

WINDY CITY TIMES

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MILESTONE

Cook County prepares for 10,000th same-sex marriage license

STORY ON PAGE 7

Above: Pat Ewert, widow of Vernita Gray, speaks at a press conference hosted by Cook County Clerk David Orr Aug. 29, announcing his office was just a few licenses short of 10,000 same-sex marriages in Cook County. Gray and Ewert received the first marriage license for a same-sex couple in Cook County, Nov. 27, 2013. Gray died March 19, 2014.

Photo by Hal Baim



'LOVE' IS LOVE

Annual Love Fest event features performances, health village.

Photo by Vern Hester

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TREE HOUSE

Humane society gets new director, home.

Photo of Kerri Burns (left) and Tree House staffers by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

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RIO OLYMPICS

Rounding up the Olympics, from an LGBT perspective.

Photo of Amini Fonua from Fonua

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JAPANESE FORUM

Japanese-American center hosts forum on LGBTQ-affirming spaces.

Photo of JJ Ueunten, Andrew Leong and Anne by Carrie Maxwell

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GREAT SCOTT
 Bent Nights looks at shows by Jill Scott (left) and The Gold Web.
 Photo by Vern Hester

'FRIDAY' NIGHT



WCT reviews the theater production Good Friday.
 Photo by Joe Mazza/Brave Lux

WAX ON



Ralph Macchio (The Karate Kid) talks about the show Ugly Betty and same-sex kissing.
 PR photo

BELLY CLUB
 Belly Up Smokehouse + Saloon has a lot of delicious fare to offer.

BODY(GUARD) LANGUAGE
 Broadway in Chicago held its sneak preview of its upcoming season, which includes The Bodyguard Musical.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ
 Find out the latest about Tyra Banks, Big Freedia and Colton Haynes.

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THE **TREVOR** PROJECT



Bayard Rustin's surviving partner, Walter Naegle, at the Rustin celebration.

Photo by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

Legacy Project honors civil-rights icon Bayard Rustin

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

On Aug. 24, 1987, one of the most significant, audacious and passionate figures both in the United States civil rights movement and innumerable worldwide causes dedicated to the betterment of humanity and a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom breathed his last breath.

Twenty-nine years to the day that Bayard Rustin bequeathed a lifetime of achievement and a mantle for future generations to take up in reaching for what he called the "ultimate goal of human freedom," the Chicago-based outdoor LGBT museum and LGBT educational advocacy organization The Legacy Project partnered with Affinity Community Services, The Northalsted Business Alliance and The Center on Halsted for an evening dedicated to that life and the man who forged it.

The event began with an invocation ceremony at The Legacy Walk's memorial plaque for Rustin at the 3300 block of North Halsted Street in Lake View.

Rustin's surviving partner, Walter Naegle, made the journey from New York to play a key role in the celebration.

"I usually spend these anniversaries by myself but, when [Legacy Project founder and executive director] Victor Salvo extended this invitation to come out here, I thought that this was something I really needed to do," Naegle said. "Because the Legacy Project is so important to educating, especially young people, about the history of the LGBT [community] and LGBT people of color."

"We are not afraid to say his name, Bayard Rustin," The Reverend Benjamin Ledell Reyn-

olds asserted in leading the invocation. "We remember a visionary, an activist, a strategist, the one who has been christened The Unknown Hero of the Civil Rights Movement; a tireless crusader for justice, a disciple of Gandhi and a mentor to Martin Luther King Jr. We remember the architect of the legendary 1963 March on Washington."

"[He] dared to live as an openly gay man during a fiercely homophobic 1940s, '50s and '60s, when it was not convenient to do so," Reynolds added. "We remember that it was he who paved the way of possibilities for those of us today who would challenge the systems of society and be bold enough to walk in his footsteps and in our own truth."

A visceral portrait of those footsteps was captured in the 2003 Nancy D. Kates and Bennett Singer multi-award winning documentary *Brother Outsider*.

Following the invocation and a beautiful rendition of *Amazing Grace* by Broadway Methodist Church praise and worship leader Jackie Boyd, the film was screened for a capacity audience at the Center's Hoover Leppen Theatre.

In a lively post-screening question and answer session moderated by celebrated journalist, Guardian contributing writer and *Out Magazine* Editor-at-Large Zach Stafford, both Naegle and LGBTQ historian, author and retired UIC professor John D'Emilio examined aspects of the film and Rustin's life, work and legacy.

"I knew who [Rustin] was before I met him," Naegle said. "The person I came to know was also the person who sang to children in a refugee camp in Thailand. He was more of a loving, gentle and human figure in addition to being a militant pacifist."

D'Emilio acknowledged that, although his own work on Rustin began as an opportunistic angle into writing about the 1960s, he was "overwhelmed by his life."

"Every social movement of consequence, he was involved with," D'Emilio said. "There's a hardly a question you can ask yourself about how to make change in the world that Rustin's life won't help you find the answer to. I think of him as being one of the most important social-justice activists in 20th-century America—far beyond what people attribute to him."

Yet Rustin's erasure as such a figure from the historical narrative was something illustrated to Stafford earlier in the evening by a young gay man who admitted knowing nothing about him.

"[Rustin] was never in it for recognition," Naegle said. "He was in it because he loved to do the work."

"As a culture, we live with historical amnesia," D'Emilio noted. "In Rustin's case it was compounded by the Quaker influence which was really important to his life. It's the quality of the work that's been done and what you build rather than being the person who gets credit for it. His being gay in that generation made it doubly necessary for him to work in the background. All of that conspires to make him not noticed in history."

Repairing this glaring omission and others like it is part of the life-blood of The Legacy Project's mission.

Salvo said that, much in the spirit of the Rustin celebration, the organization intends to begin a tradition "of always tying history to something on a particular day and, whenever possible, to someone who is on The Legacy Walk and building a program around them."

"We need to bring our history and our culture into this community in a very tangible way," Salvo concluded.

The lessons, inspiration and hope that are embodied in Rustin's life served as a defining illustration of Salvo's point.

For more information about The Legacy Project, visit LegacyProjectChicago.org.

PASSAGES

Wesley Klug

Wesley Harold Klug—a fine artist and painter known for sold-out openings—passed away Aug. 19. He was 88.



Wesley Klug in undated photo.

Klug was a native of Milwaukee, and a longtime resident of Chicago's Buena Park neighborhood.

He was an exponent of the "New Realism" movement and 1963 Huntington Hartford Foundation fellowship recipient who was mentioned as an "Up and Coming Artist" by *Life Magazine* in 1963. He studied at Layton Art Institute in Milwaukee, Northwestern University and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Also, Klug exhibited at Wisconsin Painters and Sculptors Show, Schneider Gallery in Rome, National Academy in New York, and the Herren Museum of Art in Indianapolis, among others, as well as at his own gallery, Gilman Galleries, on Chicago's Oak Street.

Klug was the beloved partner of the late Major Colonel John Julie, dear friend of Carl (Toby Ross) Provorse, and son of the late Bernard Klug and Rose Drydik Klug.

Services are private. Donations may be made in his name to Center on Halsted Senior Services program, 3656 N. Halsted St, Chicago, IL 60613; <https://community.centeronhalsted.org/DonateNow>; or 773-472-6469, ext. 491.

Arrangements by Cremation Society of Illinois, 773-281-5058 or Cremation-Society.com

PASSAGES

Robert Allen Toyra

Robert Allen Toyra died unexpectedly on Aug. 20. He was 59.

A longtime employee of AT&T, Toyra was born in Waukegan on Nov. 19, 1956, to the late Melvin and the late Charlotte Toyra. He is survived by brothers David (Patricia), of Gurnee, and Peter, of Waukegan, as well as three nephews, according to legacy.com.

An avid photographer, Toyra studied at the Ray-Vogue College of Design, now the Illinois Institute of Art-Chicago. He was a resident of the Rogers Park neighborhood.

A memorial service was held Sunday, Aug. 28, at Calo Restaurante. More information is at legacy.com at <http://bit.ly/2c0un5v>.

'Love Fest' features health village and performances

BY VERNON HESTER

On Aug. 27, the Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus (CBGMC) presented its 11th Annual Love Fest and Urbanity Mini Ball at the Chicago Illuminating Company at 2110 S. Wabash Ave. The festival and ball offered a health village, drag and vogue performances, a dance competition, a mini-cinema showing locally produced LGBTQ short films, and a raffle for cash prizes.

Presided over by CBGMC Executive Director Erik Glenn and board member David Dodd, the festival played host to younger and older members of the Black LGBTQ community as well as straight allies.

Greeting the crowd at the outset, Glenn made the point of stressing the importance of health and treatment as well as sexual health for the Black community. With health professionals from the Ruth Rothstein CORE Center and the Chicago Department of Public Health in attendance, the festival offered HIV and hepatitis testing as well as vaccinations and testing for meningitis. As the afternoon segued into evening, the Urbanity Ball took center stage.

Miss Ruff N Stuff kicked the night off with her bevy of drag performers that included Bianca Extravaganza, Dakota Lady Goth and Veronica Devaraux.

Then came the vogueing competition, which got an unexpected lift when house icon and pioneer Tommy Avant Garde gave a rare impromptu performance. The night culminated with competitions in the categories "Runway,"

"Sex Siren" and "Realness," with Father Kentrel Mizrahi hosting.

Sponsors of the event included the Regional Resource Network Program, The Chicago Center for HIV Elimination, Prep 4 Love, Janssen, The Chicago Department of Public Health, Third Coast CFAR, The Lighthouse Church of Chicago, Region Five, The Chicago Urban League, The University of Chicago School of Medicine and The Ruth Rothstein CORE Center.



Above: Performer at Love Fest. Below: Members of the Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus Photo by Vern Hester



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Japanese-American center hosts workshop on LGBTQ-affirming spaces

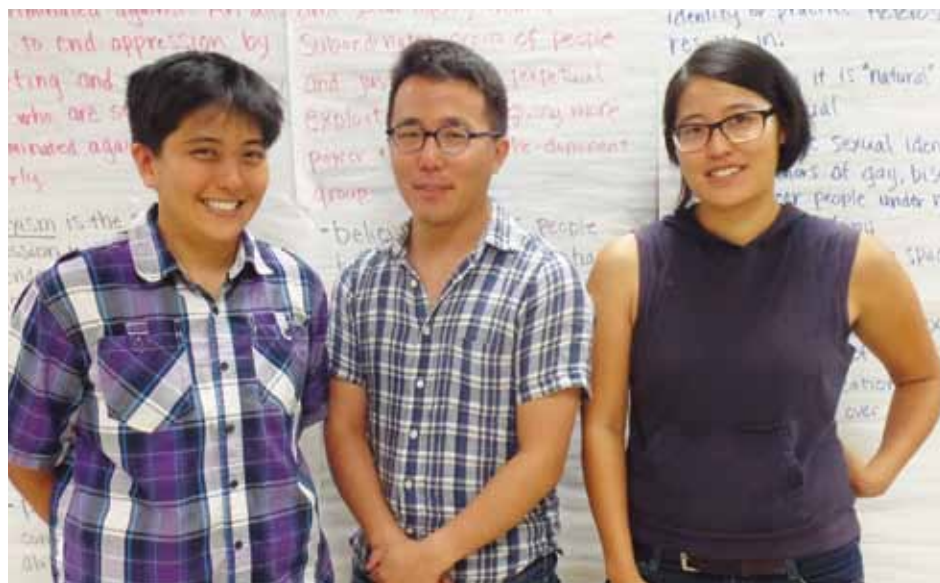
BY CARRIE MAXWELL

The Japanese American Service Committee (JASC) Legacy Center hosted a Memories of Now seminar series presentation—NIKKEI QUEER: A workshop on making our spaces LGBTQ-affirming—Aug. 18 at the JASC headquarters on Clark Street.

JASC CEO Michael Takada spoke about the history of the organization that started as the Chicago Resettlers Committee 70 years ago this month. Takada explained that the committee was formed to help Japanese Americans com-

cludes recognizing that LGBTQ Japanese-Americans are a part of that community.

Ueunten said this workshop is just the beginning of the dialogue around recognizing and interrupting homophobia and transphobia as well as gaining a greater understanding of the expansive concepts of sexuality and gender. They (Ueunten's preferred pronoun) explained that the goal of the workshop was to give allies a starting place to discuss these issues as well as the tools and foundation to do so. Ueunten also spoke about the intentions for the space, including respecting people's pronouns and no-



JJ Ueunten, Andrew Leong and Anne.
Photo by Carrie Maxwell

ing from the internment camps with professional services, referrals and information about the city at large.

Workshop leaders included Anne (who prefers not to use her last name), a queer Yonsei/Nisei social worker in mental health services in Chicago and member of Invisible to Invincible: Asian Pacific Islander Pride of Chicago (i2i); JJ Ueunten, a genderqueer Yonsei Okinawan and Japanese-American who organizes with i2i and the Chicago Dyke March Collective; and Andrew Leong, a Shin-nisei of mixed Chinese and Japanese heritage, assistant professor of English and Japanese literature at Northwestern University and author of an upcoming book on same-sex and mixed-race desires titled *Shut the Door: Japanese-American Fictions of Exclusion and Desire*.

Following the introductions, Anne noted that LGBTQ people are everywhere and that part of building Japanese-American communities in-

cluding recognizing that LGBTQ Japanese-Americans are a part of that community.

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cluding recognizing that LGBTQ Japanese-Americans are a part of that community.

Ueunten led a pair exercise in which attend-

ees were tasked with sharing something about their gender and/or sexual orientation with another attendee. This included questions about one's early memory of being told something due to their gender, describing their gender and something about oneself that falls outside of the box of what their sexual orientation is supposed to be.

Ueunten led a pair exercise in which attend-

ees were tasked with sharing something about their gender and/or sexual orientation with another attendee. This included questions about one's early memory of being told something due to their gender, describing their gender and something about oneself that falls outside of the box of what their sexual orientation is supposed to be.

One attendee noted that the Quakers spoke out against the internment camps during World War II. Another attendee spoke about the calls from some in the Japanese-American community against the targeting of Muslims after 9/11 because they recognized the parallels between targeting Muslims now to the targeting of Japanese immigrants and Japanese-Americans, including forcing them into internment camps, after the Japanese military attacked Pearl Harbor.

Ueunten told the audience about dominant and subordinate groups both within and outside of the LGBTQ community. They explained that cissexism is the belief that being cisgender is the only "natural" path in life and cisgender people have more of a right to jobs, education, a romantic life, autonomy over their

bodies and access to public restrooms that corresponds with their gender identity. Ueunten also talked about the definition of heterosexism which is the same as cissexism other than replacing gender identity with sexual orientation.

Anne noted that people often struggle with not wanting to cause conflict/be confrontational in situations where oppression is happening and it takes practice to unlearn that/act differently. She explained that it's about communicating directly and thoughtfully with people who are most directly impacted about what they need/want.

Lastly, attendees were given reference materials focusing on LGBTQ terms and definitions, and GLAAD tips for allies of transgender people and interventions for heterosexism, cissexism, homophobia and transphobia to enhance what they learned during the workshop.

Workshop co-sponsors included JASC, i2i, the Chicago Japanese American Historical Society and the Japanese American Citizens League: Chicago Chapter.

See JASC-chicago.org for more information.

IFCON 2016 to take place Sept. 1-5

Asians & Friends Chicago will host the International Friendship Conference (IFCON) 2016—a conference for the LGBT Asian/Pacific Islander community—Sept. 2-5.

Based in the DoubleTree by Hilton, Magnificent Mile, IFCON 2016 will feature city tours, a Spirit of Chicago cruise on Lake Michigan and a gala dinner. Members from chapters of Asians & Friends and Long Yang Clubs will attend, representing chapters from cities like Cleveland, Houston, Minneapolis, New York, San Diego, San Francisco and Toronto.

—Thursday, Sept. 1: There will be a pre-IFCON welcome party.

—Friday, Sept. 2: Registration will take place in the hospitality suite at 12-6 p.m., and there will be a buffet at 6-9 p.m.

—Saturday, Sept. 3: The hospitality suite will open at noon, there'll be a trolley tour at 12-4 p.m., and there'll be a dinner-boat tour on the Spirit of Chicago at 5-7 p.m. (A la cart tickets can be bought at <http://ifcon2016.org/ifcon-2016-single-event-registration/>.)

—Sunday, Sept. 4: An IFCON board meeting and break-out sessions will take place. In addition, a banquet will take place at 7-10 p.m. at the Double Tree Hotel ballroom.

—Monday, Sept. 5: There will be a farewell lunch.

The goal of the conference is to foster safe, supportive environments for gay men of Asian descent, Angel Abcede, president of Asians & Friends Chicago and co-chair of IFCON 2016, said in a statement. "Oftentimes, we find ourselves a minority within a minority in the United States, suffering from racial stereotypes and body-shaming. The phrase we hear on meet-up apps is 'No fats, no fems and no Asians.' But that's not the case at IFCON. Here we're valued for what we look like, our cultural heritages and what we represent as a brotherhood."

Email chicago@ifcon2016.org or visit IFCON2016.org for more information and to register.

Howard Brown Health releases impact report

BY MATT SIMONETTE

On Aug. 18, Howard Brown Health released a new report illustrating its impact on the community.

"It's a summary of our clinical services, and something we're pledging to do on an annual basis, said CEO and President David Munar. "It's broken up into three sections—reports

on our patients, health benefits that patients are gaining from our system of care and how we're monitoring quality of care from different disease [perspectives] like HIV, cardiovascular disease and asthma."

Munar noted that he was especially excited to "tell the story of our system of care, which is much broader than HIV and STI's—there's a significant primary care component as well."

In 2015, there were 19,453 patients seen by Howard Brown Health staff, according to the report. About 12,902 were white, while 3,589 were Black; additionally, 923 patients were Asian, 160 were Native American and 64 were Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders. About 3,472 patients were Latino.

Howard Brown Health saw 9,365 gay men, 611 lesbians, 1,763 bisexuals, 1,251 transgender women and 845 transgender men last year. About 277 patients were 65 years of age or older. Meanwhile, 1,879 youth were provided medical and/or behavioral health services at Broadway Youth Center.

The staff administered 9,468 HIV tests in 2015; those yielded 132 (about 1.3 percent) positive results. About 112 out of those 132 patients (about 85 percent) were then linked to HIV services. Thirty-two of those positives were identified through routine testing as part of primary care; all 32 individuals were linked to services. About 342 individuals received Post-Exposure Prophylaxis, or PEP, to prevent possible exposure to HIV, while 1,137 individuals initiated Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, or PrEP.

"The report shows that some of the 'back-office' infrastructure commitments that we've made have been effective," Munar added. "We're fielding over 50,000 calls a year, to schedule appointments and for medical referrals."

Munar wants to improve the focus on chronic disease management, he said, noting that more people have been utilizing Howard Brown Health to help manage long-term conditions.

The system opened its South Side clinic in May, and has begun seeing patients at its Rogers Park offices, which will be have its grand opening in November.

"We're hoping that the additional capacity in Rogers Park and Englewood will help accommodate new patients and give relief to the other clinics," Munar said. "This is a big growth year. That's another reason this report is important—we want to be transparent with the community about what's going with Howard Brown and why you should trust us with your healthcare needs.

The full report can be viewed at <http://howardbrown.org/wp/CommunityImpactReport/assets/hb-community-impact-report.pdf>.

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Orr, marriage backers anticipate 10,000 same-sex licenses

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Just as attorney John Knight, of ACLU of Illinois, finished speaking at an Aug. 29 press conference heralding the 10,000th marriage license distributed to a same-sex couple in Cook County, County Clerk David Orr said, "I now forgive you for suing me."

While Orr was joking, his remark reflected the important contributions that his office played in implementing marriage equality locally. Orr refused to let the office defend itself legally against a lawsuit from area gay couples who wished to get married but did not yet have the legal right to do so. The office also hastily prepared paperwork and office computers when those couples were subsequently granted that legal right by a federal judge, months ahead of when the state's marriage equality was already scheduled to take effect.

At the press conference, Orr said Cook County was about 10-12 couples away from awarding the 10,000th license. Numerous elected officials, rights-advocates and married couples who played roles in the marriage-equality struggle joined him.

Pat Ewert became part of the first same-sex couple married in the county when she wed her late wife, Vernita Gray, in November 2013. Gray was in poor health at the time, so a federal court said they would not have to wait until the state's marriage-equality law took effect in June 2014.

"My wife Vernita used to say that, in the forty-plus years that she was out, in the very beginning, the words 'gay' and 'marriage' were never used in the same sentence," Ewert said. "Look what we've accomplished today. ... I know that Vernita is looking down and smiling right now, and I'm guessing that she's doing a little dance."

In his remarks, Christopher Clark of Lambda Legal—which, along with ACLU of Illinois, spearheaded the legal challenge to the state's marriage restrictions—noted the roles that couples like Ewert and Gray played in bringing

marriage equality to the state. Other couples who attended the conference included Theresa and Mercedes Santos-Volpe, one of the first couples to marry when a judge extended the right to marry early to all Cook County couples who wished to do so, as well as Jim Darby and Patrick Bova and Brenda Lee and Lee Edwards. Attorney Amy Crawford also attended.

"It takes enormous courage to to share the details of their lives and they did that at every opportunity," Clark said.

Equality Illinois CEO Brian Johnson reflected on his recent marriage in his remarks. "It fills me with such pride for Illinois that we are the last wave of married couples who will have to tell the story of how, when we first met, marriage was not a legal option for our future," he said. While part of me is proud that we are 'Couple 9,191,' I look forward to the day in the not-too-distant future when we lose track of the number of same-sex couples who marry, and Illinois simply rejoices in how many families we call our own."

Orr said that marriage equality represented a two-pronged victory in that it came about as the result of both legal and legislative victories. State Rep. Greg Harris and state Sen. Heather Steans, who sponsored the marriage bill in the House and Senate respectively, both spoke about the work that legislation entailed.

Noting that Illinois was the last state in the union to legislatively pass a marriage-equality law, Harris said the law has subsequently "meant so many important things to couples in their day-to-day lives that straight people have taken for granted for years. ... But we've also got to remember how fragile these victories are. We have a candidate for president of the United States who has repeatedly said he wants to choose supreme court justices who would role back marriage equality. ... In Illinois, we're still struggling for trans rights. Transgender kids are denied rights that other kids have. So there are still fights to be fought."

Steans added, "It was not easy going from



From top: Jim Darby and Patrick Bova interviewed; Ald. Deb Mell; State Rep. Greg Harris; Orr discusses the home-states of same-sex couples who've obtained their licenses in Cook County.

Photos by Hal Baim

civil unions to marriage equality, never forget that. There were a lot of bumps along the road. Greg and I both had many people telling us, 'I can do civil unions but won't get to marriage equality, but all those hearts and minds were changed, in a short period of time.'

Ald. Deb Mell, who was a House member during the marriage debate, recalled when a Republican colleague, who was not a marriage-equality supporter, acknowledged Mell's then-wife.

"She used the language, and I thought, 'We're on to something here,' she said. "She didn't vote for the bill, but she didn't get up and rally against it."

U.S. Rep. Mike Quigley explained that the first bill he passed when he sat on the Cook County Board of Commissioners was legislation granting domestic partner healthcare benefits for county employees, and remembered that it was a tough sell.

"It only passed by one vote—by the skin of its teeth," Quigley said. "We can go back even further, to the early days in the city council when this was introduced. Literally, the community was booed out of the chambers. ...The message to all of us is: Love is love, and love shall persevere through all of these."

Knight subsequently pointed out that, even as the county is on the verge of a milestone, it is important not to forget that myriad issues still need to be settled for the LGBT community.

"The transgender community has been fighting for fairness for all of us," he said. "They have been fighting for marriage and non-discrimination all along the way, and yet there's so much they don't have at the moment, in terms of fair treatment in schools, in employment and so many other aspects. ...So there's much, much left to do."

In a subsequent Aug. 29 press statement, Orr agreed with Knight's sentiment.

"Even with the euphoria we feel today, we should never let our guard down," Orr said. "There's still a lot of work to do. In some states, judges and clerks can refuse to marry same-sex couples because of their religious beliefs. Federal legislation has been proposed which would make that the case throughout the country. That's not fair or equal to anyone. Bigotry remains, sometimes under the cloak of 'religious freedom' or 'First Amendment rights,' so we can't become complacent in what we have achieved. We need to stay vigilant in the fight for equality."

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Tree House Humane Society gets new home, executive director

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

What would inspire a former police officer and a veteran of more than 20 years with animal welfare organizations from across the United States, Canada, Mexico and Australia to leave a year's worth of well-deserved retirement on a boat off the Florida coast and, instead, brave Chicago's decidedly less temperate winters?

The answer: A lifelong love of animals coupled with a fervent belief in the mission and future of the 45-year-old nonprofit Tree House Humane Society, described on its website as "the largest cage-less, no-kill shelter for injured, sick and abandoned cats in the Chicagoland area."

Ohio-born Kerri Burns, who is lesbian, has served as Tree House's interim executive director since earlier this summer.

"They had some leadership changes," Burns told Windy City Times. "I've been able to go into [animal welfare] organizations and see what works for them, what works for the community, and help them to grow their programs and strengthen their message."

Windy City Times was invited to speak with Burns at Tree House's original building in Chicago's Uptown neighborhood, bought and paid for in 1975.

The steps to the main entrance lead to a cat lover's dream.

In rooms with as much function as they have a well-worn coziness, cats roam free sometimes, trailing one of the organization's volunteers and staff members around spoiling for mischief, some seeking attention while others are out just to satiate their curiosity. Others are nestled on a high perch watching the day's events with aloof contentment.

Throughout the nonprofit's history, both this and Tree House's Bucktown facility (opened in 2007) have seen more than 16,000 of these purring "residents," as they are called.

"In this building we have about 75 cats that are available for adoption," Burns said. "We have 65 in foster homes and we have a waiting list of cats to come to this facility. Between here and the Bucktown facility, our capacity is at about 200."

However, Tree House's residents, as well as the many hopeful people who come to foster or adopt them, will soon experience a brand-new center of operations at Western Avenue and Touhy Avenue in Rogers Park.

It is the result of hard-fought capital campaign.

Tree House's staff has always dreamed big. To hear the new facility described and shown in architectural drawings would seem more akin to an unbelievable fantasy were it not just \$800,000 in finishing touches and preparations for a stress-free transfer of the cats from becoming the kind of reality that trades creaking floorboards and aging walls for absolute state-of-the-art cat care.

The estimated 15,000-square-foot, fully accessible, two-story building will house the first cat cafe in the United States.

If someone's landlord or budget doesn't allow for a cat, that person can have a coffee with felines. All of the money from the coffee sales will go to saving the lives of other cats. When not enjoying a latte with patrons, the cats will be found relaxing on outdoor "catios."

There will also be a surgical suite and two on-site clinics—one of which will be open to the public for services including spaying, neutering and microchipping.

An education center will bring schoolchildren

and members of the public to Tree House to learn everything from how to bottle-feed kittens, to the differing behaviors of cat breeds, to the life of a feral. That center can also be converted into a cat-friendly meeting room and made available for businesses who would like to include the always invaluable feline input during their strategy sessions.

Meanwhile, the new site will include suites of play rooms where prospective adoptees can spend as much time as they want with their new mums and dads and a retail store replete with enough items to make even a Persian cat feel overly spoiled.

Each of these areas contains naming opportunities for potential donors of every budget to immortalize their legacy in this unimaginable cat world.

Burns hopes that, depending upon how well the cats adjust, the new facility will open by the end of the year.

Meanwhile, and for the next 12-to-18 months, Burns is on a mission to "Get things stabilized and get this place rocking and rolling" so Tree House is where they need to be when they take their next steps.

"When we get into our new building, we need to tell the community that we're here and all the wonderful programs that we have."

Those programs include outreach to local schools to educate students about animal welfare, a food pantry for people who can't afford to get food for their cats or dog, grief counseling for those who suffer the loss of a pet, work with seniors and the placement of less social or feral cats with businesses who are combating a rodent problem.

"They keep the rats away," Burns said. "We actually have a waiting list of businesses and communities who want us to place cats with them. We were one of the first to do this in an inner-city."

Burns wants Tree House to build even more partnerships with community businesses. In an increasingly competitive philanthropic market, such partnerships are not only mutually beneficial but essential if the work of Tree House is to continue to expand.

"We have to get creative and work together," she said. "We'll tell your story if you tell ours. We want people to support local businesses and adopt their pets locally. We don't receive any funding from the city, county or national groups. We survive because of our programs and our donors but, as nonprofits, we forget that there are really creative ways to partner with businesses. You don't have to do things traditionally. You can create really cool things to bring in the money. Luckily for us, we have our cats. They can't speak for themselves but we can market them in wonderful ways."

For Burns, all the wonderful ways to love animals was a talent with which she was born.

"I always related better to animals than I did people," she said. "Animals are always there for you. I think they give us so much more than, as humans, we will ever recognize. There's the love, care and compassion that we give to each other but tend to overthink. Animals don't. They are just true with everything they do."

Those feelings explain why, as a child, Burns constantly brought home neighborhood cats and dogs.

"I thought, 'How can I make a living in this field?'" she remembered.

At first there were no answers as Burns felt she wasn't smart enough for the science of veterinary work.

Instead, she got into law enforcement.



Above: Kerri Burns (left) alongside Tree House staff and a resident.
Below: Architects' rendering of the new Tree House reception area.
Photo by Gretchen Rachel Hammond



"As a police officer in Arizona, I learned about different disasters, incident command and reporting structures," Burns recalled. "I was also a federal and state grant writer for women and children's health issues."

They were both professions that served her well when, one day, animals needed her help.

"There was an opening at PetSmart Charities for someone to review grants from animal shelters across the U.S. and Canada," Burns said. "A year-and-a-half into it, a wildfire broke out in Northern Arizona. Over 600 animals were displaced from their homes. I got calls saying that all these animals needed to be fed. So I asked the right questions and in a logistics manner."

Within 24 hours, Burns was behind the firelines side-by-side with firefighters rescuing animals from their homes.

"It gave me such a great joy to be saving these lives," she said. "Then the American Humane Association asked me to be a part of their team."

In that capacity, Burns was involved in animal rescue during Hurricane Katrina, the 2009 federal, state and local law enforcement coordinated raid of dog-fighting operations (the largest of its kind in the U.S.) and throughout the devastating aftermath of the 2010 B.P. Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

"I became one of a handful of trainers who would teach people how to work with animals in times of disaster," Burns said. "When they evacuate their homes, people sometimes forget that their dogs or cats are still in there. They

are part of the family. They matter too."

Over the past seven years, Burns spent time working with three animal shelters helping "to bring them to the next level."

On each of those occasions and in the case of Tree House, a significant part of that work means making sure stories about the residents and how they came to be there get told.

"Organizations in animal welfare have so many wonderful stories," she said. "Tree House works with sick, injured and stray cats in the community. I'll bet most of Chicago doesn't even know that."

Burns added that there also needs to be a shift in the animal welfare culture.

"It has progressed and everyone in this field needs to progress with it," she said. "Don't just do something because that's the way it's always been done. Tree House was the first cage-less humane society in the United States. We stepped it up a notch. Now there are other programs and messages that we can get out into the community that say how important animals are in our lives."

Just as important to Burns is the Tree House infrastructure of 50 tirelessly dedicated staff members alongside a network of more than 100 active volunteers—with always room for more no matter what the skill set.

"Our staff are some of the hardest working people around," she said. "They don't get paid a whole lot and yet it is amazing to look at the

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Reflecting on Rio: The good, the bad and the ugly

BY ROSS FORMAN

When the caldron was extinguished Aug. 21, culminating the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, a true mix of wide-ranging emotions endured—jubilation, celebration, anger and embarrassment.

And that was just a start of the look back at Rio 2016, from an LGBT perspective. Rio 2016 was the gayest Games ever, as at least 53 out athletes competed in Rio, according to Outsports and Olympic and LGBT historian Tony Scupham-Bilton. There also were three out coaches. There were 42 lesbian or bi women, 11 gay men and no out transgender Olympians.

The 2012 Summer Games in London featured 23 out LGBT athletes, it was reported. Others have come out publicly since they competed in London.

Rio also was about engagements, ice cream and racism from the LGBT side.

Yep, Rio 2016 was so much more than just Michael Phelps (five golds, one silver), Usain Bolt (three golds), Simone Biles (four golds, one bronze) and, of course, Ryan Lochte (in the swimming pool and at a gas station in the wee hours of the morning).

"In a country that typically has a bad reputation for LGBT acceptance, it was beautiful to see the country of Brazil, the Olympics, and the whole world accept these successful and openly gay athletes," said college swimmer Ayrton Kasemets, who attended Mundelein High School in Chicago's northwest suburbs and is openly gay.

"I would love to say thank you to the openly gay athletes (who competed) in Brazil for being visible and inspirational. This helps young LGBT and all who are closeted find hope and acceptance."

After all, the LGBT community was well represented in Rio. Almost half of the publicly out LGBT athletes competing in the Rio Olympics won a medal, Outsports reported. Of the 53 out athletes in Rio, 25 won a medal, including 10 athletes winning gold.

Elena Delle Donne of the Chicago Sky (WNBA) captured her first-ever Olympic gold weeks after confirming that she is in a lesbian relationship and engaged to be married. Delle Donne and the U.S. women's basketball team captured its sixth consecutive gold medal, trouncing Spain 101-72, in the final. The team had other out players, including Seimone Augustus, Brittney Griner and Angel McCoughtry.

The four basketball stars were the only out U.S. residents to win medals in Rio.

Other golden athletes in Rio included boxer Nicola Adams (Great Britain) and track & field star Caster Semenya (South Africa). In addition, married couple Kate and Helen Richardson-Walsh, along with teammate Susannah Townsend, scored field hockey gold for Great Britain. Rafaela Silva (Brazil) won judo gold. The Richardson-Walshes were the first married couple to play together in an Olympic match.

Eleven out Olympians left Rio with a silver medal, while four had to settle for bronze, including one of the most well-known out athletes in the world: British diver Tom Daley, who medaled in the men's synchronized 10-meter platform.

"It is safe to say that the Summer Olympics 2016 will not be forgotten anytime soon—for good and bad reasons," said Michael Erwin, president of the predominantly gay Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association. "CMSA congratulates the record number of athletes who participated out and proud in these Games,

especially the U.S. women's basketball team, which won gold."

Negative news also ran from Rio 2016. Some really bad, sad, totally unprofessional news. Some might even say it was scary.

The Daily Beast posted a story online during the Games about how athletes use dating apps, including Grindr, to connect. The Daily Beast reporter said that he got three dates in his first hour of trying and also detailed what some men wrote on their Grindr profiles.

The reporter's detail about the men he mentioned could have outed athletes and, potentially, threatened their safety.

The Daily Beast eventually withdrew the story that led to worldwide negativity and concern.

"Today we did not uphold a deep set of The Daily Beast's values," a statement on The Daily Beast website said. "These values—which include standing up to bullies and bigots, and specifically being a proudly, steadfastly supportive voice for LGBT people all over the world—are core to our commitment to journalism and to our commitment to serving our readers."

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) said The Daily Beast story was "simply unacceptable."

"The Daily Beast article was horrific," Erwin said. "It shows that the LGBTQA community remains under attack and even though we have come a long way, there is still a lot of ground ahead of us. I hope that it does not push athletes back into the closet because we need positive LGBTQA athletic role models to look up to."

Out talk show host Ellen DeGeneres also was embroiled in an Olympic scandal—and it stemmed from a joke.

She tweeted a doctored image of herself riding the back of gold medalist Usain Bolt, a speedster and nine-time Olympian. The tweet's caption was, "This is how I'm running errands from now on."

Online comments challenged the photo as racist.

DeGeneres defended herself, tweeting, "I am highly aware of the racism that exists in our country. It is the furthest thing from who I am."

Bolt has yet to reply.

From the love department, the gold medal could go to Brazilians. After the first-ever women's rugby sevens gold medal final, a Brazilian player and her girlfriend of two years got engaged on the pitch. Marjorie Enya, a volunteer worker at Deodoro Stadium, the site of the match, walked onto the pitch after crowds had dispersed and proposed to Brazil player Isadora Cerullo. She made an "emotional speech," according to BBC, and then the two embraced.

"As soon as I knew she was in the squad I thought I have to make this special," Enya told BBC. "I wanted to show people that love wins."

From the sweet side of sports, specifically, sweet-tasting, the gold goes to out Tongan swimmer Amini Fonua who actually would have claimed silver and bronze, too. He took to social media to share a video of himself spreading cheer around the Olympic Village—by handing out free ice cream—to volunteers at a hot tennis facility.

"This is how we do in Tonga—show our appreciation to the workers with ice cream. We love you Brazil, we love the volunteers. Thank you for all the hard work you're doing; some of us appreciate what you do for us. So we give you ice cream—the easiest way to make friends is with ice cream," he said.



Above: Married British Olympic field-hockey players Helen and Kate Richardson-Walsh. Below: Olympic track-and-field athlete Caster Semenya. Both photos from Facebook



Fonua also was more than outspoken against The Daily Beast and the reporter Nico Hines.

"As an out gay athlete from a country that is still very homophobic, @thedailybeast ought to be ashamed," he tweeted.

That was the start of Fonua's social-media assault. Others:

—"@NicoHines You fucking disgust me. Do you realize how many people's lives you just ruined without any good reason but clickbait journalism?"

—"@NicoHines, Some of these people you just outed are my FRIENDS. With family and lives that are forever going to be affected by this."

Fonua also tweeted a photo of his tanned back, his perfect tan line, and said, "Yo @nichines & @thedailybeast - if what you were looking for on Grindr was hot ass (and I don't see any other reason why you'd be on there) here you have mine in all its proud glory. Now, kiss it and fuck off."

The International Federation of Gay Games, on Aug. 22, sent a letter to Thomas Bach, president of the IOC. FGG congratulated the IOC on Rio 2016, and the letter is as follows:

"This success is in terms of not just the execution of the games themselves, but more so the IOC's commitment to build a better world through sport:

—Principle 6 of the Olympic Charter now in-

cludes specific mention of sexual orientation.

—Your quote from the Opening Ceremony speech, "In this Olympic world, there is one universal rule for everybody. We are all equal."

—Statement that future host cities should be required to sign anti-discrimination agreements as part of their contracts.

—Improved number of out LGBT athletes and athletes feeling safe enough to compete openly at the Rio Games.

—Inclusion of the first-ever Refugee Olympic Team.

—Widespread condemnation response to the homophobic Grindr outing piece in the Daily Beast.

The FGG letter was signed by FGG co-presidents Joanie Evans and Kurt Dahl.

"The Federation of Gay Games applauds your leadership and focus on human rights in partnership with the international LGBT+ sport community," the letter stated. "We look forward to further developing our relationship and continued dialogue to promote our common interest of sport; sport for all; and sport free from discrimination. We invite you to join us for Gay Games 10, Paris 2018, and our shared motto of 'All Equal.'"

Also: See a story on Chicago Sky player (and Olympian) Elena Delle Donne on page 20.

Multicultural Leadership cohorts announced

The Latino Policy Forum has announced the 24 community leaders serving Latino and African-American communities to participate in the Forum's inaugural Multicultural Leadership Academy, set to begin in September.



Luis Roman.
Photo courtesy of Roman

The Academy will work with these leaders to increase their understanding of how racial and ethnic groups can collaborate to transform their communities through social action.

Luis Roman, of the local LGBTQA organization Association of Latino/as Motivating Action (ALMA), is one of the announced leaders.

Others include Azalea Acuna (La Casa Norte), Bessie Alcantara (BBF Family Services), Erika Allen (Growing Power, Inc.), Oswaldo Alvarez (Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership), Asiaha Butler (R.A.G.E.: Resident Association of Greater Englewood), April Callen (Chicago Foundation for Women), Ebony Campbell (Chicago Housing Authority), Asia Castañeda (The Field Museum) and Henry Cervantes (Our Lady of Tepeyac Elementary School).

They also include Adriana Diaz (City Bureau), Bryan Johnson (Metropolitan Family Services), Keith Lewis (United Way Metropolitan Chicago), Alfredo Nambo (Instituto Health Sciences Career Academy), Abel Ochoa (University of Chicago Collegiate Scholars Program), Nikki Patin (Surviving the Mic), Arthur Richardson (Chicago Park District), Angelica Rivera (Proyecto Pa'Lante at Northeastern Illinois University), Kimeco Roberson (Chicago Park District), Maritza Rocha (Mujeres Latinas en Acción), Analia Rodriguez (Latino Union of Chicago), Anton Seals Jr. (DePaul University), Craig Stevenson (Open Architecture Chicago/High Jump) and Carman Weathington (Chicago Commons).

For more information, visit LatinoPolicyForum.org.

Campus Pride unveils worst campuses for LGBTQ youth

Campus Pride has released its 2016 "Shame List," highlighting, for the first time, a national list of the most anti-LGBTQ colleges and universities.

The Shame List was first published online Dec. 1, 2015, as a way to highlight 57 campuses that had received or requested Title IX exemptions to freely and openly discriminate against LGBTQ youth. At that time, the campuses applying for these discriminatory waivers did so privately. According to Campus Pride, even faculty, staff and students did not often know.

Wheaton College is the only Illinois school on the list. Campus Pride states that "Wheaton College has qualified for the Shame List because it presented an 'ex-gay' speaker [Rosaria Champagne Butterfield] in its chapel service, which students are required to attend." [Editor's note: Butterfield has said she does not identify as "ex-gay" and has criticized conversion therapy.]

The complete Shame List can be found online at CampusPride.org/ShameList.

Death of trans activist causes outrage in Turkey

There is outrage in Istanbul, Turkey, over the murder of transgender woman Hande Kader.

Turkey remains conservative on LGBTI issues; however, a protest was staged Aug. 21 over Kader's death. Hundreds of demonstrators attended.

Kader, a 22-year-old sex worker and activist, was last seen entering a client's car one night.

Roommate Davut Dengiler had hoped she was still alive but he found her body in Istanbul's morgue for unidentified persons.

According to several sources, she was found raped and brutally burned.

Famous Turkish figures also joined the calls to raise awareness of Kader's murder and took part in the demonstration. Also, in tribute to her activism and in protest against anti-trans violence, the hashtag #HandeKadereSesVer, or "give voice to Hande Kader," started trending.

According to data from the rights group Transgender Europe, Turkey has the highest number of trans-related murders on the continent.

Recently, the body of gay Syrian man Muhammad Wisam Sankari was found in Istanbul. He had been beheaded and mutilated.

Writer Michelle Cliff dies

Michelle Cliff—a Jamaican-American writer/activist/professor who was the widow of Adrienne Rich—died of liver failure June 12 at age 69.

Cliff was born Nov. 2, 1946, in Kingston, Jamaica. Her parents emigrated to New York soon after her birth, but the Cliffs returned to Jamaica while she was still a toddler. They eventually returned to New York when Cliff was a teen.

In 1975, she met Rich, who was published by Norton, where Cliff worked as a production editor. Eventually, Cliff published "Notes on Speechlessness" in *Sinister Wisdom*, a feminist journal of lesbian culture that she and Rich edited and published in the early 1980s.

Some of Cliff's books include *Abeng*, *No Telephone to Heaven* and *Claiming an Identity They Taught Me to Despise*.



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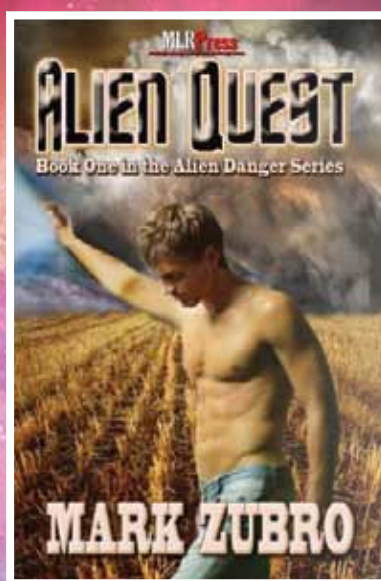
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viewpoints



Gregory HINTON

Considering Matthew Shepard

It's hard to believe that he would have been 40 this December. As a gay expat who long ago evacuated the reddening Rocky Mountain West for the warming blue shores of Southern California, the 1998 murder of a young, gay college student in Laramie, Wyoming, caught my attention.

Lured from a local bar, he was kidnapped, robbed, savagely beaten, tied to a fence and left "begging for his life" on a freezing October night under a blanket of Wyoming stars. When he passed away, five days later, the world was watching.

"His name was Matthew Wayne Shepard," inscribed Grammy-winning conductor Craig Hella Johnson into the libretto of *Considering Matthew Shepard*, his first concert-length work for *Conspirare*, the radiant Austin professional choir that Johnson, as artistic director, founded in 1991.

Considering Matthew Shepard is a sweeping, Western "fusion" oratorio—classical, contemporary and cowboy. In orthodox terms, an oratorio is a religious story, a grand musical composition for orchestra, choir and soloists.

For my work as curator of *Out West™*, a national LGBT museum program series, I was invited to attend a February preview event of *Considering Matthew Shepard* in Beverly Hills, a long way from where I am originally from: 1950s rural Cody, Wyoming.

That evening, Craig performed his song, "Ordinary Boy," with words from Matt's personal journal. When Matt's character jubilantly sang,

"I love Wyoming!" it broke me.

For nearly two decades I have felt guilty for loving Wyoming because of the despicable way Matthew Shepard was murdered. I stayed away from the rural West because of it. And suddenly, in Matt's own words, I learned that he loved Wyoming, too. I am forever indebted to *Considering Matthew Shepard* for reintroducing me to "ordinary" Matt.

Considering Matthew Shepard had its world premiere in Austin on Feb. 20, 2016. I was privileged to attend. When Craig Hella Johnson took the stage, the audience fell silent and sat absolutely motionless for the next hundred minutes. After sustained rounds of thundering applause, with critical raves still raining down; I concur with the written remarks of a fellow audience member out there in the dark: "We knew we were experiencing something life-changing—something beyond beautiful ... something to be remembered the rest of our lives."

Considering Matthew Shepard joins the ranks of many significant emotional, scholarly and artistic responses to Matthew Shepard's legacy; including books, poetry, paintings, stories, songs, plays, and films. The Laramie Project, by Moises Kaufman and the Members of Tectonic Theater Project, has been seen by 30 million people.

Jason Marsden, executive director of The Matthew Shepard Foundation, calls *Considering Matthew Shepard* "by far the most intricate, beautiful and unyielding artistic response to this notorious anti-gay hate crime."

I visited Jason at his offices in Denver about a week after the June 12 massacre at Pulse, a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida, that's been called "the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history." I guessed he had been tasked to comment. Ordinarily affable and measured, Jason did not mask his distress. "I didn't know where to begin," he told me, but Jason found the words.

Last October, I was privileged to meet with Dennis and Judy Shepard in Casper to preview

their personal collection of public condolence letters in the wake of Matt's passing. They were welcoming and earnest. Only now do I realize how much we collectively ask of the Shepard family and how much it has given back to our community in the name of its eldest son.

Thanks to *Out West™*, I visit Wyoming often. Next trip, I look forward to bringing along my CD of *Considering Matthew Shepard*. In addition to "Ordinary Boy," another favorite is "The Innocence," movingly performed by Matt Alber, which, for me, invokes the light and darkness of Stonewall, Laramie and Orlando, where we laughed before we cried.

I hope Wyoming embraces *Considering Matthew Shepard* as its official "state oratorio."

Put it to a vote only after listening to the opening track of the joyous, expansive "Cattle, Horses, Sky and Grass," from Wyoming's own cowboy poet, Sue Wallis, with contributions from eastern Wyoming poet John Nesbitt.

Until I make it home, I'll crank up *Considering Matthew Shepard* while navigating the clamoring streets of Hollywood and dream of Matt's better Wyoming.

About *Considering Matthew Shepard*

On Friday, Sept. 9, *Harmonia Mundi* will release the CD recording of *Considering Matthew Shepard*. An excerpt can be streamed at <https://open.spotify.com/track/5Mh2keE6C1JEtchNvhUSr3>.

About Gregory Hinton

Gregory Hinton is an author, filmmaker and creator of *Out West™*, an innovative museum program series devoted to illuminating LGBT history and culture in the American West. In 2015, Hinton co-founded *Out West* in the Rockies, a dedicated LGBT western archive at the University of Wyoming's American Heritage Center in Laramie. Recently profiled in the *Los Angeles Times*, Hinton has also been interviewed by the *New York Times*, multiple NPR affiliates, and many metro and community newspapers throughout the West.



St. Sukie DE LA CROIX

SENIOR MOMENTS

The out and proud voice of atheism

"Our fight in this world is not against Islam; it is against religion. I can tell you this for sure: No one's head has ever been cut off in the name of atheism. No one has ever cut into human flesh and looked down a camera and said, 'In the name of nothing.'" —Comedian Jim Jeffries

Ever since Omar Mateen walked into Pulse nightclub in Orlando and killed 49 people, I've been unable to write down my thoughts. The truth is that my thoughts are, most likely, not publishable. It's a fact that nobody is more censorial than the gay press. I've been writing for the gay press since 1983 and I've seen the "don't go there" topics come and go. At the moment, the two sacred cows are trans people and Muslims. I got into hot water for writing that Caitlyn Jenner is a white Republican man who needs to learn there's more to being a woman than wearing a designer dress. I received threats for writing that. You see, back in

the old days, before Taylor Swift and Pokemon Go, it was called "having an opposing opinion" and you were allowed to have them.

I'm not a religious or spiritual person. I agree with Gore Vidal: Religion is something that should be practiced in private between consenting adults. I accept other people's religions or philosophies; just don't push them on me. Sadly, religion is pushed on me every day. I believe religion is a cancer. There: I've said it. To say that Omar Mateen's murderous rampage had nothing to do with religion is nonsense. I've read the Koran and the Bible, and both of them are violent homophobic and sexist texts. As literature, both contain some beautiful passages and stories, with the Lesson of the Widow's Mite (Mark 12:41-44, Luke 21:1-4) being a favorite of mine.

However, I believe this trio of cults—Christianity, Islam and Judaism—were created by men to justify the subjugation and rape of women and children. There: I've said that, too. These cults are responsible for the KKK, the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 9/11, the Nazi Holocaust, homophobia, transphobia ... on and on and on. How many Roman Catholic child-raping priests have to be arrested before the Vatican is shut down? How many girls have to be kidnapped and raped by Boko Haram Islamists? How many boys have to suffer male genital mutilation? How many women have to shave their heads and wear sheitels? How many women will be denied education and forced to live under burqas, never to feel the sun on their faces? I'm sick of hearing the PC apologists say, "Oh,

but that's just the fanatics." No, it's not. Homophobia and sexism are enshrined in their religious texts.

In the United States, Christianity is enshrined in the culture. "In God We Trust" we swear on the Bible in a courtroom. There's supposed to be a separation of church and State, which is a total myth. This country will never have a Muslim president or a Jewish one, or—God forbid—an atheist. Stop kidding yourself.

On the day of the massacre in Orlando, Palm Springs held a candlelight vigil. I was there. There were speakers because a silent vigil can never be silent due to the fact that some people overestimate their own importance and like the sound of their own voice. Three religious leaders spoke—a pastor, a rabbi and an imam from the local mosque. Why? Those men should never have been allowed to co-opt that event. It's religious dogma that caused all this trouble in the first place. The three of them loaded Mateen's gun.

Mateen wasn't born a killer. He was born a beautiful child coming into a beautiful world. So was Yishai Schlissel, the Orthodox Jew who stabbed six people in the 2015 Jerusalem Gay Pride Parade. It was the religion they were born into that poured hatred into those two children.

Atheists don't have a book saying it's OK to rape children, own slaves or abuse women. And yet, it's this atheist who sits here waiting for the hate mail from writing this article—hate mail that I have no intention of reading.

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Windy City Times reviews the production *Sister Cities*.

Photo by Tori Howard

THEATER

LT Cousineau launches only LGBTQ show at Fringe Festival

BY LIZ BAUDLER

The Chicago Fringe Festival's seventh year runs Aug. 31-Sept. 11. This year, local theater personality LT (Larry Todd) Cousineau has the only show with clear LGBTQ content. His show, *Songs From My Closet*, features lyrics from many of his musicals.

"When I was putting this show together, I was looking for things that don't get sung very much, some of the songs that I've written that haven't had a chance to be seen by a lot of audiences," Cousineau said.

Working with four other singers and outside composers, Cousineau assembled a story told by multiple characters. He enjoyed the challenge of shortening his original show to fit the one-hour Fringe Fest schedule.

"We had to sort of arrange it so that we could say all the things we wanted to say at a nice speedy pace," Cousineau said. "I thought to myself, well, this is a little bit of a different audience than if I was doing it late night in Boystown. Part of what audiences in the past have liked about versions of the show have been how much range there is. The funny cuts against some stuff that's a lot more serious. And I didn't want to make it into just a silly show. I think that would do a disservice to the work and also gives the performers more variation in the things that we get to do on the stage. We get to do it in a shorter time, but we get to go to all the same places."

Telling queer stories has always been important for Cousineau. "I've never written a show that didn't have multiple queer characters, and that's been a way of differentiating myself from other people," he said. "Not that I don't feel like I can write really strong female characters that are not queer or really strong male characters, but just that I feel like my voice comes most distinctly and clearly through queer characters."

Cousineau also said he feels like there's a more personal reason for this focus. As a young performer, he noticed that he had a hard time getting parts if directors read him as gay. "And so I think I started to write characters that were gay because I wanted people like us to get work," he explained. "I wanted stuff for me to do, for people like me to do. And I've never stopped doing it. I think it's fun."

Chicago Fringe Festival Executive Director

Anne Cauley explained that Fringe shows are chosen by lottery, but within that system there are still opportunities for diverse voices to shine. "Half the shows are local, from Chicagoland, and then half are from anywhere else in the world. We think there's real value for the patrons to be able to see work from other places and for the artists to network and be inspired by work that's happening in other cities, to broaden their perspective," she said.

There is a special benefit for diversity as well. "We define diversity—it could be race, ability, age or anything else," Cauley said. "You can tell us why your voice is not being heard currently in Chicago in the arts and, if we agree with you, you will be put into that sublottery."

Overall, Cauley said Fringe is about the idea

of representing underrepresented voices. "Our idea was really based in reaction to the festivals that currently exist in Chicago. They're all wonderful and we celebrate them, but we have had artists who said, we can't get into those festivals because we don't have proof yet of our work. We don't have work samples, we don't have photos. That is the space that fringe inhabits for Chicago, giving people their first step," Cauley said.

To Cauley, an ideal Fringe show has a freshness that makes the whole festival feel unpredictable in a good way. "I think there's just something about the way that we select the shows. There's excitement in it not being the most polished work, but something very new," she said.

Cousineau, who is doing Fringe for the first time but has attended in the past, agreed. "One thing that feels really special about it is how much heart there is in it. It's sort of scrappy, a lot of people just making it work on chewing gum and popsicle sticks. The people doing it love it and will it to happen. To me, that's what unique about it: the level of heart that's associated with it," he said.

Cauley said that Jefferson Park, now in its fourth year of hosting the festival, is an ideal home, even though logistics became challenging when Fischhman's, the event's past central

venue, closed in July.

"Having the support of the alderman [John Arena] and local businesses and community members really has come into play this year, and it was really so exciting to me to see how many people were trying out ideas and trying to make connections for us to make the festival continue and continue to be really successful. That is why we're in Jefferson Park: the neighborhood sees the value in what we're bringing to the neighborhood and we really love partnering with them," Cauley said.

So why go see Fringe? Cauley described the festival as "accessible."

"All of our venues are within walking distance, and all of the shows are an hour, and all of the tickets are \$10 or less," she explained. "For the same price of one epic, masterful show downtown, you can see four very different shows. You can have a storytelling drama to a puppet show to acrobats. It's a very approachable arts experience."

Tickets for Chicago Fringe can be purchased online at ChicagoFringe.org or directly at venues, a full list of which can found online. There is a \$5 one-time fee for a button that gains entry to Fest performances, plus \$10 per show ticket. Various multiple show packages are also available.

LT Cousineau.
Photo by
Denver Smith Photography



DOUBLE REVIEW

Sister Cities

Playwright: Colette Freedman

At: Chimera Ensemble at Den

Theatre, 1333 N. Milwaukee Ave.

Tickets: ChimeraEnsemble.com; \$22-\$26

Runs through: Sept. 18

Dementia Me

Playwright: John Michael

At: Den Theatre, 1333 N.

Milwaukee Ave.

Tickets: 773-398-7028;

TheDenTheatre.com; \$10

Runs through Sept. 12

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

As the Den Theatre undergoes construction of yet another stage space, it's interesting to note that two Chicago premieres now playing in this multi-level performance complex both feature queer characters dealing with painful losses of a parent.

Chimera Ensemble snagged the rights to Colette Freedman's international hit drama *Sister Cities* (which has been adapted in a soon-to-be-released film), while gay performance artist John Michael touches upon his reactions to death when he worked in a Dallas "memory care center" in his one-man show *Dementia Me*.

Sister Cities zeroes in on a mother who has concocted a macabre scheme of committing suicide to bring together her four estranged grown daughters for a reunion in Poughkeepsie, New York. Each daughter has different locational names and separate fathers, plus



Dementia Me's

John Michael.

Photo by Paul Clark

plenty of resentments toward their mother and fellow siblings.

For example, easygoing lesbian novelist Austin (Anna Donnell) harps on divorced high-powered Seattle lawyer Carolina (Katlynn Yost) for not being in better contact with their mother. Later, suburban school teacher Dallas (Anna Donnell) takes issue with free-spirited Harvard student Baltimore (Norma Chacon) and her propensity for profanity.

But the heart of *Sister Cities* is a powerfully acted flashback scene between mother Mary (Rainee Denham) and Austin. The reason behind Mary's suicide is revealed, and that later causes some crazy sisterly drama.

Freedman is to be commended for creating five juicy dramatic roles for women in *Sister*

Cities, while also making it an old-fashioned advocacy play for a controversial topic of today. But *Sister Cities*' dramatic construction can be problematic. Sisterly "girl talk" exposition appearing after the play's first-scene crisis is awkward, as is the need for every sister to unload an upsetting personal secret.

It also appears that *Sister Cities* director Ashley Neal has miscast the actresses playing Baltimore and Carolina, since they don't fully convince in their characters' demeanor or dialogue. But more often than not the plusses outweigh the problems in Chimera's local premiere of *Sister Cities*, which is surely worth a trip.

I'm going to be more reserved in my endorsement of *Dementia Me*, which shows Texas-to-

Chicago transplant John Michael still honing and refining his style of confessional performance art. Michael is brave enough to depict himself onstage as a petulant and selfish youth, though some counterbalancing redeeming qualities would be nice.

Michael uses balloons with drawn-on faces for other characters, which is both clever (especially the visual metaphor of the life draining from his elderly charges), or very cloying with every screechy character voice he applies.

At least Michael's unleashed emotions feel genuine. Hopefully *Dementia Me* serves as both therapeutic for Michael and audiences facing similar situations to the ones he so recently and wrenchingly experienced.

THEATER REVIEW

Rose

Playwright: Laurence Leamer

At: Solo Celebration at the

Greenhouse, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave.

Tickets: \$42-\$48

Runs through: Sept. 25

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Once upon a time, a young couple fleeing poverty and starvation emigrated to the United States seeking their fortune in the great city of Boston.

Like most recently arrived ethnic minorities, they were shunned by their neighbors initially. Over decades of determined assimilation, the descendants of these proud settlers rose to po-

sitions of power, until a third-generation son, impatient with his progenitors' slow progress, vowed to sire a succession of leaders to the entire nation. His ambitions were fulfilled—but not without terrible sacrifice.

Nowadays the Kennedy name is most often associated with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in 1963 and that of senator Robert Kennedy in 1968, but also with a 1969 scandal involving Edward, who, while escorting a lady home from a party, drove his car off a bridge into the river below, drowning his passenger, but leaving him unharmed, albeit too befuddled to take proper emergency measures. The Kennedy daughters, too, received their share of publicity—through their marital activities, later through their defiance of parental authority, and finally for their own accomplish-

ments as philanthropists and crusaders in their own right.

Laurence Leamer's play introduces us to 79-year-old Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy at her summer home in Hyannis Port, Massachusetts, keeping her appointment with the co-writer of her memoirs despite her distress at the latest shadow cast by her last surviving male offspring upon a clan already associated with misfortune in popular myth. Small wonder that—in the intervals between telephone calls from likewise distraught relatives—his mother finds herself reflecting on her own role in precipitating her children's unhappy lives and untimely deaths, her capitulation to their father's ruthless machinations influenced by a faith exhorting her to unquestioning obedience, self-imposed humility and rejection of

"unnecessary thoughts," even as these same tenets now comfort her in sorrow.

Leamer's previous training as a writer of prose rather than plays is evident in his hackneyed implementation of photo albums as a device for delivering exposition, and his subject's occasional lapses into oratory—speaking, for example, of a funeral attended by "the poor, the weak, the downtrodden" (how often do you hear the word "downtrodden" in everyday conversation?). In the hands of director Steve Scott and actor Linda Reiter, however, the regrets and remorse suffered by this matriarch in her twilight years are vividly manifested in her chronicle, commanding—if not our undiluted approval—our sympathies and, ultimately, our absolution.

THEATER REVIEW

Bakersfield Mist

Playwright: Stephen Sachs

At: TimeLine (sic) Theater,

Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont

Tickets: 773-327-5252;

TimelineTheatre.com; \$38-\$51

Runs through: Oct. 15

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Bakersfield Mist has two wonderful actors and a witty script but it's not a good play. An entertaining production? Absolutely. A good play? No.

The story concerns middle-aged Maude Guttman (Janet Ulrich Brooks), a bartender who drinks and lives in a Bakersfield, California, trailer park. A junk-shop painting she bought for \$3 might be a Jackson Pollack worth \$100 million.

Lionel Percy (Mike Nussbaum), an older art authority with international credentials, arrives via private jet and limo to authenticate the painting. Maude is earthy, friendly but nervous and welcoming in her own fashion.

Percy isn't overtly hostile but exudes snobbery, intellectual superiority and disdain. "I thought you were your own favorite subject," Maude observes of him. Lionel takes all of two minutes to declare the painting fake. But the story isn't the subject of *Bakersfield Mist*. Rather, the subject is human connection, passion and rue discovered by two people across vast social chasms. It's about authentic people, not authentic art.

Playwright Stephen Sachs swiftly draws the characters in this 90-minute piece. Each gives as good as he/she gets in a battle of decidedly different types of wit and understanding. Consummate pro Brooks and national treasure Nussbaum are far, far too savvy to overplay their roles, with dry understatement the order of the day as directed by Kevin Christopher Fox. Nussbaum's wordless facial expressions are worth the price of admission, and Brooks is a rock of dumb-like-a-fox credibility. Don't hesitate to go see them. Also worthy are Jeffrey D. Kmieć's amusing "engineered home" set, Mary O'Dowd's elaborate properties and Jared Gooding's sometimes-subtle lighting.

So what's the problem? First, Lionel is in-

capable of explaining his findings to Maude, basing his judgement on instinct honed by experience after an obviously cursory examination. He doesn't examine the frame and canvas or look for marks on back or sides, which authenticators would do. He refuses to consider possible forensic evidence in paint chips and hair embedded in the paint. "I choose not to believe it. ... A fingerprint means nothing," he says of scientific evidence Maude has sleuthed. Maude herself is a trailer park cliché despite Brooks' vibrant playing. I don't believe Sachs has met so-called trailer-trash folks. Finally, the play's most crucial moment is when Lionel, halfway out the door, decides to stay and reveal himself to Maude. I don't know what prompts his decision, which happens too quickly. To the play's credit, what follows is some eloquent speech about the nature and measure of art.

Picky-picky, sure. But such details are the difference between a thoughtful and amusing play, which *Bakersfield Mist* is, and something profound such as John Logan's *Red*, about artist Mark Rothko. Even comedies can have gravitas.

CRITICS' PICKS



The Good Person of Szechwan, Cor Theatre at A Red Orchid Theatre, through Sept. 11. This is not your schoolroom Brecht, but a parable brimming with vibrant street sounds and topicality, starring a cross-dressing Will Von Vogt as the faces of ghetto economy. MSB

Kinky Boots, Oriental Theatre, through Sept. 4. Cyndi Lauper and Harvey Fierstein's Tony-winning musical adaptation of the 2005 film carries a great message of changing hearts and minds by finding self acceptance. SCM

The Promise of a Rose Garden, Babes With Blades Theater Company at City Lit, through Sept. 10. It was less than a year ago that the U.S. military okayed women for combat duty, and already we have this action-packed underdogs-in-uniform drama of females pioneering the grueling USMC advanced infantry officer training course. MSB

Rose, Greenhouse Theater Center, through Sept. 25. The biographical details are well-known, but this solo impression of Rose Kennedy at 79 has deep feeling and great style. Steve Scott's tasteful direction is perfectly paced. JA

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

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THEATRE
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Jim J. Bullock gets 'Kinky'

BY JERRY NUNN

Out actor Jim J. Bullock has had a long history being in the limelight. Starting with the '80s sitcom *Too Close for Comfort*, he quickly gained national attention as the neighbor Monroe. He went on to become a regular for *Hollywood Squares* and on *ALF* as Neal Tanner.

He later voiced *Queer Duck* on Showtime, and also appeared in the films *Spaceballs* and *Kissing Jessica Stein*.

Bullock performed on a national tour of *Hairspray* in the past and now returns to the road in another Broadway show. *Kinky Boots* tells the story of Charlie Price, who is influenced by a drag queen named Lola to follow his dreams. Bullock plays George in the current touring production.

Windy City Times: Hi, Jim. So you are originally from Texas and a Southern Baptist?

JB: Yes. It is a part of my fabric.

WCT: How was coming out of the closet?

Aug. 31, 2016

JB: Oh, honey. I wasn't out when I was in Texas. I was confused. I am still confused. I live in a state of confusion! [Laughs]

I left Texas to move to L.A. when I was 20 years old. I knew there were desires but I was hoping it was a phase. I didn't want to go to hell. At the time there was no one to relate to.

Once I got out to L.A., I realized it was not a passing fad. I was terrified to come out when *Too Close for Comfort* happened. I came out to



Jim J. Bullock.
PR photo

my parents in my mid-thirties. My friends knew when I was in my twenties.

WCT: I wanted to be Monroe as a young gay boy even though he wasn't out.

JB: I completely understand and I related to people on TV, too, like Paul Lynde, Charles Nelson Reilly and Dr. Zachary Smith from *Lost in Space*! They weren't out or talking about it, so it was the same thing as you. There's that connection and something about that person. You see yourself in them.

WCT: It must have been rewarding to be on *Hollywood Squares* if you were a fan of Paul Lynde.

JB: It was such a fun time. I was an '80s version of Paul Lynde.

WCT: How was the *Hairspray* experience for you?

JB: Fantastic. It was the first and only show on Broadway for me. *Hairspray* was a dream come true. I had given up hopes of a Broadway show happening, then it came along. I turned 50 that year. It was a great show and meant a lot to me.

WCT: How were you cast in *Kinky Boots*?

JB: My agent submitted me. I went and auditioned in L.A. I had a great audition. I am not very good at auditions, but every once in a while the wires will touch and there will be a current. Other than that I am just two flapping wires. It is so sad. I have never mastered it.

I went to New York and auditioned in front of the entire creative, which was horrifying. I didn't get it. I was devastated because I was so close. A year later they contacted me and offered me the part. I was like, "Now? A year later?"

I joined the company in October of last year, so [it's been] almost a year now. I am so grateful to be working. I love the show. It is great to be working as an actor in a show I believe in, as opposed to *Annie Get Your Gun*.

Not only do I get a paycheck but, hopefully, I am a part of changing people's minds.

WCT: One person I interviewed in the past had a small role of Nicola in *Kinky Boots* and went on to win a Tony Award for *Hedwig*. So you never know what could happen.

JB: They say there are no small roles, but that is bullshit. There are small roles. George doesn't have lots of dialogue but I have tons of stage time. I think George is essential to moving the storyline along. I am really content not having a giant number. I fuck up enough as it is.

My agent tried to submit me for *Hairspray Live!* and that is the most horrifying thing I can possibly imagine. Being live on camera in front of the world is not my idea of a good time.

WCT: What are you doing after the *Kinky Boots* tour?

JB: I am signed on until June 2018, so that is a long time. I am taking it as it comes. My career has always been a crap shoot.

WCT: You have had a lengthy career. How about *Queer Duck* again?

JB: *Queer Duck* was the best. It was so much fun doing that stupid little cartoon.

WCT: Maybe you weren't aware of it at the time but talking about being HIV-positive and being out as an actor helped a lot of people.

JB: Thank you. I never set out to spearhead a movement. With *Monroe*, I was a character, but with *Hollywood Square* I quit hiding. I'm glad it did happen but it didn't happen intentionally. I have always wanted to be honest with where I am at. It is hard for me not to be honest.

I live in a time where the world is changing. We are so far from 40 years ago.

I was fortunate to be working as an actor where I could go, "Hey, I'm a big homo," and everyone thought it was okay.

Join Bullock and the gang for *Kinky Boots* playing now through Sept. 4 at the Oriental Theatre, 24 W. Randolph St. Ticket information can be found at BroadwayInChicago.com.

for the Chicago premiere of Douglas Carter Beane's *The Nance*.

This year, PFP will offer \$10 access tickets for 10 percent of the tickets for all shows, which can be used by artists, students, seniors, or others.

See PrideFilmsAndPlays.com.

'Sharmila' to run in Sept. at Steppenwolf

The production *Me, My Mom and Sharmila*, by Fawzia Mirza, will run Sept. 23-24 at Steppenwolf Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted St.

In "*Sharmila*," Mirza shares a comedic journey of self-discovery and strength that carries her from childhood as a Pakistani Muslim in small-town Canada to living out as an actress in the heart of Chicago.

The show is at 8 p.m., and admission is \$15. See <https://www.rippenwolf.org/tickets--events/seasons/2016-17/me-my-mom-and-sharmila/?id=22067>.

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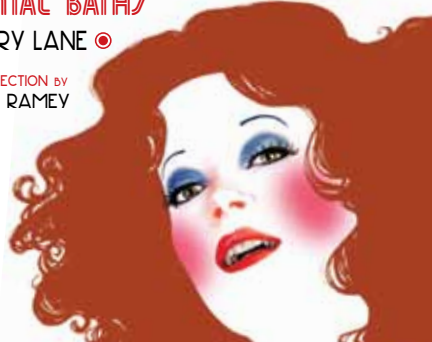
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KNIGHT at the movies

BY RICHARD KNIGHT, JR.

Little Men; The Intervention

Boys will be boys

Two years after making the best film of his career—*Love Is Strange*, the lovely bittersweet story of John Lithgow and Alfred Molina as an elderly gay couple facing financial and personal trauma after marrying in New York City—Ira Sachs is back with **Little Men**. The openly gay Sachs, once again scripting with his writing partner Mauricio Zacharias, has crafted another emotionally complicated slice-of-life drama, this one set in Brooklyn.

One of the most compelling characters in *Love Is Strange* was that of Joey, Lithgow's teenage nephew whose coming-of-age subplot was beautifully observed (and acted by Charlie Tahan). The new film focuses on another young boy, Jake (Leo Taplitz), the 13-year-old son of Brian (Greg Kinnear) and Kathy Jardine (Jennifer Ehle). The Jardines have just moved to Brooklyn from Manhattan, taking over the apartment they inherited from Brian's late father. The apartment is upstairs from a dress shop run by Lenor (Paulina Garcia), who has a tough-talking but sweet-natured son named Tony (Michael Barbieri).

Tony is outgoing and friendly while Jake is quiet and artistic—subjected to gay taunts at school—and an improbable but close bond swiftly develops between the boys. It's not clear if either boy has discovered his sexual nature, although it's no stretch to imagine that one or both of them might be gay. But nevertheless, the friendship of the boys is a thing of beauty—an awkward time of life rarely examined in the movies.

But the strong bond between the boys is the opposite of the story with the parents. Lenor's dress shop has lost money for years, and Brian and Kathy need the income in order to keep the building. They want a better-paying tenant while Lenor feels that Brian's father promised her no rent increases. A subtle power struggle develops and alarmingly escalates in spite of pleas from the boys that the adults make nice. They want that, too—realizing how important the friendship is—but the circumstances don't suggest a happy ending for all. Regardless of the outcome, Sachs draws his usual amazing performances from his actors, helped by the delicately observed script.

Sachs' sense of the city—its vibrancy and quirky personality—has become central to his movies and it's just as key here. Filled with beautiful performances (Kinnear, who has often been underrated, is again marvelous), this delicate film is a perfect antidote to the standard big-budget, superhero blockbusters and gross-out comedies that are the typical summer fare. *Little Men* is a little miracle of a movie—quietly rewarding and deeply satisfying.

Big Chill redux

Out actor Clea DuVall—familiar to queer film fans for her sullen, snarky teenage lesbian in *But I'm a Cheerleader!*, *Argo*, *Girl Interrupted*, *American Horror Story: Asylum* and others—has now written and directed her first film, **The Intervention**.

It's a *Big Chill*-like ensemble dramedy of a group of coupled friends who have gathered many times over weekends in the past, kvetching, catching up and letting their hair down. This time around, though, they've got an agenda: The marriage of Ruby and Peter has become so toxic that the others have set up the gather-



Michael Barbieri and Theo Taplitz in *Little Men*.

Photo by Eric McNatt, and courtesy of Magnolia Pictures

ing in order to advise the bickering Bickersons to get a divorce. No one else—including a lesbian couple—has relationships worth bragging about, so it's anyone's guess how the idea of splitting the argumentative couple will take.

DuVall's movie premiered at Sundance to love-letter reviews and has been a favorite on this year's queer film-festival circuit while garnering mostly positive reviews. The cast includes Jason Ritter, Natasha Lyonne (who played DuVall's eventual love interest in *But I'm a Cheerleader!*), Cobie Smulders, Melanie Lynskey and several of their contemporaries. It's available on VOD now.

Upcoming movie calendar

Highlights from films (alphabetized by date) opening in Chicago, Sept. 2 and 9 (some descriptions come from studio press materials).

The Intervention (8/26)—See details above.

The Hollers (9/2)—A man (John Krasinski) returns home to his dysfunctional family after learning his mother (Margo Martindale) has a brain tumor. Krasinski's directorial debut. Anna Kendrick, Sharlto Copley and Richard Jenkins co-star.

The Light Between Oceans (9/2)—A couple (Michael Fassbender and Alicia Vikander) who reside in an Australian lighthouse discover a baby in a boat along with a dead body. They decide to raise the child—a choice that leads to devastating consequences.

Little Men (9/2)—See details above.

Morgan (9/2)—A corporate troubleshooter (Kate Mara) travels to a remote, top-secret location to investigate a bioengineered child (Anya Taylor-Joy) who starts to become dangerous.

Akron (9/9)—First love meets the challenge of forgiveness in this family drama that continues to scoop festival prizes around the nation, including Best Feature and the Audience Award at the ImageOut Film Festival. College freshmen Benny (Frias) and Christopher (Donovan) meet on the football field and fall hard for each other, with the enthusiastic support of their respective families. In a welcome twist, Akron's drama is not rooted in the fact that these young men are gay, but in the fateful coincidence of a tragedy whose history has lain dormant for more than a decade but will soon come to light. Akron plays exclusively at the Gene Siskel Film Center. <http://www.siskelfilm-center.org/akron>

Complete Unknown (9/9)—While hosting a birthday party with his wife, a man (Michael Shannon) is startled to recognize a woman (Rachel Weisz) from his past. Going by a new name, she initially denies knowing him, but she later complicates the couple's life.

Sully (9/9)—After landing a plane in New

York's Hudson River, Capt. Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger (Tom Hanks) faces an investigation that threatens to destroy his career and reputation. Clint Eastwood directs this true story.

When the Bough Breaks (9/9)—When a professional couple (Morris Chestnut and Regina Hall) who are unable to conceive hire a young woman (Theo Rossi) as a surrogate, she develops a psychotic fixation on the husband that turns violent.

Mexican singer Juan Gabriel dies at 66

Mexican singing superstar Juan Gabriel died of a massive heart attack in Santa Monica, California, on Aug. 28. He was 66.

Gabriel was in the middle of the U.S. leg of his "MeXXico Es Todos" tour. He ranked in the top 20 on Billboard's 2015 Money Makers list, thanks largely to his touring revenue.

In 2014, Queerty reported that Gabriel surprised fans by uploading a video of himself intimately lounging with a mysterious man in a hotel room. Fans and media outlets have long said Gabriel (who had four children but never married) was gay, but he has only answered the question once formally, telling a Univision reporter, "Don't ask about something that is obvious."

Among his many albums were *Con Tu Amor*, *Mis Ojos Tristes*, *Por Mi Orgullo* and *Juan Gabriel*.

Diana Nyad in Chicago Sept. 7

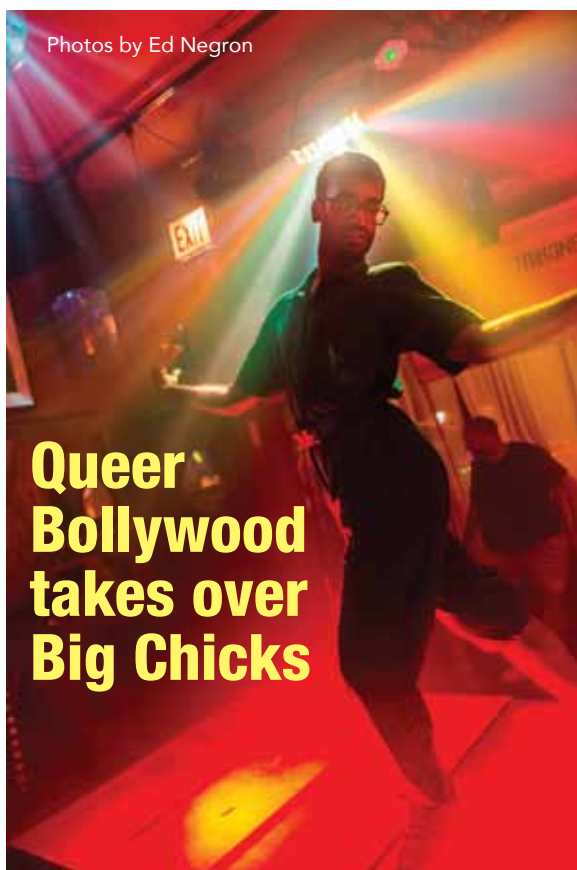
Lesbian journalist/long-distance swimmer Diana Nyad, author of *Find a Way: The Inspiring Story of One Woman's Pursuit of a Lifelong Dream*, will be the featured speaker at a luncheon hosted by The Union League Club, 65 W. Jackson Blvd., on Wed., Sept. 7, at 11:30 a.m.

Nyad will autograph copies of her work at the Union League event.

Note: The dress code for this event is business casual. Denim is not permitted. Call 847-446-8880 to reserve a spot.



Photos by Ed Negron



Queer Bollywood takes over Big Chicks

Trikone Chicago hosted its bimonthly Queer Bollywood dance party on April 19, at Big Chicks.

This month's theme was "Jai Ho: Summer Sutra." It was a packed house as everyone enjoyed South Asian dance music by DJ VoxBox and performances by local South Asian/Desi Drag Queens. The night also served as a fundraiser to help TriKone Chicago raise funds to support programs for the South Asian LGBTIQI community in Chicago. Other TriKone Chicago events include potluck dinners throughout the year.

Trikone Chicago is a not-for-profit organization that provides safe social spaces and serves as a peer-support network for queer, trans, and gender-nonconforming individuals of South Asian/Desi heritage in the Chicagoland area. TriKone Chicago hosts a range of open public events and social gatherings that foster a sense of community and promote an understanding of intersectional identities.

See TrikoneChicago.org.
Text and photos by Ed Negron



the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR

Texas de Brazil; Kanela Andersonville

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Deals that offer all you can eat (or drink) for a particular price can become the bane of one's existence.

From buffets to bottomless mimosas, people will pay a certain amount of money—and sometimes don't get their money's worth, as they'll have one plate of food or a single mimosa.

Brazilian steakhouses fall into that category as well. For example, dinner at **Texas de Brazil** (210 E. Illinois St.; TexasDeBrazil.com/locations/illinois/chicago) is \$46.99—and if you've just come from running a marathon, you may consume enough to justify the price. (Remember, you can't take anything home with you.)

Fortunately for Texas de Brazil, it has an incredible variety of delicious offerings, including salad-bar offerings (with the cost being \$24.99 if you're only dining at that bar). As for the salad bar, my dining companion fell in love with the lobster bisque, but there are items ranging from hearts of palm to shrimp salad to jasmine rice.



Texas de Brazil.

Photo by Andrew Davis

As for the meats, every single bit I tried was delectable—and I pretty much felt I had eaten Old MacDonald's farm by the time I left. Flank steak, chicken sausage, picanha and (especially) the lamb chops were just a few of the meaty options we tried and enjoyed. And if you happen to have room in your stomach after all that, you can try one of the restaurant's substantial desserts.

So, go all out and enjoy your meats! (By the way, lunch is offered on Fridays, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., for \$24.99, so that may be a better deal for some.)

A new Kanela

The spots known as **Kanela Breakfast Clubs** have been rapidly taking over the city. There are now restaurants in Lake View, Streeterville, Old Town and Wicker Park.

Now, there's one in Andersonville (5413 N. Clark St.; KanelaBreakfastClub.com)—and this one may be my favorite. Having opened on May 5 (or Cinco de Mayo, as the manager told me), this branch is open Monday-Sunday, 7 a.m.-3 p.m., like most of the others—and offered the tastiest versions of dishes I normally order at the other Kanela restaurants.

The monkey bread (with cinnamon, honey butter and walnut) didn't stand a chance, while my dining partner and I enjoyed, respectively, the Lorraine scramble (peppered bacon, Gruyere cheese, caramelized onion, charred scallion and toast) and the corned-beef hash (which I probably would've loved even more if there were no Brussels sprouts). Actually, Kanela has a love affair with the sprouts, as they're also in the pork-belly Benedict. Also, there's a definite playful atmosphere that we appreciated.

Kanela Andersonville is a wonderful addition to this breakfast-club family.



Corned beef hash at Kanela.

PR photo

nightspots the big TO-DO

OUR WEEKLY PICKS TO PLAN
YOUR NIGHTLIFE CALENDAR

**Night Names: Logan Arcade's
Monthly Queer Night**



Thu., Sept. 1, 9 pm
Logan Arcade,
2410 W. Fullerton Ave.

A safe/comfy space for all folks to dance, hang out, and/or geek out on games. Free pinball in the front room. \$4 Motor Row Brewery pints. DJ Tainted Love & DJ Poormilk. No cover.

Fetish Class



Fri., Sept. 2, 8-9:30 pm
Leather 64TEN,
6410 N. Clark St.

Interested in a fetish and don't know where to turn or who to ask? Come to the basement of Leather 64TEN the first and third Friday of each month. Top experts will be teaching each class. In a private area with non-alcoholic refreshments. \$5.

Super Labor Day Weekend Glow Party



Fri., Sept. 2, 9 pm
Sidetrack,
3349 N. Halsted St.

You glow, girl! Shine your light to celebrate Labor Day weekend at Sidetrack. Dancers, glow sticks, swag giveaways and no cover.

Jockstrap and Underwear Fetish Party



Sun., Sept. 4, 10 pm
Touche,
6412 N. Clark St.

Free clothing check. DJ Harry T. Hot Jock and Wet Underwear contests at midnight with \$50 cash prize for each.



SIDETRACK

We're all All-Stars every Thursday night with the RuPaul's All-Stars Drag Race party!

Photos by Jed Dulanis



"I look like a scrotum now."—Hugh Grant discusses the downside of being 55 years old. But he also had difficulties with his looks when he was younger: "I remember when I used to go on a French exchange in Paris and all the locals called me 'mademoiselle' because they thought I was a girl." At least he didn't look like a girl with a scrotum!

I read a provocative headline last week: "Leonardo DiCaprio Passes Hillary Clinton To Justin Timberlake." I had visions of them all at a key party—you know, when you toss your key in a bowl and randomly pick your next sexual partner. Well, it happens at parties I go to! Anyway, turns out that DiCaprio was supposed to host a Clinton fundraiser in Hollywood. For reasons too murky to go into here, Leo passed hosting duties along to Justin Timberlake. Talk about swapping up!

It's been an up-and-down couple of weeks for Ryan Lochte. I know this will shock you, but I feel sorry for him. Yes, he lied to his mom to cover up a wild night out, she blabbed to the press and then he had to stand by the story publicly. I'm not excusing him, but it's not like he was Tonya Harding handing someone a crowbar! A far greater crime was that terrible hair at the Olympics—someone ought to prosecute him for that. But, no, the Brazilian authorities have summoned him back to Rio de Janeiro to face charges of false report of robbery. Can't he just send a check? Hasn't he been through enough?

In a smart move, Lochte has signed on to compete on the new season of Dancing with the Stars. Unless he dances like Geraldo Rivera, he should be safe for a few weeks and maybe garner a bit of public support. And he certainly needs a paycheck, since his four endorsement deals have fallen through. But there's some good news—Ryan has been signed as spokesperson for my cough drops of choice—Pine Bros. (you know, those ones that are so sticky, they will pull the crowns out of your mouth). The cough drop company said, "Just as Pine Bros. is forgiving to your throat, the company asks the public for a little forgiveness for an American swimming legend." But I've come up with a better slogan—"Coat your throat with Ryan Lochte and Pine Bros."

Logo has finally confirmed something I told you weeks ago—that Robert Sepulveda is the star of their upcoming dating show Finding Prince Charming, which debuts Sept. 8, with Lance Bass hosting. Now, I'm not exactly sure who is the prince and who is doing the looking. Is Robert Prince Charming? Or is he looking for his Prince Charming? Perhaps he'll open the show by singing, "Someday my prince will come"—which could have all sorts of new implications for a gaggle of gay guys!

As I previously told you, Sepulveda had a past—but I had no idea how colorful it was. I knew that he had been cast on Bravo's Most Eligible—New York back in 2011. I also knew that he had some sort of a relationship with designer Marc Jacobs. But now we've discovered that his past also includes a foray into the world's oldest profession. Far be it from me to cast aspersions on a hooker. After all, he's hot and was able to get paid for it—good for him. This was back around 2006 in Fort Lauderdale—which fits the details of his life we already know. He was working under the name Vincent Romen and was advertising on the now-defunct Rentboy.com. We also know that he was charging \$250 an hour and \$1,500 for overnight. With those prices, he's gonna break Logo's budget! What do they get for that money? Well, he describes himself as having a "fat uncut 10-inch



Billy says that Jaden Smith is doing something his famous father (Will) won't do.

Instagram photo

cock" and, from the rather graphic photos that have fallen into our hands, he's much more than a handful. Not only does he have a big dick, but he might very well be a big dick, too. One reviewer (yes, hookers get reviews) claims that Sepulveda refused to see him, saying, "I don't like African-American men!" This does not bode well for the three Black contestants! But, you can skip the show and see every inch of him on BillyMasters.com.

Last week, Bella Thorne came out as bisexual—an announcement I might have cared about if I had a clue who Bella Thorne is. But one part of the story intrigued me—she may or may not be dating her brother's ex-girlfriend! Not only is she dating her brother's ex, but his ex's name is ... get ready for it ... Bella! Sigh—just what I needed, two Bellas who I don't know anything about (or care about, for that matter).

Little Jaden Smith is topping his dad, so to speak—he's kissing a guy in the musical series The Get Down, which is Baz Luhrmann's project on Netflix. In the teaser clip that just went online, Jaden is at a gay bar (bear in mind he's 18) and kisses Noah Le Gros. The irony is that his dad, Will Smith, famously refused to kiss another guy in the film Six Degrees of Separation, saying, "I can't be kissed, because it will gross out my fans."

Our "Ask Billy" question comes from Roger in London: "Have you watched any of Celebrity Big Brother [UK]? There are a couple of hot guys, and I hear Lewis Bloor just showed his penis. Could you track it down?"

This column is filled with people I've never heard of. And here's another one. Lewis Bloor is known for being on one of those "scripted reality shows" called "The Only Way is Essex." The 26-year-old is awfully handsome, has a great body and, as it turns out, an amazingly large penis! Before leaving the Big Brother house, he decided to flash his housemates—and he made sure he was erect when he did it! He may be a foreigner, but you won't need a passport to see him on BillyMasters.com.

When we're delivering the BIG in Big Brother, it's definitely time to end yet another column. This week, I'm on the West Coast on the final dates of The Go-Go's farewell tour. I'm sure I'll have something to say about that next week on www.BillyMasters.com—the site that ain't going anywhere! If you have a question, send it along to me at Billy@BillyMasters.com, and I promise to get back to you before we find out how many contestants on Finding Prince Charming were also hookers! Until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.

Advertisement for Sidetrack Super Labor Day Weekend. It lists events for Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, including TGIF Show Tunes, Glow Dance Party, Stoli Deck Party, Super Sized Show Tunes, Sunday Funday Dance Party, Labor Day Flashback Party, and Musical Monday! Show Tunes. It also features a "CHAD SELL!" graphic and social media information for Sidetrack Bar.

Advertisement for Leather64Ten Chicago. It features the slogan "WE KNOW LEATHER" and lists services: Custom Leather, Custom Repair, and Furniture Restoration. It includes images of leather goods and contact information: 6410 N. Clark, Chicago, IL | 773.508.0900 | LEATHER64TEN.COM | @LEATHER64TEN.

Advertisement for Leather64Ten Chicago, featuring the slogan "WE KNOW LEATHER" and contact information: 6410 N. Clark, Chicago, IL | 773.508.0900 | LEATHER64TEN.COM | @LEATHER64TEN.

Elena Delle Donne returns to Sky, reflects on Rio

BY ROSS FORMAN

Elena Delle Donne returned to the Chicago Sky Aug. 25 at the team's practice facility in north suburban Deerfield, sans Olympic gold medal.

Her gold from the recently completed Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro is locked away. No way was she bringing it, to flaunt the sixth consecutive Olympic gold won the United States won—and her first. So, her Sky teammates, coaches, staff and assembled local media will have to wait for a glimpse at her gold, but not her golden memories.

Quite simply, Rio 2016 was “the best experience of my life,” said Delle Donne, 26, who has been a WNBA All-Star in each of her first three



Elena Delle Donne.
Photo by Randy Belice

seasons and is the reigning WNBA MVP.

“It’s been a really incredible month—more than I ever could have imagined. [I] spent some really quality time with some amazing players; got to experience some really cool parts of Rio, such as Christ the Redeemer, and [Olympic] events, [including] beach volleyball and swimming. [I] saw [Michael] Phelps.”

It was “an emotional whirlwind,” and oh-so-memorable.

The U.S. destroyed Spain 101-72 in the finals.

“It wasn’t easy, don’t get me wrong,” Delle Donne said. “The scoreboard might have made it look that way, but there were some really great teams that gave us their best shot, especially in the first and second quarters.

“I think the greatest thing about our team was, we had so much depth and were able to wear everyone out.”

Delle Donne is one of three Olympians on the Sky as Erika de Souza and Clarissa Dos Santos were teammates for the host Brazilians. Delle Donne said she saw de Souza once while in Brazil, but did not see Dos Santos.

Delle Donne said she “felt very safe and comfortable, and able to have a really great time,” while in Rio, a country she tagged as “beautiful.”

Before playing her first Olympic game, Delle Donne came out regarding her engagement to longtime girlfriend Amanda Clifton in a story that first appeared in Vogue Magazine. Delle

Donne received overwhelming coming-out support on social media, though she admitted that she personally was not on social media too much while in Rio.

“From what I was able to hear, people were really receptive to it, really wishing us well, which was nice,” Delle Donne said. “[The coming-out] went well.”

Delle Donne said that her sexual orientation “has been out there for a really long time with the people who mean the most to me, and that’s really all that matters to me. Now that everyone knows, there’s more hoopla and stories for a second, but it will go away in a little bit and go back to normal ... I’m very happy.”

So when’s the big day?

Delle Donne didn’t say, and added that she won’t be sharing the date publicly. But, she added, their marriage won’t be until 2017.

And what about that moment when the gold medal was placed around your neck?

Instant chills and an instant smile came over on her face, she said, adding, “My dream actually came true; [it was] such an awesome feeling.”

Delle Donne definitely wants to play in the 2020 Games, which will be held in Tokyo, she said.

Dos Santos, in her second season with the Sky, was competing in her second Summer Olympics (2012, London), but this time was in her native country, which made the Games “amazing.”

de Souza, a three-time WNBA All-Star whose career in the league dates back to 2002 when she won the WNBA Championship with the Los Angeles Sparks, said the entire Sky team is excited to see Delle Donne’s gold medal. “Maybe it will give us more energy for the next Olympics,” she said.

OutGames launches early registration

World OutGames Miami—the 10-day event that will bring 34 sports and more than 450 events across the areas of sport, culture and human rights—has launched advanced registration.

Thousands of athletes, participants, spectators and thought leaders from around the globe will converge on Miami for World OutGames IV May 26-June 4, 2017.

Registration is available online at OutGames.org. Athletes who register before Sept. 1, 2016, can save \$100.

AIDS Run & Walk Oct. 1

This year’s AIDS Run & Walk Chicago—emphasizing the importance of unity and partnership in responding to health crises—will be held on the morning of Saturday, Oct. 1, at Chicago’s Soldier Field.

The 5K walk, 5K run and 10K run will center around the estimated 2,500 participants banding together to end new HIV infections and support those living with HIV and other chronic illnesses.

Event registration is \$30 in advance for 5K walkers and \$40 for 5K or 10K runners. To register as an individual or as a team, or to donate, visit AIDSRUNWALK.org or call 312-334-0946. Online registration ends Sunday, Sept. 25. Event day registration will be \$60 for walkers and runners.

‘Art AIDS America’ coming Dec. 1

Art AIDS America—a groundbreaking exhibition that underscores the presence of HIV in art in this country—culminates its U.S. tour at the Alphawood Gallery, 2401 N. Halsted St., Dec. 1-April 2, 2017.

This temporary space has been created in a former bank by the Chicago-based Alphawood Foundation to bring the exhibition to its only Midwest venue.

This is the first exhibition to explore how the AIDS crisis forever changed American art. Since the first reports of mysterious illnesses in the early 1980s, HIV and AIDS have touched nearly every U.S. resident in some way. While acknowledging and honoring the enormous anger, loss and grief generated by the epidemic, the exhibition refutes the narrative that AIDS is only a tragic tangent in U.S. art. Instead, Art AIDS America offers a story of resilience and beauty revealed through the visual arts, and of the communities that gathered to bring hope and change in the face of a devastating disease.

The Chicago presentation of Art AIDS America will feature more than 100 significant contemporary works in a wide range of media—from oil on canvas and photography to three-dimensional installations and video. The artists represented include Judy Chicago, Chloe Dzubilo, Karen Finley, Robert Gober, Félix González-Torres, Keith Haring, Jenny Holzer,



Roger Brown’s “Peach Light.”

Copyright The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and the Brown family

Derek Jackson, Kia Labeija, Annie Leibovitz, Robert Mapplethorpe, Kiki Smith, Joey Terrill, David Wojnarowicz and Martin Wong. Added to the traveling exhibition exclusively for its Chicago presentation will be works by a variety of other artists, among them major works by famed Chicago Imagist Roger Brown.

Racial and ethnic minorities have historically and presently not benefited from the same visibility as white male artists in shaping the narrative of the epidemic. The Chicago presentation of Art AIDS America will include additional works by artists, as well as programming, focused specifically on expanding the exhibition’s inclusivity. Related programming in the form of panels, discussions and performances will explore how the underlying issues of race, politics, culture and institutional practice have created barriers to more equitable representation.

Admission to the exhibition will be free with timed tickets; it opens on World AIDS Day. Prior to Chicago, Art AIDS America will have appeared at the Tacoma Art Museum in Washington state, the Zuckerman Museum in suburban Atlanta and the Bronx Museum of the Arts in New York City.

Major support for the exhibition and catalogue has been provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and The Paul G.

Allen Family Foundation. Additional support for the U.S. tour was provided by the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art and by Gilead Sciences.

Tickets will be accessible this fall by visiting ArtAIDSAmericaChicago.org.

Leather anniversary weekend events are now free

Leather Archives & Museum (LA&M) is preparing to celebrate its work of preserving leather/fetish/BDSM/kink history this fall, when the museum will host its 25th-anniversary weekend on Sept. 16-18.

New is that the weekend will be **free for the public to attend**. People who purchased tickets/packages previously for the 25th Anniversary Weekend will have their money refunded and will be notified by LA&M. They will have free reserved seats for all programs and an invitation to the banquet dinner Saturday night, Sept. 17. All sponsors and other previously invited guests will have reserved seats for all programs and an invitation to the banquet.

Plans for the weekend include numerous receptions, educational programming, a walking tour, a banquet dinner, after-parties and, of course, tours of the museum itself. Seating for all events—except for reserved seating for sponsors and those who previously registered—will be on a first-come, first-served basis for events at the museum.

Started in 1991 by Chuck Renslow, the Leather Archives & Museum was originally located at 5007 N. Clark St. The museum later moved to 6418 N. Greenview Ave. in 1999, where it has operated ever since.

Visit LeatherArchives.org/anniversary/.

Northwestern to run AIDS exhibition

Northwestern University’s Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, 40 Arts Circle Dr., Evanston, will run the art exhibition “Keep the Shadow, Ere the Substance Fade: Mourning during the AIDS Crisis” Sept. 17-Dec. 11 at the Katz Gallery.

By juxtaposing objects and artworks related to mourning from the Victorian Era and during the AIDS crisis, “Shadow” examines two analogous cultures of bereavement.

Artists in the exhibition include Eric Avery, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, David Grieger, Robert Mapplethorpe, Richard Mock, Domingo Orejudo, Andres Serrano and Leonard Rifas.

In addition, Block Graduate Fellow C.C. McKee will draw connections between mourning-related objects and artworks from the Victorian Era and during the AIDS crisis in “Keep the Shadow: The Body and Mourning” on Thursday, Oct. 13, 6-8 p.m.

See BlockMuseum.northwestern.edu. RSVP for the Oct. 13 event at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/keep-the-shadow-the-body-and-mourning-tickets-26689099816>.

NewTown open mic on Sept. 14

The NewTown Writers will host an open-mic reading Wed., Sept. 14, 7-9 p.m., at Volumes Bookcafe, 1474 N. Milwaukee Ave.

The event will feature LGBTQ lit by NewTown Writers as well as authors appearing in the Off the Rocks anthologies.

This is an open-mic event for all writers, as non-members can bring their work and share it from the stage. However, if time becomes a factor, preference will be given to those in the group or the anthologies.

Writers can sign up early by email (southside6167@yahoo.com) or in person the day of the show at 6:30 p.m. Each writer can read up to three poems or eight minutes of prose.

There is no cover charge. Updates on this event will be posted on the NewTown Writers’ Facebook page.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wed., Aug. 31

Adult Coloring Book Night David Bowie: Starman: A Coloring Book 7:00pm - 9:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St., 773-769-9299 <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com/book/9780859655507>

Friday, Sept. 2

IFCON 2016 International Friendship Conference is the largest annual global conference of LGBT Asians and their friends. Host hotel is DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Chicago Magnificent Mile. See <http://ifcon2016.org/saturday-september-3/>

Fashion: Elements of Fierce CALOR presents a fashion show full of art, performances and community to fundraise for United Latinx Pride and El Rescate. Original designs and costumes created by individual designers and community efforts. 2:00pm - 6:00pm National Museum of Mexican Art 1852 W. 19th St. Chicago Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/fashion-elements-of-fierce-tickets-26722258996>

Super Labor Day Weekend TGIF show tunes followed by Glow dance party 5:00pm - 2:00am Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St Chicago <http://www.sidetrackchicago.com/>

Mr. Continental prelims The Continental Pageantry System. Info and tix by phone 5:00pm Baton Show Lounge 436 N Clark St Chicago 312-527-9338

Saturday, Sept. 3

IFCON Gay Asian Dinner Buffet Dance Cruise Part of gay Asians & Friends' annual International Friendship Confer-



WET'S MY LINE Wed., Sept. 7

Out long-distance swimmer Diana Nyad will be at The Union League Club.

Photo from 2015 by Vern Hester

ence (IFCON) 2016 on the Spirit of Chicago. Two decks, dinner buffet, cash bar, a dance floor with DJ. 4pm IFCON2016 group picture in front of the boat prior to boarding. Boarding 4:30pm. After cruise, drinks at a nearby pub and fireworks display on Navy Pier. Coast guard regulations require passengers be fully clothed with shoes. \$99 4:00pm Navy Pier 600 E Grand Ave Chicago <http://ifcon2016.org/saturday-september-3/> Tickets: <http://ifcon2016.org/ifcon-2016-single-event-registration/>

Mr. Continental finals The Continental Pageantry System. Info and tix by phone 7:00pm Park West Chicago 322 W Armitage Ave Chicago 312-527-9338

Sunday, Sept. 4

Asians & Friends Dim Sum Each first Sunday of the month 12:30pm Furama 4936 N. Broadway Chicago <http://www.afchicago.org>

Miss Continental prelims The Continental Pageantry System. Info and tix by phone 5:00pm The Vic Theatre 3145 N Sheffield Ave Chicago 312-527-9338

Gay Asian Gala IFCON Dinner/Dance in Chicago The last big hurrah of IFCON is our gala dinner and dance at the host hotel with a speakeasy theme. \$95 7:00pm - 10:00pm DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Chicago Magnificent Mile, Chicago <http://ifcon2016.org/about-ifcon/> Tickets: <http://ifcon2016.org/ifcon-2016-single-event-registration/>

Monday, Sept. 5

Center on Halsted Ballroom Nights Each Monday evening on the third floor. Free classes first Monday of each month go into one particular style and subsequent weeks go into execution. No registration required. Students with no experience may join at any time but best early in month. 7:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

Miss Continental finals The Continental Pageantry System. Info and tix by phone 7:00pm The Vic Theatre 3145 N Sheffield Ave Chicago 312-527-9338

Tuesday, Sept. 6

Vives Q: First Tuesdays Guest speakers: Reyna Ortiz and Myles Brady. RSVP online to attend. 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. Also open to significant others, family, friends, allies, and anyone with questions. 6:30pm - 9:00pm Center on Hal-

sted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=11241>

Wed., Sept. 7

Meet Lesbian Sports Icon Diana Nyad Long-distance swimming star and journalist Diana Nyad, author of Find a Way: The Inspiring Story of One Woman's Pursuit of a Lifelong Dream, at a luncheon hosted by The Union League Club. Reserve your space by phone. 11:30am The Union League Club, 65 West Jackson Blvd., Chicago 847-446-8880

Gay Liberation Network organizing meeting Monthly planning meeting of Chicago's multi-issue direct action group that promotes the rights of LGBTI people. Through demonstrations and advocacy, we change the social and political situation of police brutality, labor, immigration, and more. Sept. 7 Oct. 5 Nov. 2 Dec. 7 7:00pm Berger Park Cultural Center 6205 N. Sheridan Rd Chicago <http://www.gayliberation.net>

Poetry Reading: Chinaka Hodge, Dated Emcees Chinaka Hodge came of age along with hip-hop-and its influence on her suitors became inextricable from their personal interactions. 7:30pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago (773) 769-9299 <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com/event/poetry-reading-chinaka-hodge-dated-emcees>

Thursday, Sept. 8

Trans Talk: a Three-Part Series on Living Trans The first of three consecutive Thursday afternoons (September 8, 15, and 22) at 1 p.m., beginning with a free screening of "Just Gender," a groundbreaking educational film that directly addresses the all-too-often misunderstood world of transgender people. 1:00pm - 2:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/>

Christine Reilly, Sunday's on the Phone to Monday Author reading. 7:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago (773) 769-9299 <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com/>

Parents of Trans Individuals Parents of Trans Individuals (PTI) is a sub-chapter of PFLAG. It offers a safe place for parents of children from all ages - families and friends of transgender and/or gender questioning individuals to come together to meet for conversation, support and education. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=11120>

You're Being Ridiculous skeletons-themed show This night part of Steppenwolf's LookOut Series - a new multi-genre performance series, presenting a wide variety of work, coming from a diverse array of voices, artists emerging and established alike. Doors 7:30pm 8:00pm Steppenwolf 1650 N Halsted Chicago <https://www.steppenwolf.org/tickets--events/seasons/2016-17/youre-being-ridiculous/?id=22042>

Saturday, Sept. 10

End The Violence-Remembering Orlando NW Indiana Gay Straight Coalition kick off meeting to foster policies on gun safety and creating a more inclusive environment for the LGBT community in NW Indiana where LGBT rights have been challenged n by the governor. Indiana also plays a role in the presence of guns in Chicago. 7:00pm Art Space Building, 717 Franklin, Michigan City, Indiana <https://www.eventbrite.com/d/il--chicago/end-the-violence/?crt=regular&sort=best>

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LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS, COUNTY DEPARTMENT, COUNTY DIVISION IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF Carolyn Jean Kasprovicz and Christina Lynn Zurcher FOR CHANGE OF NAMES TO Carolyn Jean Zurkawicz and Christina Lynn Zurkawicz. PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME CASE NO: 2016CONC000836. HEARING DATE: 10-14-2016 at 10:00 AM at 50 W. Washington, Chicago, Cook County in Courtroom #1704 We, Carolyn Jean Kasprovicz and Christina Lynn Zurcher, request the entry of an order by this Honorable Court in compliance with the provisions of 735 ILCS 5/21 - 101 et. seq. for a change of name and in support of this petition and under penalties of perjury as provided by Section 1-109 of the Code of Civil Procedure (735 ILCS 5/1-109) state: A. FOR MYSELF:1. My year of birth is: 1965. My place of birth was: Chicago, IL. 3. My current residence address is: 922 W. Winona St. Unit 3E, Chicago, IL 60640 4.

I will have published notice of my intention to apply to this court for a change of name. A copy of that notice will be filed with the Clerk of Court. 5. I am not required to register as a sex offender under the Sex Offender Registration Act (730 ILCS 150/1 et. seq.). 6. I have not been convicted of identity theft. 7. I have not been convicted of aggravated identity theft. 8. I have not been convicted or placed on probation for a felony or misdemeanor in the State of Illinois or any other state. 9. I request the Court change my name to: Carolyn Jean Zurkawicz. SIGNATURE Under penalties of perjury as provided is Section I-109 of the Code of Civil Procedure (735 ILCS 5/1-109) I certify that I have read the Petition for Change of Name filed by Carolyn Jean Kasprovicz and state all of the facts contained therein are true. /s/ Carolyn Jean Kasprovicz B. FOR MY SPOUSE. 10. My spouse's current name is Christina Lynn Zurcher; her date of birth is 3/28/75. 11. My spouse's place of birth was Jackson, MI. 12. My spouse's current residential address is 922 W. Winona St. Unit 3E, Chicago, IL 60640. 13. My spouse has lived in Illinois since May 10, 1997. I will have published notice of my intention to apply to this court for a change of name. A copy of that notice will be filed with the Clerk of Court. My spouse is not required to register as a sex offender under the Sex Offender Registration Act (730 ILCS 150/1 et. seq.). 14. My spouse has not been convicted of identity theft. 15. My spouse has not been convicted of aggravated identity theft. 16. My spouse has not been convicted or placed on probation for a felony or misdemeanor in the State of Illinois or any other state. 17. I request the Court change my name to: Christina Lynn Zurkawicz. SIGNATURE Under penalties of perjury as provided is Section I-109 of the Code of Civil Procedure (735 ILCS 5/1-109) I certify that I have read the Petition for Change of Name filed by Christina Lynn Zurcher and state all of the facts contained therein are true. /s/ Christina Lynn Zurcher. (8/31/16-3)

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TREE HOUSE from page 8

things that they do. I have encouraged them to see themselves as professionals in the animal welfare field—totally knowledgeable when it comes to any kind of resources for the cats in our community."

Tree House also prides itself on being a "no-kill" shelter.

The proliferation of facilities who have adopted that policy was already on the rise as early as 2008, when the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) estimated that 3.7 million animals were euthanized in U.S. shelters that year.

Current numbers released by the ASPCA state: "Each year, approximately 2.7 million animals are euthanized (1.2 million dogs and 1.4 million cats)."

The ASPCA adds that the same number of animals are now adopted annually (1.4 million dogs and 1.3 million cats).

Today, there is a significant and progressive movement to only euthanize animals that are behaviorally unable to adjust or in untreatable pain.

"In Chicago especially, we work well as a community with rescue groups, foster homes and shelters who say, 'How can we help so that Animal Control does not have to make a decision to euthanize because of lack of space?'" Burns said.

However, she believes there is so much more that can be done, including a simple change in message.

"I think 'no-kill' is a really harsh term," she asserted. "We don't come to work at shelters to kill animals. We come to work to save lives. Years ago, people didn't understand the im-

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portance of spaying and neutering their pets otherwise we could have made a much bigger dent and not had five or six million animals per year entering shelters. This is where the community needs to step up and help us with the problem."

It is a problem illustrated by Burns in a staggering number.

"In seven years, one pair of breeding cats and their kittens can produce 420,000 kittens," she said. "That's why we have so many cats running around."

"Too many people decide to shop instead of adopt," she added. "I encourage anyone who, for example, wants to adopt a Great Dane to realize that there are plenty of Great Danes in shelters or in specific rescue groups who need a loving home. There's no need or reason for anyone to go out and purchase a puppy-mill dog or cat when, on any given day, we have 200 cats in our care. Why not come on in and get one here? They're already spayed and neutered. They are vaccinated, microchipped. They are ready to go."

For Burns, leaving her boat in Florida to oversee all those cats ready to go to loving homes was more than worth the trip.

"Tree House is such a cool organization," she said. "It is so unique even nationally. We deal with cats who are typically underserved. We have a specific niche that helps us tell even more stories about all these cats who have come in here so very sick and, within a few weeks, are like little kittens again. Chicago is a great city which supports its animals so it is just up from here."

For more information about Tree House, visit: <http://www.treehouseanimals.org/site/PageServer?pagename=home>.

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