the Jim Rose Circus Sideshow, alongside artists playing Lollapalooza all inside of Berlin Nightclub. 10:00pm Berlin Nightclub 954 W Belmont Ave Chicago

Friday, July 29

Salute to the Peanut Celebrate the life of George Washington Carver on his 152nd Birthday by becoming a Nut Expert at Elixir Lounge. Sample peanut themed craft cocktails and delicious treats. Part of the The Legacy LIVE Series. Time:TBA Elixir Lounge, 3452 N Halsted St., <http://www.northalsted.com>

"Take a Swing at Breast Cancer" golf tournament Making a difference in the fight against cancer can be fun and invigorating with the Chicago-based charity that has placed more than \$6 million since 2007 into breast cancer researchers' laboratories. Participate for a flat entry fee or take on the added challenge of fundraising, for which attractive prizes will be awarded to top performers. 1:00pm Highland Park Country Club, 1201 Park Avenue West, Highland Park 773-412-6397 <http://www.ASistersHope.org>

Textual Empowerment: Lesbian Publishing in the 1970s and 1980s The 1970s and 1980s was a period of initial development and growth of lesbian publishing with networks and collectives that taught running printing presses and publishing practices, helping women take full control of the printing and distribution processes. Exhibit running through September. Thursdays 6 to 9 pm, Fridays 1 to 7 pm, Saturdays Noon to 6 pm. 1:00pm - 7:00pm Gerber Hart Library and Archives 6500 N. Clark St. Chicago <http://www.gerberhart.org>

Saturday, July 30

Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance (LGBTQ) Support meeting to talk about illnesses, symptoms, treatment, doctors, and personal issues such as dating,

relationships and work. Every Saturday. 11:00am - 12:30pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted St., <http://dbsa-glbtc-chicago.com>

The kates Chicago comedians Deanna Ortiz and Stefania Rudd host the all female comedy showcase with semi-monthly line-up of funniest comedians and emerging female comic performers. PG-13 show. \$10 7:00pm The Book Cellar, 4736-38 N. Lincoln Ave., Chicago <http://www.theekates.org/>

Chicago Outfit Roller Derby Bouts: Chicago Outfit Shade Brigade vs. Demolition City Roller Derby's Destruction Dames; Chicago Outfit Syndicate vs. Demolition City Roller Derby's Dynamite Dolls. \$15 online, \$20 at door 7:00pm Windy City Fieldhouse - 2367 W Logan Blvd, Chicago 773-486-7300 Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/chicago-outfit-roller-derby-vs-demolition-city-july-30-2016-tickets-21979927555>

Thingification: MPAACT Summer Jams Written, composed, and performed by Duriel E. Harris, a one-woman show combining poetry, performance, music and dance to invigorate audiences with the life-affirming energy of word-sound-power. Set current day in Chicago, the play transports audiences through time-space to enact their collective struggle against thing-ification-the annihilating, objectifying force at the core of all oppressions. 7:30pm Greenhouse Theater Center 2257 N. Lincoln Ave. Chicago <http://thingification.org>

Sunday, July 31

aChurch4Me Sunday Worship Service A place to find peace, comfort and always needed prayer. 11:00am AChurch4Me MCC, 7366 N Clark St, Chicago <http://www.achurch4me.org>

For Those Who Can't Performance showcase on racial injustice through empowering speech. Performers of color exhibit skills in art forms like spoken word, music, improvisation, storytelling. Hosted by Maya Haughton and Alli-

son Reese. Proceeds benefit The Healing Corner. \$12 9:00pm Under the Gun Theater, 956 W. Newport, Chicago 773-270-3440 <https://undertheguntheater.com/shows/black-lives-matter>

Monday, Aug. 1

Space Age, two men harness their queerness Real-life intimate partners Ricardo Gamboa and Sean James William Parris explore how they came to understand their queerness as gay Black and Brown boys growing up in marginalized communities where there were no models for it and no promise that it gets better. Tix online or pay-what-you-can at door. Co-programming for children ages 3-12 available 7:00pm Free Street HQ, 3rd Floor, 1419 W. Blackhawk, Chicago Tickets: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2569849>

Tuesday, Aug. 2

Vives Q: First Tuesdays This summer, with a fierce line-up of Special Guests and musical performers, mobilize to take action on critical issues the community is facing. 6:00pm - 9:00pm National Museum of Mexican Art 1852 W. 19th St. Chicago Tickets: <http://www.eventbrite.com/o/vives-q-8110514952>

Intersex Chicago A peer-led, casual conversation group for those who identify as intersex or think they might be. It is also open to significant others, family, friends, allies, and anyone with questions. 6:30pm - 8:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=11240>

Thursday, Aug. 4

American Veterans for Equal Rights (AVER) LGBT military veterans meet on the second floor first Thursday of each month. 7:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted St., 773-472-6469 <http://www.averchicago.org>

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